

The

# Link



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**Just when you thought  
it was safe to relax...**

# BCIT STRIKE II

## LET'S GET EDUCATIONAL!

The negotiations are failing, the staff are getting restless, non-binding mediation appears to be the only hope. see page 3

An FSA/BCIT Production



# The Link

is the student newspaper of the British Columbia Institute of Technology. Published bi-weekly by the BCIT Student Association, *The Link* circulates 3,500 copies to over 16,000 students and staff.

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The views in *The Link* are not necessarily those of BCIT, the Student Association, or the editorial collective.

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#### LINK LETTERS POLICY

*The Link* welcomes letters. Letters should be typed, double spaced, under 300 words and can be dropped off at *The Link* or SA offices and sent through campus or regular mail. Your name, affiliation with BCIT and a telephone number to contact you (which will not be published) must be included. Anonymity may be granted at the discretion of staff. Letters on disk, as a txt file, with a hard copy would be greatly appreciated. *The Link* reserves the right to edit for clarity and brevity.

## Campus Events

This Calendar column is open for notices of events on all BCIT campuses. Submissions can be faxed to 431-7619, sent by campus mail or dropped off at *The Link* office in the SA Campus Centre (down the corridor between the video arcade and the new copy centre location)

#### Friday, February 25

**BCIT Board of Governors Elections Nomination Period Ends.** Two students are required, each for a term of one year. Nomination forms are available at the Registrar's Office (SW1-2170), the SA Offices, NE1-377, DTC, PMTC and Sea Island Campus.

#### Monday, February 28

**American Marketing Association Meeting.** 7am. Call 451-6777 for more info.

#### Tuesday, February 29

**Remember: It's a leap year.**

**Toastmasters.** SA Boardroom, SA Campus Centre, 7am.

#### Friday, March 3

**Deadline for submissions to the next edition of *The Link*.**

#### March 6 - 10

**Nursing Spring Break**

#### Monday, March 6

**American Marketing Association Meeting.** 7am. Call 451-6777 for more information.

**SA Council Meeting.** SA Boardroom, SA Campus Centre, 5:45 pm.

#### Tuesday, March 7

**Toastmasters.** SA Boardroom, SA Campus Centre, 7am.

#### Wednesday, March 8

**Electronics:** Last day to withdraw from Term A courses and receive a "W" on transcript.

**Next edition of *The Link* hits the stands.**

#### Friday, March 10

**Medical Radiography:** Last day to withdraw and receive a "W" on transcript.

**One Night Stand.** SA and AMA sponsored party at the Commodore. Contact the SA Office for more information.

#### Sunday, March 12

**Spring Equinox.**

#### March 13 - 17

**Spring Break for most Technologies.**

#### Friday, March 17

**Deadline for submissions to the March 22 edition of *The Link*.**

#### Monday, March 20

**Term B Courses begin.**

**American Marketing Association Meeting.** 7am. Call 451-6777 for more information.

**SA Council Meeting.** SA Boardroom, SA Campus Centre, 5:45 pm.

#### Tuesday, March 21

**Toastmasters.** SA Boardroom, SA Campus Centre, 7am.

#### Wednesday, March 22

**Intermediate Latin Dancing.** Contact Recreation and Athletics for more information.

**Beginners' Swing.** Contact Recreation and Athletics for more information.

**Edition of *The Link* hits the stands.**

#### Thursday, March 23

**Recreation Council Meeting.**

#### Friday, March 24

**Electronics:** Term A courses end.

**Nursing:** Last day to withdraw and receive a "W" on transcript.

#### Monday, March 27

**Electronics:** Term B Courses begin.

## Link call 432-8974 Unclassifieds

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## Win cash prizes for targeting Sustain-Ability

If you've got a major project or assignment to complete before Open House (April 7 & 8), there's money - \$1600 in cash - plus other prizes - available for focusing on environmental protection and sustainability!

The drive behind the contest, sponsored by both BCIT's Environmental Awareness Committee and the Student Association, is to help students better prepare for sustainability challenges in their fields of work, and to help BCIT improve its performance at the same time.

"What is sustainable?" you might ask. In general terms, it means meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. That's wide open to interpretation, but the intent is clear.

With a focus on your particular industry, learning space or the whole campus itself, it could mean investigating ways to reduce energy or materials use, increasing recycling levels or exploring other issues of sustainability and environmental education. Extra marks will go to projects concerning the reuse, recycling or reduction of waste/pollution right here on campus.

There are several general areas of BCIT's operations that could really use some attention, like reducing the use of paper, the amount of disposables in the cafeteria or the number of cars coming onto campus.

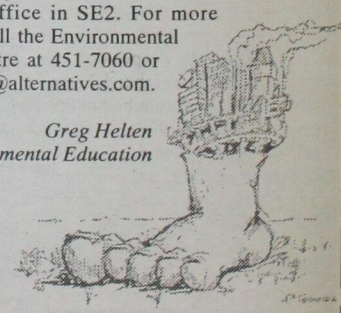
The best displays and projects will be shared with the public during Open House 2000, April 7 and 8 when 15,000 people visit our school. You can register as an individual, a team or an entire department. If your project is on a departmental or programme level, it could also be nominated for BCIT's Earth Apple Award (a staff/faculty award) that will be presented on Earth Day. So, faculty and staff participation is permitted and encouraged.

Check out the following web sites for background information on sustainability that may spark some ideas:

<http://www.natcap.org/>  
<http://www.naturalstep.org/>  
<http://www.ecobooks.com/ecommerc.htm>  
[www.rprogress.org](http://www.rprogress.org)

Contest entry forms are available at the Student Association office in SE2. For more information, call the Environmental Education Centre at 451-7060 or email: [ghelten@alternatives.com](mailto:ghelten@alternatives.com).

Greg Helten  
SA Environmental Education



## BC CHIROPRACTIC ASSOCIATION Eighth Annual CAREER DAY

Saturday, February 26, 2000  
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Participants have an opportunity to meet educators from around North America, Chiropractic Doctors practicing in British Columbia, and others interested in a career in chiropractic.

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Dr. Reed Phillips, Los Angeles Chiropractic College

Topic:  
"The Future of Chiropractic"  
2:55 p.m. to 3:10 p.m.

For Information, telephone Dr. Brad Yee, Vancouver:  
604-876-4988 / Cell: 604-970-4878



# FSA's strike action planned for end of March

CARLOS ASSUNCAO  
Link News Editor

The labour dispute at BCIT appears ready to flare up again in early April. At a meeting held on February 9th the members of the Faculty and Staff Association voted 98 percent in favour of resuming the strike which was postponed through the Accord discussions held with the government.

The FSA has set a deadline of the end of March for settling the contract, or they will renew the strike from last term.

"A lot of the members wanted to shut down the Institute right away. Some members are asking 'Why aren't we on strike now?'" Stated Ron Kessler, FSA President. "As fast as we can organize, we'll picket other campuses. In order to achieve a faster resolution we need to apply more pressure on more campuses." added Kessler.

The FSA will wait for the results of a non-binding mediation process which has a deadline of March 15th for the completion of the process, with a possible extension to the 23rd. In this mediation process both parties agreed to make a joint submission to the Minister of Labour to appoint a special mediator. As well, both the FSA and BCIT agreed that there would be no lockout or strike during the mediation process.

The perception among students has been that the labour dispute was settled after the picket lines went down in November 1999. The reality is that this dispute is far from being resolved and the threat of an interruption in their education is still looming. The picket lines came down after an agreement was reached to enter into an Accord between the FSA and the BCIT administration.

Following the suspension of picketing on November 12, the FSA and the Institute began the process of attempting to reach an accord on three major issues: workload, professional development, and PTS Instructor status.

The Accord Process was implemented at the beginning of the second round of three year wage guidelines in 1998.



Strikers on the picket line last November. This could again be a familiar scene at BCIT as negotiations between the FSA and the institute grind to a halt. LINK FILE PHOTO

The process was created to provide a mechanism for addressing the unique circumstances which existed in each of the provincial employment sectors and which would have been unresolved in bargaining under the guidelines.

A number of issues have been resolved since the strike action in November 1999. The wage offer of 0 - 0 - 2% over the next three years was agreed to by the FSA, the main issues that are stalling the negotiations are educational issues, specifically professional development time for instructors and fewer students per instructor.

"BCIT is applied education not academic education, we must be able to see what the students are doing. With the number of students I have, there's no time to read essays, the result is all marking becomes subjective." said Kessler, an economics instructor.

The Institute has made proposals for collective agreement provisions of a total of \$1.06 million and an additional \$1.16 million in operational measures. This includes the wage

agreement in-keeping with government guidelines, increased benefits, five additional instructors and increases in professional development funding and other FSA funds.

According to Ron Kessler, these concessions are simply "funding by cutting in other areas, the net benefit is zero". Kessler claims the Institute has been provocative at the bargaining table. At the same time that they made these proposals the Institute also proposed increasing the work week to include Saturdays and to increase the work day hours of 8:30 am to 5:30 PM to be extended to 7:30 am to 6:30 PM. These types of proposals have gone a long way to enflame the members of the FSA according to Kessler.

The FSA believes there is a substantial surplus in the BCIT coffers, somewhere in the neighborhood of \$8 million. The members of the FSA haven't had an increase in wages in six and a half years (since the 1.1 per cent increase in 1994) and at the same time the working conditions have dete-

riorated in their view. The FSA wants the excess funding to be used to improve the quality of education at BCIT instead of being used to fund capital projects.

The Institute has been secretive regarding their expenditures, to the point where they have been cited by the Privacy Commissioner under the Freedom of Information Act over the FSA's request to view certain documents. "It's taxpayer's money, taxpayers have a right to know where it's going" said Kessler.

When asked what message the FSA wanted to get to the students of BCIT, Kessler said "Students need to be aware that decision-making lies in the hands of the Board of Governors and the senior management at BCIT. We (the FSA) are in the terrible position of having to decide whether to risk the students of today to help the students of tomorrow or to sacrifice the future students by our inaction now."

## SA Notes

Kathy Boyce

### Council plans to revitalize its Strike Taskforce

Emotions were running high during Monday, February 21st's Student Association Council Meeting when the topic of a possible strike was addressed.

The tone of the meeting was one of both frustration and uncertainty as many questions regarding where will students stand in the event of further labour disruptions at BCIT this term were left unanswered.

The complexity of the issue made it difficult for council to make any concrete decisions.

Council is, however, preparing to gear up the Strike Taskforce it created during the previous strike action in November. Students will also be able to access information at the SA's strike information website at [www.axion.net/bcitstrike/](http://www.axion.net/bcitstrike/).

Ideas, letters, questions and concerns are all welcome, according to SA president Styles, who said students will also be able to participate in an online survey that he will be conducting at the site.

Students are encouraged to visit the site and support the task force committee.

The SA will also be seeking legal advice regarding the strike.

For more information see your set rep or contact the SA Office.

- Three major banks are being considered for an on campus banking service. Presentations by the banks to the institute and the SA will be made in the next few weeks.

- No further details are available on the garbage plan but students are requested to report graffiti on campus to Physical Plant.

- Two student seats are available on the BCIT Board of Governors. The term is for one year and includes monthly meetings. Nomination forms are available at the Registrar's and SA Office. Among other duties the 2000 Board of Governors will be responsible for the hiring of a new BCIT president to replace Brian Gillespie the outgoing president who is retiring this summer. Part time students are eligible to apply and an honorarium is included for the successful candidates.

The next SA Council meeting is scheduled for March 6, 2000 at 5:30pm in the SA Council Chambers on the second floor of the SA Campus Centre.



**Summer Camp Jobs in the U.S.A.**  
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 e-mail: kippewa@tiac.net | tel: 781-762-8291 | fax: 781-255-7167

**Critics call federal student job program  
 "corporate welfare"**

CHRIS BODNAR  
 Canadian University Press

OTTAWA  
**T**axpayer and student groups are criticizing the federal government for mishandling Canada's student job program. The controversy comes in the midst of allegations that Ottawa mismanaged \$1-billion in federal job grants.

Documents obtained from Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) under the Access to Information Act show that numerous corporations are being subsidized to hire students over the summer.

The documents reveal that such businesses as Shoppers Drug Mart, Toronto Dominion Evergreen Investment Services and Wal-Mart received federal HRDC grants under the Summer Career Placements program to hire students over the summer months in 1999.

The job grants are allocated to private sector, public sector and not-for-profit groups. Private sector recipients can receive up to 50 per cent of the cost of minimum wage for the program. Not-for-profit groups can have their entire cost covered.

Corporate job subsidies don't sit well with Walter Robinson,

the federal director of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation.

"In terms of all of these HRDC programs, we believe it's corporate welfare," said Robinson. "It's the misallocation of tax dollars."

Robinson says corporations already receive employment insurance premium relief for hiring students and that any further incentives to employ students should happen through tax cuts rather than program subsidies.

But while the Taxpayers Federation advocates the elimination of job subsidy programs, the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) says the student job program - though needed - must be monitored more closely.

"We certainly do need a summer employment program, but it needs to be monitored closely," said Denise Doherty-Delorme, a CFS researcher. "[The program has] its snags and we would like it tidied up."

Doherty-Delorme says a problem with the current program is that it has significantly less funding than in previous years.

Since 1996, the summer employment program received \$90-million a year. In contrast, the federal government gave out \$180-million in 1987 and 1988. The program received its first cuts in 1990, and got a slight one-year boost in 1994 when \$108-million was given to summer job grants.

And while hourly rates and average summer wage figures were available prior to 1992, figures are no longer kept monitoring pay rates. As well, while the CFS was previously able to monitor whether male and female students were being paid equally, these figures are no longer available.

"The biggest crux is that they cut and then they don't have the people to follow up on these programs," said Doherty-Delorme.

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# Doing the math and pointing out the ECONOMIC ALTERNATIVES

FLOYD HOWLETT &  
ALEJANDRO BUSTOS  
Canadian University Press

OTTAWA

Paul Martin, the federal Finance minister, is not the only one drafting a budget for Canadians.

Since 1995, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA), a national left-wing think tank, has been working on an alternative federal budget.

The annual report, co-authored with CHOICES, a Winnipeg-based social justice coalition, provides an economic blueprint that regularly differs from the economic path taken by Ottawa.

"We are in a post-deficit surplus era where there are three choices: pay down the debt, cut taxes or invest in social programs," said Bruce Campbell, executive-director of the CCPA.

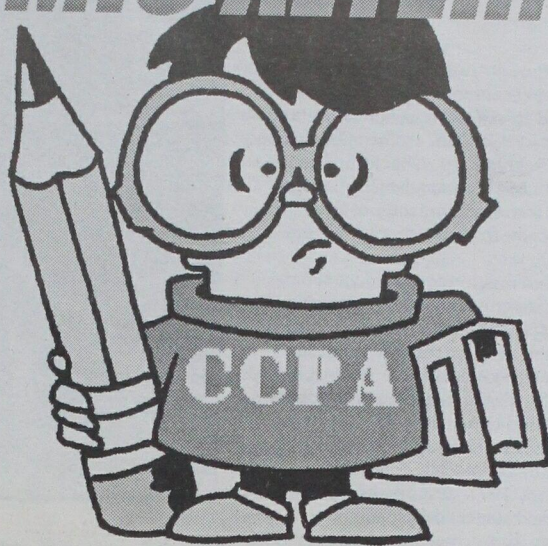
According to federal government estimates, Ottawa will see a budget surplus of more than \$60-billion over the next five years. The governing Liberals have promised to spend half of this surplus on tax cuts and paying down the debt, and half on social spending.

The alternative budget, in contrast, advocates that 100 per cent of the surplus be reinvested in social programs.

In the upcoming federal budget, which Martin will deliver on Feb. 28, the government is expected to announce a surplus of \$10-billion for the upcoming fiscal year.

Analysts predict the surplus will be divided into three areas: \$5-billion in tax cuts, \$4-billion in increased social spending and \$1-billion in debt reduction.

Some economists, meanwhile, have pegged the true surplus number at more than \$95-billion over five years. And if a Maclean's magazine poll published this past December is any indication, Canadians want to see this massive surplus diverted into health care, education and other social programs.



50 per cent of Canadians want Ottawa to reinvest in social spending, while only 12 per cent want a tax cut.

According to the poll, 50 per cent of Canadians want Ottawa to reinvest in social spending, while only 12 per cent want a tax cut.

### Alternative Federal Budget Suggestions

#### TAXATION:

Without increasing the overall rate of taxation, put in a fairness package reducing taxes on low incomes, compensating with increased taxes on unearned income and higher tax rates on individuals who earn in excess of \$100,000. Eliminate GST on magazines and books to support the cultural sector.

#### FAMILY POVERTY:

Investment in a national agenda for children and families by means of an enhanced Child Benefits with a maximum benefit of \$4,200 per child, decreasing according to

income level, but prohibiting any clawback by provincial governments for those on social assistance. Set up a Child Care and Early Childhood Education Fund providing quality child care working towards a universal national system.

#### HOUSING:

A re commitment by the Federal Government to social housing programs with the aim of constructing 20,000 new units per year in partnership with non-profit, co-op, provincial and municipal housing organizations, plus assistance for repairs of existing stock of up to 10,000 units per year. The commitment of \$100-million for the immediate alleviation of emergency shelter needs.

#### HEALTH CARE:

Restore a universal, accessible comprehensive public health care system with an additional \$400-million this year and \$2-

billion each year for the next five years to expand both hospital and community based health care. Require provinces to provide quality home care as a public service within their health care plans. Develop a National Drug Plan and increase financial aid for both AIDS and Aboriginal Peoples' health support.

#### DISABILITIES:

Provide more public funding for social advocacy and public education on equity issues. Increase the Opportunity Fund for innovative employment projects for Canadians with disabilities from \$30-million to \$45-million. Set minimum national standards for access for people with disabilities. Provide a Tax Benefit rather than Tax Credit which would benefit all Canadians with disabilities regardless of whether they had a taxable income or not.

#### POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION:

Canada is one of only three industrialized countries without a national system of grants for post-secondary education. Move from an over dependence on student loans to a grant system based on need. Establish a Post-Secondary Education Fund of \$3.1-billion to reduce tuition levels and improve quality.

#### JOB CREATION:

Unemployment is still unacceptably high. Significant new jobs can be created, while at the same time improving the social health and the environment through public infrastructure projects such as upgrading of water and waste water systems, waste management, development of public transit, commuter rail and public building retrofit.

You can view the alternative budget at: [www.policyalternatives.ca](http://www.policyalternatives.ca)

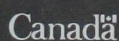
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# Does MILLENNIUM MONEY HURT more than it helps?

JAIME KIRZNER-ROBERTS  
Canadian University Press

MONTREAL

When most students receive a \$3,000 cheque from the government they are ecstatic. But not law student Colleen Handy.

Last week, the Carleton University student announced she is rejecting her \$3,000 Millennium Scholarship. "I am turning down the Millennium Scholarship because, at best, it leaves me no better off," she said.

Handy says the scholarship brings her no further ahead, since the money would only replace provincial loan forgiveness bursaries to which she was entitled before being offered a Millennium Scholarship. Because all but \$500 of her scholarship is taxable, unlike the bursary, accepting the scholarship would actually end up costing her money.

"At first I was excited to have received \$3,000. But as I read the fine print, it became clear that I would never even see the money, as it is supposed to be paid directly to my bank," Handy said. "Then I found out that most of the scholarship is taxable, and now I am worrying about whether or not I will have to pay more tax next year."

The Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), which is supporting Handy in her rejection of her scholarship, has charged that the Millennium Foundation is part of a political move by Ottawa to appear serious about addressing student debt issues.

"The federal government has spent a lot of money promoting a boutique program that offers very limited assistance to students," said Michael Conlon, National Chairperson of the CFS. "It is outrageous that federal funds have been devoted to Millennium Scholarships in Ontario that will leave some students with a liability instead of a benefit."

According to the CFS, eight per cent of Canadian students will receive money from the Millennium Foundation, even though more than half-of-students have student loans. The fact that students lucky enough to receive a scholarship have to pay tax on it only adds insult to injury, says the Federation.

"The Canadian Federation of Students calls upon the federal government to, at the

very least, renegotiate the Millennium Scholarship agreements signed with the provinces and to make the scholarship tax exempt," said Conlon. "The Ontario Millennium Scholarship debacle makes it clear that we need a comprehensive system of grants and lower tuition fees, not a public relations charade from the federal government."

Wojtek Baraniak, vice-president (community and government) for the Students' Society at McGill University, is similarly angered by the way the current tax system penalizes needy students. He is working hand in hand with the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations in their lobby to amend the Income Tax Act as it pertains to student scholarships, which hasn't been amended since 1971 despite skyrocketing tuition rates and student debt loads.

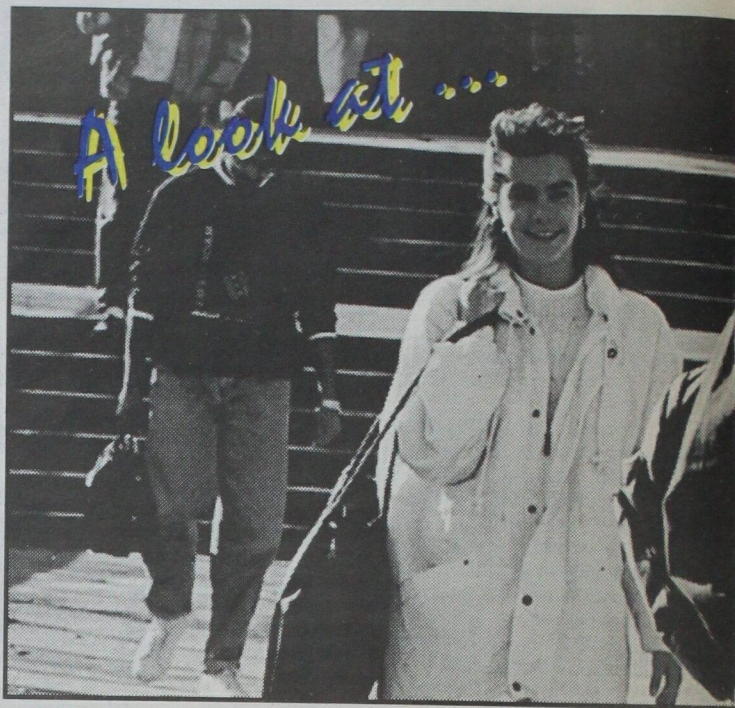
"How can the government give you money with one hand and then take it away with the other, all while claiming to help students?" asked Baraniak. "Young Canadians realize this ironic situation, but does [Federal Finance Minister] Paul Martin?"

Baraniak has collected more than 1,000 signatures from students demanding that the Income Tax Act be amended, and will be writing a letter to Martin this week.

For their part, the leadership at the Millennium Foundation have also been lobbying the federal government to make the scholarships tax deductible. They argue, however, that any savings that provincial loan programs gain as a result of Millennium Scholarship infusions will be directly reinvested into student aid programs.

The Millennium Scholarship Foundation was created in 1997 by Ottawa, with a \$2.5-billion grant. The money will be distributed to 100,000 students a year for the next 10 years.

The Foundation has signed agreements with all Canadian provinces to use existing needs assessment programs, in order to eliminate administrative overlap. Scholarships, which typically amount to \$3,000 each, either go straight into the pockets of students, or towards their existing debt, depending on the province.



## National student group slams na

GORDON LOANE  
Canadian University Press

FREDERICTON

The federal government is being taken to the cleaners by Canada's big banks, says Jason Aebig, national director of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA).

The CASA leader, whose organization represents 275,000 students at 17 universities nationwide, is critical of how the banks interpret the default rate on student loans.

Recently, Ottawa offered to give the banks that lend money to post-secondary students \$100-million in risk premiums - money given by the government to offset the money the banks lose when students default on their loan payments.

Since the Canada Student Loan program was handed over to the banks five years ago, the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Bank of Nova Scotia and the Royal Bank have collected approximately \$75-million per year in risk payments from the government.

But the banks insist \$75-million, based on a five per cent risk premium, is not enough.

"The banks couldn't continue to provide on that basis because the losses for the government and for the banks are horrendous," Royal Bank chairman John Cleghorn told the Globe and Mail. The banks are now demanding that risk premiums be boosted another four-and-a-half per cent.

According to Ottawa's proposed deal, the federal government would be required to set aside \$100-million over the next five years to cover the increased risk premium.

The government offer was made after the banks claimed their default rate on student loans had climbed from an expected 18 per cent to 26 per cent in recent years.

But Aebig says the problem lies in the bank's definition of what constitutes a default rate.

"The banks lump late payments in with unrecovered loans to calculate their default rate," he said. "If a student doesn't repay their monthly student loan after three months whether consecutive

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www.extinctionsucks.org  
BC Endangered Species Coalition



# Federal post-secondary education spending a budget is a possibility

CHRIS BODNAR  
Ottawa Bureau  
Canadian University Press

points to a study by the Ottawa-based research group Informetrica Inc. indicating better economic growth through increased spending rather than through tax cuts.

The Informetrica report indicates an increase in 24,000 jobs and a 0.14 per cent increase in gross domestic product (GDP) for every \$1 billion invested in education, versus only 12,000 new jobs and a lower 0.04 per cent growth in GDP for \$1 billion in tax cuts.

"All of the spending has a bigger impact because when you have a tax cut, some of the money goes directly into savings and profit," said Mike McCracken, Informetrica's chief executive officer. "It dampens the effect of the money."

McCracken believes up to 30 per cent of money saved by corporations and individuals will go directly into savings, rather than into spending in the economy. As well, he says the people most in need of relief — those making less than \$15,000 a year — don't pay taxes anyway.

The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), along with other education groups, are asking for increases of \$2 billion a year over two years directed toward education through the transfer payments.

"I think it's safe to say that education won't be the focus of the budget," said Ryan Dunford, the government relations co-ordinator of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations.

"We feel the transfers are going to be addressed in the budget, but we don't know by how much," he said.

And while their calls for large transfer payment increases may not be answered, there are indicators that they may find some smaller successes.

An annual CBC and Maclean's poll conducted in December, shows lack of support for education and social spending as the most important problem facing Canada, with 31 per cent support. Unemployment came second with 19 per cent support,

followed by taxes with only 12 per cent support.

In an open letter to the provincial premiers following their first ministers conference on Feb. 3, Prime Minister Jean Chretien responded to written concerns addressed to him, making specific reference to education spending.

"I am pleased that your letter referred to other social programs as well as health," he wrote. "It is extremely important in the current context to remind ourselves that no matter how important health care needs are, the CHST is not simply a health transfer. It is also designed to address other important priorities for Canadians. I refer particularly to the needs of post-secondary education in a globally competitive knowledge-based economy."

While this has given reason for optimism to education groups, both CASA and the AUCC have identified other areas in need of funding as well.

"We're hopeful that we'll also see increased research funding," said Best.

While the budget will likely hold funding details regarding new research chairs announced in the Speech from the Throne in October, Best hopes there will be more money for the traditional research granting bodies. These include the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council and the newer Liberal-created Canadian Foundation for Innovation.

Dunford also indicates the possibility of an increase in the amount of scholarships and bursaries that are tax deductible. Education groups have been asking for an increase in the amount, set at \$500 since 1971, up to \$5,000.

Other areas expecting to see significant spending are homelessness, to which the government has already targeted with over \$700 million in new funding and health care, which will likely share any increase in transfers to the provinces along with education.

OTTAWA  
Lobby groups believe more money for post-secondary education may be coming in the federal budget, only one week away.

"I'm cautiously optimistic about post secondary education and the budget," said Robert Best, director of government relations for the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. "For us, what's really important is that money goes into the transfer payments."

For most education groups, the major concern for this year's budget is an increase in transfer payments to the provinces. The Liberal government has cut transfer payments to health and education by \$7 billion since taking office in 1993.

In December, Finance Minister Paul Martin announced that the federal surplus may be up to \$60 billion over the next five years. Opposition and lobby groups estimate the number to be anywhere up to \$95 billion. The past two months have seen extensive debate regarding how the surplus should be used.

Numerous media outlets have reported leaks indicating the possibility of up to \$5 billion in tax cuts in the upcoming budget and \$4 billion in new social spending. Anywhere between \$1 to \$2 billion has been estimated for transfer payment.

Now, many groups are hoping the government will recognize the value of reinvesting in social spending as opposed to tax cuts.

"Anyone who has visited a school, a hospital or lost their job lately knows the country's social institutions are in desperate shape," said David Robinson, the communication director for the Canadian Alliance of University Teachers. "Now if we give tax cuts to corporations, it's the idea that if we give more money to the rich, they'll do more with it — the trickle down effect."

Robinson hopes the government has heard this message, and

the program," Aebig said.

The CASA national director also can't believe the banks are trying to get Ottawa to set aside more money to cover a higher default rate, given their overall billion dollar profits in recent years.

"The banks may be losing money on the student loan program, but they must be making up for the loss somewhere else," he said.

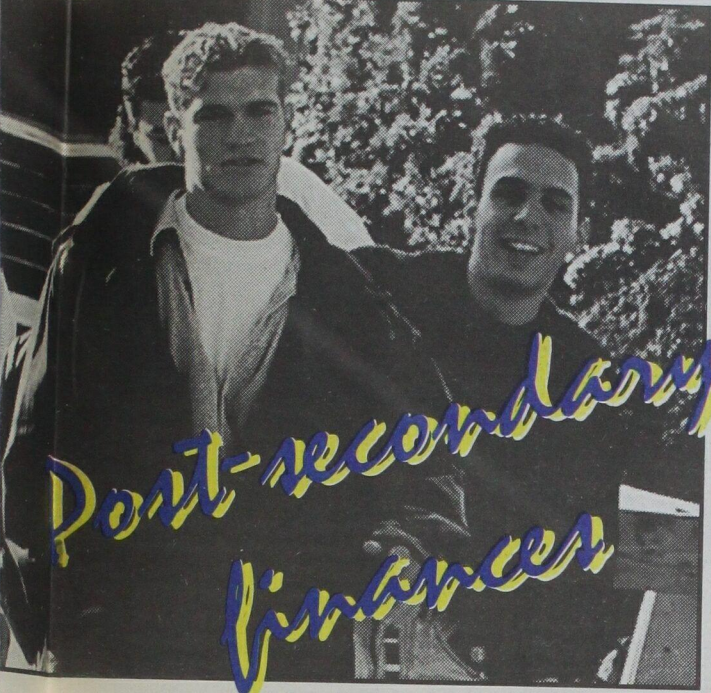
Aebig adds that losses on student loans should be balanced with the fees students pay to use bank accounts, ATM machines, Visa and Mastercard.

"I think that the banks have to be good corporate citizens as well and learn to balance the positives and negatives," he said.

Aebig also wonders if students might not be better off if the federal government re-assumed arrangement of the Canada Student Loans Program instead of hiving it off to the banks.

But he doesn't see that happening any time soon.

"Human Resources Development Canada officials in Ottawa have told me it is less expensive for the banks to handle student loans than it is for the federal government to administrate it. The current method is too cost efficient for government to ignore," Aebig said.



Post-secondary finances

## International banks over student loans

individual, then on the 91st day that student is in default of their loan. It doesn't mean the money will not be recovered, it just means it is late on that 91st day."

"By lumping both together you arrive at a default rate that is considerably inflated," he added.

Aebig says university students are also being penalized by the banks in their default rate calculations.

While the student loan default rate for university students averages seven percent across Canada, Aebig noted the default rate for students who attended vocational colleges and technical institutions is about 13 per cent on average, and the default rate for private vocational schools is at least 18-20 per cent on average.

Aebig said the big banks lump all the post-secondary institutions together to calculate a default rate, which penalizes university students and makes everyone pay for the sins of a few.

"Target those who are not paying their loans, put whatever measures in place to make sure they pay back their loans. Don't give everyone a high interest rate, don't give everyone a difficult repayment schedule and don't restrict the availability of student loans just because some people are abusing

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# ESCAPE BCIT

**Gomez**  
February 23  
Richard's on Richards

**Sloan**  
February 29  
Vogue

**Modest Mouse**  
February 24,25  
Richard's on Richards

**Frank Black and the Catholics**  
March 1,2  
Richard's on Richards

**Amazing Indy Power Hour  
w/ Kym Brown**  
February 24  
The Anza Club

**Tara MacLean**  
March 3  
Sonar

**Black Halos**  
February 25  
Commodore

**Nickleback**  
March 4  
Commodore

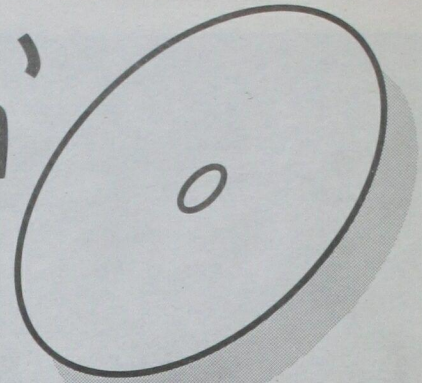
**Fiesta De Cuba  
Featuring Marlin Ramazzini**  
February 26  
Hot Jazz Club  
\*Free Swing Dance lesson with  
Kirkconnel at 8:30pm

**Stewart Goodyear in Concert**  
March 11  
Vancouver Academy of Music

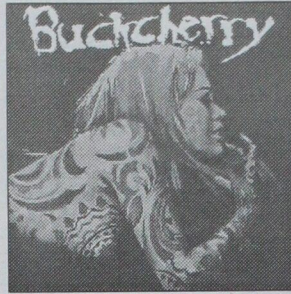
**Buena Vista Social Club**  
February 27  
Orpheum Theater

**Ricky Martin**  
March 11  
GM Place

# Spinnin'



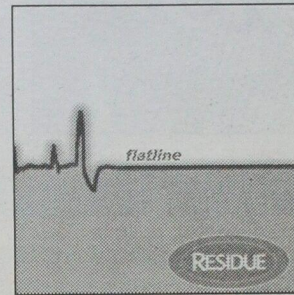
# the disks



**Buckcherry**  
*Buckcherry*  
(Universal / Dreamworks)

You've probably been hearing Buckcherry's single, "Lit Up" on CFOX or XFM. It's a lovely tune about getting wasted on cocaine, brought to you by 5 "experienced" guys in L.A. Buckcherry lists their inspirations as being folks like Iggy Pop, Prince, KISS, and ACDC. I'm thinkin' that they may listen to these bands, but I doubt any inspiration was very forthcoming in the process. How do you say...one hit wonder? Maybe not even "wonder", maybe "curiosity" would be the better term. These guys write a song about the glories of cocaine use, and it makes them a few bucks, but there really is no brain behind their bang here. Too many tattoos, yes, brain power, no. I doubt that you will hear much more from Buckcherry after "Lit Up" leaves the air waves.

*Erin Garlick*



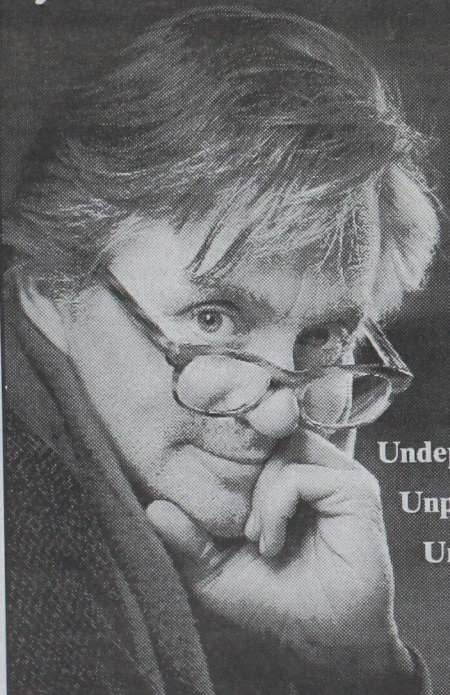
**Flatline**  
*Residue*  
(Independent)

The four local guys that call themselves Flatline pretty much made me lose myself to coma status when I fell asleep to their album, "Residue". Not that they don't have potential, they're just at the point in their careers where every song sounds like the one before it, and they don't quite know where to take a stand when

it comes to a definite musical dynamic. It's the kind of album that sounds like they came up with a couple of good tunes, probably track 8 "Wendy" and track 9 "All Around Me", and then proceeded to write a bunch of filler songs so they could produce a full length CD. But it's too early in the growth process for these boys. The vocals are weak and badly mixed, so that everything seems to fade together in a generic blur. When Flatline does make an effort to harmonize and some interesting vocals surface, they are quickly dropped, I am assuming due to difficulty level. But their mixed vocals need to be pursued, and when combined with the simple but clear guitar, could produce some more interesting sounds. With a little more work, Flatline could emerge as an interesting contributor to the Vancouver music scene.

*Erin Garlick*

# Michael Douglas

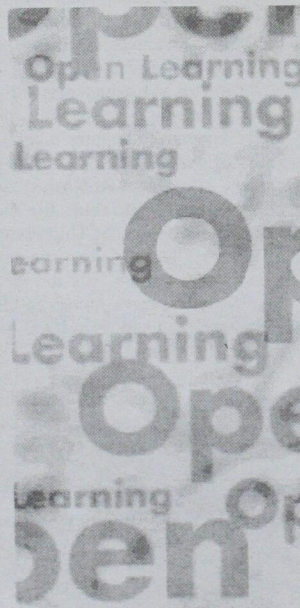


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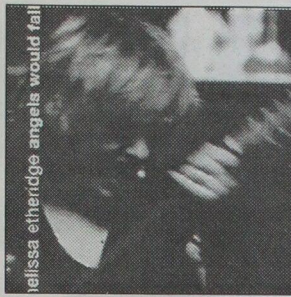
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**Melissa Etheridge**  
*Angels Would Fall*  
 (Single Release)  
 (Universal Music Company - Island / Def Jam Music)



melissa etheridge angels would fall

This lady has had her fair share of press lately, announcing that the father of her children is none other than the legendary David Crosby, of Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young. Was this surprise announcement planned to boost sales of her newest release "Breakdown"? Perhaps, but if so, it was a wise marketing move. The first single from the album is "Angels Would Fall" and this was the release I had before me to review. A friend of mine pointed out that the beginning of this tune is strikingly similar to Joan Osborne's "What if God was One of Us", and I had to agree. You can almost sing Joan's entire chorus directly over Melissa's, but then the chord progression changes. It's a catchy song, and Melissa tells a story in this beautiful effort. The other cut on the single release was "Into the Dark", a sincere ballad with an honest sound and very clean production. Melissa is clearly not losing her touch, as she writes, sings, and produces her own music. This CD will stay in my CD rotation at home for the next few weeks.

Erin Garlick

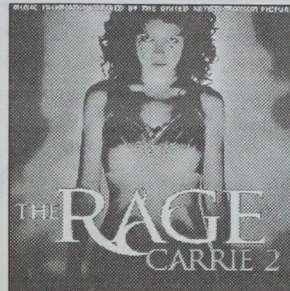
voice communicates the seasonal message of "good will" convincingly. The live band is very tight which compliments the commendable efforts of the headlining artists. It's a great seasonal album for a great cause, and you'll probably be able to pick it up on sale now, so your next Christmas will be a bit more musically festive. Erin Garlick

reminding me of Skunk Ananse. She expresses a woman's life, it's good and bad times, learning and teaching in an social urban environment in the America. This black woman has so much soul and her faith in god sometimes sounds a little like gospel, but that ain't a bad thing ain't it. She sings of love and respect stirring memories of Lauryn Hill and Erika Babu. The R&B music weaves in and out of her voice, dressing the album with class and style. I really enjoyed the melody of "Life Story", where she gives it up to her listeners. The bonus track is also a refreshing wash to the ears, "Heaven Help". All in all, Black Diamond is truly a shining diamond among so many stones. David Lai



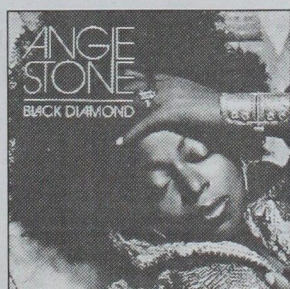
**Bizzy Bone**  
*Bizzy Bone Presents Heaven'z Movie*  
 (Ruthless Records / Sony Music)

There is only one word I can use to adequately describe this contribution to the music world....painful. Bizzy Bone is rap crap, and "Heaven'z Movie" is an album best left on the store shelf. I've said it before, and I'll say it again, I admit I am not a big rap fan, but I can appreciate any reasonable musical effort, and this CD just doesn't make the grade on any level. The songs (if you can be so kind as to call them songs), are over-produced jumbled servings of expletives and meaningless lyrics. And I can say the lyrics are pathetic in a semi sure fashion, as most of the album is undecipherable. Cuts like "Brain on Drugs", "Demons Surround Me", and the classic "Yes Y'All" really take Bizzy's message home. The message of his non-existent talent. And who is the first credit on his list of thank-yous? None other than God, who Bizzy thanks for Jesus. Could I be more frightened? The only song I marginally understood was #2, "Thugz Cry", until it occurred to me that it was an unadulterated rip off of Prince's hit, "When Dove's Cry". If there is anything good and pure left in the record industry, Bizzy Bone will never "present" another album again. Erin Garlick



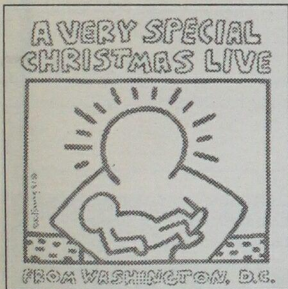
**The Rage**  
*Carrie II*  
 (Attic Records)

I am not a big horror flick nut, so I haven't seen Carrie II, or Carrie I for that matter, but I think I got a real feel for this movie thanks to the angry sounding music that stood out on the soundtrack. Most of the songs are aggressive and intimidating, like Fear Factory's "Resurrection". The driving edge to this tune compels you to keep listening, and the interesting dynamic variations are reflected with excellent production work. Kate Shrock is the surprise talent on this mix CD, displaying her vocal skills on "Dark Love". The soothing contrast on this cut helped me to relax a bit before diving back into the intense music on the rest of the album. Kate sounds to me a bit like Tori Amos, or perhaps exhibits some of the early sounds of a Sarah McLaughlin. The movie Carrie II was based on the book by Stephen King, so the majority of the harsh sound on the album was supportive of his fright filled writing style. Buddha Monk finished up the record with "Spark Somebody Up", an antagonizing piece of street rap with a sincere message



**Angie Stone**  
*Black Diamond*  
 (Arista)

This woman has soul rhythm and most definitely the blues. Singing from heart, soul and experience, Angie is all passion and truth. The first track, "Freedom" is a gentle and soft favorite and so is "Life Story" with its catchy melody



**Various Artists**  
*A Very Special Christmas Live - From Washington D.C.*  
 (Universal Canada Music)

There's nothing very surprising about this compilation CD. Lots of famous people singing lots of famous Christmas songs raising lots of money for the Special Olympics. And it's a pretty excellent live recording to boot. Mary J. Blige and Sheryl Crow team up to belt out "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree", and Vanessa Williams sings "What child is this?". You know Eric Clapton will be singing as soon as you hear his distinctive guitar stylings, and although Jon Bon Jovi sounds a bit whiny, the sentiment in his

# Cornell rocking outside the 'garden

TAMARA ROUSSELLE  
 Link Arts & Culture Reporter

An evening with Chris Cornell. His Vancouver debut sans Soundgarden. If his previous solo efforts were any sign of what he was capable of on his own, this was going to be a treat indeed. No opening act, no drumroll, just the show, and a late one at that! It wasn't until 9:45 that he actually took to the stage.

**CONCERT REVIEW**  
**Chris Cornell**  
 February 8th  
 Queen Elizabeth Theater

Opening with "Sunshower" the mood was pretty much set for the show. Mellow, but powerful, Chris was able to belt out every note. Both "radio hits" were played back to back next. First, "Can't Change Me", then new single "Flutter Girl". However these songs were not the highlights of the show. The real treats were songs like "Seasons", a beautiful acoustic number from the "Singles" movie soundtrack. Or "Like Suicide" off of Soundgarden's "Superunknown" album. These are slow songs that really give Chris a chance to show off his vocal skills.

Chris spent his hour plus set pacing the stage. As he walked from end to end he'd shake hands, give a nod, or if it was in-between songs he might even have a conversation.

One thing I never really pegged Chris Cornell to be was a comedian. At one point in the night he walked the stage from end to end pointing out who was special, who had a nice mustache and who the crazy f\*\*kers were.

A humorous anecdote was when a drunken concert goer hopped on stage during the break before the encore to babble into Chris' mike, which was turned off. However, Chris could hear everything the guy said. So when he took the stage for his encore he called the man back up and asked him, "So you can sing? I heard every word you said and you said you could sing." He proceed to get a drunken middle aged man to sing the Canadian national anthem, which at first he did not know the words to but was finished off beautifully by the crowd. It was laughs all around.

The only other two Soundgarden songs to make an appearance were "Fell On Black Days" and "Bootcamp". A poorly heard version of Temple Of The Dogs' "All Night Thing" was also on the set list. Something that wasn't planned was a man up front grabbing Chris' crotch as he said his final goodnight. But like a true rock star, he didn't even flinch.

Chris Cornell has an amazing voice. Any Soundgarden fan who attended the show hoping to hear Soundgarden might have been disappointed. Except for the bad sound at times this show was one for the "best ofs" list.

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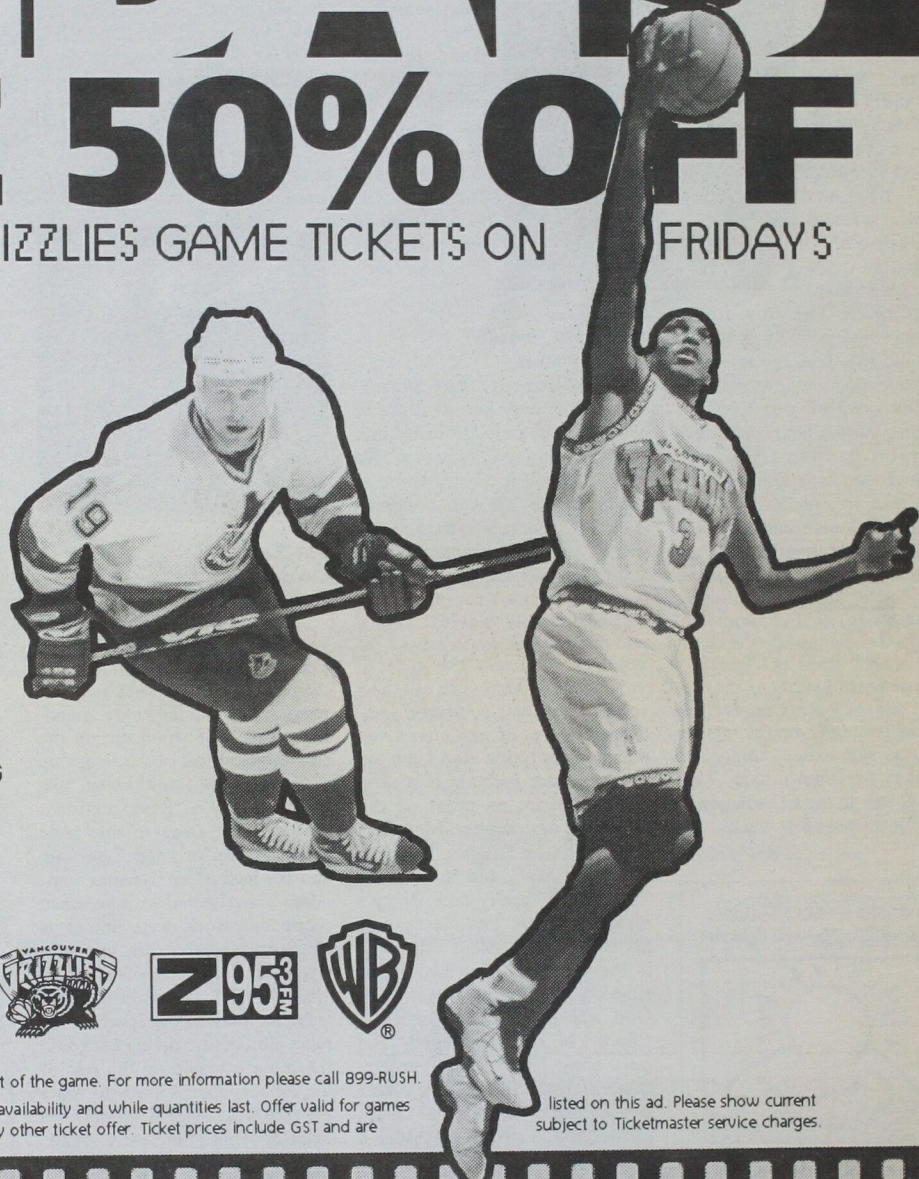
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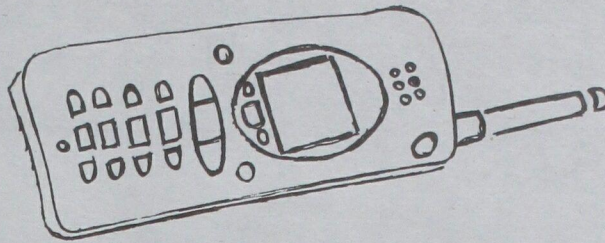


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# the cell phone MENACE



JOHN SAID  
Canadian University Press

LONDON, ON  
Of all the 20th century gadgets the most annoying has to be the cell phone.

While I understand that some people just want to be wired to the world at all times, the cell phone has become an intrusive force in today's society.

The cell phone is spawning a new generation of rudeness, in young and old alike.

Take for example the other day when my wife, youngster and I decided to treat ourselves to breakfast. We weren't seated 15 minutes when some guy decided to make a cell phone call. Now that isn't bad in itself, but for this person to leave his table to get up

and walk around in a restaurant talking on the phone is down right rude.

If a call was absolutely necessary, this person should have removed himself from his table - and from the presence of other patrons - and head to the lobby where he could conduct a phone conversation properly. But not in the middle of a restaurant.

This isn't a new phenomena either. It seems every time I go out for a coffee there is always some ass making or receiving a call. A call that 99.9 per cent of the time could have waited.

And if you haven't noticed, those on cell phones tend to talk louder so that everyone, including those outside the building, can hear them.

While many may think it looks

cool to talk on a cell, most times you look silly. I suppose it's all part of the 21st century. You can't go anywhere without being in contact with everyone imaginable.

I've seen various editorial comics sharing the view that cell phones should be banned from public places, namely theatres and restaurants. Frankly, I support that view. Cell phones have become a menace that needs to be curbed.

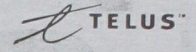
One of the most pathetic sites I have ever seen was the lonely girl at a restaurant, fork in hand chatting away on a cell phone. At the time I thought this person must be very lonely for a dinner companion if she'd actually make a phone call through dinner. Then it dawned on me that she's eating alone because no one wants to eat with someone so wrapped up in themselves and that cell phone.

Welcome to the "me" generation!

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## The end of an era

To read in *The Link* issue of January 12, 2000 that the intercollegiate programme BCIT has participated in for the last 18 years is terminating is a sad day for athletes who relish the challenge of juggling studies, part time jobs but to their credit still have the time to play the sport they live for.

I have coached men and women's soccer at BCIT for 10 years and never had a player quit due to workload whilst attending BCIT. The comment quoted, "We weren't competitive" is an insult to all the athletes that have tried their best and participated in the sport they excel at. The main problem these days is the word "sport" is taken to the level that winning is the only result.

To all the athletes that have played at this level for BCIT congratulations on a job well done and you can hold your head up high and tell others during your life "I was proud to have had the chance to get an education and played my sport for my school."

Alan Ross

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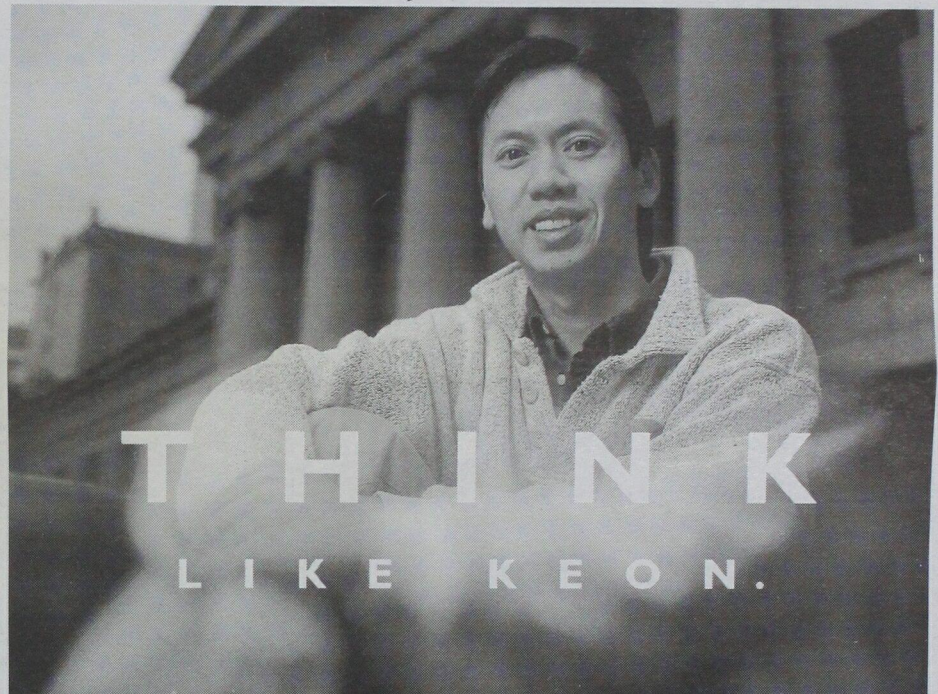
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