

# the *Link*

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PROHIBITION**  
in B.C.

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# The Link

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## ABOUT THE LINK

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## THE LINK

Room 281 - Building SE2  
3700 Willingdon Ave.  
Burnaby, B.C. V5G 3H2

## PHONE

604.456.1167

## FAX

604.431.7619

## PUBLICATIONS MANAGER

John Morrison III  
publications@bcitsa.ca  
604.456.1167

## ADVERTISING SALES

Andrea Lekei  
sales@bcitsa.ca  
604.453.4072

## EDITOR

Kevin Willemse  
linkeditor@bcitsa.ca

## ASSISTANT EDITOR

David Swanson  
linkeditor2@bcitsa.ca

## CULTURE EDITOR

Thorstan Gerlach  
linkeditor3@bcitsa.ca

## THIS WEEK'S CONTRIBUTORS

Richard Lawrence Cohen, Sarah De-shaies, Tylan Fraser, Matt Hirji, Kevin Hipoloto, Tanan Kesornbua, Lucas Meneses-Skoda, Navneet Pall, Nathan Tennant

Cover illustration: Ion Oprea

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# PHOTO of the WEEK



A couple cuddles up watching a movie during LoveFest in the Great Hall.

Tanan Kesornbua

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## CAMPUS QUERY

# How do you feel about the legalization of marijuana?



**IAN HARDACRE**  
Radio Broadcasting

"I'm in favour... I don't want to be giving money to criminals, I don't want to support organized crime, I just want to get high. I want to be able to walk down to my liquor store, show some ID, and buy a pack of joints."



**BRITTANY BEAUPRE**  
Marketing

"I think it should be legalized, but I think it should have the same kind of drinking and driving rules."



**MITCH LASEUR**  
Geomatics

"I don't think it should be legalized because of the side effects it causes on people. I think people under the intoxication of marijuana would be a detriment to society in general."



**KELLY CHRISTIE**  
Nursing

"I work in psychiatry and I'd say alcohol does way more damage than marijuana. Neither one of them are good for you, but I don't think it's the government's business what you want to do."





The BCIT Student Association is one of many B.C. student groups delivering cards filled out by students, complaining of insufficient postsecondary funding.

Lucas Meneses-Skoda

## BCIT students join WTF?! movement

Students make their way to the provincial legislature demanding more funding for postsecondary education

**LUCAS MENESES-SKODA**

Link contributor

This Valentine's Day, the provincial government may have received plenty of attention from BCIT students, but it is not all loving.

Representatives from eight postsecondary institutions, including BCIT, stomped the grounds of the Victoria legislature on Valentine's February 14, delivering them heartfelt Valentines cards asking one question: "WTF – Where's The Funding?!"

Where's The Funding?! is a campaign formed last year by student unions at UVic, SFU, UBC, and Capilano University. This year, student bodies from Langara, UFV, UNBC — and now BCIT — have joined the cause. The purpose of the campaign is to demand an increase in funding to

postsecondary education in B.C. More specifically, to eliminate interest rates on student loans, re-establish a non-needs based grants program, and increase overall core funding to all colleges and universities.

"It's basically a form of lobbying" said BCIT Student Association President Nicola Gardner in an interview with *The Link* before heading to Victoria to join the protest.

*They've got sixteen months until they hope to get re-elected. They're going to have to start making some decisions.*

— Nicola Gardner,  
BCITSA president

Gardner and Vice President of External Affairs Tara Johnson traveled to the island bearing hundreds of provocative Valentine's Day cards on behalf of BCIT students who proclaimed

their displeasure with their government's stance on education funding.

"I don't know if they'll read them. I hope they read them," says Gardner. "I think it's important, and we have put a lot of time into this. A lot of people forget that the B.C. government works for us. They're here because we put them there. They are paid with our money. It is their job to make this province a better place."

Just like many other students, Gardner is feeling the heat from rising student fees and hiked interest rates. In fact, B.C.'s interest rate on student loans is the highest in the country — 2.5 per cent above prime.

"It really hit home when I saw how much money I'm going to be paying in interest," said Gardner.

B.C. is also the only province without a student grants program in place. In 2004, the Liberal government completely eliminated the needs-based grant program, cutting \$100 million of student funding.

Gardner believes that in

the long run, these shortfalls are affecting the entire post-secondary education system, and hindering efforts to increase financial stability rather than just working to pay off their loans.

"Not providing enough loan money, coupled with ridiculous interest rates, forces people to work part-time as opposed to going to school," she says. "So, a degree that you're supposed to be able to finish in three or four years takes students five or six years to complete."

For now, however, Gardner is confident that by having participated in the Valentine's Day campaign and strengthening the WTF?! movement, B.C.'s outraged students have made their voices heard.

"I think it's like any other lobby or protest; you put pressure on people. You put the public eye on them... you put the spotlight on them... They've got sixteen months until they hope to get re-elected. They're going to have to start making some decisions."

### NEWS BRIEFS

#### BCIT lab technicians make efforts to go green

BCIT lab technicians are creating a more environmentally friendly atmosphere in their biotechnology classrooms.

Bryan Andrews and Myra Howell have recently implemented a new system to keep laboratory plastics from putting them in the garbage, and rather ending up where they belong — the recycling bank.

It started with simply rinsing off non-hazardous soft plastics after their point of use, and diverting them to the right stream of disposal, something that had not been done effectively in the past.

The next major step in the lab's commitment to eco-friendliness is the effort the two technicians have put in to order products that use less packaging.

"We're trying to do it as we go along, and the more things we find to reduce, reuse and recycle, the better it is," said Howell. "There's always room for improvement."

Andrews and Howell are reminding students of this simple yet extremely beneficial act of recycling, and have since seen over a third of their total plastic waste go to recycling.

Howell says she's excited about the potential there is to make an even bigger impact.

"We're not going to stop here," she says. "We are going to try go as green as possible."

— Lucas Meneses-Skoda

#### Not just for St. Patrick's Day any more

Those interested in the environment have an opportunity to socialize with like-minded students thanks to a new club at BCIT.

Green Drinks Burnaby, a meets the first Wednesday of every month at Professor Mugs from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. to discuss of all things sustainable.

The drinks might not actually be green in colour, but the conversation certainly is.

Anyone interested in contributing to the discussion on local and global ecological issues are encouraged to attend. The green drinkers can be found in the reserved area by the fireplace upon entering the bar.

— Lucas Meneses-Skoda





Matt Hirji / The Gateway

# World dodgeball record reclaimed by U of A

University of Alberta breaks dodgeball record with 4,979 players

**SIMON YACKULIC**  
University of Alberta

EDMONTON — Cheers of “U of A! U of A!” broke out in the Butterdome last Friday with news that the University of Alberta had once again captured the Guinness World Record for the largest dodgeball game ever.

With 4,979 players, the U of A’s record-breaking game smashed the previous dodgeball record held by the University of California, Irvine, who took the title in September after hosting a dodgeball game with 4,000 players.

For the U of A, it wasn’t only students who competed — many staff and alumni came out to play, including one alumna who received her first degree from the U of A in 1968 and was one of the final 20 players to be eliminated.

A Guinness judge was also flown out to adjudicate the game. Philip Robertson, who attends about two record-breaking attempts a week on behalf of Guinness, was an enthusiastic observer of the record attempt.

He told those around him that the volleys of balls raining back and forth over the court reminded him of “what medieval warfare must have looked like” in terms of raining arrows.

“This is actually a really competitive record — this is the 13th dodgeball attempt,” Robertson said, explaining that it was important for record-challengers to abide by strict rules for the game. For the U of A, that included having at least 100 referees on hand.

“For this event, there are over 4,900 participants, and they’re allowed one ball for every four participants, so at least 1,250 balls,” Robertson noted.

Both teams of nearly 2,500

participants were evenly matched, and the game came down to a nail-biting end as each team was worn down to just five players battling across the court. Ultimately, for the third year in a row, the gold team edged out a victory.

*“there are over 4,900 participants, and they’re allowed one ball for every four participants, so at least 1,250 balls,”*

— Philip Robertson  
Guinness World Records judge

“It’s the most fun event on campus that I’ve ever attended,” said gold team member Michael Ross. “I’ve never seen so many U of A students get together behind one thing and have such a wicked awesome time doing it.”

Chemistry professor Chuck Lucy was also wearing

a gold team shirt, and might have been responsible for a few hundred students attending the event.

“I’m out here for school spirit,” Lucy said. “I saw it on the web and asked my class of 400 to show up, but we start at one, and so I’m hoping we can actually make it for class today.”

While the game didn’t get underway until after 1 p.m., despite an advertised noon start, thousands of people eventually packed into the Butterdome and added another notch to dodgeball history.

Students’ Union Vice-President, Student Life Colten Yamagishi, who worked for weeks to ensure a large turnout, was blown away by the response from the university community.

“It was absolutely amazing. This whole week, I never truly believed that it was going to happen, but I had confidence that the U of A loves dodgeball and loves

this event, and I knew that we could come through,” Yamagishi said.

“It’s something that you can’t imagine in your wildest dreams until it comes true.”

Yamagishi said that he hoped either the University of California, Irvine, or another school would rise to the U of A’s challenge and continue the competition.

He also responded to speculation by Dean of Students Frank Robinson that, considering the growth in turnout for the dodgeball game over the past few years, the university could aim to get 10,000 participants out next year.

“I hope they come out and break it again,” Yamagishi said.

“We got to 5,000, and that said, we still had to turn people away, so we want UC Irvine to do it so that we can come back and do it again next year. Let them have a little taste, and then we can take back the record again.”



# 'I would like to see you guys angry,' Bob Rae tells students

Interim Liberal leader encourages young voters to step up

SARAH DESHAIES

CUP Quebec Bureau Chief

MONTREAL (CUP) — If you're a young person, Bob Rae wants to hear what you have to say — but you need to step up and say it. And no, he won't reveal whether he'll be running to be the next leader of the Liberal Party of Canada.

Rallying the youth vote was the goal of the interim leader of the Liberal Party of Canada as he capped off a five-day tour of Quebec on the cusp of the opening of Parliament with a stopover at Concordia University on January 27. More than 50 students and supporters packed the room to hear Rae, who had been invited by Concordia's Political Science Student Association and Liberal Concordia.

One student asked Rae how he planned to recruit students, despite the low youth voter turnout rate.

"How long is it going to take for you guys to tell us what your vision is?" responded Rae. "Why are you waiting for me to tell you why you should participate in politics?"

Rae went on to add: "I think a lot of it has to do with how the baby boom generation takes up a lot of space," he said. "This is not a generation that is uninvolved; this is a generation that says, 'I don't hear you talking about the things that matter to me.'"

One Concordia professor wanted to know how Rae felt about the differing quality and budget for education across the provinces.

While committing to giving students opportunities and focusing on research and development, Rae had critical words for the Canada student loans program — saying it's



Bob Rae is trying to encourage students to voice their opinion as Liberals retool their agenda.

Navneet Pall / The Concordian

"not a particularly good," at times inaccessible, and should not turn a profit — and apprenticeship programs. "Not enough support," he said.

*"How long is it going to take for you guys to tell us what your vision is?"*

— Bob Rae  
Liberal Party of Canada  
interim leader

And while he acknowledged that the federal government does not dictate tuition rates, Rae said he is open to advice: "I want us to be talking to university and college campuses and apprenticeship programs and everywhere that people are involved in learning experiences, and say, 'How can we

help?"

But if the turnout at the last Liberal convention is any indication, young Liberals are trying to make their presence felt in the former "natural governing party" that was decimated in the last federal election.

The biennial convention, which took place in Toronto Jan. 13–15, was attended by over 3,000 delegates, about a third of whom were under 25. Three of out of five candidates for the job of national policy chair fit into that age bracket: Braeden Caley, Ryerson student Daniel Lovell and the youngest of the bunch, Zach Paikin, 20, who was present at the Jan. 27 talk. But the winning candidate was Maryanne Kampouris, who was born in 1956.

At the convention, party delegates decided to legalize and regulate marijuana, as

well as instituting a preferential ballot system for elections.

But it's clear the party still has some soul-searching to do.

When one student asked if it was time for the party to adopt a new manifesto of ideals, Rae responded: "Probably, it is."

While admitting that the party needs to go back to the drawing board on its policies and ideas, Rae emphasized that they are not "really lost" but are instead refining their position to not be simply based on opposition to Stephen Harper or on legacies left by other politicians.

"We're saying, think for yourselves; and if you want somebody else to think for you, you have two other parties you can go to," he said. "Our party is different."

Rae left after an hour, leaving Montreal members of Par-

liament Justin Trudeau, Francis Scarpaleggia and Marc Garneau to take up the question period and answer the question of whether the "Bob Rae" bounce, or the Liberals' bump in support in recent polls, will last.

"I think a tremendous amount of credit needs to go to Bob," said Trudeau. "He's been a very strong leader."

But while there has been a small upturn in support, all three agreed more work needs to be done.

"I like to compare the Liberal Party to a body [that] was wheeled on a gurney into an ER, and they had to put the paddles to us," said Garneau. "I would say today that the Liberal party has a heartbeat. It's not ready to get up out of bed, we're still intravenous. We've got a heck of a long way to go, and we know it."

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# The first date fallacy

How did sitting in loud movie theatres and mechanical dinner conversation become the first date routine?

**DAVID SWANSON**  
Assistant Editor

Dinner and a movie: The clichéd first date ritual. It's been romanticized by your favorite after-school special and very well might be the go-to move in your courtship playbook.

I know *Saved by the Bell*'s clean cut California rebel Zack Morris always brought cheer squad captain Kelly Kapowski to local hangout The Max for a burger before they took in a flick at their local single-screen, 10-person cinema. But is the dinner-and-a movie combo actually a good first date activity?

The whole point of a first date is to get to know someone better; you want to find out if you're compatible.

Do you both like Mongolian BBQ and hiking in the B.C. backwoods? Do you find her awkward mannerisms endearing or does the way she plays with her hair remind you of your annoying little sister? Does he speak passionately about his convictions or does he dominate the conversation, preventing you from expressing your opinion?

How do you expect to discover any of these important details if your first date is spent sitting in a loud theatre, not talking to or even looking at each other? This hardly seems like a good strategy for uncovering the finer points of your potential mate's personality.

Hitting a restaurant for bite, either before or after the uninspiring climax of some formulaic romantic comedy, while a slight improvement, raises the level of interpersonal engagement to a marginally acceptable level.

You sit across from each other at a table that is inevitably either too long or too cramped to create a comfortable personal divide and regurgitate interview-like date questions that you use as a conversational crutch to stave off any awkward silences.

*The whole point of a first date is to get to know someone better; you want to find out if you're compatible.*

When dinner finally arrives, you find yourself constantly thinking 'I didn't know there was gonna be so much parsley in my rice' and spend the rest of meal wondering if you have a piece of herb in your teeth, covering your mouth as you talk, and planning your unsophisti-

cated escape to the bathroom to inspect your pearly whites.

**Solution:** Your first date activity should be something that builds a connection, or at the very least exposes any mutual chemistry that might warrant a second date. Hit the bar and play a game of foosball. Crack a bottle of red on the beach and have a conversation. Not a drinker? Toss the Frisbee around at Stanley Park or check out the new exhibit at the art gallery. If neither of you find common ground across these options, chances are slim you're each other's soul mate, so don't waste your time and money.

Save the cinema for a later date when you actually know your potential beau or belle a little better. Not to mention it's a lot easier to get away with the old fake-yawn-and-put-your-arm-around-her routine when she can actually hear you explain how your moves are usually better.

## First date alternatives

### Granville Island Improv

Take your would-be mate to improv for fun, laughs, and audience interaction. You'll be quoting and making references to the performance for many dates to come.

### Live music

Find out what they're into and check out some local shows. The Biltmore Cabaret and The Railway Club both have shows most nights. Alternatively, pick up a *Georgia Straight* or check out [livevan.com](http://livevan.com) for listings.

### Walk along the Seawall

Going for a walk is a great opportunity for you two to get to know each other. It offers a great atmosphere, fresh air, and plenty of opportunities for that first kiss.

### Shoot some pool

Engaging in a little competition is a fun way to get close. Show off your skill and maybe learn a few things.

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# BCIT works (but at what cost?)

Seeing how much work a students can cope with is no indication of their ability

KEVIN WILLEMSE

Editor

It's 2 a.m.. I should go to sleep, but am contemplating squeezing in an hour or so of studying before hitting the sack.

That's one option. I could work on the video project that's due next week, research potential companies for an upcoming case study, finalize the editing on a report due in three days, or read any one of the five chapters I need to notarize before exams next month. Of course, there's the homework from last week I need to catch up on as well and some online graded activities too...

I knew (to some extent) what I was getting into when I signed up for the school of business at BCIT. For a year less than the usual diploma time frame, combined with an excellent graduate placement record discussion groups, the blogs and forums all tell the sorry tale of their late nights, teamwork challenges and depleted social life. I don't have a problem with that; being somewhat of a perfectionist, I am used to overtime hours and meticulous editing of documents and presentations. At the risk of sounding like a Nike commercial, good enough is never good enough in my world.

It's part of what makes me and my team's work a true representation of our absolute best effort and skills. It's something I take pride in, something I've nurtured for years, and believe it to be instrumental in my past and future successes.

But now, I fear we may be forced to part ways.

Excellence takes time; the



Just another wild Saturday night for this BCIT student.

Richard Lawrence Cohen

Romans and beer ads will tell you this, and it's largely true. To demonstrate one's best ability requires many things: attention to detail, a drive to learn everything about the subject matter, knowing industries and applications, and, when working in a team, the management and collaboration of people, resources and outputs.

But at BCIT Business, the simple laws of physics do not allow me the luxury of time — and thus my best work — to be delivered, period. Every project could do with an extra few days of research and editorial polishing. Homework could be turned in a bit sooner. Lab notes and reading exercises fall a week or two behind, and an extra day to study for that cru-

cial test is impossible amongst the blur of deadlines. Something's got to give, and that something is usually my study hours or presentation quality.

*“Do we graduate, diploma in one hand and Red Bull in the other, having shown very little of what we can actually achieve?”*

It begs the question, is “stress testing” students any way to measure their academic capabilities? Are we merely being pushed to breaking point as

part of a ritualised, embedded BCIT culture which values coping rather than demonstrable excellence? Can we truly be considered “workplace capable” simply because we, upon landing that prized job, are able to suck up inordinate amounts of work while reminding ourselves that we are not expected (or able) to deliver to our maximum quality levels and potential? Do we graduate, diploma in one hand and Red Bull in the other, having shown our lecturers and peers very little of what we can actually achieve?

I recognize and know from years of applicable experience that the workplace can be tough. There will be times when you are asked to perform above and beyond the terms of your employment contract. I

have no problem with that and relish going above and beyond to impress my managers and myself.

However, the workplace is also a place of reasoning and balance. It supports mutual influence between colleagues to create an environment that understands, nurtures, and then demands your absolute best. If it is not, and you are simply bombarded with meaningless tasks to see how much you can handle, you need to make a change before you realize that you are just becoming a mediocre, uninspired intellectual garbage disposal.

But right now, I need to wrap up this case study. Maybe two more hours. Then I'll look at it and say it's not good enough but it's good enough.

# SEE YOUR NAME IN PRINT

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## The case for ending **MARIJUANA PROHIBITION** in B.C.

By **David Swanson**

**B**ritish Columbia's favourite colour is undoubtedly green. Its lush and beautiful public parks are home to some of the most amazing hiking, mountaineering, and camping in the country. B.C. is known for its environmentally conscious green initiatives.

The famous David Suzuki Foundation, located in Vancouver's hippie headquarters of Kitsilano, is a non-profit environmental policy and education group that raises funding, awareness and public engagement for issues like global warming and sustainable economic policy.

B.C.'s provincial government was also the first in North America to commission a carbon tax, a move many of those at the forefront of the green revolution be-

lieve is, as *The Tyee's* David Beers calls it, "a model of environmental and economic design."

That said, British Columbia might have to agree beloved Muppet Kermit the Frog when he laments, "It's not easy being green."

B.C. plays host to a more controversial form of greenery: our tenuous relationship with the well known black market mistress, Mary Jane.

The legality of marijuana is a hotly contested topic in Canada, but even more so here on the west coast, as the world famous "B.C. bud" is distributed to all corners of the globe. Vancouver also hosts an active pro-marijuana community that is desperately trying to rally support to end the prohibition of marijuana.

Organizations such as the B.C. Marijuana Party, Cannabis Culture, and The Green Cross Society of B.C. are among those that believe marijuana prohibition is not only detrimental to society, but that its legalization could result in significant medical and economic benefits. Their efforts during the last decade have helped sway the attitudes of both politicians and the public in favour of ending a losing fight against the controversial plant.



### **B.C. MARIJUANA FACTS**

The B.C. marijuana industry is worth an estimated five to eight billion dollars, a significant por-

tion of which comes from people living in within B.C.'s borders. In 2006, the University of Victoria-based Centre for Addictions Research of B.C. as well as the Centre for Applied Research on Mental Health and Addictions at Simon Fraser University released a study highlighting some facts about B.C. marijuana use compared to people living in other Canadian regions.

The study revealed that 53 per cent of British Columbians surveyed have used marijuana, compared to 44 per cent among those surveyed in other parts of the country. It also revealed that it's easier to purchase pot in British Columbia. 65 per cent of respondents on the west coast said it was "very easy" to obtain, in comparison to other provinces,



where 44 per cent of those surveyed felt it was easily accessible.

If one needed further evidence of B.C.'s significant relationship with pot, a 2010 Angus Reid opinion poll showed that 69 per cent of British Columbians surveyed supported the legalization of marijuana, in comparison to just over 50 per cent of other Canadians surveyed.



### PROHIBITION MYTHS

There are various arguments against legalizing marijuana. Some say it's a gateway drug that leads to the use of harder and more dangerous drugs like cocaine, heroin, or crystal meth. Others argue that legal government distribution channels will make it easier for youths to access marijuana, but public schools are already saturated with weed. Some argue it's physically harmful; but if that were a valid point on which to debate its legality, tobacco wouldn't be sitting on every gas station shelf.

And, of course, there are always those who just blindly believe that smoking cannabis is immoral, without questioning why they have adopted that perspective, or the agenda of those who dictate its moral status.

These arguments are tired, uninformed, and largely supported by people with a limited interest in developing a holistic understanding about marijuana and its prohibition. Perhaps they belong to people who have little experience with marijuana and do not understand the social, political, and historical factors that have created its stigma.



### PURPLE'S PERSPECTIVE ON GREEN

One exceptionally well-informed and reasonable argument for maintaining prohibition comes from someone who regularly smoked pot and earned around \$5,000 a week selling weed during his senior year in high school.

Enter Mr. Purple. A BCIT student and former marijuana vendor whose street alias was reference to the product he distributed throughout Greater Vancouver.

"My brothers were among the first people to introduce the strain of Purple Kush to B.C. It was the main crop of their grow network. It was for that reason that I became known as 'Purple' on the streets, essentially serving as the main hub putting Purple Kush into the high schools of the Lower Mainland."

Mr. Purple believes an important revenue stream for many people born into a disadvantaged socioeconomic position will disappear if cannabis were legalized. He argues that the marijuana trade is the only source of income for many people living in impoverished neighbourhoods.



*The B.C. marijuana industry is worth an estimated five to eight billion dollars.*

"Growing up at 135th & 104th in Whalley, it was basically already determined... that I would follow the [footsteps] of my brothers and their affiliations or risk becoming a victim of gang violence in the section of the city I lived in. As messed up as it sounds, by putting that first bag of weed in my hand to sell, my brothers had actually done the best thing for my personal safety at the time. There was much less chance anybody would threaten my safety because... they knew who I was working for," Mr. Purple told *The Link*.

"Bottom line, for people in the position I grew up in, legalization means the end of the revenue stream that they depend on. I owe the illegal marijuana trade for everything I have."

However, Mr. Purple eventually recognized the violence associated with his trade and made a decision to exit the industry early in his trafficking career. He used the funds he earned from selling to start a legitimate business in order to remove himself from a lifestyle he knew would eventually lead to his death or imprisonment.

"I was able to take everything I learned and earned, and put it towards establishing a successful business in music and enter-

tainment. This has ensured that my future will not include relapsing back into the drug dealer lifestyle."



### A HARM REDUCTION STRATEGY

Mr. Purple's story is about social mobility. He believes legalization is just a means by which the government can take distribution rights and revenues from people in underprivileged communities that depend on selling cannabis to make a living. He thinks it will eliminate an opportunity for people to earn enough to leave poor and dangerous areas.

Mr. Purple recognizes that the black market drug trade isn't good for society.

"Preserving criminal markets isn't in humanity's best interest," he says, "but it is for a lot of the people that I grew up with and love."

Mr. Purple shows great empathy for those living in destitute communities like his hometown of Whalley, and believes their welfare is important. Unfortunately, this empathy is preventing him from analyzing the situation objectively. People in the drug trade, if successful, will become institutionalized by it.

In most circumstances, earning a great deal of money will not motivate someone to leave a job. Financial success is an incentive to keep doing it. Unlike the strong will of Mr. Purple, most successful



*[Politicians] must develop and deliver alternative marijuana policies that avoid the social and criminal harms that stem directly from cannabis.*

dealers will continue to sell drugs.

If marijuana is legalized and regulated, it will be a taxable good. The tax revenue can then be reinvested into our social infrastructure including healthcare, education, and affordable housing. People would have a higher

quality of life, giving them more stability which will reduce their likelihood of entering the drug trade in the first place. In turn, they will then be less likely to sell marijuana or other drugs in search of financial and physical security.

Mr. Purple doesn't see legalization as a beneficial harm reduction strategy because legislation often serves those who create it, not those who are forced to obey it.

He doesn't believe that marijuana tax dollars would be invested in projects that would benefit people in lower-income communities.

However, government coffers may be lined with valuable seven-fingered leaves soon anyway. In November 2011, four former Vancouver Mayors — Sam Sullivan, Michael Harcourt, Larry Campbell, and Philip Owen — released a statement through the Stop the Violence BC coalition, endorsing the legalization of cannabis. They wrote:

"Marijuana prohibition is — without question — a failed policy. It is creating violent, gang-related crime in our communities and fear among our citizens, and adding financial costs for all levels of government at a time when we can least afford them...[Politicians] must develop and deliver alternative marijuana policies that avoid the social and criminal harms that stem directly from cannabis prohibition."

Vancouver's current mayor, Gregor Robertson, has also gone on record endorsing the legalization of marijuana. It would appear that British Columbian politicians are realizing the importance of minimizing public disorder related to the marijuana trade.

They have realized that drug dealers who protect their business using violence will no longer be viable, because people will simply purchase weed from the licensed and legitimate weed retailers. This will allow law enforcement officials to reallocate resources spent busting grow-ops on investigating and charging more serious crimes.

It is the duty of a responsible government to serve the interests and needs of the public. Classifying marijuana as an illicit substance ignores the wishes of British Columbians, impedes democracy, and hinders the development of a safer society.



## CULTURE NEWS

## Toque Sessions a delight for fans both old and new

For the third year in a row, the CBC is hosting free concerts every Thursday and Friday evening, until March 30. The series, named the Toque Sessions, consist of a medley of genres from jazz, to world, to rock; all free to the public.

The performances take place at the CBC Broadcast Center in downtown Vancouver, an intimate (but alcohol-free) theatre with great acoustics. There is still plenty of room to move around, and the stage is easy to see. The shows are suited to all ages, and I saw more than a few older folks hanging out in the back too.

One of the advantages of going to recorded shows like these is that you can always count on the band to play their absolute best.

Yukon Blonde played a fantastic set on February 3, including all the songs off their new album, *Stairway 7*, and was one of the better shows I have seen.

Many of the bands performing at the Toque Sessions are local, and it's great to see the support and opportunity the CBC gives these bands to expand their fan base, as well as play and be recorded in a quality venue.

A complete list of upcoming sessions is available on the CBC website. All you need to do is register, but empty seats are filling fast, so book yours now! Did we tell you it's free?

— Nathan Tennant

### Remaining Toque Session shows

|                                    |             |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Hey Ocean!</b>                  | February 23 |
| <b>Adonis Puentes</b>              | March 1     |
| <b>Zimbamoto</b>                   | March 2     |
| <b>Adaline</b>                     | March 8     |
| <b>Acres of Lions</b>              | March 9     |
| <b>Alex Cuba</b>                   | March 22    |
| <b>Frazey Ford Memphis Project</b> | March 2     |
| <b>Colleen Brown</b>               | March 30    |
| <b>Chad Brownlee</b>               | March 30    |



I think this frame from the film speaks volumes.

Sony Pictures

## The Vow fails to live up to any promise

Directed by: Michael Sucsy  
Stars: Channing Tatum, Rachel McAdams, Sam Neill  
Running time: 104 minutes

**THORSTAN GERLACH**  
Link Contributor

'Tis the season of Hallmark-inspired love, and fittingly, here is a film that seems to have taken its lines directly from a Hallmark Valentine's Day card: *The Vow*.

*The Vow* tells the story of a newlywed couple struggling to cope with the wife's amnesia after a car accident. The film leaves you hoping that soon you too will forget all about this lifeless and insipid film.

After the accident, husband Leo (Channing Tatum) must regain the love of his wife, Paige (Rachel McAdams), because she cannot remember him, their friends, or their five-year marriage. After several failed attempts, Leo resolves to simply have Paige fall in love with him all over again. Enter douche-bag ex-fiancée Jeremy (Scott Speedman), and Paige's controlling, estranged parents (Sam Neill and Jessica Lange) who aim to get in the way of Leo's efforts.

Every cliché imaginable is stuffed into the first ten minutes and mercilessly drawn out over the film's near two-hour run time; an unbearable eternity. It's hard to believe five writers worked on the screenplay. Perhaps the

magic number was six, because by the end of the movie I was hoping for someone to drive a stake through my heart.

Perhaps most confusing of all was that for a movie set in Chicago—home of Barack Obama, Oprah Winfrey, Kanye West, and the blues—there is an uncanny lack of diversity. Every character in the movie is attractive and white. It's enough to make one believe that there are no African-Americans, Asians, or Hispanics in Chicago. Maybe filmmakers were sparing the different ethnicities because every character is painfully unlikable. On the night of the car accident, for example, Paige and Leo's friends show up at the hospital in the middle of the night

with perfectly combed hair, neatly dressed, and in full make-up. Seriously?

*The Vow* is inspired by a remarkable true story; however, that does not forgive this fictionalized account for being so shallow and utterly ridiculous. It's a shame, not even the often-shirtless Channing Tatum and Rachel McAdams can save this mess. It seems the filmmakers overlooked, or were simply unaware, that love is the most sincere of human emotions.

Love must be genuine in order for it to deepen and grow. Unfortunately, the only genuine feeling of love in *The Vow* occurs when the credits roll.

**OVERALL GRADE: D**

## EVOLVING 20

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1. **Born Gold** - Lawn Knives
2. **Hollerado** - Good Day At The Races
3. **Philoceraptor** - PYT
4. **The Shins** - Simple Song
5. **Surfer Blood** - Miranda
6. **Arkells** - Michigan Left
7. **Justice** - Newlands
8. **Oh No! Yoko** - Boyhood
9. **Diamond Rings** - Mellow Doubt
10. **Au Palais** - Tender Mercy

11. **Lana Del Rey** - Born To Die
12. **M83** - Reunion
13. **Said The Whale** - Lines
14. **King Khan & The Shrines** - I Got Love
15. **Braids** - Peach Wedding
16. **The Big Pink** - Stay Gold
17. **Grimes** - Genesis
18. **Joel Plaskett** - On The Railes
19. **Miike Snow** - Devils Work
20. **Sleigh Bells** - Born To Lose





## UPCOMING MOVIES



February 17

**Ghost Rider 2**Directed by Mark Neveldine & Brian Taylor  
Stars Nicolas Cage, Idris Elba

Nicolas Cage is back as Ghost Rider Johnny Blaze, who is called upon to stop the devil from taking on human form. Ciaran Hinds and Idris Elba co-star.

Running time: 95 minutes



February 24

**GONE**Directed by Heitor Dhalia  
Stars Amanda SeyfriedA young woman sets out to face her former kidnapper, as she fears it is the same person who has just abducted her sister. Amanda Seyfried and Jennifer Carpenter star.  
Running time: Unknown

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# Safe House a safe bet for action fans

Directed by: Daniel Espinosa  
Stars: Denzel Washington,  
Ryan Reynolds  
Running time: 117 minutes

**KEVIN WILLEMSE**  
Editor

Okay, let's get the bad stuff out the way.

*Safe House* becomes a tad predictable for government espionage movie buffs about halfway in, albeit with a slightly unique angle and well-executed conclusion. Next, the movie was shot on location in South Africa, and my being born and bred there revealed glaring clichés and inaccurate representations of the places and its people (which most viewers will not notice). Lastly, there is a continuity error around three quarters of the way in, where Denzel Washington's glass of wine miraculously fills itself, right after being chugged down.

If you find yourself shaking your head at these unremarkable nuances, good. Because this movie is a stonkingly bril-

liant action-espionage roller-coaster.

Upcoming director Daniel Espinosa grabs you from the start with Tarantino-esque cut scenes and deliberately shaky camerawork, leaving much of the background plot to be pieced together as the story unfolds. And you'd better be quick, because ten minutes in, it grabs you by the throat and never lets go.

Denzel Washington plays

the part of long-time-gone-roogue, highly-sought-after ex CIA agent Tobin Frost, in possession of highly valuable agency intel, which he is looking to sell and make public. For his troubles, he is immediately under attack from all sides of Cape Town's streets, and finds forced refuge in the US Embassy. From here he is shipped off to the local CIA safe house, under the menial care of rookie agent Matt Weston (Ryan

Reynolds), who longs for more exciting assignments.

The ensuing battle between CIA agents trying to extract Frost, assassins wanting him and his secrets offed, and Weston trying to protect his house guest and prove himself as a field agent, leads to some awesome car chases and combat scenes. In fact, the unorthodox angles and almost too up-close-and-personal cinematography leaves

you feeling a little uneasy at times; it's that believable. Look out for Reynolds' long and brutal hand-to-hand stuff near the end.

In fact, all the characters deliver great performances. Of course, Washington is as cool, creepy and methodical as ever as master manipulator and professional killer. The whole good-guy-gone-bad-guy (gone-good-guy) persona fits him like a glove, and there is nothing creepier than his hitman smile. Reynolds also (finally) broke my *Van Wilder* typecasting by delivering a solid, understated believability to what could easily have been a cheesy character. For just a few minutes, Carlos Villar (Ruben Blades) delivers an awesome cameo as Frost's only ally in the world of government espionage.

*Safe House* may not be the best Valentine's Day material, unless you both enjoy hard-hitting action (without gratuitous gore, thank goodness). But for the other 364 days of the year, I'd watch it again on any one of them.

**OVERALL GRADE: A-**



Universal Pictures

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# 3D movies are the worst



Movie goers should save their money from greedy Hollywood executives

**THORSTAN GERLACH**  
Culture Editor

*Star Wars Episode One: The Phantom Menace* was re-released over the weekend, because Lucasfilm had the genius idea that every Star Wars fan should enjoy the movie in 3D. Nerds now have the luxury of dressing up as their favorite Star Wars characters again (outside of Halloween) and wasting their money on a third-rate film. Isn't there enough Star Wars crap out there yet? I'm sure there is a fiery pit in hell for this type of greed.

As luck would have it, I was sent to write the review. I did a little research beforehand to assuage my fears, and found out that converting old footage into 3D is quite the task. Considering none of the Star Wars films were originally shot in 3D, the headache I normally associate with having to watch even a 2D Star Wars movie crept up and bit me as soon as I took my seat. The headache grew worse when it dawned on me that for the next two-and-a-half hours I was going to have to sit through Jar-Jar Binks in glorious 3D. No, he wasn't digitally removed.

I entered the theatre tep-

idly, similar to the way I always cross myself before watching a Michael Bay film, with the dreadful certainty that the next moments of my life were not going to be fun.

The familiar John Williams score and scrolling credits flooded my eardrums and I resigned myself to the fact that I was indeed in the fourth circle of hell.

I sat down later to write my review and concluded it wasn't worth the effort (I'll leave the review for George Lucas' maker). However, I was enticed to widen the scope of my recent frustrations toward 3D films in general.

*“When you hear of a movie being re-released in 3D, don't go.”*

Here is a number for you to consider: the top five grossing 3D movies (*Avatar*, *Toy Story 3*, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2*, *Transformers 3: Dark of the Moon*, and Tim Burton's *Alice in Wonderland*) have earned a little over \$2.2 billion. It's no wonder studios are rushing to release movies in 3D. However, what the studios seem to overlook is that a good movie is a good

movie, and a shit movie is a shit movie, regardless of whether it's in 3D, black and white, or even silent (hello, *The Artist*!).

Movie goers don't rush to see a movie because it's in 3D but because it appeals to their interests, and forgive me, but 3D films are nothing more than a gimmick. Take the aforementioned top five grossing 3D movies: can anyone honestly claim that these films would not have done well without the 3D; or would anyone have even cared or noticed if they weren't?

The novelty is wearing thin and frustrations are being compounded at the thought that studios will be rereleasing *The Little Mermaid*, *Finding Nemo*, *Monsters Inc.*, and even *Titanic* in 3D! What's next, *The Notebook 3D*?

I plead to you, loyal readers, when you hear of a movie being rereleased in 3D, don't go. The 3D imagery is far from perfect, the glasses look silly, and you'll get a headache after 30 minutes.

It's high time we stop these greedy movie producers from pimping out our favourite movies and making us believe a perfectly good movie will be better if it's in 3D. There is plenty to do on a weekend and plenty to watch in theatres that don't pander solely to your wallet.

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[wordpress/?page\\_id=158](http://wordpress/?page_id=158) or at the Uconnect Resource Center (SE2 Rm. 286)

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## BCITSA Info & News



### Executive Weigh-In



**A message from BCITSA  
Vice President of Student Affairs  
Tylan Fraser**

I'm being serious when I say I want to get to know you.

That is not a pickup line, but an attempt for me to make the student body aware of what the student association can do for you.

Right now, it's about that time of year where the majority of you have become accustomed to BCIT's heavy workload. You've probably increased your personal productivity and developed time management skills in order to complete case studies, projects, and exams. Things are going well, and a more "relaxed" schedule is on the horizon; but why not use this time to develop another skill?

Take some time in these last few months to take up the challenge of 'beating yourself'. Of course, I don't mean this literally. It could be an assortment of many things, but generally pushing yourself to perform beyond your current standards. You don't have to do it for long, maybe just a few months.

Start off by putting your best effort into the smallest of your daily activities, like brushing your teeth. Brush those teeth like you are waxing a new car or getting ready for a blind date.

Honing these skills can improve your time management skills under more stressful situations at school and at work. I remember my orientation day, when a professor told me, "A glass of water will become heavy if you hold it for too long. Put the glass down and rest." His basic philosophy was that taking a break is understandable, and even recommended, but I think there should be something added to that. Taking a break is nice, but it needs to be balanced with rewards of taking equal time to focus on a job, a project, or relationship.

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# Ask Alex



Lucas Meneses-Skoda

Hey Alex,

I've been having sex with my boyfriend for about a year and lately he's been talking about trying kinkier things involving belts, ropes, and so on. I've never done that kind of stuff before and I'm kind of worried that it'll hurt, but at the same time, I'm kind of excited. What should I do?

— Probably Perfect Normal

Dear PPN,

It's perfectly normal to be worried if it'll hurt. When it comes to bondage it's all about the technique. Knowing where how to safely administer some slap 'n' tickle can change the entire mood from 'Ow!' to 'Oooh!' I can probably write an entire essay on proper spanking technique (hopefully my professor gives me a good mark this time).

What I'm saying is, do some research! What tends to turn people off of bondage is that they think the entire practice is 'unsafe' or 'painful.' These are the kinds that'll probably never try anything exciting, ever. Studying up helps both calm you down and inform you on the right techniques to make sure you and your partner are getting the most out of it. If you know what you're doing, it's great! If you don't, don't expect to move comfortably for a week. Just make sure your boyfriend does some research too as, I'm assuming, he's going to be administering it (for now at least).

Just be careful though. Remember that the number one goal of sex is pleasure. If things get rough, and not the good rough, bail and try again another day. The last thing you want

to worry about on your final exam is how sore your everything is.

Good luck!

With love,  
— Alex

Dear Alex,

Lately my girlfriend has been getting a lot of sex toys. And by a lot, I mean I can't keep count of them on two hands anymore. I think I'm being replaced. You think I'm doing something wrong here? Help?

— Blow Up Boy

Dear BUB,

Only a little over ten? I'm already on my third drawer... The point is, there's nothing wrong with any woman, or man, having a few sexual aids for any reason. But if you really think that there's something wrong, you're going to want to sit down and talk it out with her. It could be anything from needing something to tide her over until you're around, to just really liking sex toys.

People tend to associate 'my partner is getting sex toys' with 'I'm not good enough', and that's usually not the case. There are more people into them than one would imagine.

If it really does bother you, you could always ask her, politely, to slow down on her purchases. But, looking at this positively, with so many toys laying around there's always the option of incorporating it into your love making. Who knows? Maybe by the end of all this you'll end up purchasing a couple(dozen) yourself.

With love,  
— Alex

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