

Engineering Students Venture To UNB

Pete Grandy
Reporter



As UPEI does not offer a full engineering undergraduate degree, engineering students annually visit UNB and Dal. in hopes of answering the daunting question: What the hell am I doing next year? Us third year students face the dilemma of what field of engineering to enter and whether to go to campus-based UNB or pub-based Dalhousie. For you, the reader, to fully experience this trip, I am taking the liberty to describe it from a third year student's perspective.

The trip begins with the inevitable three hour drive to Fredericton. We stop in the infamous Port Elgin gas station/grocery/liquor store for our nightly booze. As I wait in line, one of the friendly beer-bearing locals stares myself and my colleagues down. I interpret his keen eyes as a signal to ask "How she going?" but am distracted by the obscene amount of fireworks lying on a large display. The longer I stand in line, the more I envy the breathtaking culture of Port Elgin. We approach our car to find a gift! The beer bearing local left a large wad of mucus on the passenger side window. My heart fills with warmth and I smile. Truly, kings among men.

We arrive at the Lord Beaver Brook Hotel in Fredericton. Not bad. We approach the front desk and reluctantly give a credit card number. We arrive at our designated room to be greeted by one of our colleagues. "We've been here for 2 hours and I'm Fucked." I congratulate and join him in his endeavors to "get loose." After several hours of foolishness, my attention is drawn to a heated debate outside our room. I investigate to find

the youngest looking 28 year old I've ever seen arguing with the hotel manager about missing light bulbs and a broken door.

At this point, I realize that it is an appropriate time to hit the bars. Memory gap. The next thing I know I'm in one of my old high school buddy's apartment wrestling with a complete stranger. The apartment reeks of different types of smoke. After being yelled at by the owner of the wrestling ring room, I leave with my uncomfortable looking classmates who regretfully followed me to the apartment. We proceed to the UNB student union bar where beers are \$2. Memory gap. I find myself looking around the bar for my fellow engineering students only to realize they have left an hour ago. Frustrated I continue drinking my cheap beer. Somehow I end up at the bar in which all the other engineering students are found getting down. Memory gap. I wake up next to a second year student who is, without my consent, sharing a pillow with me. Perhaps mistaking me for the girl who is supposed to be sharing the room with him, I forgive him by shoving him the hell over. I decide it might be best to sleep on top of the covers.

I am awakened by a sloppy looking individual named Thorse. The engineering group gets ready to depart for UNB. As we approach the front desk to check out, we find the same youthful 28 year old, again arguing with one of the hotel managers. Apparently, the hinge of a door and three sets of hallway light bulbs went missing the previous evening. How does the hotel management react to this relentless crime? They charge each of the twelve rooms \$100. I review the logistics of this surcharge in my head. \$1,200 - \$50 door hinge = \$1,150 remaining. 15 Light bulbs x 3 sets = 45 light bulbs. \$1,150/45 light bulbs = \$25.55 a bulb

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Haiti?

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Contributor

The people of Haiti find themselves in a peculiar struggle. Their democratically elected government was overthrown by Haitian exiles from Miami in February of 2004 with the support of the Canadian, French, and American governments and was subsequently placed under the mandate of the United Nations five months later. Today, the country is in a chaotic state. Supporters of the overthrown government are being silenced, all too often through violence.

It is difficult to criticize the international community's involvement in Haiti because the occupation now has the stamp of the United Nations on it. I would suggest, however, that international intervention in Haiti is symptomatic of the re-ordering of global politics since the American led invasion of Iraq in 2003.

What does Haiti have to do with Iraq?

The United States' doctrine of "pre-emptive war" was the impetus for their decision to invade Iraq in March of 2003. The invasion of Iraq created perhaps the largest political schism the world has witnessed since World War II. Although governments have publicly opposed foreign led wars in the past (recall Korea, Vietnam, Iraq I, Yugoslavia, and Afghanistan II), this opposition has largely been voiced by countries in the underdeveloped world (with the exceptions of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait).

The impending war on Iraq in 2003 was different because governments within the Western World publicly opposed it. France and Germany were perhaps some of the loudest voices against an invasion. Canada, in the face of immense pressure from the United States and

England, decided not to invade. Furthermore, public opinion throughout the world was overwhelmingly against war. Many countries saw massive demonstrations. For example, London was the site of the largest public demonstration against war in England's history (over 1,500,000 people). The convergence of both state and popular opposition to the war on Iraq had an insularizing affect on the United States. Campaigns such as the "Freedom Fries Bill" became quite popular, as did notions of "an Old Europe," which seeped into the common vernacular.

The U.S. administration, realizing that Iraq posed no threat, have changed their rationale for waging the war from something tangible, i.e. finding "weapons of mass destruction," to something theoretical, 'promoting democracy'. As a result, the concept of the "failed and failing state" has been introduced into the lexicon of global politics. The "failed state" is controversial not least because its defining characteristics are open to interpretation, but also because questions of who have the authority to label countries as "failed" are not addressed. However, the utility of a "failed or failing state" is that it provides a justification for "pre-emptive warfare" and America, it seems, is now threatened less by conquering states than by failing ones.

It is in this context that the American, Canadian, and French invasion of Haiti in 2004 becomes relevant.

The invasion of Haiti was rationalized by it being declared a "failed state." Examinations of the post-invasion alliances, which have formed in its wake, indicate a political rapprochement of Western countries. Haiti provided a venue for France, Canada, and the United States to

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