

OPINION & COMMENTARY

... And Now For Something Completely Different: The Rants of a University Student

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Contributor

Well, the New Year came in with a bang this year, particularly for those of you who happen to live in the general area surrounding Brown's Court and Queen Street. For anyone who was not present that evening, I think a friend of mine described it best when he said "Oh my God. Brown's Court is like Rwanda," which was almost entirely true, except for the fact that Rwanda is not filled with drunken idiots. Yes, the large hordes of youth who chose to ring in the New Year by hanging around Brown's decided to drink responsibly, clearly indicated by the hundreds of broken beer bottles on the ground the next morning, and to act in a civilized and mature manner, insomuch as ripping the door off building 17, throwing a mattress in the hall and somehow causing a ceiling leak can be considered as mature and responsible behavior. As always, the wonderful long arm of the law personified by the Charlottetown Police and the sole car sent to the scene acted valiantly in controlling the situation by staying in their car and doing absolutely nothing. Wonderful.

Christmastime on PEI was once again a joyous occasion, a time for love and joy and trees and turkeys and for relatives to tell you how bad they had it when they were kids. I heard some Baby-Boomer going on about it the week before Christmas: "Kids today get the Gameboys and the iPods and those cell phones. We only got oranges and socks. And we were damn happy to get it." Well aren't you all just paragons of virtue and unfettered selflessness? How can my generation ever possibly meet the impossibly high standards of your oh-so-wonderful and possibly greatest generation of all time? Give it a rest. We don't care about your damn oranges. It sort of loses its quaintness after you whine about it for 50 or 60 years. Hey, at least you didn't have to fight and die for your own freedom like the two generations did before you. And at least your parent's generation didn't totally screw you over by depleting pension plans and social programs to the point that there was no money left by the time you got to retiring age even though you had to pay for it through the nose for your entire career like we're going to have to do. Phht. Sounds like a pretty sweet deal to me. Oranges and socks indeed.

Other than whining, the other great Canadian Christmas tradition continued this year. The World Juniors, were held in Vancouver and Kamloops BC, as Canada beat the snot out of every team they faced, with only 6 goals scored against them.

Of course all of this could not have been done without the gracious help of the American coaching staff, who, when tied with Canada late in the third thought "I know! We can pull our goalie!" Uh huh. Good one. Canada of course scored an empty netter, clinching first place and a bye to the semis. Even though they needed that win, this is perhaps the stupidest move in modern sport as a) their goalie was by far the best US player on the ice, and b) you are playing Canada, the World Cup, Olympic, and World Junior Champions, and believe it or not, they're pretty good at scoring on a net with no goalie in it. But no, I take that back, the stupidest move ever was last year's semi final in the World Juniors, when the US was losing 4-2 to Russia, and, (surprise, surprise) pulled their goalie. Russia scored not one, but two empty-netters, after which the Americans figured they better put him back him. After the US took a dumb penalty, the Russians responded by scoring with one second left. Final score: USA 2 - Russia 7. God Bless America.

This year's series culminated in a 5-0 Canadian win over the Soviets, who before the game predicted that mother Russia would "dominate" Canada. Riiight. The Russians were pretty peeved that a goal they scored went uncalled because no one saw it, with their coach arguing that they would've probably won had it been called. Um no. Then it would've been 5-1. Good old Russian math. Idiots. Some people felt that Russia was cheated in the non-call and that it could've changed the game, but for myself, I consider it payback for the 2003 Gold Medal game that we lost, in which Russian goalie Medvedev, after review, clearly hit the net off its moorings with 10 seconds to go in the game, a move that if caught, would have resulted in a penalty shot for Canada. Of course the Russians and Canadians shook hands after the game and drank Smirnoff and beer late into the night and made fun of the goalie pull-happy Americans.

Well I was informed after my last rant that some people were offended by my attack on the efforts

of the Charlottetown Transit busses to decorate for the holidays. In that article I commented that the trolley-busses looked ridiculous by saying, and I quote "Ding ding! Here comes the shit-mobile." Well, I am sorry for anyone that offended, but that is exactly what the bus looked like. I was not attempted any sort of attack on the bus system as a whole, I know that Charlottetown needs a transit system in place, the schedule is getting better, and more and more people are using it. Hell, I wasn't even all that pissed off when the first time I tried to get on the bus that it drove right past the stop I was waiting at. My question is more me wanting to know why the hell we had to get busses that look like trolleys. For once, could we please just get something normal? Not something named after Anne or Confederation or potatoes or any of that nonsense, nothing to do with history or heritage or tradition: just normal damn busses. It would be more environmentally friendly, they wouldn't have to use pine benches for god's sake, and we could

actually ride them with a bit of dignity. For some reason, one model that has been decided on for our fair city is one that is supposed to look like trolleys from 1608. What in the hell? 1608? This has absolutely no historical basis in Charlottetown. First of all, I'm pretty sure we didn't have a mass transit system in 1608, seeing as our first transit system was developed in, yes, you guessed it, 2005. Secondly 1608 is about the same time that Samuel Champlain founded a little village called Quebec, while Black Plague and scurvy is still killing off the Brits, and John Smith is getting his ass saved by Pocahontas. Seeing as nothing was established anywhere near Charlottetown for another 111 years, I'm going to go out on a limb here and say we didn't have a fleet of trolleys messing about the forest in 1608. Maybe a few Co-op cabs, but that's about it.



The Election Scoop

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Contributor

Alright, do not get the wrong idea about this article. I am not going to write a long boring spell about elections. I promise... well, I will do my best. As all of you know Canada is in the midst of our 39th Federal Election campaign, which will culminate with the voting to be held on January 23rd. What I want to do with this article is outline for all of you a few important factors that may motivate you to perform your civic duty and vote.

As students, especially those of post-secondary institutions we have the ability to select the candidates and government who we feel will best represent our needs. I am not going to try in any way to sway the vote, I am simply wanting all students to realize the importance of getting out and casting a ballot. Many of the current, and pertinent issues in this election refer directly to Post-Secondary Education and the expansion of funding for financial support, research and development, and the creation of new infrastructure on campuses across the nation.

I realize that not all students keep up to date on current political issues, or the news even. This is not to say that our opinions are not important. Currently the political parties in our country are doing their best to win over our votes by providing election promises based around PSE.

I am not going to give names of parties, but recently I have read and heard of platforms that include; the expansion of the Canada Access Grant which would put more money in the pockets of you the students, the creation of a Lester B. Pearson Scholarship available to international students and those traveling abroad, a review and revamping of Canada's Student Financial Assistance program, as well as thoughts regarding the construction and establishment of a Medical school on little old PEI.

As a student, and I guess more importantly a member of our Student Union executive, I feel that many of these issues are pertinent and should be recognized by the entire student population. Everyone knows that Post-Secondary Education is a major benefit to society and will help to create a healthy, wealthy and wise society.

What I am trying to tell everyone is that we have a voice. According to Stats Canada in 2004 there are approximately 571,685 University students in Canada. This number would make up one of the largest single voting populations in Canada. We, as students, are the biggest single voice in Canada. It is our civic duty, our responsibility in good conscience, to vote on January 23rd. For more information regarding advance polls and polling stations check out www.elections.ca