

SPECTRUM

The Grad ZONE

Arts and Science Unite In Forestry Grad Research
by Shelley Luce

Master's student Serge Lutz has a unique title, which suits the unusual work he is doing in the Faculty of Forestry. Serge is an ecological historian. He is studying the history of New Brunswick's forests and trying to discover what they were like before European settlement and land-clearing began.

Serge's B.A. in History from the University of Saskatchewan and several years of working in the forest industry make Serge a natural for the position of ecological historian.

Little is known about the state of New Brunswick's forests before the time of European colonization. Logging in the province was underway by the year 1696 and has continued ever since. Because we do not know what types of trees were present, how big they were or how densely they grew, we cannot begin to assess the ecological impacts of over 200 years of logging. These are questions that Serge is working to answer.

Serge is applying his knowledge of, and

experience with a variety of historical resources in a study designed to discover those answers. Using original handwritten land survey records, diaries and letters which are stored at the New Brunswick Museum, the Provincial Archives of New Brunswick and the Harriet Irving Library at UNB, Serge is finding the species composition, species distribution and other ecological parameters of pre-European forests of New Brunswick.

The project builds on previous uses of archival data and gives it a cutting-edge application: the data are digitized in ARC/INFO, part of the Geographic Information

System, in order to pinpoint locations of trees from the historical records. The ecological data that can be drawn from the occurrence of particular tree species can then be used to paint a picture of the forest in the late 1700's and early 1800's for New Brunswick.

Such a reconstruction can lead the way to a starting point for the study of present day forests in New Brunswick, and could also provide useful information for forest management.

The unique combination of historical and scientific inquiry is allowing this UNB graduate student to make an important contribution to forestry research.



Arts, Science, Forestry... The GSA has it all

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ends meet. It appears as though she would be better off. They normally pay minimum wage (\$5.25) or higher. In addition, she probably would not have to work that many hours per week. In response to her argument of financial hardship, Ms. Davidson knew exactly how much money she would make this year as a member of the Executive. In fact with the extra weeks last summer she has already exceeded that amount. This hardship should have been foreseeable, and knowing that Ms. Davidson should have taken it into account before running for office. I know it's harsh, but that is the reality. During my time in office I raised this issue more than once. The Executive of the UNB SU is among the lowest paid in Canada, given the size of the Union, and I would fully support a compensation scheme that takes into account the costs of attending university from outside of Fredericton. This would make the positions truly open to all students as opposed to only townies (Fredericton area residents). I know Ms. Davidson falls in the category of the non-townie and I am sure that the finances are tight. This does not excuse the actions taken by Ms. Davidson, the rest of the Executive, nor the Council. The Union should not get into creating reasons to pay the small group of people who run the show additional money because they need it.

Several other questions arise from this decision. Who is going to see that these hours are put in? How will they distinguish between her time spent in the office on the rest of her portfolio and her time spent on this project? I understand that this has been justified as Ms. Davidson is doing part of the General Administrators job during her absence. This is not true. The direction of the Health Plan (which is the basis of this project) has always rested in the hands of the VP Student Services. The administration of the plan is the duty of the General Administrator. Naturally, projects such as these normally would involve input from both persons so as to give the Student Leadership perspective as well as the experience and knowledge base of the administrator. This was how the change from the CFS plan a year ago to the Blue Cross plan was done.

My real concern rests with the *Consumer's Guide*. If Ms. Davidson's make work project is used as a basis for wage setting and the 600 hours Joe FitzPatrick cites is realistic for the development of *The Guide*, the editor should be receiving \$2,222 not \$800. I would argue that this is still too low. In

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fact, I would suggest the Executive consult the employment guidelines adopted by Council last spring for some guidelines regarding wage setting. *The Guide* is without a doubt the biggest success of the Student Union over the past five years. It has received accolades from the entire University community, and is a true statement of the maturity and responsibility that students can bring to the University community. This is a far cry from the actions taken by the Executive and Council this year. Eliminating *The Guide* is a definite step backwards.

Finally, the financial woes of the Union this year are not the result of budget errors last spring as has been the position of the Executive all year. Think about it, the errors are nothing more than typos which anyone could have easily been corrected. It has been sold as "There are

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errors in the budget so please excuse the fact that we spent like fools!!! We are not to blame. We could not possibly have known any better!!!" Oh, please!

I hope that students, seeing as their representative to Council have failed to, ask the questions and demand answers. How can people run off on junkies (As President Lamrock would call them) because they do not have conferences in their portfolio. That is unbelievable and irresponsible. Being the steward of the Students' money is a serious job that must be taken seriously. This has not been the case this year.

Paul Estabrooks
Vice-President Finance and Administration UNB SU 1993-94
President UNB SU 1994-95
Somewhere in cybersp@cc

Left Job

Continued from last week

Capitalism's Racist Roots (pt II) by Nik Carrier

This glaring contradiction was personified in Thomas Jefferson.

He wrote the Declaration of Independence and was a Virginia slaveholder. The only way out of this bind was to claim that blacks were less than human.

Racism therefore did not spring out of the air, or from human nature. It was the result of a 150 year long struggle by the ruling class to justify the large-scale use of African slave labour without which modern capitalism could not have developed.

Racism outlived slavery as it continued to provide capitalism with an excuse for its exploits.

By the late nineteenth century the world was partitioned among a handful of the most powerful states. These imperialist powers—such as Britain, France, Germany and the US—competed with each other for the largest share of the globe. Each state needed to justify its rivalries with the other great powers and their collective claim to dominate the non-European people of Africa, Asia and the Americas.

Racism once again fitted the bill. The theory of natural selection developed by Charles Darwin to explain evolution was snatched by the imperialists and mangled into a supposed justification for their division of the world. The global pecking order, supposedly reflected the biological superiority of the 'white races'.

This ideology was used to argue that imperial domination was both in the interests of the western powers and the interests of the oppressed who benefited from its 'benevolence'. The attitude is best summed up by the poet Rudyard Kipling who wrote of 'The White Man's burden'.

The rulers of the big powers also encouraged the development of popular nationalism in their own countries. They hoped by doing so both to bind the working class to them and to win mass support for the wars waged in the colonies and among themselves.

WOMYN SAY

"Erotic comes from the Greek word 'eros', the personification of love in all its aspects... and personifying creative power and harmony. When I speak of erotica, then I speak of it as an assertion of the life force of women, of that creative energy empowered, the knowledge and use of which we are now reclaiming in our language, our history, our dancing, our loving, our work, our lives."

Aubre Lorde, b. 1934

NOTES FROM THE IVORY TOWER

The Culture of Speed
by Daniel Goodwin

When a certain well-known member of Canada's track and field team was found guilty of cheating and stripped of his gold medal at the Seoul Olympics in 1988, the collective hand-wringing and soul-searching which swept from sea to shining sea was deafening.

During the Dublin inquiry which followed, we were treated to coach Charlie Francis' argument that his protégé was a victim of a system which reserved its rewards for those who could successfully meet the standards of international competition.

Perhaps more significantly, Francis charged that in order to compete effectively at international levels, it was necessary to do what other world-class athletes were doing. If that meant taking stanozolol, so be it.

We all complacently shook our heads at this line of reasoning. Despite the money, fame and glory which comes with being a world champion, we felt that Johnson should have resisted the urge to cheat. He should have just said no. We all know that cheating is wrong, unsporting, shameful.

Thus, I was amused last semester when one of my professors asked the class whether anyone had ever cheated in school and the vast majority of the students in the auditorium raised their hands. And don't forget, the pressures and rewards of higher education are a lot slghter than those faced by Ben Johnson.

Despite the different stakes and arenas, however, there are useful analogies between the two situations. The sprinter and the university student are both expected to cover the ground in a relatively short period of time.

These expectations are not an isolated phenomenon. The century that gave us Formula One races and the supersonic jet workshops at the altar of speed. As we approach the end of the millennium, we are always reminded of the speed of change: ten years ago, it was said that knowledge (whatever that is) doubled every seven years. Apparently, now it doubles every six.

We hear ad infinitum (and ad nauseam) about the Internet and how it will help us get information easier and quicker. And more of us get caught up in that Catch-22: we work harder and harder in order to buy the things that will save time.

The reason for the shortage of time at the university has its roots in a demographic shift which began in earnest about fifty years ago. The university system as we have it today, requiring 120 credit hours for an Arts degree (five courses a semester for four years) was created by a very different world for very different students.

The students of yore who can afford to spend four years studying full-time were, by and large, the children of wealthy families. And if they didn't graduate with a sterling GPA at the end of four years it was no big deal. At least they had read a lot of books and they'd have no trouble finding a job. Things have changed.

Today, students come from a wide range of economic backgrounds. Many leave university with ridiculously high levels of debt. Many hold down part-time or even full-time jobs while going to school.

Continued next week

Pride by Arhemis

Love Is In The Air...

Ah, the feeling one gets when one experiences the thrills and spills of the Tilt-A-Whirl at the Exhibition. This past Wednesday was that spectacular time of year we call Valentine's Day. A day when, strangely enough, we're supposed to commemorate our feelings for others through various rituals of affection, like the mass consumption of saccharine-raising foodstuffs and the advancement for the defoliation of the planet. Seriously though, love, relationships and all that, take a lot of working, which might explain why sometimes it can be a pain in the ass. However, relationships mark the start of a unique experience, depending on the type of relationship one is talking about. In this case, I'm talking about intimate, love (or lust) based relationships. The kind that makes you feel mushy inside when you're together with that certain someone (whether opposite- or same-sex in nature).

It's really remarkable that when people talk of relationships of this sort, society invariably acquiesces a heterosexual label on it. Unless of course you happen to have a homosexual relationship, in which case it's thought of as less than a heterosexual one. Apparently, the "normal" course of relationships appear to be exclusive to heterosexual couples. They can fall in love (Awww gorsh!), be dependent, co-dependent or interdependent upon each other, have true feelings for each other (Iloveyouloveyoulove...), get married ("I now pronounce you ball and chain...), have kids (or not), argue, occasionally separate and get support from one or the other. However, make the relationship a homosexual one, and BOOM, all the criteria goes out the window. Case in point. A recent Ontario court case involved a woman who was trying to obtain support for her and her child from her same-sex partner. The rejecting argument stated that such a request was not eligible on the grounds that "...same-sex relationships do not involve the sort of dependency found in heterosexual unions." The judge disagreed citing a 1995 Supreme Court of Canada ruling by Mr. Justice Frank Iacobucci. The citing states that the traditional "presumption against interdependence in same sex relationships is not only incorrect, but it is also the fruit of stigmatizing stereotype." (Globe and Mail, Saturday, February 10, 1996).

Society for the most part, views homosexual relationships as not having any similarities to heterosexual ones. Well du-uh! Who's the rocket scientist who thought this one out? The only difference, relationship wise that exists, is whether the couples are opposite-sex or same-sex partners. If you think about it, that's really not much of a significant difference. In every other way but gender, homosexual relationships go through the same motions as heterosexual relationships. We live, love, depend, argue, reconcile, raise kids with, and separate from our partners. Things that heterosexual couples encounter in their relationships. The aspect of labeling a relationship as superior to others, isn't based on who one loves, or even why. It depends on how one loves, and that is one genuine part of what makes relationships go on.