

NEWS

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UNB womens group supports Students want changes to Elections Act bylaw restricting strip bars

CYNTHIA KIRKBY

THE BRUNSWICKAN

The Womyn's Collective is taking on misogyny, one Sports Bar at a time. This is according to Carla EKY Lam, who spoke on behalf of the UNB student group at the city council meeting on Monday. An amendment, arising from the opening of the North Star Sports Bar which features exotic dancers, was read at the meeting. If passed, it would restrict adult entertainment to primary commercial areas, and would require council's approval before opening. "The city already had a bylaw which designates what kind of businesses can be where, like near residences, churches, and children. The North Star Sports Bar didn't get included in that," Lam explained. "It was an oversight, so it just kind of opened up. The city thought they should amend the bylaw to restrict this adult entertainment, as they define it."

"This bylaw serves as a first step in our overall effort to eradicate the present commodification of women's sexuality," Lam said to council, inferring that more work is needed. "[The bylaw] isn't achieving the ultimate end of what we'd like to see happen, which is basically a closing down of all these kinds of places, and an end of pornography," she stressed in an interview with *The Brunswickan*. "But not for the traditional, moralist reasons." The reason, according to Lam, is the power differential between men and women. "If we lived in a society where there was equal ground between the two, maybe such things could be considered art, and they wouldn't be misogynist or patriarchal like they are right now, or damaging to attitudes toward women, which people carry subconsciously into relationships with women." When asked how strenuously she would object to Chippendale's, Lam was uncertain. "I can't say that I would take this stance for men stripping, I'm more concerned about the power

differential, which makes this more damaging to women. If we didn't live in a misogynistic society, if we lived in a perfect world, it'd be different, a healthy sexual thing." Lam's "perfect world" is one without Xcitement Video, without Penthouse and Playboy, without Sweetwaters' lingerie contests, and even without some advertisements. "Any type of derogatory depiction of a woman is directly linked to violence against women. These are very legitimate studies, and that link cannot be denied." While Lam would like to see such depictions eliminated, she is afraid that The Womyn's Collective will be expected to do the work. "We've started something, but we can't attack every single activity, every single group," she said. "We want to avoid becoming Great Feminist Avengers who go down and close out the corner store for having pornography. We'd like to, but you have to pick your battles."

GORDON LOANE

THE BRUNSWICKAN

The New Brunswick Student Alliance has asked a legislative committee to make changes to the provincial Elections Act. The move comes following persistent complaints from university students throughout the province who experienced difficulty both getting on the voting list and voting during the September 1995 provincial election. The election came just as students were wrapping up their summer jobs and moving to begin a new university year. Currently students have the option of voting in their home constituency or voting in the constituency where they live while attending university. The Student Alliance wants the legislative committee to maintain that option but asked for some additional changes to allow voters in urban areas to be sworn in at the polls upon proof of identity and residency, similar to the process now in place in rural polling divisions. The current process to get on the voter's list in urban areas is just too complex and most students just get discouraged or don't bother, according to Shawn Rouse, President of the NB Student Alliance, who together with Vice President Policy Kelly Lamrock, appeared before the legislative committee this week. Lamrock related a personal odyssey that took him some two and a half hours before he could get on the voters list and vote on provincial election day in Fredericton. Rouse told the committee he was enumerated in three ridings: in his home



Maria Paisley Photo

town of Sussex; where he worked last summer in Black's Harbour; and where he lives while attending Saint Thomas University in Fredericton. Despite it all, Rouse claims he still did not get to vote. The Student Alliance asked the committee to provide greater discretion to the Chief Electoral Officer to ensure that voters who would be particularly disadvantaged get on a voters list. The Student Alliance also asked that a student voters guide be prepared by Elections New Brunswick, using Elections Canada's efforts as a guide. The guide would provide much-needed information to many university students who would be voting for the first time. The Alliance also wants the legislature to look into establishing a permanent voters registry using drivers license registration data. More controversially, the Alliance asked that the date of municipal elections be moved to March from May, to better reflect the make up of a community during much of the year. "When municipal elections are held in May, most university students who move home or elsewhere to take summer jobs lose the right to vote in a

community where they spend the majority of the year," Lamrock told the legislative committee. "Moving the election to March would solve this problem," said Lamrock. But at least one legislative committee member challenged Lamrock's contention, arguing that winter weather in March might be detrimental to holding municipal elections at that time. Lamrock countered by arguing that it was not unprecedented to see either federal or other elections held in March. After the session both Rouse and Lamrock seemed pleased with their reception. "I am reassured," said Rouse. "It seemed the committee was quite aware of the problems in the last provincial election with students voting and the enumeration process." Lamrock also felt the committee was sympathetic. "We wanted to make sure that we at least showed that students were interested enough that they were here." "I am hopeful that we will see some changes to the Elections Act," Lamrock concluded.

Government encourages buying computers

GORDON LOANE

THE BRUNSWICKAN

Students wishing to purchase personal computers can take advantage of a new incentive program currently being offered by the provincial government. The government is offering a provincial sales tax rebate up to a maximum of \$250 for anyone purchasing a personal computer for home use. This limited time offer does not apply to computers purchased for

business purposes or for students who purchase computers for business purposes. "One of the stipulations when you purchase the computer is that it has to be Internet accessible," said Nancy English of N.B. Inquiries. "If you purchase from an NBNet authorized dealer, then you get three months free Internet service courtesy of NBTel," said English. As an added incentive for purchasers, the Royal Bank is offering a loan rate of prime plus one per cent.

The minimum loan must be \$3,000 and the maximum is \$5,000. "This incentive is from the Royal Bank and is unrelated to the government incentive," said English. Community Colleges are also offering seminars on how to shop for a computer. Further information and other details on this incentive program and whether or not you qualify can be obtained by calling the Get Connected toll-free number, 1-888-368-2222. The Internet address for information is www.gov.nb.ca.

Former Neill House resident on trial for sexual assault

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"George went to the door and said 'Campus Police, open up.'" Smith opened the door and C was on the bed with her pants undone and her hair clip on the bed. C went into George's room and laid down for a while and then returned to her residence. The Crown then called B to the stand who told the court she went to visit friends in the "Pit" (the ground floor of Neill House) and ended up in Smith's room, where there were people sitting around talking and drinking beer. She had "some beer" and the fire alarm went off. When they came back inside, she went to get her jacket out of his room. "The other two people left," said B, adding that Smith then closed the door. "He came over and grabbed me by the two arms and said 'You're fucking me tonight.' I told him he had the wrong idea; that's not what I had in mind... I tried to leave but he had hold of me." "He started to try to kiss me, then we were on the floor, he was on top of me... I was on my back." She went on to say that he tried to put his hands in her pants. "He kept saying 'I know you want to fuck me,'" she said. "I got up and told him what I thought of him and he grabbed me by the left arm and said 'if you give me a blow job we'll forget this ever happened.'" B then testified she talked to a friend who suggested she report the incident. "I talked to my proctor, who contacted security," B claimed she had four marks on her left arm (from Smith grabbing her) leaving fingertip-like bruises. Upon leaving the stand, B wept openly in the arms of a woman in the gallery. Jody McCarthy, a Neville House resident last year, said he was in the Pit and B came up to him. "She was talking very fast, she was hysterical... very jumpy." He went into Jake's room to get B's jacket. When asked why B didn't get her jacket, McCarthy said, "She was still very wary of the room." Next, a friend of B's testified she saw B the next morning. "I noticed she had a bruise on her arm... It looked like fingerprints." She said she did not see the bruise the previous night. Another friend who lived in the same residence as complainant B said B came to her room when she left Neill House. A former Tibbits resident testified she saw B walking home. "B seemed upset," she said, but added that she didn't know why. The Crown asked what made her

think B was upset. "She seemed distraught; she looked like she might have been crying," she responded. The next witness called was the complainant A, an FHS student. She visited several friends' rooms in Neill on November 3. She was in the hall of the Pit and "was pulled from behind" by the belt loops in her pants. "It was dark in the room... my belt was being undone... my pants were down to my ankles... my bra was pulled up and... my top was pulled up." Complainant A remembered being in pain and speaking to the police. "The next thing I can remember is I woke up in the hospital," she said. Many of the details of A's testimony were difficult to hear as she was exceptionally soft-spoken. When asked by the Crown, "What consent did you give Jacob Smith that night?" A responded, "None

whatsoever." On Wednesday, Dr. Patricia Thorpe was called to the stand. Thorpe attended A at the Chalmers Hospital from 2:30 until 4:15 am on November 4. She did a full sexual assault examination, took specimens and did a visual exam. She pointed out it was difficult to examine A as she had to wake her up. "She kept falling asleep." Thorpe did not smell alcohol but took a blood sample and found "an extremely low level of alcohol," (.022). A was also prescribed something to prevent pregnancy. Thorpe gave A tests for STDs and took sperm samples. Motile (active/moving) sperm was present. Cheryl Murphy, a UNB Security Officer, was the next witness. She said she was called from Lady Dunn to Neill House around 12:30 am. "I met Jeff

Wedge, the Don of Neill. He had a girl with him in his apartment." "I took A to the bedroom and I stayed with her... she was crying and shaking and very upset. I was unsuccessful at calming her down." Murphy stayed with A for 35 minutes, at which point the City Police came and escorted A out. Wedge told the Crown that around 11:45 pm, November 4, James LaBillois came to his apartment with A. "She was upset, distraught... crying..." Telephone calls were made and Murphy came to speak to A. City Police arrived and A was taken to the hospital. Later Smith went to Wedge's apartment. Wedge told Smith "that there had been a girl that had been brought to my apartment earlier in the evening and that he [Smith] had been mentioned, or there was an allegation that there was a sexual assault or rape."

"He informed me that the girl had been in the house for the last couple of weeks... that she had relations with Craig and others," Wedge testified. "He told me that he had sex with her earlier." Wedge informed Smith he would be calling UNB security. Smith and Wedge went to the Residence Administration Building and the supervisor on duty, Gary Guitard, asked Smith to fill out an incidence report. Wedge testified that when the police arrived, Constable Hennessey asked Smith for I.D. and informed Smith he was under arrest and that he could have counsel. Wedge also informed the court that Smith was no longer a resident of Neill House as of November, 1995, by "mutual decision." Wedge said he thought it would be difficult for Smith to live within the residence community

because of the allegation against him. The final Crown witness was James LaBillois from Boston. LaBillois was a resident of Neill House. On November 3 he "heard a girl screaming." "I went out and a friend of A's was screaming at Jake," said LaBillois. "I asked her what happened and she said 'He raped A.'" He went into the bathroom where A was. "She was nuts, she was crying, her eyes were all red and puffy. A grabbed on to my arm and I told her I'd take her to Jeff Wedge's apartment." They went to the Don's apartment. Then UNB Security came and LaBillois went back down to his room. He later went with A, her two friends and the City Police to the hospital. "Then I went to the police to give a statement." Hillary Drain closed the arguments for the Crown on Wednesday.



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