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A bit of soul searching

Dear Editor,

As I was sitting in the Moncton Bus Station, trying to endure my three hour stop over to P.E.I., I began reflecting on my past three years at St. Thomas. In the past years at STU, I have been getting prepared to help people in times of their crisis. During this same period, I have been able to do a lot of soul searching.

With my graduation quickly approaching and with the resignation of Mr. Mulroney, many things come to mind. Mostly that my "calling" to help make this a better world and help people to overcome some of their struggles is much more difficult. With NAFTA, the GST and the newly proposed UI laws, there are a multitude of new victims of the system.

Some other things that come to mind are that after I graduate I will be in debt up to my eyeballs. I try to better myself and educate myself and I'm punished. What sort of incentive is that! The government and the public are always pointing to the supposedly lazy people receiving social services as the ones responsible for their own troubles and the deficit, but what incentive is their for job training and education; debt? In that case they are no further ahead, if anything they become worse off. Can anyone blame people for feeling so helpless and powerless in their own lives.

A few years ago in the Federal

Parliament, many MP's jumped on the bandwagon to do something about child poverty. If anything has changed, it has changed for the worse. Since that time above acronyms (NAFTA, GST, UI) and the new Child Tax Credit and such have failed to reach the people who need the money the most; the POOR! What are these MP's really doing about child poverty. If these children's parents are poor, I would guess the children are also going to suffer from the effects of poverty. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure that out!

During the last year I have been doing my practicum with a group for abusive men. Within that time, the premier declared one of the twelve months as family violence month. This is when a foundation on campus began to study what causes family violence. This is all well and good, but last year the premier cut funding to the various non-profit agencies who are trying to do something about the effects of this same violence. With additional cuts coming later this spring. There is a possibility that some of these groups and agencies will cease to exist. What is the point of studying it if we are not going to do anything about it. Besides, I can tell you now what the causes are: poverty, patriarchy and a government that isn't meeting the needs of its populous.

Someone asked me the other day if I think things are going to change for the better, and I answered as I usually do to this question, "Yes! How can things get any worse! However, now that I reflect upon that question and on my past 3 years at STU and upon my upcoming

graduation that things have got progressively worse in just those 3 years. When as a society and a country are we going to stop looking for scapegoats to our problems and start taking care of our fellow Canadian brothers and sisters?

Ian R. MacDonald

P.S. Remember those acronyms at the election booth!!

Tabloid-style attack

Dear Editor:

The Brunswickan's tabloid-style attack (March 12, 1993) on the Neill House Escort Service must have left the residents of that building completely disheartened. Even as a non-resident, I was angered by your zealous attempt to undermine such a well-intentioned program.

The Neill House Escort Service should not be condemned on the basis of the cited Ontario incident, which is, though reprehensible, entirely irrelevant. Since the potential for abuse of an escort system is blatantly obvious, and because Neill House coordinates its service through UNB Security, one may safely assume such dangers had been contemplated long before *the Brunswickan* cast its paranoid doubts on the subject.

Accountability and safety have always been paramount concerns in the management of the Escort Service. Escort volunteers are screened by proctors, and their names are recorded by the Security Department as a means of preventing unfortunate incidents. Like the entire

health science community, however, Neill House has been unable to devise a procedure that would accurately predict the thoughts and actions of its volunteers. Given this glaring fallibility in its screening process, (which *the Brunswickan* has kindly pointed out) perhaps Neill House should eliminate the possibility of abuse by ceasing operation of the service.

I sincerely hope that Neill House will continue its good work in spite of your disparaging remarks. If doubters had made inquiries into the motives behind the Escort Service, they might have learned that the program is only one of several

projects that Neill House has organized to raise its self-awareness with respect to the injustices faced by women.

The Gentlemen of Neill House have spent countless volunteer hours trudging through wet and cold nights in an attempt to do what is right. According to *the Brunswickan*, their efforts aren't enough. I'm beginning to wonder if nice guys really do finish last.

Yours truly,
Kelly VanBuskirk
Past president, Neill House

There will be a Graduate Student Association social on Tuesday, March 23 from 7:00 P.M. at the Social Club Do not forget to bring your I.D. Cards. This notice is directed to the members of the GSA only.



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