

NEWS

Laurier SU closes paper

by Paul Done
Imprint

Following a series of controversies over the past 19 months, the conflict between Wilfrid Laurier University Student Union, (WLUSU) and their student newspaper, *The Cord* finally reached a crisis point.

In response to student complaints following the publishing of an article entitled "Eroticized safe sex article blitzed" in the Feb. 20 edition, the WLUSU Board of Directors voted on March 3 to indefinitely suspend publication of the paper.

A second motion, which called for the immediate dismissal of *Cord* editor Tony Burke, was defeated when put to a vote.

The article in question concerned the struggles of *The Muse*, the student newspaper at Memorial University, St. John's Newfoundland.

The Muse had printed an article entitled "A Gay men's guide to erotic safer sex," which dealt explicitly and frankly with the issue of HIV transmission among gay men.

The article contained erotic descriptions of safe gay sex, along with a graphic of two men engaged in oral sex.

In publishing their report on the controversy, the editors of *The Cord* included excerpts from the article, preceded by a disclaimer which read, "The following is an excerpt from an article . . . printed in *The Muse* (which) stirred up a great deal of controversy. The opinions expressed within it do not necessarily reflect those of *The Cord*, but we wholeheartedly support anyone's right to print it."

When interviewed, WLUSU president Stuart Lewis said that the board viewed the article not as an isolated incident, but as "part of a continuous pattern of poorly edited and libellous copy."

The Cord currently has two outstanding libel lawsuits against them.

Earlier this term, following similar complaints about the content of *the Bored*, a spoof issue of the paper, a code of ethics was drawn up for the newspaper. As further justification of the decision to suspend production, Lewis said the Board of Directors felt that the article violated that code.

Lewis went on to claim that the paper "on the whole, puts the image of the school at threat." He felt that the staff of the paper did not have the "best interests of the student body" in their minds, and that they put their own interests first.

The editors of the paper, however, felt that they were completely justified in running the extract as it was informational, and was intended to contextualize the article. There was an informal meeting on the night that the paper was being prepared, and at that time there was a consensus among *Cord* staff that the controversial text should run.

Staff members of *The Cord* and members of the Student Publications' Board of Directors, under whose auspices *The Cord* is produced, expressed grave dissatisfaction with the way that the incident was handled by WLUSU.

Staff claim that no formal notice was given that the topic would be discussed at Sunday's Board meeting, thus no official representative of the newspaper was present.

Guy Etherington, editor of the entertainment section of the paper, claims that WLUSU was looking for any pretence to shut the newspaper down.

"We've printed things this year that were worse than that (article)," Etherington said.

A long-standing problem at the paper, according to both Lewis and *Cord* reps, has been the way the Stu-

dent Publishing Board is set up.

Presently, *The Cord* is financially dependent, and editorially answerable to Student Publications — an arm of the Student Union.

The staff of the paper would like editorial and financial autonomy because they feel it would allow them to make their own decisions regarding whether or not to publish copy.

Western Gazette now a daily paper

Max Farley and Tara Smyth
The Gazette

The University Students' Council (USC) of the University of Western Ontario became the proud parent of a daily student newspaper two weeks ago.

Thirty-six of 43 USC members voted in favor of allowing *The Gazette* to publish four times a week, starting in September, 1991. The expanded paper will include national and international news from The Canadian Press wire service.

VP-communications Jeff Naphin, who supervises the paper, called the expansion "a great step forward."

President-elect Craig Shepard urged doubters to vote for the expansion because "there is no good time to expand, just as there is no good time to have kids."

Shepherd later called the move historical. Not all councillors shared his sentiment.

VP-student affairs Dave McGilvray voted against the motion, saying the content of the proposed paper should be examined further and the expansion should wait a year.

Mark Nadeau, who recently ran

for USC president and lost, expressed strong opposition to the expansion.

Nadeau called the paper "a special entity unto itself," fulfilling a special need to inform as well as to report campus news.

Nadeau also criticized *The Gazette's* current coverage of campus events, particularly with respect to the USC.

Michael Gray, USC speakers commissioner, said students will receive little more than "news McNuggets" from the sparse world news coverage he said is offered by the wire service.

After the vote, Scott Feschuk, Editor-in-Chief of *The Gazette*, said he was extremely pleased with the success of the project.

"It's a credit to council that it can rise above the traditional animosity between us and make a sound business decision," Feschuk said.

The model for the paper's expansion was based on a study of daily college newspapers in the United States. *The Gazette* will continue to be distributed free of charge to students.

The paper will publish Tuesday through Friday.

Campus Chronicles

by Jennifer Lim
Brock University

Susan Whyte, an American Sign Language (ASL) teacher at Sheridan College is determined to start a signing course at Brock.

The ASL course "helps people to understand facial expressions and body movements so that they sign better," said Whyte.

According to the Brock Press, there is one professional interpreter for the approximately 3000 deaf people in the Niagara Region.

In November of 1990, the ASL was officially recognized as a language of instruction.

University of Western Ontario

Theresa MacInnis, editor of the King's Chronicle was fired for producing a section, the Chronicle-Exile in the February issue of *The Gazette*.

The King's Chronicle was told not to publish the paper until the King's College Student Council (KCSC) reviewed the contents of the paper.

In a typed statement the KCSC said that, "In perception and reality the (Chronicle-Exile) was the February issue of the King's Chronicle."

MacInnis who was fired then reinstated and then fired again, maintained that her removal was not justified.

United Jewish Appeal

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