

EDITORIAL

Merry Christmas...where's my cheque?

BY JAMES ROWAN

As Christmas approaches yet again, the annual rituals of university life loom large. Foremost amongst these is, of course, the examination period. Secondly, there is the inevitable end of term essay crunch. Thirdly, there is the normally venomous debate over honouraria at the UNB Student Union meeting.

For the first time that I can recall, the Council was successful in ramming through the honouraria schedule without any debate, aside from one rather thinly veiled attack on the priorities of the Council and the Honouraria Committee. Normally these meetings drag on for hours as those who have gotten the short end of the stick—or Councillors who get docked \$25 because they've been to meetings so infrequently that no one recognizes them—whine about the horrible injustice of the system. Others wax poetic about the philosophical merits of honouraria, the high cost of these bonuses and how some people plainly don't deserve them, or deserve several times more than they are going to get. Well, they're all right.

The honouraria system, for those unfamiliar with the term or the process, comprises several tens of thousands of dollars set aside by the Student Union to reward its volunteers for their hard work. The recipients are those exceptionally useful, hard-working or keen volunteers in the area of student services (Media, Council, Alcohol Awareness, Campus Safety, Orientation, etc.), or those lucky enough to worm their way into a safe sinecure.

My position on honouraria is, to be perfectly honest, in no small part coloured by the money I am scheduled to receive over the course of the year. Whatever funds I receive must be weighed against the 40-60 hours every week I spend working on *The Brunswickan* and on other student publications. Obviously, when that sort of time commitment is involved, there is no way to adequately compensate the volunteers for their time—so we don't. Honouraria is meant to be a token of thanks, a pat on the back for a job well done and for all the hard work that went into making

the students' lives a little easier.

When you consider the massive time commitment (on top of full course loads), it is obvious that we aren't in it for the money. While abuses do happen, for the overwhelming majority of the recipients, honouraria is what it was meant to be: a thank you, not a job. But it cannot be denied that without this money, neither myself, nor any of the Executive nor most of the editors of the Brunswickan could afford to be involved. We are spending so much time here that we have very little time to study, let alone to find part-time employment.

The main problem with honouraria isn't the total amount given, but the obscene disparity between the top and the bottom of the scale: as an editor, I am getting 25 times more money than I received as a staffer last year, and doing only twice as much work—and, obviously, some of the hardest working volunteers anywhere are receiving only 1/25th as much as I do for a comparable effort. Such disparities will always exist—and I don't have an easy answer. One way to resolve the difficulty would be to revamp not the amounts, but the system whereby they are awarded. Presently, every position has a set honouraria. No amount of work can get you more money, but non-performance and laziness can get you less. The tendency is to fund positions, because they are predictable and stable. As a result, the staff who do all the leg work are left in the cold, for it is impossible to estimate how many there will be and what sort of compensation would be fair.

Something has to be done. Taking into account staff participation would be a big help, and wouldn't hurt recruitment either. And despite the large amounts of money already involved, in many (most) cases the honouraria have to be increased. In this time of budget shortfalls and tight incomes, this is bound to be unpopular. But not as unpopular as the total collapse of student services on this campus.

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to reappear on the banner restraining orders and lots of them.
for people to stop referring to him as *Karen's Love Snack*
for everyone to call him "Snugglebunny" instead of "Mr. Cranky"—a closer reflection of his true personality, he says.
for the Student Union to love him again, and some Chik-on-Pang! for his stocking another scoop to sniff out.
yet another extra-curricular activity.
to meet the guy in the Camaro.
a last name that doesn't rhyme with a private part.
something to top his Camille Paglia interview—even if Clinton isn't returning his calls.
for people to stop thinking she's still going to STU
Rugby goes Varsity.
for him to be quiet for an entire day—oops, that's what the rest of us want.
a copy of Emily Post's new *Answering Machine Etiquette in the 90's*
a lifetime supply of chocolate
to get the column he always writes his pieces for, but doesn't have.
for Dez to finally find that damn G&S ad for *Whut's Gwan On*.
for Stradivarius/OEG to go double platinum.
a lift home to Sydney for the holidays.
to get tickets for something she's supposed to review.
a review.
the publication of his new darkroom guide, titled *You guys suck*.
All the world's a Skater park, and all its people Skaters...
as many publication credits as Lumpy.
that writer babe.
"If you took out your spleen and look at it..." wins as viewpoint question.
we're too scared to ask.
a Jerry Garcia tie. And his own personal proof-reader.
a Hamilton Aerosmith tour date.
a high paying job as the world's leading Mac Guru. Failing that, a case of Keiths.

Darlene Greenough:
Chris Lohr:
Mimi Cormier:
Jason Simmons:
Josee Guidry:
the typesetters:
Rambo Norris:
Jamie van Raalte:
Team Leader:
Hugh Macneil:
Chantal Albert:
Paul Estabrooks:
Pat FitzPatrick:
The rest of the Student Union:
Liz Lautard:
Tammy Yates:
The Marlenes:
Glenna:
Heidi & Shona:
The Social Club:
Pub in the Sub:
CHSR:
The Pillar:
The Aquinian:
Munro:
Kelly Lamrock:
President Robin Armstrong:
The Math Department Secretary:
CBC, ATV, MITV:
Donahue:

a real job
more death poets—because a page can never be *too* depressing.
for people to realize that underneath the wild, hell-raiser façade, she's really a quiet, reserved sort of person.
for people to realize that Techno-Weenie is his title, not his name. Also a 12 Step recovery program for DOS Heads.
an air freshener.
two(sic) git(sic) a proofreading(sic) semenair(sic).
capital punishment for smokers.
an all show-tunes Radio station (explains the CHSR Funding situation, huh?)
an Education—or at least an Educator.
an autographed copy of *Team Leader: The Collected Correspondence*
Pearl Jam/Nirvana live at the SUB Cafe students \$69.00, i.d. required at the door.
for people to stop calling him VP-Stationery and Office Supplies.
Valium—even if you don't know you want it, you need it.
for Fitz to chill.
for Steve Miller to officially dedicate "Take the Money and Run" to her.
for people to forget she's not on the executive anymore.
all expense paid trip to Donahue and for Rowan to stop spending money
a neon sign that says "Rumour Control Central"
a smaller neon sign that says "We don't know, we're only here part-time."
the grand opening of the Social Pub for the above not to happen
Same as last year and the year before: an audience. Also a budget.
Respect.
Help. Also an audience.
to be ahead of the office goldfish in the order of succession.
to be hired as Letterman's Top Ten List writer for the Bruns to go out daily.
Combat Pay.
a branch office in the SUB to cut down on gas.
Camille vs. Matin: 10 Rounds, Winner take all.



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