



mugwump journal

by Deborah Geneau

We've made it through the second week of classes. Things are still relatively quiet on campus but I'm convinced it's the calm before the storm. I should warn you, dear readers, that I am a pessimist.

The biggest event last week was the Extraganza with the Tenants and Sherrif. As usual, liquor tickets sold out at 10:30 and booze around 12:30. There were a number of people who did not arrive at the SUB until 10:30 or shortly thereafter. Paying \$5.50 for an Extraganza ticket and waiting in that practically immobile line at the door only to discover the pub is dry is (to say the least) not pleasant. Orientation is not to blame for the shortage of liquor but the NBLCC, naturally. True, liquor lasted until 12:30 one might argue but one factor cannot be overlooked. Students drink like pigs. Buying tickets at these things is a regular rat race. First come, first served. Survival of the most persistent.

You have to give Darren Evans credit for turning CSL around. Finally we are getting half decent entertainment on this campus. I personally thought Sherrif was ajoke. They, however, seemed to think they were something great with their tight(ish) leather pants, shoulder length hair and total lack of stage presence. The crowd upstairs were about as enthusiastic as the band (with the exception of one guy who was dancing up a storm).

The Tenants were a different story. They showed signs of life and so did the crowd in the cafeteria. I wish I could write something more about their music but it's all sort of a haze.

Oh yes. The second week of classes and already rumours of sexual violence are floating around. They are politely referred to as "incidents"; the "incident" at McLeod or the "incident" at Harrington. The mentality of "men" who attack, harass or rape is completely beyond my comprehension. The number of these "incidents" on this campus and in this city is amazingly high for the size and population here. A friend recently said to me, "I don't feel safe in this city" and I'm inclined to agree with her. Hopefully Neill House will resume their escort service for women on campus. It's a great service.

It greatly disgusts me that women are not safe on this campus or on the streets at night. Fredericton is a far cry from a large, crime ridden metropolis. There's something wrong. There are a lot of sick minds out there.

I must say I am greatly relieved to see the new color of the annex in the Tilley parking lot is brick red. Not Pink. The boys from the physical plant had me worried for a few days.

I'd like to wish Jeannie a Happy Birthday. Hope you have a nice time this weekend.

ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! HI MATTHEW.

editorial 8-THE BRUNSWICKAN

SEATBELTS - A GOOD IDEA

On November 1, the New Brunswick government will enact mandatory seatbelt legislation, meaning all passengers in a car have to wear the belts. Anyone under the age of sixteen will be the responsibility of the driver.

The main argument I have heard against this legislation is it is our decision whether we should wear seat belts or not and no one, not even, or rather - especially, the government, has the right to force us. Those that argue in the vein conjure up images of Orwell's big brother wathing over our shoulder, supervising our every move. They are tired of being legislated to death.

The correct term is more likely legislated to life. It has proven time and again that seatbelts save lives. Admittedly, there are those who have died in car accidents because of being trapped in cars by seatbelts but those cases are a small percentage. Of the four means of death in car accidents only one is a result of being trapped in the car. Statistics and studies show your chances of surviving an accident are far greater when wearing seatbelts.

Attempts have been made to educate the public to the advantage of seatbelts but they refuse to get the message. Too many people die each year as a result of accidents and if the seatbelt legislation will reduce that number then it should be supported.

Attitudes need changing.

Beginning the school year with no place to sleep is the worse possible experience a student can have and an alarming number of kids are starting this year in just that manner. Granted, students who waltze into town early in September expecting to find an apartment are either extremely naive or extraordinarily careless - with the exception of foreign students who may not have the opportunity to fly to Fredericton during mid summer to go apartment hunting. This is also true of Canadian students - the ones fortunate enough to have a job. One important fact remains. There are no apartments available in this city. Isn't that wild? This is a university town and there is not an apartment to be found. Furthermore, there are no projects to develop student housing or even construct new apartment buildings! None!

The students lucky enough to actually find an apartment (usually across the river or in some obscure place called Wilmot Park or Keswick Ridge) is then faced with a ridiculous rent which does not include basic heat or lights.

It is possible to find habitation on the North side of the river at a rent level considerable lower than the Fredericton average but this is not a practical solution for students. The majority of students lack an independent means of transportation and the bus system in this city is the pits. Why should students be forced to live so far away from the university anyway?

This is great for the residence. Even though residence life has less to offer now than ever before, the houses are packed to overflowing. The extra students accepted into residence are put up in hotel rooms. Nice. Maybe hotels should begin offering a special rate for students.

Back to the poor student looking for an apartment in Fredericton - he or she will find many obstacles in this course. Lack of accomodations is the fundamental stumbling block. Discrimination, or rather, reluctance on the part of the landlord to even accept students as tenants is the next. Landlords have begun introducing excessive conditions under which they will rent to students; no overnight guests, no subletting during the summer months, and others.

A student will often pay over three hundred dollars a month for a two bedroom hole in the ground. Landlords make a killing off dumps and dives no respectable person would live in. Students do not have a choice. They take what they can get and it's rarely worth the money they pay for it.

At the other extreme are students who opt for apartments far more expensive than they had planned or can afford. Forest Hill Towers (that luxurious place where high rise living has become a way of life or something like that) is not full for the first time in its history. No doubt there are few students living there (it's almost impossible for a student to get in) but that fact says something significant about living conditions in Fredericton.

It's time something were done. Students come here and pour their money into the university and the city - it is time they got something in return. Students are growing tired of being treated like dirt - we are people too - with feelings, needs and expectations. Fredericton has a backward attitude toward university students - that attitude is simply not caring.

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