

Issue 11 **editorial**  
BY MACK MORGAN

Call me pissy. Usually when something irritates me or annoys me a lot, I would use this space for a rant and/or a rave. Well, this week I'm not quite as pissed off as usual. Maybe it's the nice weather of late. You know all that drizzle, and sloppy wet grass that *still* stenchs of earthworms. So, in honour of a little thing annoying me, a little editorial.

The University of New Brunswick and countless other schools in North America are guilty of undermining and the cheapening of our institutions of higher learning. Possibly faulty teaching, or not catering to the mental regression-itis of students causes this. Generally however, professors who actively engage in scaling of marks instrument the decay of our education and the validity of our degrees.

Scaling of marks is as old as universities or colleges. Professors use a formula or a rule of thumb to effectively gauge the expected performance of a class and their actual performance. This is known as a round about "Bell Curve." When their is a great difference in the two, professors engage in the scaling of marks to bring about the class percentages and marks back into a spectrum which they had originally anticipated.

Professors scale marks for two main points: the test, midterm or exam was too hard or the students were too dumb. In my experience, I have found it very rare for students to be too dumb. Maybe too lazy or unmotivated but never too dumb.

Professors possibly have an ulterior motive to scale their marks. By scaling their marks, profs look better in the eyes of the administration and students. The administration sees a high GPA and thinks "This professor effectively communicates the aspects of the course." And Joe or Jane Student sees it as "Yes, an easy grade and no work." I'm not trying to belittle academia, but maybe profs should do away with scaling and give us what we earn and, oh yeah this might improve our ratings in Maclean's and better prepare us for the job market—*honestly*.

*The Mugwump Journal*

Academics and their politics make Mafioso look like a convent of cloistered nuns at Sunday Mass. Most academics are individuals with the same levels of education, same income expectations and the same future. A former political science professor, who taught at UNB for years, captured the image rather well.

"Son," he said, "academics are a bunch of prima-donnas." I just resigned as UNBSU V.P. External Affairs, ending 2.5 years in student politics. So this is my last chance to delve into the arcane and banal world of academic politics. This is my chance to spill it off before I head off into "life after student politics"; so no discussion of federal, provincial or student union politics. Let's talk about the prima donnas who are charged, as one former UNB president stated, with acting "in loco parentis" for all of us nice young boys and girls.

I have dealt with politics at UNB as a student and as a politician. Both experiences have frustrated the Hell out of me and tarnished what would otherwise have been a wonderful experience at UNB. Too many of the old-guard academics are petty bureaucrats bent on protecting their academic fiefdoms at all costs, come Hell or high water. Sure there are exceptions. The registrar, her associate for enrollment and admissions, an Associate Dean in Forestry & Environmental Management, a certain "Dr. Woodstock" who sits on EMAC and, of course, Trinda are amazing people. People who work all day long solving problems for students, creating new programs which will make UNB the place to be in the next century trying to improve the quality of our lives here at UNB. These folks, and a handful of others, could have a significant impact on this institution, but are thwarted in their efforts by the people who make up the machine known as "Academic Politics."

I could tell stories all day— about a faculty member on Senate & Board of Governors (BOG) possessed of the need to deliver lengthy diatribes on the proper use of grammar in various pieces of academic legislation; a BOG chairperson who refers to our elected representatives as "little snots," and treats them in a manner which is offensive and condescending; cases of individual and systematic discrimination against women, gays, international students and minorities in both the professoriate and in the student body, most of which go unpunished and, in some cases, covered up by various officials at this institution; the real story behind the handling of the case of a certain former Assistant Professor of Mathematics & Statistics, about a professor who recently assumed control of an initiative which, for as long as anyone can remember, has been run by the departmental student association but has been hijacked by one professor in fulfillment of a personal agenda; a professor with the seemingly endless need to sexually harass female students and abuse the graduate students under his tutelage, about professors mis-using and mis-appropriating research funding, and great programs which were never begun because the person who originated the ideas was not "in" with a certain clique in a department or faculty. Get the point?

Want to know the Hell of it? Stories such as these are not in any way unique to UNB. In my dealings with student associations across the nation, I have heard some which are even more petty or egregious than those which I have seen at UNB. These are the types of stories which give universities bad names. When these are coupled with media attention, they lead to events like we have witnessed at UB's department of political science. No amount of spin-doctoring by university P.R. flacks can make these sorts of stories go away.

It boils down to good people being undermined by a few bad apples who have lost track of the ideal *oiacademe*. Universities are places where people come to mature and expand in mind and spirit. This idea must be protected, but to do so requires the weeding out of those who seek to subvert the process for personal gain or who bring to our institutions personal baggage, which has no place in our classrooms, laboratories and libraries. This, my friends, is the challenge: reorienting academic politics so that the focus is placed where it belongs: on the academe and all who comprise it, not simply on the prima-donnas

by Patrick FitzPatrick

**Blood n' Thunder**



Please print this... I'm one of your Arts Reps

To the Editor,

Please print this article in *The Bruns* so that I may initiate contact with all presidents and/or executives of clubs and societies in the Arts faculty. My goal in initiating this contact is to obtain information on these clubs' ongoing activities so that I may be able to assist them in student union affairs.

The reason for my concern on this issue is that the Arts faculty is so diverse that there is difficulty in obtaining the information necessary to make informed decisions and advise council on what these clubs are doing. My wish is to concentrate our energies so that we will create a unified voice on issues and maintain some communication links between the Arts reps and the clubs and societies that we, in part represent. Personally, I think it would make my job a lot more easier and fulfilling and I could stop being uninformed about what each club is doing. So please, if any of you presidents or execs are out there reading this, please make contact with me so that I may set up a meeting with you all. My E-mail address is J320, my phone number is 454-8953, or leave a note in my mail box in room 126 in the SUB. Your participation in this venture would be greatly appreciated and I hope to represent you better in the future. I would like to thank *The Bruns* for the time and space provided.

Yours Truly,  
Jonathan Bishop,  
Arts Rep.  
U.N.B. Student Union

**Abortionism, cults, freedom and whatever**

Dear Editor,

Contrary to the inclusive philosophy of freedom, which holds that rights are intrinsic with human life, the philosophy of all oppression holds that rights are granted or denied to the powerless based on criteria the powerful choose to recognize. This philosophy can be thought of as the central dogma of a non-theistic, idolatrous cult which worships human reason as competent to choose exclusionary criteria for membership in human community. The sects of this

cult are defined by their criteria for excluding others. Thus, the Racist sect excludes people on the basis of ethnicity, the Creedists on the basis of religion, the Birthists on the basis of prenatal or postnatal status, etc.

Because this philosophy rationalizes the termination, truncation, cutting short or "aborting" of human rights, the term "Abortionism" characterizes both the cult and its unifying dogma. Power is a major idol of the cult (see Orwell's 1984), especially the power to choose whose lives or liberties may be terminated or "aborted". A Birthist Abortionite mantra neatly captures this with the question "Who decides?"

Will we ever learn to recognize and reject this cult and all its destructive choices? For a much more detailed discourse on Abortionism, visit the World Wide Web at URL <http://www.mich.com/~buffalo>.

Sincerely,  
Alfred Lemmo

**Quit strutting around like a...Peacock, UNB Security**

Dear Editor,

In regards to the article in the tenth issue of *The Brunswickan* entitled, "Three sexual assault charges laid," I am writing as a woman of this campus to express my outrage at the statement made by Rick Peacock, director of security at UNB. By his own admission, he essentially blames, in part, the victimised women for their attacks. By "encourag[ing] all to take the necessary precautionary measures to reduce the risk of possible being victimized in a similar situation," he is saying:

1. Women: don't walk alone, especially at night. Now for a lot of women, this is not only difficult as a task, but insulting as a duty. Why should we have to sacrifice our right to walk alone at night safely for our right to be free from assault?

2. Use the SafeWalk program: That's what it is there for! As I understand it, this program is run out of Neill House—the house in which a resident was recently accused and will now face three sexual assault charges. Does this sound like a good idea?

Despite the offensive implications of Mr. Peacock's statement, I wish to recommend that the following measures be undertaken in order to protect women from sexual assault occurring again.

1. Get better lighting: It is an abomination that this lovely campus is

cloaked in darkness in the evening, lending itself to conceal predators while women must attend evening classes, meetings or use facilities such as the library.

2. Change the Walk-Safe program: it should be altered to be a student service wherein a woman and a man are required to escort any individual requesting the services of the program. [Editor's note: this is already the case. See "SafeWalk goes Co-Ed" Issue 7.]

3. Refocus the Security department—first and foremost, the department and the administration should solicit the opinions of women on campus in order to determine ways in which the security on campus could be improved upon. Of course, a woman, who understands the real security needs of half the campus population, could be placed in charge of the department offering a more sensitive perspective.

I hope people realize that women cannot and should not be forced indoors, in groups, in order to be free from the fear of sexual assault. What we need is real change for real safety.

Gabrielle Slouvey

**Not safe/secure with safety/security alert**

Letter to the Editor,

The "Safety/Security Alert" that was issued by the University's Director of Security and published on the front page of your November 10th issue was poorly worded. It created the impression that women who are assaulted on university property are somehow blameworthy if they fail to "take proper precautions."

I am sure that the Director of Security did not mean to imply that male violence against women is women's fault. Violence against women is mostly men's responsibility, and the responsibility of a society and a popular culture that tolerate and condone it. While the University cannot be expected to assume the entirety of this responsibility, it can be expected to provide bright lighting and a nurturing and receptive environment for women and their learning experiences.

A public clarification by the Security Chief would be timely and helpful.

Sincerely,  
Deborah Harrison  
Director Muriel McQueen  
Fergusson Centre for  
Family Violence Research