

# SPECTRUM

The opinions found in Spectrum are not necessarily the views of the Brunswickan. People interested in writing for Spectrum must submit at least three (3) type-written articles of no more than 500 words each to the Brunswickan.

## The Wimmin's Room

# Where is the money being spent?

CHANGING THE RULES! *Half the money from the Victim Services Fund is being spent on services the government already provides.*

by Rita Boudreau

Hey, did you hear that the McKenna government FINALLY decided to start dishing out some of that \$1 million bucks that's been piling up for the past five years - ya, the money that was supposed to go towards services for victims of violent crimes. Groups have been trying to get the money for two years now - ever since they were tipped off that it existed. Shit, you think groups were asking for McKenna's first born instead of money that was earmarked for services like the rape crisis centres.

Anyway, the Saint John Rape Crisis Centre got a grant of \$25,000. Not bad. I think that is about the same amount as the Fredericton Rape Crisis Centre had cut from their budget. (However, to be fair here, I should mention that the Fredericton Rape Crisis Centre also received \$5,000 from the fund.)

Of course, half the money from the Victim Services Fund is being spent on services the government already provides. (I checked with a lawyer and YES, that is illegal. But, hey, it wouldn't be the first time McKenna changed the rules to suit himself.)

My question is: Where is the money that was paying for these government services now being spent?

And, if the Victim Services Fund is created from fines levied everytime someone is guilty of a criminal offence, then why can groups only apply for the money once? It makes sense to me that if rapes and other types of violence are ongoing against women, then funding should be ongoing for services like rape crisis centres.

\*\*\*\*\*

In other news around campus... have you heard what the grad class project will be this year? Brace yourself because it's just brimming with originality and sparkle. LIBRARY BOOKS!

Yep, the grad class will be purchasing library books. Now, I've got nothing against books. Hell, I love 'em. I've got hundreds of them. I've spent entire days in the women's bookstore in Toronto, Ottawa and Vancouver.

No, it's not the project I'm pissed about, it's the way the Grad Class went about it. The first project that won a vote earlier in the fall was a playground for the daycare that is being planned for the next school year. (Funding is in place and the project is supposed to go before the Board of Governors later this month for official approval.)

But, the Grad Class and members of UNB's fund raising centre didn't like the outcome of the first vote. So the Grad Class held a second vote. Their reason for throwing out the first vote was, and I quote, "there are no guarantees that the

project will be built by spring AND there will be NOTHING TO TAKE A PICTURE OF in the spring at the graduation ceremony." Those words of wisdom from our esteemed Grad Class president Mary Dabble. (Wow, and she's a potential grad).

So a second vote was held... unfortunately no one knew about it except Mary and company. Only about 70 people voted (about half the number that voted the first time) by a mail in ballot to *The Bruns*. And of course no arrangements were made to inform students who might not read *The Bruns* or those who do not come on campus during the day. Needless to say, the library book project won.

And hey, for a mere \$25 donation you lucky photographic graduates looking for the ultimate photo opt at graduation time will be able to have your smiling mug taken next to your favourite book.

Yea, that really works for me.

However, on the plus side, the Student Union is now implementing strict guidelines as to how the grad class project will be chosen in the future as a result of the rather questionable practices of Mary and her committee. Always a silver lining if you look hard enough.

\*\*\*\*\*

Still no word yet on the charges of racism in the Business department. There was a student meeting just before the Christmas break about the whole incident. A committee is being formed by students to get some results. The latest I've heard is that Vice-President Traves was supposed to announce his decision on Dec. 8 as to whether there was racial discrimination. I still haven't heard any final word but I do know that the student who has been the most outspoken about the racism charge now has THREE charges of plagiarism against him.

It seems everytime he kicked up a fuss about racism the University

would level another charge of plagiarism against him. Certain higher ups in the Business Department even tried to get him thrown out of the Graduate program. Luckily the higher ups in the Graduate school told the business department to piss off... well, okay, they didn't use the exact words "piss off." They were more diplomatic than I've ever had the patience to be... but the message was the same.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Wimmin's Collective is looking for new writers for the Wimmin's Room. Some of them need a break... well, okay, some of them really are just going to try and stay out of trouble this term... \$10 bucks says certain outspoken writers can't do it.

If you are interested in writing or think you might be interested and would like to talk about it, call Valerie at 457-4456.

\*\*\*\*\*

There is a group of women in

Still no word yet on the charges of racism in the Business department. A committee is being formed by students to get some results.

Fredericton who are forming a committee to organize a Women's Festival for International Women's Day on March 8. Tentative plans are for a women's film festival, women's dance, women's coffee house and possibly a women's art and crafts show. The Committee wants to plan a weekend of events and is looking for women to sit on various sub-committees. The Committee is also looking for female singers, poets, storytellers, etc., to perform at the women's coffee house. For more information call Linda at the Fredericton Rape Crisis Centre at 454-0460 or Valerie Kilfoil at 457-4456.

## Positively Pink

# Gay villages in the modern parlance

GAY GHETTOS! *In Europe, a safe communal space was not usually part of the ambience.*

by Adrian Park

Gay ghettos - gay villages in the modern parlance - are a very North American phenomenon. For sure, there are areas of European cities where gay and lesbian bars and businesses gather, but there are few areas to compare with San Francisco's Castro and Market districts, Los Angeles' West Hollywood, New York's SoHo, Montreal's St. Catherine East - Beaudry, or Toronto's own village. In Europe ghettos have a darker, more sinister reputation - a safe communal space was not usually part of the ambience.

The first of the gay ghettos came about almost by accident. San Francisco just happened to be the main disembarkation and demobilization point for troops returning from the Pacific theater of World War II. By the mid-sixties, the Castro was a space where a certain degree of freedom could be achieved, alongside the remnants of the Beat Generation. In 1978, the ghetto elected Harvey Milk as the first openly gay city supervisor - and the dream seemed to be nearing fulfillment. Milk's murder, alongside that of Mayor Moscone in 1979 only seemed to reinforce the notion that safety could only co-exist with personal liberty in the ghettos. Not only was there safety in numbers, but the only safety was in numbers: the conflict between "integration" and "separatism" that had simmered in San Francisco for a decade gained

a new urgency.

All manner of community ventures arose in the gay ghettos around North America during the 1970s and 1980s: the obvious being the bars, bath-houses and sex-shops, but alongside these grew community health centres, gyms and health clubs, cultural centers, day-care facilities and even schools for lesbian and gay youth driven out of the main stream school system. With local radio stations, newspapers and elected councils, the ghettos became villages within their respective cities - eventually, candidates for public office at all levels began courting the pink vote.

I will be the first to admit that the ambience of Toronto's village, that patch between Yonge, Bloor, Wellesley and Church, is quite special. Even non-gay residents appreciate the relaxed and tolerant atmosphere, and sense of community. For gay and lesbian visitors, being somewhere where you are not a minority constantly on guard, alert for hostility, is refreshing to say the least. For gay and lesbian residents such a concentration of numbers means not having to beg and plead for municipal amenities - like other tax payers, they pay the piper, and to some extent call the tune.

One day last June I was sitting in a street cafe in Toronto's village relishing the shade of a spreading black walnut tree, when memories of another ghetto thousands of miles away, came to mind. It was twelve

years ago in Prague, Czechoslovakia, and the cemetery in the heart of the old Jewish ghetto also had black walnut trees offering welcome shade.

This ghetto had its origins in the 12th century, and was originally a near-penal compound for one of Europe's oldest Jewish communities - complete with walls, locked and guarded gates, strict curfew and squalid poverty. Sometime around 1400 the ghetto elders got permission to build a new synagogue - it's still standing, the Old New Synagogue, over the ruins of the older building, constituting the oldest Jewish sacred site in Europe still in use. During the religious upheavals of the 15th and 16th centuries the Jewish community won new freedoms, the ghetto walls were demolished, and though Jews could not own property outside ghetto, they could travel and work around the city under an Imperial edict of protection.

In the city of Faust and the golem Yiddish scholarship and culture enjoyed a golden age. By the mid-19th century the ghetto had two synagogues, its own town hall, a chamber of commerce and public works, banks, yeshivas, an academy for the study of the Kabbala, and a half-dozen Yiddish newspapers and publishers.

Between March 1939 and the last weeks of 1942 it all came to a terrifying end. Reinhardt Heydrich began by sealing the ghetto and adding to its inhabitants thousands

I will be the first to admit that the ambience of Toronto's village, that patch between Yonge, Bloor, Wellesley and Church, is quite special.

of Jews from elsewhere in Bohemia and Moravia. After Heydrich's death at the hands of the Czech resistance, his successors began the mass deportations. The children were murdered in Theresienstadt, the adults went in cattle trucks to Ernest Zundel's non-existent gas chambers in Chelmno and Auschwitz.

The Old New Synagogue still celebrates the mayor feasts and festivals, but in a Jewish population that only numbers in the hundreds, where once there were tens of thousands, religious observance is not what it was in the golden age. The Jewish town hall is a museum, its permanent exhibits dominated by a tableau of children's paintings and drawings from Theresienstadt. The modern ambience is a quiet melancholy: a psychic echo of what once was.

A ghetto can be a refuge and a safe space, but an open prison under a liberal regime is still a prison. A safe space is no substitute for real freedom, and a ghetto called a village is not real liberation, but a way-station on the road to that destination.