

WHAT'S UP?



At Alexander Galt

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25 cents

YOU DON'T GET TO DO THIS EVERY DAY!

by K.M. Fahmy

Now that Model Parliament is over, I guess there's no use in telling you all that was wrong with each and every bill and what all the members said; but I can tell you what I--as a member from the house and an active member of the debates, think.

It all started off pretty slow. The Throne Speech was pretty mundane and everyone was just starting to get their legs during the Health and Welfare Bill. Starting with the constitutional proposals, however, question periods started to heat up and some of the members began getting downright insulting. When Jasen Fauteux, the member from Sudbury took the initiative in asking a question in French, he was attacked, especially by Conservative Victor Lee who argued that he was Chinese and couldn't understand. The Conservatives even had the audacity to pounce on one of their own members, Cindy Giroux, who asserted her rights and crossed the floor to the N.D.P. "No Great Loss" stated the headlines of their paper, the Parliament Press, but obviously it was, since it gave the opposition a majority in the house.

A Parliament Press cartoon depicting their leader, Laura Madokoro, holding the head of Liberal leader Kathryn Reynolds on a platter was in very bad taste and showed just how crude the government could be. This continued throughout the two weeks, while the Conservatives lost more and more of their credibility each day.

John Buck, Finance Minister, showed his laziness by not even trying to come up with his own budget, and plagiarizing the real Finance Minister's budget. His only argument was that this was a Model Parliament, not real life, and so it wasn't necessary to come up with his own proposals. However, isn't the point of Model Parliament to learn about how the government works? If everyone mimicked what was being said in Ottawa, then how were we supposed to learn anything? (although it has been said that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery--was that your point, John?)

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TRACK & FIELD

by Shanna Loach

Track and field sprinted into the early month of May with ten meets scheduled. The first meet being May 6th, the participants were left with only four to five practices to prepare themselves for competition. On May 12th, Galt hosted their annual all relay meet. Seven schools attended from as far away as Quebec City. Our girls brought home the trophy for their division. Though the boys lost to Massey Vanier, Galt had the most points and won overall.

Track and Field is definitely not a dying sport. The school first opened with over 2700 students which has declined to approximately, 975. Over the years the number of participants in this sport has remained constant!

With about 60 athletes, Mr. Heath believes they have a very strong group, both as a team and individually, many of whom are new and others who have once again returned to represent our school.

Track and Field is more of a social sport as opposed to basketball or football. You're not on a court or field pushing and tripping the opposite team. In between events there is time to sit around and talk to various members of other teams.

With school coming to a close and both the regionals and the provincials being towards the end of June, we wish everyone participating the best of luck!

RAMPANT CONDOMS AND SLINKY SEX--WHAT'S NEXT?

by Karen Black

Well, here's an update on Galt's big scandal--(cover your ears, O naive ones) CONDOMS (that horrible C-word!). A few months ago, when I first heard that Galt was going to have condoms, I thought, "hey! condom machines! Water balloons!" but in fact, condoms are only available if you go down to the school nurse. And if you go down to the school nurse, you have to get a lecture before you're given your prize. On top of that, no one under 14 will be given a condom.

Fine. It makes sense--all of it. But first of all, you've got to wonder whether the shyer people are going to go down to the nurse's office and endure what they might think of as humiliation. It's hard for a timid person to go and ask for protection and have to sit there wondering what the nurse is thinking (e.g. "My Goodness! HE's having sex? I would never have imagined that HE would...") And if a 13 year old comes asking for a condom, you've got to figure that most probably he or she is already sexually active.

As it happens, so far (according to our school nurse, Yvette Bourque) only older students have come for a goody bag. But in the three months condoms have been available here, those older students are part of the very few who have actually come by for protection. Of course, it seems pretty obvious why; in my opinion, people would be more likely to go to a CLSC or a drugstore where they're unknown, or, if they can't get to either, to simply not use anything at all. Our nurse disagrees with me; she feels that people would find it more embarrassing to go to a drugstore than to come talk to her, someone whom they know.

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Before long, parliament had become a mindless war of words, with people on both sides trying to make others look bad. I was attacked for constantly bringing up what I believed was important and needed to be addressed in the house, but obviously the government didn't want to hear it. Perhaps they were afraid that they wouldn't know how to respond.

Many people were dissatisfied with Parliament, and saw how useless standing up and insulting people was. No one was exempt, whether it was "women beating their wives" (I admit that it was I who stated this embarrassing blunder) or the Parliament Press not knowing how to spell the word "peek". Everyone was attacked for making mistakes or being assertive. From the eyes of this Liberal, it made Parliament pretty stupid. (Though I must admit, it was a hell of a lot of fun and I'd do it again if I was asked!) This article was not meant to offend anyone, but if it did, forget about it—parliament is over!

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I asked if she thought that if we had condom machines we would be encouraging sex, and she answered quite adamantly that that would not at all be the message we would be giving. Shaking her head, Yvette repeated "Protection should be available". As a parent, however, Yvette thinks that high school students are much too young to become sexually active. She added, though, that she remains neutral on the subject at school. She explained to me that T.V., society, and pornography send the message that sex is good, and that you simply aren't a real man or a woman if you're not doing it.

It's true—take jean commercials, for example. It's reached the point where you can't even tell the ad is for clothes; after all, the only things shown are slinky, sexy, half-naked women flaunting themselves all over the screen. And let's not forget those blue-eyed hunks of virile man-hood who are busy leaning seductively against their shiny red corvettes. Commercials like that aren't telling you to wear jeans—the message they're giving out is more like DON'T wear jeans (or anything else, for that matter!). In any case, it certainly encourages teenagers (their target audience) to have sex younger and younger. Compared with this, parents and teachers shouldn't waste their time fighting insignificant things like whether or not to have condoms available at school. It seems pretty petty, when the real problem results from so much porno, violence, and publicized casual sex. When those things have been abolished, my bet is that we won't even need condoms at school anymore.

Think about it.

Tears were shed as our students said their goodbyes to their new best friends. They were sad because they were leaving Canada, but happy to have made new buddies.

Looking back on the previous month, most were astonished to realize that it had gone by so quickly. Time flies when you're having fun!

The German students weren't the only ones sad. Our students, realizing how much school work they had missed, were also feeling ill. While the German students were here, they went to such sights as the Haskell Library and Colby Museum, Thetford Mines, and Montreal to see an Expos' game. Most of the Germans had never seen a baseball game before. They received signed baseballs from Expo players. At the end of the fourth inning they were warmly welcomed, by kind words on the new scoreboard. During their one day stay in Montreal, they visited the Fur Museum and were given a guided tour of Fort Chambly. They were fortunate to meet Quebec's minister of transportation Sam Elless during our visit to Quebec city. They then went to the Old Port and also to the Musée De Quebec where we saw famous art artifacts and received a tour of the old prison.

The Sunday before they left we held a final dinner with all the exchange students and host families. We were fortunate enough to view the debut concert of Steve Walker and his partner Marcel, singing "In The Jungle".

The Monday that they left many were sad to leave Canada. They wished they could stay here. They thanked all their host families for having made their stay something they would never forget. After exchanging addresses, everybody said their tearful goodbyes. Even the parents were upset to see them leave. The Galt students were thinking positively though, by saying that they would see them in 45 days and 7 hours! They were mostly upset that some probably would never make it back to Canada.

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NITWITS AND DUMBNESS: THE OPIATES OF INTELLECTUAL OLYMPICS PROVINCIAL FINALS by Karen Black

This was IT: the Provincial finals for the Intellectual Olympics competition. We were pitted against our old rivals: Massey Vanier Regional High School. As our school band kicked off the championships with the music of "Fame" and "O Canada", the championships were under way. Our team was made up of Nancy Beattie, Mark DeBoer, Kareem Fahmy, Chris Forrest, Cynthia Giroux, Bronwen Kyffen, Laura Madokoro, Marie-Eve Owen, Christina and Kathryn Reynolds, and Tony Hodge (who was replacing Jessica Mills as she was sick).

First in the line of competition was Current Events. This was obviously our strongest event, thanks especially to Kareem Fahmy and Laura Madokoro who answered most questions with speed and accuracy. Massey Vanier lagged behind in points until the end, when player #8 (whos name I neglected to learn) got into the spirit of things and finally began answering a few questions. Fortunately, he wasn't quite spirited enough to win the event for Massey, as we triumphed with 430 points to their (measly) 250.

The next event was Math/Science. Both teams were sadly deficient in this part of the competition. Neither school could answer more than a few questions, though some of the contestants seemed to be having fun with their beepers for the heck of it. E.g. QUESTIONER: what is the percentage of this in this and that plus that? CONTESTANT: beep! uh, I don't know. This sort of answering went on throughout this excruciatingly boring event. Massey managed to eke out a victory, though, with 190 points over our 110. (Please note that each question was worth 10 points, not 1.)

Debate followed. I have to mention that in my last I.O. article I put down the officials for having terribly boring topics, but I was pleased to note that this time the debaters were given a topic that was engaging. "Be It Resolved That Television Is The Opiate Of North Americans" brought out a whole slew of interesting and funny arguments which picked up the pace of the competition after the disastrous Math/Science. Our team members, Kareem Fahmy and Kathryn Reynolds had well-written and entertaining speeches, as well as strong arguments for the affirmative. Massey's team,

however, was not so well-prepared. It seemed to me that the first speaker was simply saying whatever came to mind; he didn't really have a single argument other than T.V. not containing opium or that his little brother was hyper. All he did was crack jokes during the whole speech. His partner was more successful; at least she knew what a debate required. She had a good, well-prepared speech.

As for the rebuttals, Kareem's was so strong (though slightly petty!) that I figured we had probably won the event. After all, Massey's rebuttal was pitiful. All the first speaker did was repeat what he had said before, and make even stupider jokes. Though the audience roared with laughter, I wasn't impressed.

Unbelievably, Massey Vanier managed to win the event. This is completely beyond me. In my opinion, and many others, the debaters from Massey had no idea what a debate was. They seemed to think it was some sort of stand-up comedy act; the one who gets the more laughs wins. That concept may work for drama, but it doesn't for debating. I was disgusted with the results. A debate is a discussion--not a show.

Engineering was next. The engineer's task was to make some sort of "robotic" arm (maneuvered by one team member) that would lift weights and deposit them in a bucket. Though our team (made up by Cynthia Giroux and Mark DeBoer) had a simple design for their arm, and had some difficulty getting their weights into the bucket, they made it through the first round. Massey's team had a more complex design that worked well, depositing the weights smoothly and skillfully into the bucket. Unfortunately, their design wasn't very strong, and in the second round their mechanism began to bend dangerously. Both teams made it to the third round, but both robotic arms broke on the 5 kg weight. The final decision was that Massey won because they had a better design.

Drama followed, and was by far the best event in the whole competition. The skits were based on proverbs--Galt's was "All Is Fair In Love And War". With Marie-Eve Owen and Chris Forrest as the leads, our team did a hilarious (though EXTREMELY crude!) presentation on a wife who was disgusted with her husband on their second anniversary. Kathryn Reynolds added a great touch as an irate Italian waitress in the restaurant where the husband and wife were seated. In all three I.O. competitions this year, this was certainly our team's best and most appreciated drama production.



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PICKS OF THE MONTH by K.M. Fahmy

Concrete Blonde-WALKING IN LONDON

The First really successful album was called "Bloodletting." It told the stories of an alcoholic named "Joey", a hooker named "Caroline" and "Tomorrow, Wendy" was going to die of AIDS. Throw in a few vampires and "The Beast" called love, and you had yourself one of the best alternative albums of the year.

So what has Johnette Napolitan and her band got in store for us this time ? A Ghost of a Texas Ladies Man and some James Brown. Quite the interesting combination. What was so great about "Bloodletting" was that each song had its own distinct character while they all worked together really well. From the hard rock of "The Sky is a Poisonous Garden" to the slow medly of "Lullabye", each song was a gem.

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Massey Vanier's skit left a little more to be desired. Sure, it was funny, but it was also dumb. The plot line was something about a drowning woman (who couldn't keep her concentration and kept laughing), and a bunch of British hypocrites. It had some great one-liners, but basically no substance. It was completely meaningless, though it fit well with their proverb "Discretion is the better part of valor". Apparently meaninglessness and dumbness was "in" with the judges, however, because they voted that Massey's team should win.

Since Massey Vanier didn't know about the Creative Writing event, our team simply did a demonstration. Instead of writing a story and reading it, our Creative Writing team (Christina Reynolds and Tony Hodge) wrote a series of commercials, then presented them with the help of Galt students Tim Crook and Robyn Stronach. They were funny and well done.

The results from art finished off the competition. I couldn't figure out what the assignment had been--all I know is that there were some pretty weird posters on the stage. Galt won.

So that was the end of the battle of wits and knowledge. Though Massey Vanier won overall, I think it was obvious to any nitwit that they weren't any better than our team. Massey was good, but so were we: next year we'll kick their butts. Long live the spirit of competition!

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I wish I could say that for Ghost of a Texas Ladies Man". The album tries to be like "Bloodletting (the Vampire Song)" from the last album but comes off as a humorous bit of fluff. "Les Coeurs Jumeaux" contains some French lyrics which seem odd coming from Johnette. "Woman to Woman" isn't bad and "Someday?" is okay. "City Screaming" begins with very real sounding city noises which blend into a song. "...Such a Long Time Ago" rounds it out.

But those are the good songs. And these have the potential to be some of the band's greatest hits. The title track, "Walking in London" is the best. The lyrics are captivating, the guitars are hypnotic, and Johnette's husky voice envelops you. A gem!

"Why Don't You See Me" is sad and slow and one of the best songs in the band repertoire. Wonderful. "I Wanna Be Your Friend Again" is great. There's no other way to put it--just great.

And there's one which isn't bad and isn't good; the remake of James Brown's "It's a Man's World". Concrete Blonde and James Brown? Who knew?

If you're a Concrete Blonde fan get it--you'll like it--if you want to hear them for the first time, pick up "Bloodletting" which was superb.

CHOICE PICKS: "Walking in London", "Why Don't You See Me", "I Wanna Be Your Friend Again".

En Vogue--Funky Divas

"Born to Sing" was spectacular for a debut album, "Funky Divas" survives as a follow-up, just barely.

10 EASY WAYS TO TO FAIL YOUR JUNE EXAMS

By Karen Black

1. If teachers hand out review sheets, lose them. Don't do them either--why bother? They won't teach you anything anyways.

2. Skip a lot of classes--heck, don't bother going to school at all. Classes are almost finished anyways and it's not like you're going to miss learning anything helpful for the exams.

3. If you do go to class, don't waste your energy listening. Doodling on your binder is much more fun than learning about those quadratic equations which you didn't really understand, but hey! Who cares!

4. DON'T do homework. That would be the absolute dumbest thing to do; I mean, your brain might actually take in some useful knowledge. (And we can't have that, can we!)

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Again it begins with the girls talking among themselves, this time before a concert which blends into the first song "This is Your Life". It is followed by the first single "My Lovin' (You're Never Gonna Get It)" a great song with a great video, much like some of the songs from the first album. "Hip Hop Lover" is nice, but it includes a pretty pointless rap. "Free Your Mind" is about prejudice and almost lives up to the standard set by "Part of Me" from "Born to Sing". "Desire" is red hot and clues us in to what is yet to come from the group. "Giving Him Something He Can Feel" is decent, "It Ain't over Till The Fat Lady Sings" is a personal story told very well musically. "Give it Up, Turn it Loose" is incredible since it actually is a continuation of "Waitin on You" from their first album. I've never seen that before! "Yesterday" is yet another remake of the famous Beatles hit. "Hooked on Your Love" and "Love Don't Love You" are fine. "What is Love" is hilarious as it recites all these different meanings of the word love.

What else can I say? These girls know how to sing better than most professional singers. Their voices blend so well it's almost magical and when they sing your can't help but listen. Again, if you want to hear En Vogue for the first time, you'd best pick up their first album "Born to Sing". It was great. This, like Concrete Blonde's album is just good.

CHOICE PICKS: "My Lovin (You're Never Gonna Get It)", "Free Your Mind", "What is Love" and "Turn It Loose".

5. Don't study ahead of time. Make sure you only open your books the evening before the test; that way you can be up till 3:00 A.M. drinking coffee and trying to stay awake. Just think--the next day you won't be able to read a single question on the test because your eyes will be too blurred! Last-minute panic is the best policy.

6. When you get to the test, don't overture yourself reading specific directions or making sure you understand the questions. Things like that are so bothersome! Just write whatever you feel like.

7. Once you write an answer, forget about it. Don't waste your time re-reading or checking over your exam--the test is so boring. It's not as if it's worth making sure you had the right answers the first time.

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8. If you get multiple choice questions, just answer them randomly. You're bound to get one or two right by the end. (I like the C A B s y s t e m - - C...A...B...C...A...B...)

9. Don't answer questions clearly. Write about anything you can think of, including your dog Fluffy. Maybe they'll think she sounds cute and give you a few marks for it.

10. Be as messy as you possibly can. If you write clearly there's always the inevitably awful chance that your answer can be understood. The teachers might, (horrors of horrors!) even decide to mark it right. (And that, would be the most terrible thing that could happen. After all, we're trying to fail these exams, right?)

So good luck, and good failing. Follow these directions to the word, and you can rest assured you won't get a mark past 40%. But after all, that's our ultimate goal, isn't it!