

MUGWUMP

Five and a half hours of hell

by Jamie Rowan
and Allan Carter

I'm back ! I know, I said Al Carter would be back this week, but he was really busy, so I said I'd take over for him. Well, the results from the Student Union elections are in now, so I can talk about the people I really wanted to talk about last week. (Al should be appearing later on in the column.)

Let's start at the very top of the list, with the Student Union President. In a surprise victory, Eric Burchill defeated Kevin Fritz in a closely-fought race. This was a real shocker to everyone, most especially Kevin. Well, you win some you lose some. Hopefully, Kevin will stay active in the SU. He seems to be doing a decent job: not the most glowing compliment perhaps, but in reference to the UNB SU, the best you're going to get.

Speaking of losing some, all the incumbent VP's were re-elected. Tammy Yates won handily, in the most one sided showing since *Bambi meets Godzilla: The Movie*. Apparently, Tammy taunted Jamie "Hack'n'Slash" Van Raalte with the fact that despite the fact that Jamie was running unopposed and Tammy had a real opponent, she got more votes than he did. Oh, and as for the Dot-Matrix lady, she's in as well. Not that we mind, though: after Steve Williams' comments at the last council meeting, we have much better targets than Anna.

Some mention should be made of Steve's wonderful idea: take the current budget overrun and then take the extra amount out of next year's budget. Well, that would give us \$11,000 over 27 issues. Had it passed you'd be seeing the *Bruns: Official bi-annual student pamphlet of the University of New Brunswick*. The student meeting where all this debate went on was a marathon endurance-testing session. It was so bad that the Bruns News Department was literally working in shifts to combat fatigue. The Chair, Mr. Pink Bunny Fuzzy-Slippers himself, tried to get things moving, but it just wasn't happening.

This delay was responsible for one of the great statements in SU history, from Councillor Hall: "I have to get out of here before my car turns into a pumpkin." But mercifully, after *five hours and forty two minutes (the longest meeting since one of the many Bosnitch impeachment attempts)* of mind-numbing agony, it was over. The few who remained conscious limped home. The cleaning staff had to work around the lifeless bodies of the others. The main result of the meeting was that the budget draft proposal drawn up by the Finance Committee has been shot to hell. That piece of paper has more things drawn in and crossed out than I would have thought possible.

Apparently, last week in Mugwump, Rowan promised that I would talk about cats this week. Well, he lied.

On a more serious note, this week Canada lost one of its best broadcast journalists, Barbara Frum (The Journal). Frum was fighting chronic leukemia since 1974, something which I never knew until I heard about her death yesterday. The Journal won the Gemini Award this year for best news documentary series. Frum's ability to think quickly during interviews and never beat around the bush with her guests will be greatly missed by all the those who watch the Journal. As Micheal Enright (star of *As It Happens* CBC-radio show) put it, Frum "really gave a damn about things she dealt with in her journalism". I think that was evident to all Canadians. We'll miss her.

OPINION

The opinions found in Opinion are not necessarily the views of The Brunswickan

The min's room II

by Chad and Andrew

In light of Ms. Gushurst's diatribe of last week, we of The Min's Room feel it is necessary for clarification on exactly what our purpose is.

Our purpose is to remind the feminist movement of UNB ("The Wimmin's Room") that blatant sexist and "maleophobic" (our own word) statements will not be tolerated. If Ms. Gushurst had taken the time to read our article she would have realized that we are not against the women's movement or emancipation of women worldwide. But instead of seeing this, Ms. Gushurst has grouped us with the small minority of men who oppose the women's movement. This is of course expected because of Ms. Gushurst's own insecurity with anyone who give a legitimate opposition to her and her group's sexist rantings.

It seems that Ms. Gushurst failed to grasp the basic premise of our article ("The Min's Room", February 28, 1992). We have no disagreement with feminism in general. In fact, we are pro-feminist. The reason we "have few kind words" for "The Wimmin's Room" is because we feel that it is vitiating the feminist cause by resorting to prejudice against men. This serves only to increase the gap between men and women, which has no viable purpose.

We truly wish that we could "point out the rapists" for Ms. Gushurst, but we can't. All we can tell her is that the vast majority of men aren't and therefore have no reason to feel "uncomfortable". Is she trying to tell us that we are responsible for the actions of all other men? This is the same sort of mentality that Adolf Hitler used against Jews.

Ms. Gushurst stated that in our debut article, we gave no concrete solutions to the problems of women in society. How can one expect us, with one article, to have the solution to women's problems when "The Wimmin's Room" has not come up with one single concrete proposal in the year it has had its column. Instead of solutions to gender issues, "The Wimmin's Room" has resorted to debasing and assigning blame to all men for women's problems. Instead of debating the issues raised by us, Ms. Gushurst has compared us to Mr. Brian MacDonald ("Stand Up Guys", February 14, 1992) who, we realize is afraid of the women's movement because it threatens his power as a privileged man. We are not afraid of the women's movement. What we are afraid of is that the movement seems to have been becoming increasingly sexist in it's remarks. For example, a button worn by a feminist stated that "The more men I meet, the happier I am I own a dog". Indeed, like most reactionary and revolutionary movements, the women's movement has become hijacked by a small, vocal group who have their own ideas (usually racist or sexist).

Talking about the problem won't lead to a backlash if it is done in a sensible manner. The "real alternative" to Ms. Gushurst's brand of feminism that we have suggested is one in which men and women work together to solve sexism and the problems that it has caused for society in general. Men are standing up to sexism of all sorts, including that which is promoted by "The Wimmin's Room". Ms. Gushurst, your brand of feminism scares us because it may, given real power, deny rights and freedoms to men just because they are men. Can you deny this? From what we read in your group's column, this is the conclusion that we come to.

You stated that "Women should not be made to walk a tight rope between offending men and changing things for themselves and other women". If you truly believe in this and gender equality then why should men be forced to walk the same tight rope between not offending radical feminists and changing things for *both* genders.

Ms. Gushurst takes her hat off to all the men who stand up for women's rights and who stood up against the Montréal massacre. With this statement she indirectly accuses us of being insensitive to women's rights in general and the Montréal massacre specifically. Ms. Gushurst does not know us, so how does she know that we are not sensitive to women's issues. For the record, we feel that the Montréal massacre was a heinous crime committed by *one* man. One man who was sick and demented and did not speak for all men, and especially not us. Preventing the Next Marc Lepine will only be accomplished by cooperation between the sexes, not conflict. If Ms. Gushurst is sincerely interested in solving gender issues, then we invite her and her group to contact us, and we can all get started on stopping sexism, rape and harassment.

The ball is in your court, Ms. Gushurst. Do with it as you please.