

# THE BRUNSWICKAN OPINION & EDITORIAL

Editorial

## VNC program invades privacy

*UNB plays role of Big Brother - do they have the right?*

by Cindy Brown  
Editor-in-Chief

As "paying customers" at the esteemed University of New Brunswick, I wonder how most students feel about the Virtual Network Computing (VNC) being run on computers in the web kiosk in Tilley Hall.

From what I've heard, most students are pretty pissed. Most understandably.

What right does the university have to infringe on the privacy of students? What business does the university administration have sticking their noses in the business of the student population?

With VNC, those who had access to the passwords for the computers with the program installed on it could see

personal e-mail, bank statements - anything a student did on those computers was virtually free game.

It is my understanding that VNC has been uninstalled from the web kiosk in Tilley Hall since *The Brunswickan* published its article entitled (most wittingly) "VNC lets UNB see you and me" in the March 1<sup>st</sup> issue.

Does that mean the university is admitting they were wrong to have the program? Are they just hoping that no one will notice the article published just before March Break?

The fact the program was allowed to run in the first place appalls me.

University computer labs, such as the web kiosk in Tilley Hall, are put in place as a service to the students. But because the university provides a service to the students, does that mean they have the right to monitor every word a student types on those computers? I don't think so.

I, as a student, would have no problem

if the university installed a camera system in that hallway to monitor who was using the computer and to ensure no damage was done. I think the university stepped over the line when they installed VNC.

If the university doesn't have the money to install a camera system, why not have an employee take a walk by the kiosk every once in awhile? Better yet, pay a student to do it.

If the university allowed the installation of VNC on the computers in Tilley Hall, what else would they do? To a person who is not familiar with computers, VNC is not easily detectable - especially if you are not looking for the program specifically. What other programs could be used to "monitor" students without their knowledge?

I wonder how many students typed personal messages on those computers, while secretly being watched? Is this how someone gets their kicks - watching Joe

Student type a message to his Mommy?

Face it - most students can't afford their own computers and will use those the university provides on a regular basis.

The lab manager for the Faculty of Arts, Bill Hamilton, justified the program's use by saying it was "a security precaution" in the March 1<sup>st</sup> article in *The Brunswickan*.

I would think that if any security precautions are taken on campus, it is the student's business, as paying customers, to know. It is not the university's business to know a student's personal e-mail.

I would suggest to the university that they not take this incident lightly. A university needs "paying customers" to survive, and I don't think that many students would enroll here if they even thought they were being watched.

We pay through our teeth for an education just to get spied upon by the administration.

## Thanks J.P.

To the editor:

We would like to share a friend of ours with the university community. He worked with us long enough to create dear memories, and a deep attachment that was sadly realized in his recent death. J.P. Leblanc, so quick with a smile, was too quick in leaving and we find ourselves wanting more time to celebrate his life with him.

J.P. was the janitor at the New Forestry building, and knew its inhabitants as well as he knew the building itself. While keeping the building running clean, he still found the time to get to know everyone, and share a smile and a laugh. The man knew more about the practical art of living than most people we have known. He was happy and content, most certainly because he was also very wise. He knew how to glean the most from God's green earth, and how to share it with anyone who was interested, be it a lesson in gardening, a delivery of frozen fish from his weekend exploits in Memramcook, or an impromptu demonstration on how to open shellfish.

J.P. revealed his deep love for his family in warming stories about his wife, parents, and siblings. His stories of growing up in New Brunswick wove a vibrant tapestry, threaded with detail in both French and English. The strength of his character revealed itself in the infectious smile and willing hand that greeted you whenever you needed it. J.P. was that special kind of man who becomes the backbone of a place of work, and makes it a community. The UNB Forestry community was better for his presence, and its long history is richer for having known him.

Wishing you were here, J.P.,  
Your friends

## Capitalizing on Thomas' death morally wrong

by J.C. Ford

I hate to be the bearer of bad news to animal activists and vegans like Kathryn Asher, but their comparisons of animal farms/ranches to Holocaust-era concentration camps are dubious at best, irresponsible at worst. Indeed, there are countless examples of animals being abused in so-called "scientific" experiments, which test products like cosmetics, tobacco, shampoo, and other toiletries. In addition, animals are abused/killed to make trinkets, rugs, shoes, jewelry, luggage, and many other accessories.

There is a legitimate argument for condemning the use of animals for these purposes, and the same can be said for the social engineering of a "master race" through racial, ethnic, and religious cleansing. Both examples do have one common theme: they represent a certain luxury.

Most of the aforementioned items and

the unconscionable murders of innocent people aren't necessary for individual or group survival. Unfortunately, Asher extends this argument to include her biased vegan agenda which condemns killing of animals for consumption, which is necessary for our survival; there is no replacement for food.

Quite frankly, it puzzles me that Asher and other animal rights activists don't understand the difference between luxury and necessity; apparently, they must have swallowed too much PETA-brand Kool Aid.

Asher continued to criticize Andrew Daley for his scientific reasoning of consciousness in plants, calling it absurd. I think she is in no position to call anyone's reasoning absurd, considering the ludicrous comparison she made between Dave Thomas and Adolf Hitler in her initial letter. I also think that no one really knows whether plants truly feel relative "pain" or "consciousness" (both with disputed meanings) or not, and I make no apologies for my

ignorance.

Of course, no self-respecting vegan or animal rights activist would admit that he or she doesn't know either; after all, it would be inconvenient to promote a self-serving agenda if a hierarchy between animals with "consciousness" and plants without "consciousness" wasn't properly established. Plants do have root and shoot systems that enable them to carry out certain life functions, such as circulation, respiration, reproduction, growth, and excretion. Every life function involves the initial response to environmental stimuli such that the plant will respond accordingly (it does sound like consciousness, doesn't it?).

Plants, however, do not have *animal* brains and no pain receptors have been found. It certainly makes plants different but not inferior or having less right to live. Perhaps I would respect Asher's opinions on plants if she would simply admit she relates to animals better than she relates to plants because they are

somewhat closer to human beings in her mind. Animals do often possess eyes, ears, legs, hair, the ability to feed heterotrophically, huddle with their offspring, make vocalizations, and so forth - unlike plants.

Finally, I will congratulate Asher for not letting reality stand in the way of her perception that she is a morally superior being when she refuses to consume animals and their products. Reality, however, cannot be denied forever; capitalizing on Dave Thomas' death to promote a highly questionable agenda after anointing him as the Adolf Hitler of animal farms should make Asher file for moral bankruptcy.

## Just a thought...

by Joanne Barr

March Break is officially over. Part of the pleasure of any holiday is the anticipation of such; the planning, the preparation, the packing. I think another really important part of the pleasure of any holiday is in recollecting them.

Those who travelled to such places as the Caribbean, Florida, Cuba, and Mont Blanc, will have memories and experiences to cherish for some time to come. The interesting and wonderful thing about our recollections is that the dreariness and the rain, the dust and the discomfort, are quickly forgotten and the beautiful, happy, fun-filled moments are those which tend to remain.

I remember going hostelling with my family when I was a student. We went skiing in the Eastern Townships in Quebec. We were actually storm-stayed for several days in a small hut on top of a snow laden mountain near the now-popular Mount Sutton. It was quite an adventure. I'm sure there must have been some frustrating moments but I can only recall the fun-filled and funny episodes.

A holiday can provide us with opportunities to see places we have

never seen before and experience things we will probably not ever forget. We can be exposed to new vistas, new beauty.

I'll never forget my first impression of Edinburgh, Scotland, when on holidays years ago. I walked out of the train station and looked up to see a grand castle outlined against the sky. It was absolutely awe-inspiring.

A holiday or break can be the time to experience life in a different kind of community from our own and meet new people. We can develop new friendships, learn from others, and about others.

A holiday may be just the time to think about what we are 'making of life.' It may be the time not just for respite, but also for reflection. Away from the constraints of the everyday, we have a chance to look at things in their right perspective. The one unailing test of the value of a holiday is that we return to our everyday reality with new energy, with zest.

Whether you were skiing in the mountains, running barefoot along a sandy beach, or reclining in a hot tub, I hope you had a wonderful "break" and that you've returned refreshed, renewed, and revitalized... ready for all that awaits you. Welcome back.

## Campus Security monitors cameras 24/7

by Reg Jerrett  
Director, UNB Security and Traffic

Campus Security monitors several indoor and outdoor cameras located around the UNB campus 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The intent of these cameras is to make the campus more secure and provide a safer learning environment for students.

### Thefts

Sometime between March 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, unidentified individuals stole an overhead projector valued at \$6500 from the Professional Studies Building at STU.

The projector had been mounted to the

ceiling and fastened by a cable. City Police are investigating.

Sometime during the week of March 4<sup>th</sup>, several hard drives valued at over \$2000 were stolen from the Campus Bookstore. The items had been removed from their boxes which were then stashed under a shelf. There are no suspects at this time. If you have any information about the person or persons responsible for these thefts, call Campus Security, Fredericton City Police or Crimestoppers.

### Mischief

On March 2<sup>nd</sup> at approximately 11 pm, UNB Security received a report of damage to a washroom on the third floor of STU's

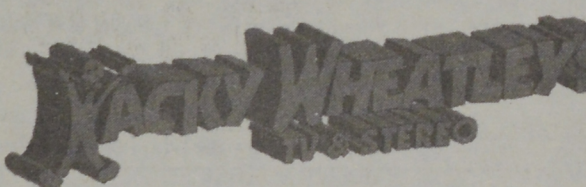
Harrington Hall. A water fountain and two panes of glass in a window were broken. Two intoxicated male students were reported in the area at the time of the incident. The matter is being investigated by STU Student Affairs. If you have any information that could assist authorities investigating this incident, please contact UNB Security or STU Student Affairs.

### Found Property

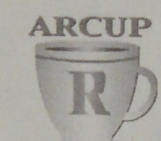
Once again, long-lost possessions have been uncovered by UNB Campus Security in the Harriet Irving Library. A security member, while conducting his checks recently, noticed what appeared to be a leather strap hanging from a ceiling tile. Upon further examination, he discovered a brown suede purse belonging to a 1972 nursing student. Attempts are being made to track down the owner.

### Task Force Update

The City Police task force investigation into alleged assaults on and near the UNB and STU campuses is ongoing. On Sunday, March 10, a male subject was observed in the Campus Shoppe at the SUB acting in a suspicious manner. The task force is looking into the incident.



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