

Visibility, spraypaint, and 'Grrillas'

QUEERIES

VAL COLDEN

During Frosh Week in 2001, spraypainted pride flags appeared one night all over the downtown campus of the University of Toronto.

In use since the 1970s, the rainbow flag, or pride flag, has long been a gay pride symbol. More recently, it has been used as a pride symbol for people with a variety of LGBTQ identities. Since 2001, these spraypainted symbols have been a consistent part of the landscape at U of T. More recently, a stencilled outline of the words "Trans Pride" appeared around campus.

Though some condemn tactics like spraypainting, the symbols around campus have certainly done a lot to raise LGBTQ visibility. When people see these symbols on a regular basis, they are forced to deal with them. Like at many universities, spraypainted messages are common around some areas of UNB, particularly near the residences.

While these are mostly just messages about different houses, the presence of symbols such as pride flags wouldn't significantly change the look of campus in these areas.

Last month, a group called Grrilla Queers at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, caused quite a stir without anything as permanent as spraypaint. The group, which is reportedly completely unaffiliated with the Alliance for Sexual Diversity at X and X-Pride, seems to be working from a distinctly political perspective. Their posters say they "are not your cute, easy to get along with bisexuals, lesbians and gays...[they're] righteous dykes, every shade of genderqueer and fags with perspective."

Through posters on campus, they are advocating for things like an end to male control over 'womyn's' bodies, remarking that 77 per cent of anti-abortion leaders are male. Some of their posters express views many at St. FX, an inherently religious institution, consider to be anti-Catholic.

Not surprisingly, some aren't happy with the posters, including the University Chaplaincy and the co-chairs of the group X for Life. However, reaction to the posters seems to have extended further, to accusations that the posters were an attack on Catholic students and specifically on X for Life. Even the Student Union seems concerned about the posters. I haven't actually seen any copies of these posters, but the information I have makes no reference to any campus group being named on the posters.

Unless these posters contain material which promotes discrimination or hate against a specific group, I see no reason for people to be so upset about them. Yes, they're presenting political views. Yes, they're probably a lot more radical than people are used to. But their purpose seems to be to educate people and to challenge their perspectives.

Isn't that what university is supposed to be about?

Lovin' Andrew WK & parties

by Bruns Staff

Ok, seriously, if you don't already love Andrew WK, then you've got to get your priorities straight. While some of *The Brunswickan* staff is not ready to embrace his music, his total awesomeness is undeniable.

Aside from personally calling and thanking people who bought his album and saying the word "party," hundreds of times on his debut album, Andrew WK does everything he can to be a great guy, and not enough people are like that.

So *The Brunswickan* is taking this opportunity to thank Andrew for doing what he does, even though we dedicated the paper to him last week. We would also like to acknowledge Dilbert comics and Ritz crackers for getting us through the day.



BECAUSE EVERYTHING IS POLITICAL

TAN-NEE NG

February is Black History Month. February is almost over, so why is Black History Month the shortest month of the year? This is certainly an interesting question to ponder...but in the meantime, let us look at something else.

Everything white American culture has, according to journalist and writer Greg Tate, "sold to the world as uniquely American in character - music, dance, fashion, humour, spirituality, grassroots politics, slang, literature, and sports - was uniquely African-American in

origin, conception, and inspiration." So what are some other things white Americans have taken for granted from black people? Well, let me tell you about one of the most obvious but strangely invisible contributions that black people have made to America.

The building of a 20th century globally dominant power (in this case, the US of A), is something black people must be given credit for, to the max. But what role, exactly, did black people play in the building of an American Empire? Well, imagine for a moment being beaten, chained, and ripped from your homeland, taken overseas to a new climate and treated like a soulless animal. All of a sudden, your whole way of living is turned upside down, your humanity is turned into a commodity, your body is the property of someone else, and your spirit is crushed. You could have been a princess or king, but now you are nothing. They sell you on an auction

block to the highest bidder, and you are made to work long hours with no pay in the hot sun. All because you have a different skin colour, different facial features, and are from a different land - all because you are different and deemed a member of an "inferior race."

Racism is a complex set of presumptions, attitudes, and beliefs that some human beings ("races") are inferior and subordinate to others in distinct and significant ways. Racism can take on many forms and continues to exist to this day. According to critical political economists such as Mel Leiman, however, racism facilitated the slavery of Africans, which was perhaps the single most important factor in the early growth of US trade and export. "The blacks came overwhelmingly as unfree labour (slaves or indentured servants) as a result of the forcible expropriation of their lives and liberty."

Without sanctioned slavery in

America, the US would have never come to be such a gigantic economic force in today's global infrastructure. The slave trade provided free labour for US capitalists in the world trade market, and ended up giving them an undeniable advantage in that global competition. Slavery was institutionalized in the United States in the 1640s principally because it would be so economically profitable for Southern plantation owners - who ended up making so much money off the slaves that it enabled them to buy even more imported slaves.

Although slavery has long since been abolished, inequality and discrimination against black people economically and socially still exists to this day. In order to help solve this problem, we must all take a deeper look at the contributions black people have made to our lives and world so we can gain a greater appreciation for them and how they shaped our existence.

Rainbows = beautiful

by Kaela Stradiotto

Every colour counts.

I like red, I like blue, I like purple. I like green and yellow. I especially like them all together. Then again, I've never understood exclusion.

Respecting Sexual Diversity Week was February 16th-20th here at UNB. I made a point of attending all the activities I could, but the Panel of Faith on Wednesday was what struck me most. I've had a thousand different discussions on the topics of religion and sexual diversity, as well as the combination of the two, so it was interesting to see what new things there were to be said.

Reverend Mac Campbell of Marysville United Church brought up something that I hadn't really considered.

"Respecting is a huge step forward from tolerating. Celebrating and embracing is even better, as it doesn't make the 'them and us.'"

So I got to thinking; why are we so fucking stuck-up? What is our problem? We constantly create all these stupid divisions, ways to separate ourselves from our fears, because as long as we are not "them" we are ok. That couldn't be further from the truth.

At the risk of overtly sounding like

the hippie I am, we need a little loving. No, seriously. It's an interesting practice, to look at a stranger, just some random person, and imagine you know them, imagine they are your best friend, and see how differently you would perceive them, how their appearance, and all we make that stand for, wouldn't matter. How all the first-impressions and judgements could be totally insubstantial and unjustified.

I like boys. I like girls. I generally like people. And I don't see any issue in the exploring of sexual identity. Our sexuality is just another aspect of our being that needs attention and respect. Why be ashamed?

Sex is such an obsession in North America, and yet when we talk about our own bodies and what we can do with them, it suddenly becomes taboo. The real issue, in my eyes, is the lack of respect we have for ourselves and others. It's not about accepting every kind of sexual practice or letting go of morals or values; it's about being comfortable with who we are and loving ourselves enough to know that we deserve to love and be loved. Why not value the beauty that diversity brings to our life? That's why they make a boxful of crayons with every colour, not just the ones we decide to favour.



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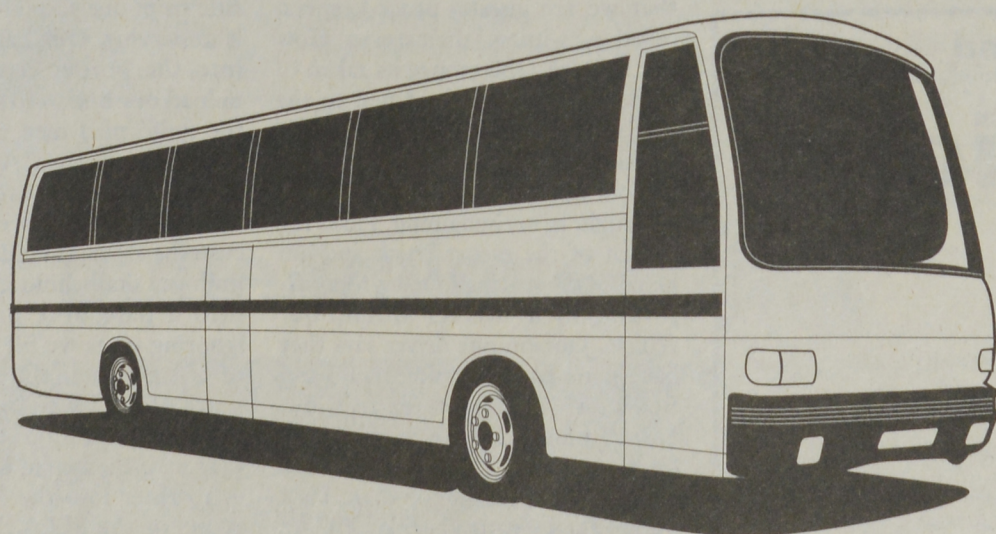
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Under these terms, do you give your Student Union the mandate to negotiate and implement a U-PASS agreement with the City of Fredericton?

☐ YES ☐ NO

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The Brunswickan
21 Pacey Drive, Suite 35
Fredericton, NB, E3B 5A3

main office • (506) 453-4983
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