

## Santa Claus came to town



Fredericton's annual Santa Claus parade was held Saturday on the streets on downtown.

Jonathan Hudon / The Brunswickan

## Intersession in London offered once again

by Dr. Nicholas Tracy

After five years of work, I can at last look with confidence on the London Intersession study program I have developed. London is one of the greatest cities in the world, and especially so to those who are students of history and English drama. It is an exciting place, filled with theatres, castles, palaces, art galleries, museums, and museum ships.

Students who take part in the program, which will run between May 1 and 22, will be taken through the maze of London streets built up over two thousand years, to sites as diverse as the Globe theatre, a reproduction of an early 17th century theatre of the type in which William Shakespeare first produced his plays, the Cabinet War Room where Winston Churchill, his ministers, and servicemen, directed Britain's war against Nazi Germany, and the Banqueting Hall in Whitehall, the only surviving part of the old Whitehall palace, and the place from which King Charles I was led to his execution. On day trips from London students will

travel by train or coach to such places as Portsmouth Royal Dockyard, where they will see H.M.S. Victory, which served as Lord Nelson's flagship at the battle of Trafalgar in 1805, and H.M.S. Warrior, the first steam propelled ironclad battleship in the Royal Navy.

I have worked out with a small London club accommodation within easy travel of central London, in which we will be served a full breakfast every day and supper on weekdays. We will have London transport travel cards which will take us by a bus or underground railway to our work sites, and which will also let students explore London on their own. There is a classroom in the club, which will be used most mornings to brief students on the sites they will be visiting during the day, and which will also be used, for example, to prepare students for the plays they will be watching.

All students will be able to go to all the sites the classes will be visiting, although they are only permitted to take two courses for credit. The third they can audit for no additional cost. My own course, "Master and

Commander," will introduce students to the material culture of the Royal Navy. This includes visits to the ships, the dockyards, and museums, including hands-on experience in the naval archives. In the tradition of the naval service, students will be required to keep a journal of their visits, and will be assigned a grade on the basis of their participation at the sites, and on their journal.

The other history course will be taught by Dr. Cheryl Fury of UNBSJ, who will be leading students through the streets of London to teach them its history. From four hundred year-old pubs to royal palaces to monuments and churches, students will experience the sights and sounds of early modern London.

The third course is Dr. Sandra Bell's "Page to Stage," which will introduce students to theatre production of four to five plays, including back stage tours and attendance at performances. Bell is a teacher at UNBSJ.

The Intersession study program in London is modeled on those which have been successfully run for several years in Rome and Athens, and is being joined this

year by new study programs to New York and Paris. Each has their unique attractions. The London program is slightly more expensive than the others because of the cost of London theatres, and because it has only been possible to reserve beds for 22 students.

If you don't want to be left behind, be sure to register early! By contrast, the lower price for the New York trip is only possible if 35 students register. Because of the different timing of the London and Rome programs, it is possible for students to take the London study sessions and then travel across France to Italy and take part in the second half of the Rome study program. It is also possible for students to stay on in London after the end of the study program, perhaps staying in the same club.

The London Intersession program website can be found at: <http://www.ccl.unb.ca/travelstudy/london/index.php>.

Students are also encouraged to contact me and my colleagues with any questions:

Dr. Nicholas Tracy: [tracyn@unb.ca](mailto:tracyn@unb.ca); Dr. Cheryl Fury: [cfury@unb.ca](mailto:cfury@unb.ca); Dr. Sandra Bell: [sbell@unbsj.ca](mailto:sbell@unbsj.ca).

## Response to York crime

by Frances Olimpo  
Excalibur (York University)

TORONTO (CUP) -- Students at York University are holding an open forum regarding safety and security in response to what some students feel is escalating violence around campus.

The meeting comes on the heels of a series of assaults near the Toronto campus.

"There's been repeated muggings and alleged sexual assaults on or very near campus, so the open forum is our response to those events," said Corrie Sakaluk, president of the York Federation of Students (YFS).

"I think that the student community has expressed that they see it as escalation."

Toronto Police issued a public safety alert for York and its surrounding area after a student was sexually assaulted in an alleyway near campus.

A woman was walking in the area at 6 p.m. on Nov. 18 when a man approached her from behind, put a gun to her head and took her between two nearby houses. According to a police press release, the suspect sexually assaulted the victim, and then fled.

The victim is speculated to be a York University student who had just gotten off a bus.

The Nov. 27 forum will discuss ways in which "security and safety can be improved on campus and just off campus in the York Village."

Issues that the YFS hopes to discuss include increased lighting, expanded security patrols, an improved blue-light safety system and an escort service straight to students' doors. The group is also proposing a 24-hour library to ensure "a safe, central study space."

Sakaluk said students who say they don't feel safe on campus have approached her. She's concerned that the university is distancing itself from the seriousness of the other crimes, which didn't happen on campus.

"I think that because the York Village is so close to the campus that it would be easy for security to patrol that area, it's important for us to take responsibility for things that are happening to our students and I hope that security and the administration will co-operate and try to make that happen," she said.

On Oct. 2, a female York student was walking home when she was approached by three young men. She said she was pushed against a fence, and one of the suspects produced a handgun and demanded her wallet. The suspects fled after she complied. According to the victim, the police said at the time it was the sixth robbery in the area in the two weeks prior.

More recently, two York students studying in the basement of the Technology Enhanced Learning Building were robbed for their laptops at gunpoint. One of the victims struggled with one of the three suspects and was struck before the suspects fled the scene.

York administration has not put up any notices of the mugging or robbery incidents that have happened in nearby residential areas off campus.

Bulletins regarding the Nov. 3 laptop robber have been posted and a media release was issued and made accessible by a link on York's main website in regards to the alleged sexual assault.

Michael Markicvic, head of York security services, said the Toronto Police bulletins for the other incidents are "very vague."

"The other things you'll find is that the incidents are not related so we don't have a trend," he said.

Richard Fisher, chief marketing and communications officer at York, said different situations require different responses.

"We have to have a hierarchy of information as we send it out. We can't treat every single incident the same way because when there's a serious incident, no one will notice," he said. "But we do try and inform as much as we know about these incidents when we hear about them."

"All I can say to that is that this is the most serious incident we've had and we've treated it with the utmost seriousness," Fisher said regarding the alleged sexual assault, adding that the university has participated in media reports and provided online news bulletins.

He said York has increased the frequency of shuttles and foot escorts around the campus premises as well as those considered "slightly off campus," though the number of escorts and vans will not change.

## Toronto prof uses hip hop to examine urban violence

by Derek Leschasin

The Uniter (University of Winnipeg)

WINNIPEG (CUP) -- Toronto, traditionally known as Canada's economic and cultural hub, has also become well known for a relatively recent development -- the rise of street crime and gun battles between warring gangs.

There were over 130 shooting incidents in the first half of this year alone, a drop of 16 percent from 2005, according to Toronto police statistics.

How to account for the violence plaguing urban communities in Toronto, Winnipeg, and elsewhere?

According to Rinaldo Walcott, an associate professor at the University of Toronto and the Canada Research Chair in social justice and cultural studies, some of the most poignant analyses of these events can be found within hip hop, despite its connotations of "bling" culture and misogyny.

"Chuck D called hip-hop 'the CNN of black people,'" said Walcott, quoting the most famous personality from the old-school political hip-hop group Public Enemy as he opened his guest lecture at the University of Winnipeg on Nov. 15.

Despite being fraught with homophobia and misogyny, rap has "other things happening," he said.

Walcott's research focuses on marginalized aspects of Canadian culture -- ethnic minorities and cultural sub-groups.

During his wide-ranging lecture at the U of W, Walcott spoke about the messages of Canadian hip-hop artists about urban ethnic communities and how they may offer some insight into the flare-up of violence that the mainstream public has only recently become aware of, most notably with the Toronto Boxing Day shootings of last year.

Walcott singled out Canadian rappers K'naan, Kardinal Offishall, and Jelleestone as particular examples of the kind of social commentary hip hop can provide.

He noted their activist political lyrics, which link impoverished and marginalized living conditions faced by some Canadian minorities with the sort of neo-liberal socio-economic policies enacted throughout Canada and North America by the likes of Brian Mulroney, Ronald Reagan and former Ontario premier Mike Harris.

At the same time, these artists reject the glorification of violence that tends to predominate in mainstream hip hop.

Where once it may have made little sense

to speak of ghetto-inspired hip-hop culture in Canada as anything but an imitation of the culture in the United States, Walcott argued that neo-liberal policies are creating those conditions in Canada as well.

Similar to the situation of Toronto's black community, "in Winnipeg, the language of gang culture is attached to the native community, and in Vancouver, it's South Asian youth," said Walcott.

What concerns Walcott is the increased policing of the ethnic communities linked to violent crime.

After the Boxing Day shootings of 2005, Walcott argues, "a war was declared on the black poor and working poor in Toronto."

While this "war" may be related to the drop in shooting incidents, Walcott argued it will not solve the problem of what he refers to as "wasted human life" -- marginalized populations.

"Listening to hip hop should be a crucial part of cultural studies," said Walcott. "At each time we can call rap into question for its misogyny, we can also find spaces where something else has been created."



Internet

## A shopping season to be jolly

by Bradley Mullins

The holidays are just a little under a month away and many of you will soon be heading out for the usual seasonal shopping. This article contains a few things keep in mind to ease the burden of mall madness. After all, it is the season of joy and happiness.

The first thing to remember is although you may leave your shopping to the last minute, most stores plan for the holiday rush well in advance. Christmas stock can arrive in some stores as early as July or August. Here enters the rule of limited supply. Companies produce a limited supply of products to meet an expected demand. So, don't be surprised if you wait until the second week of December and all the great gifts are gone. What is more, if you have to order something in, remember that it is a busy time of year for Canada Post as well, so seasonal delays should be expected.

Now we come to those wonderful people who staff your favourite stores. Most stores are pleased to offer you friendly and efficient services (some exceptions may apply).

Stores hire seasonal employees to meet the increased demand. Often these new staff members are still learning the basic dynamics of the job when they are swarmed by complicated questions by even more complicated customers. Store employees have the same qualities as other people. They make mistakes, forget things, and have bad days just like the rest of us. A little patience can go a long way.

If you are tired of jam-packed stores and food courts, I recommend a shopping in off-peak hours. There are not nearly as many people out and about Monday nights as there are Saturday afternoon. Of course, this will change the closer it gets to Christmas. It is also helpful to plan ahead. Follow Santa's lead - make a list and check it twice before you head out.

Finally, and perhaps most important, remember why you are buying presents in the first place. It will make the whole process easier if you remember the spirit of the season. Defiantly a cliché, but good advice nonetheless, and it can all be summed up in one simple philosophy: the act of giving is more important than what is actually given.

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