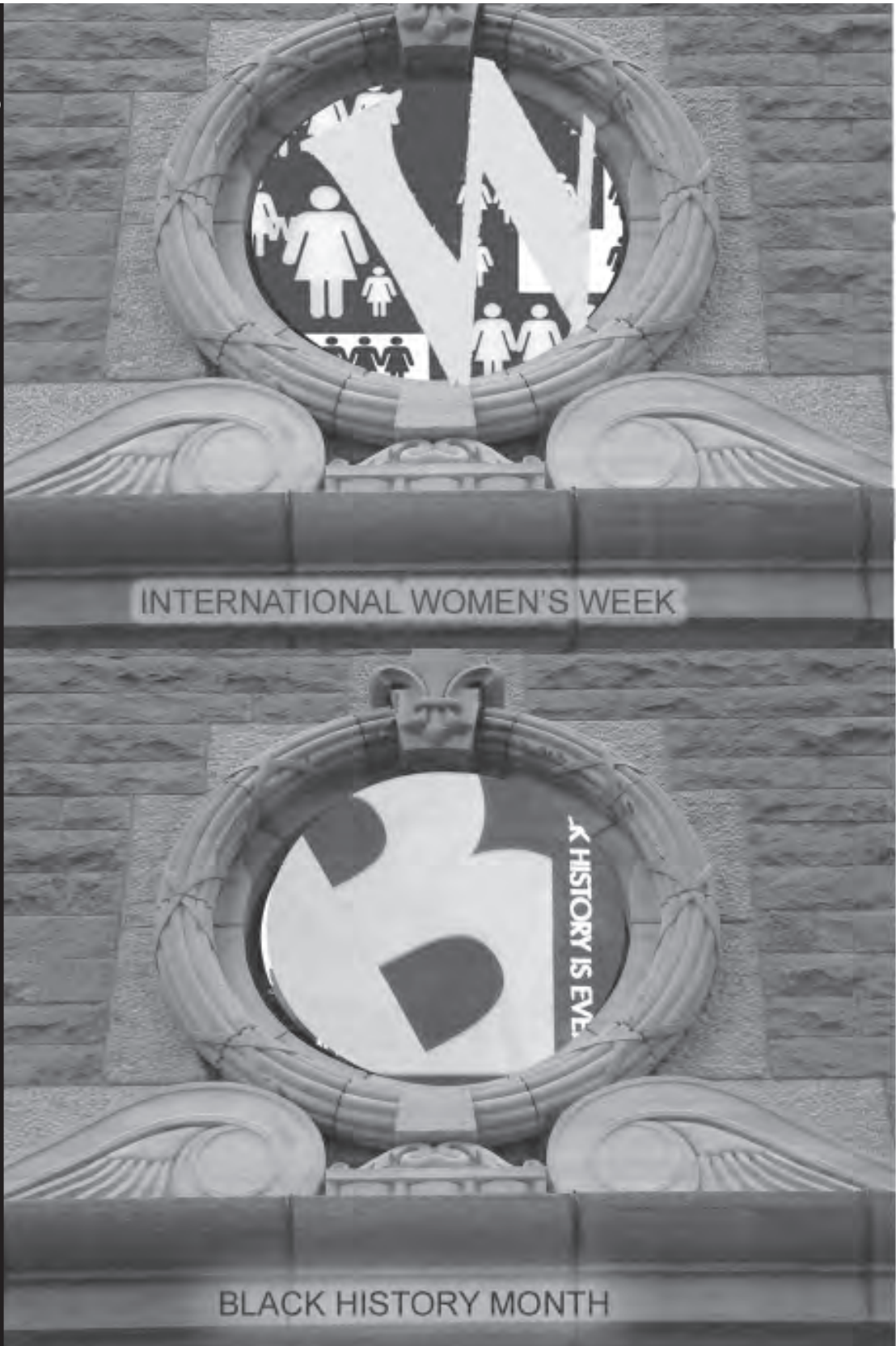


VANIER COLLEGE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER

Double Issue
Vol 23 N° 4&5
FEB/MAR. 2006



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

From the Editor...

This issue of the *VCTA Newsletter* is a hefty one—a **DOUBLE ISSUE**, really. Along with articles of syndical and pedagogical import, it celebrates both Black History Month and International Women’s Week.

Not to be read in one sitting! Stick it in your backpack, your briefcase, your big winter coat pocket and take it along with you to the Metro, to the queues where you stand in line, the dentist’s office, the bathroom—wherever you can take some time to savour your colleagues’ ‘takes’ on various aspects of our shared lives at the Vanier we hold dear.

This time round, the Editor-in-Chief was blessed with two wonderful Co-Editors: **Dany Brown** in Student Services and **Tricia Bell**, Humanities and Women’s Studies. Each in her own unique way helped to shape this issue: ideas for content, unflinching humour, thoughtful writings and compilations, contacts, cyber- and in-person hugs and pats on the back, notions about order and lay-out.

Regarding the order of things, we are all 3 delighted to give our friend and colleague, Gloria Di Murro, the “Lead” spot on page 3. Enjoy.



Tricia Bell
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	Eric	8:00 - 10:00
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	Ian	1:30 - 3:00
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	Alena	10:00-12:00
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A Funny Thing Happened on My Way to a Diagnosis... or The Diary of a Mad Houseperson

Gloria Di Murro

We've only just begun¹

Friday, December 2 (ironically, my day off) I worked a twelve hour shift, having promised close-to-my heart friend and editor, Shirley Pettifer, that the December *VCTA Newsletter* would be in mailboxes in time to commemorate the Polytechnique Massacre: Dec. 6. I also promised many other people a lot of things...SORRY!

I delivered the almost-final proof to Shirley at 8:15 that evening and was warmly greeted with soothing, calming words (I was babbling by then), a nourishing meal, and a scotch (also soothing, calming and nourishing). Little did I know that I should have drunk the whole bottle!

With visions of *Newsletter* modifications (and newspaper ads, concert programs, scores of artwork, Vanier Todays, and such) dancing in my head all weekend, I tried to concentrate on the FUN things in life—like cleaning the toilet, washing the socks that stand by themselves, cooking, cleaning, and driving my 15-year old son Nicholas to and fro. Next thing I knew it was Sunday night and another eventful week was about to start. Just how eventful was yet to be seen!

Monday morning greeted me at 5:30 with breakfasts and lunches to make, a determination to get to work early so that the *Newsletter* would be printed by noon, and ensuring that my hard-to-wake teenager was conscious. I made it in at 7:15, reached my *Newsletter* deadline and worked right through until 3:00. I was exhausted, not noticing that I had grown an extra organ between my breasts.

Take two aspirin and call me in the morning²

Tuesday morning, Dec. 6, that extra organ was playing a painful tune. The old doc at my local clinic poked around and quizzically/gravely pronounced I had a growth measuring 10mm (which, if I stand a certain way, looks like a third breast growing between the other two). I still thought it was the ulcer that came with my new job. Perplexity ensued as I answered “no” to all questions: no symptoms, no weight loss, (I had gained 3 pounds!) no loss of appetite (I wish!) and no loss of energy. (Everyone else wishes!) He then prescribed an ultrasound to determine the “what” and sent me on my way.

With prescription in one hand and my sweetheart (and rock) Patrice in the other, I marched out to...where? Where does one go with a prescription for an ultrasound? The hospital? “*Non, madame. Le prochain rendez-vous est au printemps.*” Emergency scans WERE done if so determined by old doc (“*Non, mad-*

ame, ce n'est PAS une urgence”). So off we went in search of private clinics which only had 3- to 4-week waiting periods. The earliest appointment possible was at Sacré-Coeur on December 23rd, which I promptly booked. By 4pm, I was pleasantly exhausted (all that fresh air instead of toner and ink) and called it a day, thinking how lucky I was compared to those women who had lost their lives on this date just for being women. Again, little did I know.

What, me worry?³

As usual, if I'm not stressed out, or busy catering, cleaning, bowling, dancing, helping someone, doing something or going somewhere, my body screeches to a halt, scornfully screaming “You wanna stop? Feel *this!*” So after a fitful sleep (trying to find a position where I didn't grunt) I awoke, that bone-chilling Wednesday morning, to the smell of coffee and shish taouk. There was my soul mate wrapping my son's pita lunch, making our breakfasts, all dressed and ready to go.

“Where are you going?” I asked. “WE are going to Sacré-Coeur Emergency. You're getting an ultrasound done today. I've packed a little bag; you won't need it, but if you do, it will be in the trunk.” And off we went. Sometimes I think he's psychic.

Arriving at Emergency early enough to be number 3 (It was like winning the lottery!) it only took 15 minutes to see the triage nurse (male, mid-forties, not my type). He took my vitals, listened to my woe, said “WHOA!” and told me to wait outside. I had no sooner sat down when I heard my name paged to *Salle 8* (At this point, I was ready to yell “BINGO!”).

I was greeted by two doctors (both males in their teens, one my type, one not) who tut-tutted over me and felt my extra organ. They confirmed that I had a mass (golly gee) and that I needed an ultrasound. Pat and I giggled like school children. I then put on a hospital gown, was put on a gurney and given some happy juice. I would be staying in Emergency until the scan was done.

Sometime that evening (I kept losing track of time) and after the scan had been done, a female doctor



Gloria as Gertie the Bag Lady

(also in her teens and DEFINITELY not my type) gave me the results, practically blubbering as she did so: "*Madame, c'est grave. Vous avez une masse de 7cm.*"

Whoa! It went from 10 **millimeters** to 7 **centimeters** in less than 24 hours? I think not. Of course, the definition of "masse" was yet to be determined. So while I patted her hand and reassured her (between verses of "*Don't cry for me, Argentina*"), a million things were going through my mind. One thing was certain, I wasn't going home just yet.

Let the games begin⁴

Two days in Emergency and I wanted to cry "I want my mommy!" (even with Patrice by my side). I was blessed with the next best person: my sister, Gilda. In she marches with face cloths, deodorant, body wash, talcum powder and other things that my 'overnight' bag didn't have. Of course, she was also armed with copies of *Good Housekeeping* and *Family Circle*.

Patrice and I gave her a running commentary on my neighbours, one of whom was cuffed to his bed with two security guards watching over him (a visitor from the local penitentiary) and one poor elderly gentleman who was having trouble moving his bowels (we grunted with him, doing breathing exercises like Lamaze class).

Assured I was in good hands, (after casting her "*You'll-have-to-deal-with-me*" look to those in charge) Gilda went back to work.

Later that evening, I was transferred to a ward (so much for paying 30 years of insurance) with two other people. The elderly lady on my left was a gem—when lucid. The male on my left was a reject from *Lord of the Rings*. He stood approximately 5'8", weighed close to 110 lbs., and told us his life history: "*Je m'appelle Jean.*"

Luckily, this was one of the best rooms in the house. All others, including the private and semi-private rooms, had little orange and red signs posted on the doors, warning visitors of contagious diseases. Was I safer at home?

That night (or should I say early morning?), at approximately 2:30am I was awakened by the loud and distinct crinkling noise of plastic bags. Assuming that garbage cans were being emptied in the hallway, I stayed in a semi-slumber. Fifteen minutes later I wondered when the noise was going to stop. How many garbage cans were outside my room? Getting up to ask the orderly when he would be finished, I leapt with fright as I saw my roommate, Jean, sitting in the closet, his beady eyes furtively staring out at me as he wrestled with a big white garbage bag. I ran back to my bed and pulled the covers over my head.

The crinkling sessions continued to keep me awake for another two nights and I noted that the big white bags were multiplying. Playing detective, (Hey, I wasn't sleeping anyway) I uncovered Mr. Jean's secret: while everyone was asleep, he was stealing toilet paper,

cookies, water bottles, towels, and anything else portable from the hospital stores. A sort of reverse Santa. After breakfast (which he'd ask for 3 portions to put in his white bags, thank you) he would promptly ask for morphine and sleep all day. Poor soul, those late-night pillaging sessions were wearing him out; meanwhile I looked (and felt) like a deer in headlights.

The third night, I was awakened by lip-smacking noises (also around 2:30 am) to find Jean staring at me from a chair at the foot of my bed: "*Veut-tu du thé ou du yoghurt?*" he asked. What could I say? "*Non, merci.*" And pulled the covers over my head.

Meanwhile, on my left, Lucy was losing lucidity and proclaiming she still hadn't baked her Christmas cookies (made with molasses and nuts, incidentally) at which point Mr. Jean locked himself in the bathroom to have a cigarette. He sprayed disinfectant as he came out, giving the room a pungent aroma of chemical pine smoke which made poor old losing-lucidity Lucy cough in her sleep. By this time it's 3:15am, and I'm dreaming of Three-Ring circuses. "*S'il vous plait,*" I pleaded with the nurse, "*trouvez-moi une autre chambre. J'ai besoin du sommeil!*"

Oh Where, Oh Where is the Primary Source?⁵

Monday rolled around and they moved me to a bright semi-private room with a view and a Holy Cross in front of me. Thank you, Jesus. I needed Him to watch over me with the Medical Olympics about to start.

If it ends in 'oscopy', 'ostomy', or 'opsy' (bippity, boppity, boop), it was done during the following two weeks. I was poked, prodded, stabbed, and pricked many, many, times. Eight vials of blood were taken daily, as well as my temperature (normal) and oxygen count (always between 98-100% - gold medal act, folks). They performed 4 biopsies (1 liver, 1 uterine, 2 breast), lung x-rays, an endoscopy (gag), HALF a colonoscopy (the mass blocked my right side) which was torture even WITH Demerol, a CT scan, and an MRI, among other tests.

During one of my favourites, the barium enema (at which point I was humming Frank Zappa's "*Enema Bandit*"), I took one look at the 'tool' that would be visiting my nether regions (which I thought was only sold in sex shops—camera not included), and asked the doctor if the camera shouldn't be on the outside. Just think: no more fundraisers! The fortune they could make renting the videos!

In between tests, I kept as active as possible either walking the halls (being the only one ABLE to), or chanting "*So-So-Solidarité*" with the hospital staff as I stood beside their picket lines (CSN) in support of Vanier staff (CSQ) doing the same. As the daily tests came back "negative" I celebrated with one particular nurse, Mylene, who happens to be the daughter of one of our own, Léo Lefebvre (recent 38-year retiree).

Continued on pg. 30

SOME KIND OF VICTORY

Eric Durling



Before I begin my post-mortem of negotiations, I would like, on a more personal note, to wish you and your families, on behalf of the V.C.T.A. Executive, a year filled with health and happiness. If we didn't get a chance to extend our wishes to you in person, we hope to have rectified the situation at our first Happy Hour.

As these were my first negotiations as a member of the Executive, I took every opportunity I could to consult with those who had lived through many others. Nearing what we thought would be the end of this round, I remember someone telling me that, as always, our nego committee would come away with the appearance of some gains so that our side could cry victory. Needless to say, this was not the scenario that we saw acted out just before Christmas.

However, I must admit that it was with great satisfaction that I watched our federation reject an agreement in principle that to many of us would clearly have been a moral and a practical defeat. At Vanier, losing the present arrangement we have with our DEC courses taught through Continuing Education could have had negative consequences on as many as twenty or thirty of our non-tenured teachers. But more than that, many of us realised that to accept what would become part of the decree while legally challenging the other parts would probably not make much sense to some judges. It would, however, allow the government to say to the population that it came to agreements with us and would be able to use the money it saved from denying our salary demands to lower taxes.

Recent decisions aside, the most important issue raised for us as

public sector unions by the government's decree (also known as law 142) is what would appear to be our total inability to negotiate decent salary increases when our employer is the government. It is obvious that the 8% over six years was decided long ago with no intention to make a compromise and that the government banked on the public not shedding many tears for us. As hard as it may be to accept, even if we win our legal challenge and force new negotiations, we would have to be rather unrealistic to hope for much more than increases which come close to the cost of living.

If we are forced to be realistic about our immediate financial futures, there is one element of these negotiations that can give us hope. For the government seems only to see us as an expense, while its partner in negotiations, the Federation of CEGEP's (also known as the FÉDÉ), which is composed of all our Directors General and Academic Deans, always tries to chip away at our rights involving working conditions and gain more control over our jobs. What is always encouraging to see is how the government is consistently willing to leave the FÉDÉ on their own at the end of negotiations. Once the government forces all of the difficult financial measures down our throats, they are not stupid enough to stir up the pot by doing the FÉDÉ's dirty work for them.

In short, the unacceptable demands in the agreement in principle that we just rejected at our General Assembly of Jan. 26 clearly have the smell of the FÉDÉ all over them. If, in the future, we want to maintain any kind of bargaining power with regard to our working conditions, we have to direct all of our energies, and our dissatisfaction towards the FÉDÉ. If we can do this, the government will always be inclined to temper its disrespect for

us with a certain political savvy that will keep them from giving our administrators too much of what they want.

How do we do this practically, you ask? Well, if the government has restricted our right to strike, boycott, work-to-rule, or otherwise diminish or alter our activities, they cannot prevent us from engaging our administrators in every possible forum. Every teacher has the right to have a meeting with his or her Deans and the Director General. Although financial and sectorial negotiations are effectively finished, there are still local negotiations going on between our union federation (FAC) and the FÉDÉ.

Now, and in the next few years while we live under the decree, teachers should lobby administrators to take teachers' demands to the FÉDÉ. This is one of the few things that we are legally allowed to do. Let's make the most of it. After all, shouldn't our administrators be the advocates for the teaching profession in general and for the Vanier community in particular?

Eric Durling has been teaching English at Vanier since 2000. As well as being the Chairperson of the Non-Tenured Teachers Committee, he is Vice President of the VCTA.



A Newbie and the Union

Somewhat disparate thoughts about recent and current union issues from the point of view of a somewhat newbie teacher

Nancy Leclerc

I would like to respond to the dialogue that John Tromp initiated last year and to general union issues from the point of view of a newbie teacher. I admit I am far from understanding everything that is union-related but if I wait for the day that I understand it all before jumping in and saying something, I fear that I will be close to retirement. So...here goes!

Firstly, I agree with a few things that John had to say. For example, John argued that discussions and issues that are deemed as “closed” by those who, well, closed them many moons ago might need to be re-opened and re-examined by this new generation of teachers. Decisions that were made at a given point in time may have been a good idea at the time given the circumstances but, at the risk of sounding cliché, we all know that times and circumstances change. We also know that, with the influx of a new generation, needs change.

Of course, we need to make well-informed decisions and be able to look at these things from various points of view. But how do we even become well-informed about such complex issues? When we ask people about events and decisions from the past, we inevitably get biased accounts. Is the solution for us to collect all the possible accounts and analyse how people’s biases have affected them to try to find one, true objective account? Heck, I’m an ethnographer and even *I* don’t think that’s feasible.

Attending general assemblies often proves more confusing than enlightening since, understandably, speakers don’t have the time to stop and qualify every statement for the sake of those that have not been around for 10 or 20 years. Reading the literature provided by FAC is not only time consuming for young teachers who often have young families and new courses to prepare but it is also confusing, full of jargon and I suspect, contains bias as well. At this time then, I have no answer to my own question. Perhaps someone can make a suggestion.

I was also interested in John’s discussion of the necessity of the union to protect *all* teachers. This issue has been bugging me for a while and it appears that feathers get ruffled when this is brought up. Well, *my* feathers get ruffled at the thought that the same system that protects me protects people that are not doing their jobs well *and* are not making an effort to improve.

We all know that this happens. No one wants to talk about it outright. We only get this information in furtive, whispered conversations. We wouldn’t want to offend those people who are not doing their jobs well and who give us all a bad name, would we? So we go on, accepting that the flip side of the coin is a necessary evil and figuring that if that someone happens to be close to retiring, then it is pointless to try to get them to change their ways.

Here is another take on it. Bad teaching might not be physically harmful in the way that, say, bad medical “doctoring” is but we need to recognise that there are potential negative effects. If someone who is not good at teaching, or who used to be good at teaching but

has lost the desire to do so, is five, six, or seven years away from retirement, that still represents another five, six or seven years in which that individual has time to crush x number of students’ will to learn.

Of course, we need to make well-informed decisions and be able to look at these things from various points of view.

Just to be clear here, I am not suggesting that someone who is not a perfect teacher is a bad teacher. As a relative newcomer who has only been teaching for about eight semesters (including summers and Continuing Education), I admit I am far from perfect. However, I have a willingness to learn from colleagues and through professional development. I seek to find my flaws and correct them.

I am also not implying that only individuals who have been doing this job for many years have the potential to be so tired of it all that they lose their drive. It’s quite possible at any stage of one’s career.

What I *am* referring to is the lack of motivation to improve one’s craft and the lack of recognition that one’s actions, or lack thereof, might have a negative impact on one’s students and on one’s colleagues. If that happens, maybe it’s time to re-evaluate one’s life goals and priorities. I have promised myself, and others, that if it comes to the point where I feel sick to my stomach at the thought of coming to work, I will move on to something else. It goes against my principles to keep a job simply because of the security.

A related issue, then, is that of teacher evaluation. Ever since I’ve learned about the issue of summative evaluation and the union’s fight against it, I’ve wondered why, rather than fighting against the college’s right to

review whether its employees are doing what they're supposed to be doing, the union doesn't demand to be involved in the process whereby measures are developed to assess a teacher's overall performance in terms that makes sense from *the point of view of teachers*.

If teachers do not participate in the creation of evaluation tools, these tools will be designed by bureaucrats who know little about pedagogical issues. In the meantime, new teachers become the targets of ineffective summative evaluations that rely on anonymous student feedback. We are caught in the middle of what appears to be ideological war between the union executive and the administration.

I agree, of course, that summative evaluation shouldn't be administered with the explicit or implicit goal of removing one's hiring priority. However, what is wrong with the creation of an evaluation tool that allows those who pay us to make sure we are doing our jobs and asks us for a bit of accountability? It should actually work to make us better teachers since a poor evaluation should, in principle, lead to seeking resources that will help us improve.

Every workplace in which I've ever had the joy (please note the sarcasm here – most of these workplaces were gas stations and other hellish environments where neither customers nor employers cared about the well-being of employees) of working has had some process whereby the people who are paying others to do something can verify that the workers are giving something in return for that pay. Why should teachers, tenured or not, be immune to this? It is incredibly ironic to me that unions, institutions that arose out of class struggle, are now being used to maintain a kind of class privilege where entitlement to one's position is lifelong and unquestionable.

Finally, another issue that I think needs to be re-evaluated by the upcoming generation is that of the kinds of action we take as a college against governmental assaults on our workplace. Although the motion proposed by Steve Rosenfield last term as an alternative to picket lines was rejected, I'm glad that the dialogue was opened. To hear the discourse at some of these G.A.s from individuals who cling to "traditions" so strongly that they are unwilling to question their effectiveness *right here, right now*, it becomes intimidating for newbies to dare stand up and say that we want other alternatives.

Now we've been legislated back to work so the point has become moot. Or has it? At the last G.A., there was talk of action against the legislation itself. So the debates will continue. What will we do? I'm no psychic but I predict that we will have the same debates with the added nuance that striking will now be illegal and that the sacrifices will be much greater.

Therefore, we will still have the opportunity to discuss alternate strategies. I very strongly hope that the dialogue started by Steve's motion will continue. There



What better way to gain public exposure than to actually teach in public?

are many avenues we can explore as a union to protest the government's actions while getting public exposure. For instance, Mark Prentice's piece: **Lessons from Alinsky** in the last newsletter really lit my fire. These three tips in particular caught my attention:

- Never go outside of the expertise of your people.
- Whenever possible, go outside of the expertise of the enemy.
- A good tactic is one your people will enjoy.

This led me to think of a fun thing that is in the domain of expertise of teachers and *outside* of the domain of expertise of the government: teaching!

What better way to gain public exposure than to actually teach in public? We're still doing our jobs. There is no law that says we can't all take our students on fieldtrips at the same time and to the same place, is there? And while we're there teaching our students, why not let interested members of the public in on the fun? They will learn something in terms of content and in terms of what exactly it is that Cégep teachers do.

It's a crazy thought, of course, but that's what brainstorming is about: crazy thoughts that wind up not seeming so crazy considering the alternatives. And, man, do we ever need alternatives.

Nancy Leclerc started teaching Anthropology at Vanier in 2003. She is a co-founder of the Open Door Network, has organized college-wide panel discussions on native issues and sexual diversity and is currently organizing a discussion/debate evening (with colleagues Roger Guetta and Alanna Horne) for the evening of Tues. March 28. See the Odds 'n' Ends page for more details.

Black History Month:

Labour history must include contributions of Black labour activists



Black History Month is celebrated in Canada to recognize the contributions of Black peoples to the growth and development of this country and their importance to its history.

The contributions of African Canadians are still far from being integrated into the mainstream of Canadian history. However, many now know of Mathieu Da Costa, a man of African heritage who arrived into this land in 1604 with French explorer Samuel de Champlain and who served as an interpreter between the Europeans and the Mik' maq people. Many also know about Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railway, a network of safehouses and individuals that helped Black people escape slavery in the United States.

Less well-known, however, are the contributions of Black activists to the labour movement. This aspect of our history is important to recognize because the labour movement was and continues to be instrumental in fighting for human rights and equality for workers and all Canadians. The simple truth is that our struggles for human rights and equity would not have been completely effective without the hard and persistent struggles of Black workers.

All accounts of Canadian labour history must include the collective and individual contributions of Black workers and labour activists. Examples of these include the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, a Black-led trade union in Canada that fought to end discrimination in railway employment, and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. There are also some pioneering Black labour activists such as Stanley G. Grizzle who was a leader in the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and who, in 1961, became the first Black labour relations

officer in a provincial labour relations board. There is Fred Upshaw, who in 1990, became the first Black person to head a major Canadian union, the Ontario Public Service Employees Union. More recently, there is Marie Clarke Walker, who is currently the executive vice-president of the Canadian Labour Congress, the first African Canadian to hold such a position.

As the PSAC celebrates its 40th Anniversary, it recognizes and is grateful to the contributions of its Black members and members of African heritage. The actions and dedication of these members has helped advance the PSAC, and put us in the forefront in the struggle for human rights and equality. Their strength, courage and vibrancy are exemplified in the success of the union in negotiations, membership representation, political advocacy and the various committees, including the Equal Opportunities and Human Rights committees.

As part of promoting the contributions of peoples of African heritage to the labour movement, throughout the month of February, Black History Month, we will post on the web some short articles on the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. We will also post a web quiz at the end of the month.

*Taken from the website of the **Public Service Alliance of Canada***

*Thanks to **Judith Lerner Crawley** for this submission.*

Black History Month:

Brought to you by Dany Brown in Student Services & her team of Volunteers

Once again Vanier College is celebrating Black History month. Every February we bring in a variety of educational and entertaining activities to our community. This year we have seen a greater and more generous outpour from the community, as several students, staff and faculty members have become involved. It is our hope that we can continue to expand this event to fully respect, represent and educate the Vanier community.

Here is a list of some of our events:

February 1st to 24th: Display in the Carrefour

Pieces of art, contributed by members of our community are currently on display in the Carrefour.

Special thanks to Doug Miller (The Learning Centre), Subash Handa (Computer & Digital Systems Technology), Erin McLeod (English Dept.) and Tara Holden (student) for their generous contributions to our display case.

February 15th: Black Theatre Workshop presents the play *Afrika Solo* Auditorium U.B. FREE !

Young Djanet lives in a world where beauty is sometimes judged by the straightness of one's hair and the fairness of one's skin. Our heroine begins to question her place in what she has always called "home", when her best friend screams at her to "go back where you came from". In search of answers as to who she is, our Djanet embarks on a musical voyage of inner and outer discovery, taking young audiences on an educational and entertaining journey through Africa. *Afrika Solo* resonates with a contemporary African perspective of questions that have been raised for generations.

Film Presentations:

Feb. 7th Hotel Rawanda—Auditorium Showtime 10:00, 12:00, 2:00 & 4:00

Feb. 21st Boycott (Rosa Parks) Auditorium Showtime 10:00, 12:00, 2:00, & 4:00

Vanier Students present: A Celebration of Black History

Feb. 22nd Student Mall during U.B. Check out the wonderful displays presented by our students from several countries across the world!

Student Panels on Black History

Thurs. Feb. 23rd 4:00pm and Mon. Feb. 27th 4:00pm Auditorium

A panel of students deal with the importance of educating the public and themselves on issues affecting Blacks today. Some of the topics to be discussed include racial profiling, the contributions that Blacks have made to society, breaking down misconceptions about Africa, discrimination, getting Black history into the curriculum and much more.

Black History Month Quiz: Available in Student Services (C203) starting Feb. 16th Cash Prizes!!!!

The Struggle for Racial Justice

Tricia Bell



The city of Montreal has unique and beautiful qualities unlike many Canadian cities, and the diversity of cultural backgrounds most certainly feeds the vibrancy. Along with closer connections among diverse groups of people comes more tolerance, acceptance and understanding, right? Unfortunately, Montreal is not immune to the ugliness of racial discrimination. Although Black History

Month forefronts the ongoing struggle against racism, we really need to contemplate this deplorable reality on a year round basis.

The struggle for racial justice has produced important gains for people of colour, particularly those living in Western countries. Yet, simply because it is no longer morally or legally acceptable to treat people of colour in abhorrent ways, like enslavement or even murder, it does not mean we have conquered the deeply rooted problem of racism in our society.

A key problem is that we have not rooted-out the racist foundation of our institutions; we have merely attempted to modify our institutions as if they are a machine to tinker with. Arguably we need to re-build the machines because racist ideologies are woven into the fabric of our society and have manifold negative consequences.

Unfortunately the rhetoric of racial equality has triumphed more than its material results. We only need to look beyond our noses to see the social reality facing us, and if that is not obvious enough then we need to talk to people of colour to gain further insight into how the grim realities of racism play out in our daily lives. Moreover, we need to explore how racial discrimination is most successfully promulgated unconsciously, and how such perpetuation sustains the sources of institutional power premised upon it.

A Montreal-based social justice organization, *Mothers United Against Racism (MUR)*, is striking at the heart of one institutional power source, police authority, in an attempt to achieve racial justice. Community activists formed *MUR* in response to the serious problem of racial profiling by the police in Montreal. There are too many incidents of aggressive and abusive behaviour by Montreal police officers and metro security guards against people of colour, particularly Black people, adolescents, and young adults. People of colour are questioned, searched, humiliated, hit, handcuffed, and even injured *without* having violated any laws or committed any wrongdoing.

MUR contends that a large number of police officers pre-judge people of colour, especially Black men, as criminal. In fact, police officers have even claimed to be doing 'preventive' work since their perception is that if 'these guys' do not engage in criminal behaviour today, they will tomorrow. Clearly there is a double standard between whites and non-whites where freedom, equality and presumption of innocence are concerned. At times the consequence of this double standard has been deadly.

The Montreal police department admitted that "they have a problem with racial profiling and are bringing in a number of measures to fight it" (Montreal Gazette, January 29, 2005). Measures such as volunteer basketball games with young people of colour have come under harsh criticism. It is somewhat perplexing as to how shooting hoops can combat racial profiling (does it help the police discover our common humanity?), but may also be insulting to those who bear the brunt of police aggression.

On a more substantial level, a *Quebec Task Force* was appointed to remind the *Minister of Relations with Citizens and Immigration* that racial profiling contravenes our commitment to various international laws, notably the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Though seemingly a more appropriate reaction to the problem, the Ministerial response has been a 44 page report titled *The Full Participation of Black Communities in Quebec*, which seems to water-down the severity of the issues and dooms us to the never-ending tinkering at the faulty machine.

If you want a chilling view of how some Montreal police harass, humiliate and brutalize youth of colour in Montreal check out *Zero Tolerance*, a 2004 NFB documentary about racial profiling directed by Michka Saäl. Montreal police criticized the film as one-sided and claimed it only showed the negative sides of their beat cops. However, even though one inhumane incident is enough to chill us to the bone, this film is filled with far too many personal testimonies to ignore the significance and widespread nature of racial discrimination in our fine city.

Considering the age and diversity of our student population the problem of racial profiling is most likely part of the experience of many that we interact with on a daily basis. Consider that the student who arrived distracted and late to your class may very well have been stopped on his way to Vanier—questioned, searched, humiliated—then sent on his way. What intellectual curiosity and learning readiness does he bring to your class?

I urge you to bring your students to an important presentation during International Women's Week. Marie-Célie Agnant, writer, poet, and *MUR* member, will discuss her work as a community activist struggling against racism and her efforts to promote a peaceful, equitable and just society.

As someone who has been harassed by authorities, mostly in my youth, I know police aggression first-hand. Yet, I also know that my skin colour trumped preconceived ideas about my criminality. Let us stand in solidarity with those who do not have the proverbial 'get out of jail free' card. Racism is everybody's problem.

Marie-Célie Agnant of **Mothers United Against Racism** will be at Vanier on Tuesday March 7th, 2006 as part of International Women's Week. Her presentation will be in the Auditorium (A-103) from 10:00-11:15am.

Tricia Bell teaches Humanities courses with the following themes: the role of current media in democratic societies, the extension of colonialism under 'third world development', and environmental ethics. Before beginning to teach at Vanier in the winter 2004 term, she worked as a freelance researcher and writer advocating social and environmental justice.

Message from the Governor General

Her Excellency Michaëlle Jean



It is with pride that I extend my warmest greetings to all Canadians celebrating respect, equal opportunity, and sharing throughout Black History Month.

Each year, the many activities, such as the **Vanier College** display and presentations, that highlight these celebrations provide us with opportunities to learn more about our fellow citizens of African descent. Did you know that it was in 1604 that the first person of African descent, Mathieu da Costa, an interpreter, set foot on our shores alongside Samuel de Champlain? Or that in 1793, Canada became the first jurisdiction in the British Empire to move toward the abolition of slavery, toward freedom?

In my installation speech, I said that destiny sometimes takes us in a direction we might

never have imagined. Canada's history speaks powerfully about the freedom to invent a new world, about the courage underlying those remarkable adventures. My own adventure represents a spark of hope that I want to keep alive for as many people as possible. I believe very strongly that my appointment as governor general would not have been possible without the efforts and sacrifices of those who fought before me.

To my fellow African Canadians and to all those who are committed to justice, I hope with all of my heart that our common experiences and hopes will ensure that equality and openness prevail in Canada and the rest of the world.

Union 101:

A Further Response to John Tromp

Charles F. Levine



Those of you with long memories will recall that in the April 2005 edition of the *Newsletter*, I discussed the origins of FAC (as a breakaway from FNEEQ-CSN) and FAC's position as the 2nd largest of the three CEGEP teachers' unions (FNEEQ and FEC are the others).

Because of the positions I will take in this article, I feel that there are two historical facts that should be placed in evidence: In 1978, I was the President of the VCTA when we had a 6 week strike over an issue called "technical firings." After a successful mediation, we got all the jobs back. Second, from 1996-2000, I was Vice-President for Labor Relations at FAC.

Onward to the issues.

Issue 1: To Strike, or Not to Strike

John Tromp suggested that we should consider alternatives to striking when negotiations stall. Unfortunately, since I first began to work with the VCTA in 1975, every imaginable alternative to strikes have been discussed over and over again. None of them work. John pointed out that the current "system" involves losing pay and then having to make up the days lost without repayment.

He's right. One (or two or three) day strikes are irretrievably stupid, with one exception: Originally, such strikes gave a warning that if the Employer (the Government) did not respond to these strikes, we would shut the system down unless at least some of our demands were satisfied. If this threat can be made real, then the Government faces the chaotic possibilities of students who will not graduate or advance to the next year of school. This is a real weapon.

In my mind, therefore, the question is not whether strikes work. They do, but only if we take them seriously and force the employer to do the same. Short strikes only work if they are a credible predictor of a long (unlimited) strike to come. Other "pressure tactics" can be used as a preliminary warning, but only a credible threat to close the system indefinitely will ever put us on somewhat even terms with our employer, The State.

The real issue is not whether strikes work. The real question is whether there is ever again going to be enough militant energy among public sector workers

to create conditions for an Unlimited General Strike.

Issue 2: To FAC or not to FAC

Since its creation in 1988, FAC has steered a relatively independent course. As a federation, we have negotiated several contract clauses of which we can be proud. On the other hand, we have no seat at the Central Table during negotiations. This means that we have never actually negotiated our salaries.

Ever since the foundation of FAC, attempts have been made to align our federation with one or both of the other CEGEP teachers' unions for negotiating purposes. During the next to last round of negotiations, we had joint meetings with both the other federations. This time around, we formed a cartel with FEC.

We have also been wooed on several occasions by the CSQ (on behalf of FEC) to more or less give up our independence. Thus far, we have not yielded to this temptation.

Although we have had little news about this at Vanier, FAC is in serious trouble. Last year, Valleyfield, one of the founding Colleges, almost disaffiliated. There is currently a disaffiliation petition (apparently signed by over 100 teachers) circulating at Lionel-Groulx, one of our largest Colleges.

At Vanier, I have talked to several people who feel it may be time to reconsider our affiliation. There is unhappiness over leadership on the issue of the 173 hours (why did it take two years for us to sign?) and with the results of the recent "negotiations." (Remember, FAC unions voted to retain the Governmental decree rather than the agreement negotiated by our committee).

My feeling is that in some respects, FAC may simply have run out of reasons to exist. As members of a large Federation, we would have a seat at the Central Table, and if that Federation was the CSN, we would be in a serious position to shut down the CEGEP system with a strike.

So, John Tromp, on this issue I think you raised an interesting and valid point.

Charles F. Levine, a self described dinosaur, has spent many years on the CRT (French acronym for Labour Relations Committee), the VCTA Executive and the FAC Executive. He teaches Political Science and Humanities, has been a Co-Editor of the *Newsletter* and continues to offer his proof-reading talents.

Black History Month

Panel & Display



On Wednesday, February 8, several members of the **Diversity at Vanier** group met with 15 Black students to discuss the student contribution to Black History Month. The people present were full of ideas and ready to work to help educate themselves, their friends and the wider Vanier community about the issues they see as important.

Their interests broke roughly into 2 categories – on the one hand to educate about Black history and the contribution of blacks to society, and on the other to deal with some of the intractable issues of racism, such as profiling which seems to be so prevalent and persistent in society.

Two events have arisen from their initiative.

- First there is going to be a Black History display organised for Wednesday, February 22 during UB at 12:00 in the Student Mall. There will be poster displays, African and Caribbean dresses and hopefully some dancers.
- The second event is a panel of students who will present their views on different issues facing themselves and the communities they come from. This will include a small play and a short clip from the film *Zero Tolerance*. We have booked the Auditorium for Monday, February 27 at 16:00.

If you have a class at that time, we would strongly encourage you to bring your students to hear and participate.

For more information:	Dany Brown	7884
	Maria Chiras	7086
	Doug Miller	7900

Hockey Tournament

For Faculty and Staff

Je suis professeur au Cégep John Abbott à Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue. Nous organisons un tournoi de hockey cosom pour employés de cégeps; la date prévue est le dimanche, 7 mai, en après-midi, à John Abbott.

Le tournoi en est à sa deuxième année. L'an dernier, des représentants du Collège de Valleyfield et du Cégep de St-Laurent se sont joints à nous, mais nous espérons pouvoir accroître le nombre d'équipes. Le but du tournoi est tout autant de rencontrer de nouveaux collègues au sein du réseau que de pratiquer ce beau sport qui, chez nous, est bien populaire au sein du personnel.

Nous recherchons des équipes d'employés seulement — pas d'étudiants. Nous envisageons un bon calibre de jeu. Ce n'est pas nécessairement un tournoi mixte, mais les joueuses sont, bien sûr, bienvenues. Ce n'est pas nécessairement non plus un tournoi pour jeunes employés seulement — nous recherchons joueurs ou joueuses de tout âge faisant preuve d'une assez bonne forme physique et maîtrisant les rudiments du hockey.

Nous planifions un souper dans un restaurant de Ste-Anne pour clôturer l'événement.

Je te saurais gré de diffuser ce message. Merci beaucoup!

Eric Laferrrière (514) 457-6610, poste 5178

Joining Hands to make A Difference: Celebrating International Women's Week

Tricia Bell



International Women's Week, from March 6-10th, 2006, is upon us again and it is my pleasure to highlight some of the speakers and events organized by the Women's Studies Program.

The theme of International Women's Week 2006 is *Joining Hands to Make a Difference*, and therefore we endeavoured to build alliances among staff, faculty, students and active members of the Montreal community.

The events throughout the week reflect our focus on diversity, inclusiveness and the importance of collective contributions. The potential for the circle to widen is great; we hope for participation on a variety of levels. The easiest way to participate is to *join us* during the week as we attempt to make a positive difference in our community.

Monday March 6th offers two compelling panels, a film screening and concludes with a vernissage of a Photo Exhibition in B305.

Too often we do not hear about issues in First Nations communities directly from the perspective of the people themselves. Their experiences are frequently mediated by various 'expert' opinions, whether academic, policy advisors, or media sources. ***Native Women's Voices: A Speaker's Panel*** presents a unique and important opportunity for us to hear the voices of First Nations women as they give us insight into social issues within their communities. Join us for this panel discussion at 10:00 -11:15 am in A103.

Discrimination and intolerance toward diversity of sexual orientation are evident society-wide and therefore it is no surprise that they seep into our college community. The panel ***Women & Sexual Diversity***, organized by the Open Door Network, allows us to hear about the realities of sexual diversity in our community in an effort to overcome the dehumanization of Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgendered (LGBT) people, some of whom are members of our Vanier community. Join us for this panel discussion, 11:30 am – 12:45 in A103.

The afternoon proceeds with the film, ***Under One Sky: Arab Women in North America Talk about the Hijab*** at 2:30-3:45 pm, in A103. This film highlights the views of women who wear the hijab as well as women who choose not to wear it, documents discrimination directed against women who wear the hijab and explains the roots of Western (mis)perceptions about the hijab.

Join us for the opening and vernissage for Judith Lerner Crawley's photo exhibit: ***The Women's Daybook Series***, 4:30-7:00 pm in Room B305. The exhibit continues all week and into the weekend: Mar 6th to Mar. 12th. Judith is a recently retired Vanier teacher from the Communications Department and long-standing member of Women's Studies. It is our pleasure to showcase this thoughtful and evocative series.

Tuesday March 7th kicks off with a presentation by Marie-Célie Agnant, member of *Mothers United Against Racism (MUR)*. Mme. Agnant is a renowned writer and activist dedicated to promoting a peaceful, equitable and just society. She joins International Women's Week to highlight the problem of

authorities unfairly accusing people of colour of criminal behaviour, especially members of the Black community, adolescents and young adults.

MUR aims to raise awareness about the fact that many police officers perceive people of colour as criminal suspects simply because of their appearance. Mme. Agnant notes that the perception is "if they have not committed an infraction today, they will commit one tomorrow". The criminalization of people of colour is a form of racism and has put people's lives at risk. It is not uncommon for students of colour, particularly males, to be stopped, questioned and sometimes "frisked" on their way to Vanier and to your classroom. Mme. Agnant will provide some insight into how we can help put an end to such injustices. Join us for her presentation in A103 from 10:00-11:15 am.

We round off the day with a Film Festival, including ***Love, Women and Flowers*** (11:30-1:00 pm), ***Ladies Room*** (1:00-2:30 pm), ***The Rosa Parks Story*** (2:30-4:30 pm) and finally ***The Famine Within*** (4:45-6:00 pm)—all in A-103. Watch for the flyers around campus reviewing each featured film.

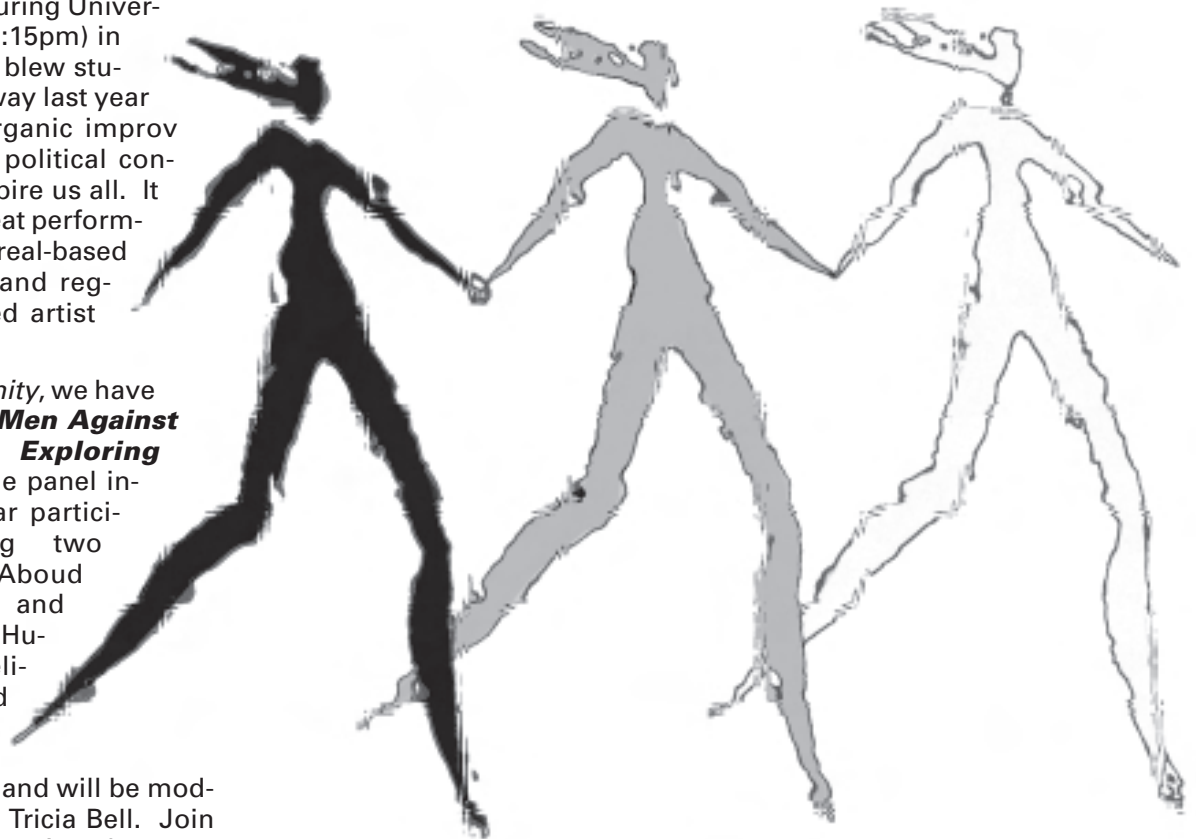
Wednesday March 8th is International Women's Day and we begin our celebration with the *Women's Champagne Breakfast*. Staff and faculty are welcome to partake in this gathering where we break bread and celebrate the accomplishments of women. Great food, great company, local talent and an array of door prizes should entice all. Tickets are inexpensive and available for purchase as of Feb. 20 in C101, N165 and Human Resources (Judy)

We are very pleased to welcome back **Kalmunity Musical Collective** to perform during Universal Break (12:00-1:15pm) in A103. *Kalmunity* blew students and staff away last year with their live organic improv jazz beats and a political consciousness to inspire us all. It is a sure-to-be great performance by this Montreal-based hip-hop, fusion, and reggae roots inspired artist collective.

Following *Kalmunity*, we have the ever-popular **Men Against Sexism Panel: Exploring Masculinity**. The panel includes four stellar participants, including two teachers, Brian Aboud (Humanities) and Sevak Manjikian (Humanities & Religious Studies) and two students, David Backhouse and Kevin Naimi, and will be moderated by myself, Tricia Bell. Join us in the Auditorium-A103 between 1:30-2:45 pm for a lively discussion about masculinity from the male perspective.

Finally, rounding out the day, we are very pleased that Ariane Brunet, Women's Rights Coordinator at Rights & Democracy, will discuss her work promoting female rights as human rights internationally. Mme Brunet is fearless in her effort to champion women's rights and will most certainly impart wisdom and inspiration about her work in places like Afghanistan: 3:30-4:45 pm in A103. Special thanks to her sister, Sabine Brunet, Coordinator of the French Department, for helping to make this event happen.

Thursday March 9th begins with a **panel discussion about violence as it affects young women**. Diane Sasson, Executive Director of Auberge Shalom, and Sarah Elgazzar, member of the Amal Crisis Response Team, and Leena Sarkar, a psychotherapist with the Montreal Sexual Assault Centre will provide insights into the ongoing social reality of ag-



gression and violence directed at women.

It may surprise some members of the Vanier community that sexual violence is a common experience for many of our female students. It was a student's question during last year's presentation on partner violence that sparked our commitment to address this issue again. A brave female student stood in front of many in the auditorium and asked: "How can I convince my friend to leave her abusive boyfriend?" A forum such as this can offer potential solutions to this question. Join us in A103 from 10:00-11:15 am for this important panel discussion.

The second part of the film festival continues on Thursday from 11:30 am to 5:30 pm in A103. Check out **Of Hopscotch and Little Girls** (11:30 m-1:00 pm), **Sex Slaves** (1:00-2:45 pm), and **Iron Jawed Angels** (3:00-5:30 pm). Watch for flyers reviewing each featured film posted around campus.

Friday, March 10th To conclude the week's events we are

pleased to welcome back **The Raging Grannies**, who we can always count on to inspire us to challenge injustices and have some fun in the process. Join us from 11:30 am-12:45 pm in the Amphitheatre (B223) for the *rage*.

Please watch for additional information as we publicize our events through Intercom, the Vanier website and flyers posted around campus. International Women's Week at Vanier College is a long-standing and great tradition and the impressive quality of this year's participants & events demonstrate both its significance and longevity. I look forward to seeing you all there!

Tricia Bell teaches Humanities courses with the following themes: the role of current media in democratic societies, the extension of colonialism under 'third world development', and environmental ethics. Before beginning to teach at Vanier in the winter 2004 term, she worked as a freelance researcher and writer advocating social and environmental justice.

Photo Exhibition in B305

Judith Lerner Crawley writes...

Women's Daybook Series brings together photographs selected annually by the editors of *The Women's Daybook* from those I submit in response to an announced theme. Second Story Press's first agenda book in 1990 featured Canadian Women Photographers and 13 photographs – one on the cover and one to introduce each month. Mine was the December image. The format of the agenda has changed little since then and is maintained by Sumach Press, which became the publisher in 2000.

Vanier College is a fitting venue for this work. Vanier's Women's Studies program hosted my 1st exhibit in the staff cafeteria during one of our early celebrations of International Women's Day in 1978.

More than 25 years later, gathering these individual agenda photos into a series has become a way for me to begin a retrospective look at my artwork. I see threads of my various projects and connections to issues of the second wave of the Women's Movement.

The painting in the *Passages 2000* photograph, for instance, was central to the 1982 exhibit *Art et Feminisme* that accompanied Judy Chicago's *Dinner Party* at Musée d'art contemporain. Several pieces from *Relations* were also included. Themes such as parenting, community life, education are evident. Even my work with the Montreal Health Press, publishers and distributors of information about issues of health and sexuality, is represented; *View from a Rock* is in Newfoundland, where we attended a conference in 1994.

Working on this series has been a learning opportunity for me in another sense as well. Rather than reprint photos from the past, I wanted to explore working outside the traditional black and white darkroom with digital printing methods of traditional 35mm black and white negatives.. There is much to learn.

So thank you Communications/Studio Arts and Women's Studies for inviting me to exhibit in the context of celebrating International Women's Week: "Joining Hands to Make a Difference." And thanks to Sumach press for continuing to showcase the work of Canadian women photographers, as well as challenging me to write about each selected photo.

Vanier Celebrates International Women's Week *Joining Hands to Make a Difference*



Women's Daybook Series

Communications/Studio Arts and Women's Studies invite you to a
photography exhibit by Judith Lerner Crawley
curated by Alanna Stalker Horner

March 6 - 12, 2006 Room B305
Vernissage Monday March 6 4:30 -7

Mon 10 - 7 Wed 8 - 12; 1:30 - 5:30 Fri 10 - 3
Tues 10 - 3 Thurs 10 - 12; 1:30 - 5:30 Sun 2 - 4

Cégep Vanier College 821 Ste-Croix (de l'Eglise) St Laurent Montreal

Disagreement, On Principle!

Stephen Block



Labour relations, like life, is a learning process. That does not make our recent experiences any easier to swallow. The final

outcome, the terrible “agreement in principle” (AIP) went down to defeat because it did not get a double majority (more than 50% of the local unions and more than 50% of the voting members). This gets us off the hook collectively by making the pill a little less bitter. Had the AIP been ratified, it would have brought into sharper focus the fact that we were only able to coax the usual suspects (all 37 of them) to our GENERAL Assembly on Jan. 26th.

Had the agreement been “ratified”, the ending could have been as bad as the whole negotiation (sic) process. Of the 37 who showed up to vote at our General Assembly, hardly anyone knew what we were being asked to ratify and virtually none of us understood that accepting the AIP would have done Vanier a considerable amount of harm.

Most had the impression that either “choice”—the AIP or the decree—was horrendous and equally offensive. Others believed the process was over: the government decreed, we now get on with our lives for the next decade, like it or lump it. And so few attended.

But after receiving information at the GA, I believe we made the correct decision in voting the AIP down 32-5. By contrast, Dawson, which held a (dreaded) referendum, voted overwhelmingly in favour, and in great numbers. This alone helps to illustrate what we are up against. But it also shows how much

progress our former union advocates at Vanier accomplished in the past. For the AIP, which others, elsewhere, saw as an improvement, we understood to be, in Charles Levine’s words “a big step down”.

It is not at all clear that we would have come to the same conclusions without the General Assembly discussion as most of us, in attendance or not, had the impression the ratification vote was meaningless. As it turned out, it was not.

Part of the government’s game was to decree us, the night before Christmas, and then the day after we woke up from our sleepy holi-

It is not all clear that we would have come to the same conclusions without the General Assembly discussion

days, have us ratify the Agreement in Principle. And most of their plan—thankfully not all of it—worked.

It is important for us to look back on the process so as to be informed about our options now. What “lessons we can learn for the next time”? What did the union attempt to do and what does it plan to do in the near and distant future?

Janice Paquette, as she so often does, asked THE Question(s) at the Jan. 26th General Assembly, this time of our negotiators present: “What’s wrong with you guys? What were you thinking? Were you all asleep?” That is, “What made you accept the Agreement in Principle and why would you recommend that we vote to ratify it?”

My reply to her privately was, “Yes they were asleep, but it wasn’t their fault”. They were negotiating to deadlines with a proverbial gun to their heads and were forced to go

without sleep for the last 72 hours.

Negotiating to deadlines or under some pressure to bring negotiations to a conclusion is not uncommon and is used as a tactic by management to wear the other side down and extract as many concessions as possible in the final stages. But this round of negotiations (sic) seemed different to me. It has been my view for 7-8 years, that the process of collective bargaining in Quebec was in jeopardy, that real collective bargaining no longer seems conducted.

This time around was an illustration. Charest seemed to set the tone when he fired his finance minister and replaced his education minister. The new Finance Minister had a hard-line business mindset and the new Minister of Education, unlike his predecessor, never spoke to any

of the aims and goals of the education sector he was supposed to represent.

As things unfolded one could draw the conclusion that not just this round of negotiations, but negotiations—real negotiations—were being put in jeopardy, the law the Liberal government passed being the final piece of evidence. Unless this law is challenged, every government from now on has the option to declare the bargaining process over and impose a contract without first negotiating in good faith. This is why I was exhorting the union to try to go to mediation/arbitration back in November. The government may have rejected it, but that would have at least added ammunition to our argument that we were acting in good faith and the other side was not.

So, even before the imposed deadline of Dec 15, there was something about this round that simply seemed off. The government didn’t

appear interested in compromising on anything. It was more like a round of concession bargaining, except contrary to what some of our colleagues have asserted, it was not because the government has no money.

Rather, it was done for ideological reasons because of the animus this government has for the public sector and teachers in particular.

That accounts for my view, then as now, that the only way to stop what was transpiring was by finding another mechanism. Mediation or arbitration was my proposal. But it is also true that we have to seriously look beyond our usual tactics, especially since we ourselves have said that the strike option was also not plausible or even on the table at the end of this round.

But I have to say I entirely disagree with the analysis that we should be changing our tactics because times have changed and governments no longer have the money they once had. Well, true, they no longer have the money they once had; they have far more money than they once had, flirting, as they now do, with a zero deficit.

The problem is with the zero deficit goal, not the lack of finances. This too is an ideologically driven policy, discredited time and again by the very fact that most of our most successful governments have operated with a deficit, oftentimes a very substantial one. We need go no further than understand that the deficit after WW11 was over 100% of GNP (sic). Did it lead to the disaster, which conservative business economists predicted, or did it in fact lead to the longest period of economic boom in our history?

The trick, as our Keynesians economist friends and allies remind us, is to have such deficits in the service of the public sector, job creation and social programs and not as it currently is used in the US (and perhaps soon in Canada as well) to service war efforts and further discredit public sector spending. The Charest government has intro-

duced a very different governing philosophy to go along with their managing philosophy. In brief they run their negotiations and their government "as a business". That may sound intelligent until it is un-

The problem is with the zero deficit goal, not the lack of finances

derstood what the business lobby's priorities and preferences are. Running a government like a business has a very specific meaning:

Just looking at our little corner of the public sector and business' bird's eye view of it, business (sic) wants to privatize public education; eliminate the CEGEP model; eliminate tenure and have us teach more "skills" oriented curricula. All this stems from an apparent animus which many business "leaders", in and out of government, have for teachers and for public education; many of them having come up through the private system.

I looked up the word 'envy' in Roget's thesaurus, feeling it did not quite capture the meaning I was looking for and found the following: "*envy, noun: Resentful or painful desire for another's advantages: covetousness, enviousness, jealousy. See desire*". Surprising to think this may be a source of their animus? Let me explain what I mean by telling a little story.

I used to be on a university board with public affairs managers. On more than one occasion a senior vice president of a large Canadian company complained about the school's curricula. It was not "skills" oriented enough. It did not prepare students for the "real world". The real world I guess was the one he inhabited, the world where a limousine was waiting outside to whisk him away to the airport, to another meeting in another city, where his secretary did all his preparations and kept him up to date from his office. Hmmm.

I guess we could all use a little of that kind of dose of reality but un-

fortunately it certainly would appear to be somewhat beyond our present means. The great irony is that such people see only that we "work fifteen hours a week", have lengthy paid vacations and have gone further in our education than they.

This business leader went on to name subjects that no longer should be taught at the university level which included virtually everything taught outside the field of commerce.

I gently asked him what school he attended. "Brébeuf", he said. "Ah Brébeuf", I replied, "Tell me, did they teach Latin and the classics at Brébeuf?"

"Yes, yes" they did he said.

"And did it ruin your chances of success in the 'real world'?" I intoned in my best Socrates.

That's the point. These "leaders" do not have an appreciation for their own training and wish to deny it to others. It runs throughout their attitude toward education and has made its way into the highest offices of government—a government which treats education, as it does teachers, as a line item on their budget which, for now, must be accommodated. But if such accommodations can be put off for another 6-8 years, all the better.

So their advice to us as pedagogues needs to be resisted wherever possible, even while we no longer have the right to resist their "negotiating" style.

As this round was so different, including its surprise and abrupt ending, it required and still requires some new and innovative means of response. But much of the discussion, even in our own *Newsletter*, has focused on the failings of our local union.

Saul Alinsky, also a personal hero of mine, was quoted in the last *Newsletter*. My longtime admiration of him stems from his brilliant means of organizing and rallying people, whether religiously conservative or politically radical, to common causes of social justice. It is in good part thanks to him that

It has proven to be far more complicated to organize today in the face of some very sophisticated resistance and responses from employers.

we have organized workplaces and civil rights and liberties for he showed us how to rally against injustices committed by governments and private businesses alike.

It has proven to be far more complicated to organize today in the face of some very sophisticated resistance and responses from employers. So it is important that Alinsky's adages not make it appear that all we need is a change in organizing styles and the battle can or could have been won.

For example, conservatives and business leaders studied Alinsky. Why? So they could imitate his success. Armed with incredible amounts of money, power and influence, they set out to affect public policy, public opinion and public affairs by any means necessary. We are now living in a post-Alinsky era where part of what we need to do is study employers' strategies in return. That is certainly something that I advocate. In so doing it is meant to take the pressure and blame off of the local unions.

The article referring to Alinsky may leave the impression, once again, that the union is less than competent and less than imaginative in its organizational drives; that some in some unions are lacking in imagination. There would probably be a wide consensus that that is the case, although there would undoubtedly be some disagreement as to whom we are talking about here.

But even so, and even when I myself would make such assertions, my view would always be that the emphasis should be on understanding the whole labour relations process better and not to just confine ourselves to criticizing the lack of

skills of the local unions. Otherwise the impression is left that we need, first and foremost, to organize against our own union and nowhere does Alinsky suggest creative measures to organize union members against their own union because his concern, and I believe what ours ought to be, is to organize against the employer, especially when the employer exceeds the bounds of reasonableness in her/his behaviour.

This presupposes both that members are well-informed and that they take an interest in their union. It has become clear that part of the problem locally is that the union has not properly disseminated information to its members—including its own plans to open up discussion and have more open general assemblies. This leaves the impression, which I believe is incorrect, that certain information is held privately by "insiders".

My experience over the last year has been that these so-called "insiders" seem more anxious than

It appears as if change is finally going to come and we will find a model of affiliation that best suits our needs and purposes.

anyone for us all to be in the know. But sometimes the manner in which we communicate, to say nothing of recent time pressures caused by the bargaining round, leaves these important considerations aside. It certainly is not deliberate but it underscores our need to get information out to our colleagues especially when we ourselves have proposed to do so in Association Council and elsewhere.

And so for the problems with our

affiliations at the higher levels, information on that is likely pending. And it appears as if change is finally going to come and we will find a model of affiliation that best suits our needs and purposes. To me that has been part of the frustration with this round. While unionists in the upper levels were being out-muscled by government (and some say out-smarted), unionists at the lower level were being outflanked to some extent and were having difficulty communicating their message on the necessity to remain vigilant in protecting our hard won the rights and working conditions.

To my pleasure, unions throughout the public sector have decided to go the legal route. We will be challenging the decree law in court while at the same time arguing that this government failed to bargain in good faith. If we are to consider deflecting our union dues anywhere, it seems to me, as I mentioned to the FAC/FEC cartel people, that we should consider assembling a war chest for the sole purpose of challenging the government in court, whenever necessary and possible. It is expensive but at this point it is our only avenue to protect the rights of public sector workers to bargain collectively in a reasonable atmosphere.

Governments know how expensive going to court is. That is why this government has imposed a clause in the AIP, less draconian I think/hope in the decree itself, that compels us to pay for grievances we lose or grievances we withdraw from. To tell the other party that they no longer have the right to file grievances without risking bankruptcy just seems illegal to me. I find this incredible. We have to

hope that some judge, or panel of judges somewhere will agree with us. This clause puts an onerous price tag on filing grievances and thereby, de facto, imposes new working conditions.

This clause reflects the direction we are going in as this government strips basic rights out of the collective bargaining process. And it is not the fault of the local union or even of the upper levels. But it does demonstrate that we need to review the entire collective bargaining process, from the priorities we set, to the options we see, to the way we behave and represent ourselves publicly, to the kind of publicity we generate for our profession, to the

way we prepare to do battle for our rights, to the targets we choose and the venues through which we pursue them.

This decree/AIP was the government's doing, not ours. At the very least, regardless of what the government may claim publicly, the AIP has been rejected. Locally we can dare to hope that our new DG, who appears to be committed to our CEGEP, and who does come out of the educational sector will appreciate what it takes to maintain a civil, productive and supportive environment for all our employees, new or long tenured.

We will have to carefully monitor

what the government has just handed to us, especially its impact on our new teachers, an impact that would have been far worse had we blithely gone along with the agreement in principle.

Stay tuned, please.

Stephen Block has a Ph.D., jointly granted, in industrial relations from Université de Montréal's school of industrial relations and in public affairs and public sector economics from Concordia University. He sits on the CRT (Vanier's Labour Relations Committee) as well as on Association Council and teaches Humanities courses in media, history of ideas and business ethics

TRIBAL DANCING AT VANIER

Ray Shankman

I've finally seen it
hiphopping gyrating uninhibited spasmodic
belly popping hip hurling dancing
giving it up in unison
hands waving
it's really *sick!*
a St.Vitus dance macabre
a moonwalking break dancing dirty dance lambada
a salsa wiggle a mambochachamerengue plot to overthrow the world
the revolution is upon us!
Students of the world unite the answer is here
the messiah returns beyond rock and roll his baseball cap
and thug clothes in Cuban sway
automated machinery unplugged
they have learnt this at least
to move with their music in their times
to rewrite collective traumas in the now
who the f*ck cares about English French and Chemistry
anyway anyhow whatever
though physics has energy
gone the abstraction going the mind enter the spastic trance
the gymnastic rhythmic physics of psychic soul
who needs the classroom it's not shaped right
this visceral passion, "O my God can we really f*ck in public?"
dance, the spontaneous orgy of life, this tribe
this moment

Ray Shankman has been teaching English at Vanier since 1974. He has taught his colleagues in Performa, lost students and been lost himself. Poetry is one way of locating oneself, so every now and then he dabbles in the playful/painful exercises of hide and seek and lost and found. This poem was inspired by Ray watching Vanier students compete in the So you think you can dance competition.

UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women: 25th Anniversary

The Canadian theme for International Women's Week 2006 is **Beyond Laws: The Right to be Me**, which addresses women's rights, women's diversity and the need to put words into action.

2006 marks the 25th anniversary of Canada's ratification of the most comprehensive international treaty on women's rights, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

The law guarantees women and men equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities in all aspects of Canadian life. Much has been accomplished to put into place legal foundations such as the Canadian Human Rights Act, pay and employment equity laws, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and maternity and parental benefits.

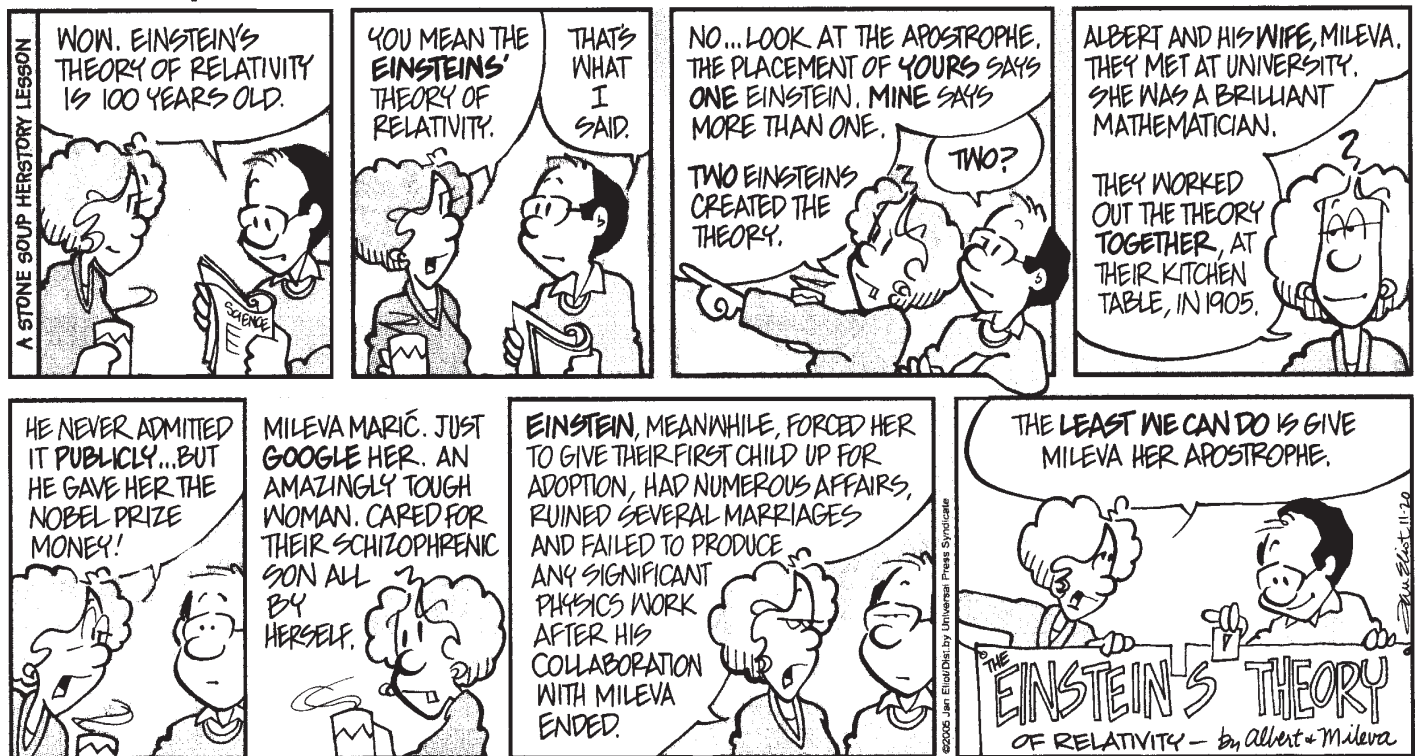
Despite these legal foundations, a gap remains between laws and the reality of women's lives. Many issues from the past, such as violence and poverty, have not been resolved. Today, as women join the labor force in record numbers, raise families and participate in their communities, barriers remain. These barriers keep women, whether they are Aboriginal women, women with disabilities, lesbians, single women, lone parents or women living in poverty, from realizing their full potential.

The legal removal of barriers is not enough. We need to close the gap between the sexes in our daily lives. The 25-year wait for equality is over!

From: <http://www.cwhn.ca/hot/news/default.html#usCsections>

Stone Soup

By Jan Eliot



Policy First!

Vanier and International Cooperation

Vanier College does not have a policy to guide our decisions about participating in international projects. Concerns about the proposal to develop a Vanier College program in Respiratory & Anesthesia Technology for the Riyadh Military Hospital in Saudi Arabia, have made the need for such a policy urgent.

From the Vanier College Teachers - Association Council

The V.C.T.A. has no objection to the initiative to develop an Attestation des Études Collégiales (AEC) in Respiratory & Anesthesia Technology for the purpose of international co-operation. However:

Whereas Saudi Arabia does not offer democratic and human rights to all of its population;

Whereas Saudi Arabia is known for its repressive treatment of women;

Whereas Vanier faculty and staff of Jewish faith might face potential discrimination: i.e. difficulty entering and leaving the Kingdom, and therefore potentially rendering them ineligible to participate in this venture with dignity as equal partners;

Whereas Vanier College's Human Rights Policy says that the objective is " *To fulfill the College's legal responsibility under the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and the Act Respecting Labour Standards in Quebec, to take reasonable steps to prevent discrimination and harassment and to provide procedures to resolve problems and handle complaints;*"

Whereas any contracts entered into by Vanier College should respect and contain the objective of the Human Rights policy listed above;

Whereas serious harm could be done to the reputation of Vanier College;

Therefore, Association Council strongly recommends

- A. That Vanier College and its Board of Directors reject the proposal to implement an AEC with the Riyadh Military Hospital in Saudi Arabia;
- B. That faculty representatives on Academic Council and the Board of Directors support the present motion;
- C. That Vanier College immediately develop an institutional policy on international co-operation and develop a code of ethics for such activity.

From the Association of Vanier College Professionals

The AVCP does not want its members to be obliged to service or be involved with the development of programs with the government of Saudi Arabia or its military.

That country's history of human rights abuse, repression of women, use of torture, disregard for international law or codes of conduct is long and well documented. Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and numerous other credible and reputable non-governmental organisations as well as governments have condemned the Saudi regime (see Appendix I – excerpt of US State Department briefing to Congress). It states that abuses and violations of rights far exceed any advances there might have been.

Many members of the AVCP do not want to be involved with a repressive government with such an atrocious human rights record. Vanier has a long history of promoting equity, affirmative action, interculturalism, and justice. It is our contention that any collaboration with the Saudi regime does not discourage the existing repressive, autocratic and misogynist ways, and we find it reprehensible that Vanier College would enter into association with such a government and its military organizations.

Any contact with Saudi Arabia should therefore be based on these principles of affirmative action, equity and interculturalism that the Vanier community has developed over the years. One small example: we should insist that women benefit equally from any opportunity to teach or be in the program.

We also wish to deposit a document published by Amnesty International entitled *Open for Business* (Appendix II) which highlights the dangers foreigners face when trying to do business in the Kingdom. This document also gives examples of measures of protection and guarantees of equitable treatment that employers/contractors can insist upon and include in any contract signed with the government of Saudi Arabia or its military.

Finally, we request that our disapproval of the program of cooperation with Saudi Arabia be incorporated into the minutes of the Academic Council along with the supporting documents.

From the Jewish Studies Program

Feb. 2, 2006

To John Stavrianos, Academic Council

We would appreciate your bringing the following to the attention of the members of Academic Council:

It is with great concern that we have learned about Vanier's intention to proceed with a contract with Saudi Arabia and its military that would involve the College doing business with a regime that has a very poor record on human rights, as documented by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the U.S State Department.

We are particularly concerned about the potential discrimination against Vanier faculty and staff of the Jewish faith, who might face difficulty entering and leaving the Kingdom, and potentially be rendered ineligible to participate in this venture with dignity as equal partners.

We would therefore urge the College not to proceed with this project.

Respectfully,

Rebecca Margolis,
Co-coordinator, Jewish Studies Major Program

From the Womens Studies Program

To: Ioannis Stavrianos, Chair, Academic Council
From: Arlene Steiger, Coordinator, Women's Studies Program
Date: February 14, 2006.

cc Gilbert Heroux

I am writing to express the concerns of the Women's Studies Program about the proposal to implement an AEC with the Riyadh Military Hospital in Saudi Arabia. As I am sure the members of Council know, this project has recently been discussed at many levels in the college. These discussions have raised complex issues and revealed a diversity of opinion about this particular case that we believe is both divisive and dangerous.

We urge Academic Council to give due weight to the diversity of opinion within our own community about the advisability of undertaking this contract. We suspect that our own community mirrors a larger community to which Vanier College will have to respond. This situation demonstrates that ad hoc decisions about international contracts are not the way to proceed.

We support international involvement as a positive path to pursue. However, we believe that a college policy

regarding Vanier's role in international cooperation must guide us down this path. We ask that the members of Academic Council lend their support to this approach by insisting that decisions about particular projects be tabled until a policy that represents the position of the Vanier community with respect to international cooperation has been developed.

URLs for Saudi Arabia

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2004/41586.htm>
(excerpt = 2 paragraphs, starting In Saudi Arabia,)

Human Rights Watch

<http://www.hrw.org/doc?t=mideast&c=saudia> <http://www.hrw.org/doc?t=mideast&c=saudia>

Amnesty International

<http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/ENGMDE230822000>

Amnesty has many other documents and bulletins about individual cases if you search through their regular website.

Simple Life for Simple Folks

by Su Yi

Food is food to nourish our body.

Knowledge is what we can learn and put into practice.

Friends are people we share our experience and feelings with.

Charity comes from our heart for those we care.

Follow the path that suits us the most.

Travel light when we are looking for directions.

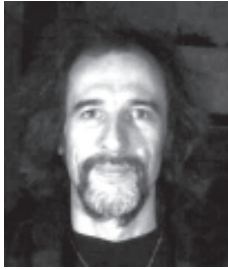
Wait till we understand our choice before we act.

Include others if we wish to find fulfilments.

Su Yi is a sociology teacher at Vanier College.
"We are survivors, in one way or another. Su Yi opts for a simple life as she can only afford a simple life, and no others. What others do is not her problem. Why would her choice be a problem to others?"

A short yet rambling essay...which may or may not lead to further essays along these lines...

Claude Remillard



On the necessary apprehension of a student's right to have been brought up in a way that may lead to behaviour construed as unacceptable; further, on how spontaneous outbursts are Golden opportunities to advance enlightened thinking. In a nutshell: Why it is ok, godly, necessary, righteous and even useful for little Johnny to be a dork – live! In class!

Scenario: Classroom discussion that includes some topic such as ethnocentrism, racism, homophobia... During the discussion, little Johnny blurts out, 'Ah faggots creep me out, keep away,' or some similar petulant diatribe. Some students laugh, cajole, express shock, dismay, perhaps even revulsion.

The teacher is presented with what appears to be a situation of inappropriate behaviour. One need not even delve into the impossibility of even defining such a term and setting any type of stable limits. (Saying 'Damn' in class was probably grounds for expulsion not that long ago, especially if an excuse was being sought!)

Ultimately, I am suggesting that, upon close examination, the idea of behavioral problems is a complete chimera. What appear to be behavioral problems can easily be interpreted as perfect responses to the individual's environment.

It is also possible that assimilation of this point of view (the polar opposite of that currently held), rather than creating stress, confusion or disorder, will actually reap great dividends for all concerned. And of course by all, I mean the Universe as you know it.

Why are these outbursts automatically regarded negatively? They are positive! Surely, we expect by law of probability to have homophobes or ethno centrists in our class. We have innumerable 'types' in our classes. This is because of the infinite 'types' in the world (thank Adonai for their existence!). All categorized, analyzed and synthesized by a university Social Science Department from which, somewhere down the line ultimately, a memo forbidding the self expression of that 'type' will be created.

Is it possible that the appearance of one of these specimens, especially when they reveal themselves at the critical moment, (and aren't they all critical moments?), presents an opportunity to demonstrate something other than surprise that one of the types specifically prohibited from self expression should suddenly self

express, or surprise that these people even exist, or indignation or anger towards some not seen as (demonstrably?) enlightened as we?

If we know such people exist then should we not, by extension, *know why*? If we know why, how can we fault them, forbid them or shame them, once they express the *quintessence* of their being at that moment?

Further regarding our surprise, if a person has a phobia, they have a fear. The fear often leads to preemptory attacks...in a sort of misguided sense of self defense. Further, we cannot legislate against fear-although we try.

It may be analogous to a person who is agoraphobic criticizing people for wanting to go out. Certainly they wish they did not feel the fear. At least, I hope we wish to be fearless. However, solutions often proposed by teachers in these situations can be equivalent to telling a person who is hydrophobic that he must expect to be pleased by water right now or else!

Some people, depending on their background, are surprised to find many topics we discuss quite easily, are discussed publicly at all, in a mixed audience no less!

It is a matter of great personal distress to be fearful at all. We all fear something. Yet, today, you might say we are not allowed to. As if telling someone or showing them a *code* of conduct, is enough to get them over their fear.

Imagine that student then, imbued as he is by 18 years of parental and social indoctrination (family, local and/or regional) feeling an explosive well of emotions bubbling to the surface. He explodes, releasing his self to the world. And what does he get? A reprimand from a person probably just as fearful of something else! (Or worse, a homophobe/ethno centrist simply following the course outline, hidden so deep in the closet of his own fears).

When someone is fearful of water, friends attempt to encourage by pointing out the benefits of aquatic pleasure. Some may even push their friend in. What then of the ethno-centrist or the homophobe?

Claude Remillard: Working at Vanier for 4 years. As a Youth, looked forward with eyes agape to one day walking the Hallowed Halls of Academia, further hoping those austere Masters of the Word of the Aeon would see fit to drop even a few crumbs of their wisdom along my rickety wayward path...In the meantime, I teach Geography, QM, and Explorations, but am available for other subjects. May soon move to Paris to learn French through stand up comedy, come back, enter politics, change world etc....

IMPORTANT EVENTS IN CANADIAN HISTORY

Compiled by Dany Brown, Student Services

In the 400 years we have lived in Canada, Blacks have been part of many milestones in Canada's history and culture. These are some highlights:

1604 -06

Mattieu da Costa travels with the Champlain expedition to Port Royal. He serves as an interpreter between the French and the Micmac Indians of the area.

1628

Olivier Le Jeune, an eight year old boy from Madagascar, arrives in Quebec. He is the first recorded slave purchase in New France. Le Jeune is probably the first person of African origin to live most of his life in Quebec.

1709

In New France, slavery becomes legal.

1734

A Montreal slave named Marie-Joseph Angelique learns that she is to be sold to someone else. In an attempt to escape, she sets fire in her mistress's house. The fire cannot be contained, causing damage to half of Montreal. She is caught, tortured and hanged, bringing attention to the conditions of the slaves.

1783

More than 5000 Blacks leave the United States to live in the Maritimes, Quebec and Ontario. Having sided with the British during the American war of Independence, they came to Canada as United Empire Loyalists, some as free men and some as slaves. Although promised land by the British, they received only varying amounts of poor quality land and, in fact some received none at all.

Around 1783 in Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia, Rose Fortune becomes Canada's first policewoman.

1792

A large number of Black Loyalists in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia migrate to Sierra Leone in West Africa, mainly because the promises of land in Canada were not kept by the British.

1793

Under the leadership of Lt. Governor John Graves Simcoe, Upper Canada passes a law to stop people from bringing slaves into Upper Canada. The law also frees slaves who are 25 years old or more. With this act, Upper Canada becomes the first British territory to bring in legislation against slavery, although it does not abolish slavery completely.

1796

About 600 Blacks from Jamaica are deported to Nova Scotia. Known as Maroons, they help rebuild the Hali-

fax Citadel. In 1800, most of them leave for Sierra Leone, Africa.

1812

(WAR) Fighting on the same side of White militia and Mohawk Indians, a group of Black soldiers force American soldiers to retreat in the Battle of Queenstown Heights. Some 2000 Blacks emigrate from the United States to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick during the War of 1812.

1834

At midnight July 31, slavery comes to an end in all British territories, including British North America. To honour this important event, August 1st is celebrated as Emancipation Day in Windsor Ontario and elsewhere.

1837

Black militia units participate in putting down the rebellion in Upper Canada.

Early mid 1800's

More than 30,000 American Blacks escape slavery in the United States and come to Canada. In the United States, the Fugitive Slave Act is passed in 1850. It provides that even free persons can be made a slave if suspected of being a runaway. As a result more fugitive slaves and free Black persons come to Canada.

1841-42

The Dawn settlement in what is now Dresden, Ontario, is established to provide self help for Blacks in agricultural communities.

1850's

From her home in St. Catherine's Ontario, Harriet Tubman makes 19 trips into the United States to help slaves escape into Canada.

In Ontario, the Common Schools Act is passed providing for separate schools for Blacks and Roman Catholics. This results in separate schools for Blacks, leading in some cases, to Whites refusing to have their children attend schools with Blacks. In Hamilton, Ontario, there are riots and some of the parents try to prevent Blacks from attending schools with white children.

1853

Mary Ann Shadd is the first woman in North America to become an editor of a newspaper. Working out of Chartam, Ontario, she publishes, edits and writes in the *Provincial Freeman*, a newspaper serving the Black community in Ontario.

1854

Establishment of the African Baptist Association of Nova Scotia.

1856

Formation of the British Methodist Episcopal Church (BME), an all Black Church.

1858

About 600 Blacks from California move to British Columbia. One of them, Mifflin Gibbs, later plays a key role in persuading British Columbia to become a part of Canada.

1859

Abraham Shadd is elected to the town council in Raleigh, Ontario and becomes the first Black elected to public office.

William Hall, born in Hants County, Nova Scotia, becomes the first Nova Scotian and the first Black to win the Victoria Cross for Bravery. The Victoria Cross is the highest military honour in the British Commonwealth.

The all Black Victoria Pioneer Rifle Company is formed to defend British Columbia.

1861

Dr. Anderson Fuffin Abbott becomes the first Canadian born Black to graduate from medical school.

1872

Elijah McCoy, born in Colchester, Ontario, invents the first of his many devices to oil engines used on trains and in factories. His inventions are so good that many people refuse to buy imitations of his work. They insist on "The Real McCoy".

1882

John Ware, a Texas cowboy, moves to Alberta. He introduces longhorn cattle into Canada and pioneers the development of the rodeo.

1909

Black farmers from Oklahoma start settling into Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

1914-18

Black Canadians join combat units and a construction battalion is formed as a segregated unit in the 1st World War. They serve with great loyalty, even though the Government tries to keep Blacks out of the Armed Forces, even though Blacks are abused and attacked due to skin colour.

1939-45

In the 2nd World War, authorities again try to keep Blacks out of the Armed Forces, but blacks insist on serving their country. Eventually, they join all services of the war, often serving with distinction.

Carrie Best, of New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, starts publishing a newspaper called the Clarion. Later its name changes to The Negro Citizen. It continues publication for 10 years. As a publisher and writer, Carrie Best shows that Blacks are often not treated fairly in Nova Scotia. She shows how they are not served in restaurants and kept out of theatres. Best helps to rid those practices, making Nova Scotia, and Canada, a better place to live.

1954

Segregation ends in Nova Scotia schools with the advent of changes to the law that permitted segregation.

1955

The Canadian Pacific railway finally starts to let some Blacks work as railway conductors. Before that time, many Blacks worked on the railway, primarily as porters.

1950-60

New laws make it illegal to refuse to let people work, to be served in restaurants or to move into a home because of race.

1960s

Large numbers of people from the Caribbean start settling in Canada.

1962

Daniel G. Hill, an American born Black who moved to Canada in 1950, is made the first director of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, the first government agency in Canada set up to protect citizens from discrimination. He later becomes chairman of the Commission. Later still, he serves as the Ombudsman of Ontario. He also writes three books, including *The Freedom Seekers: Blacks in Early Canada*.

The Canadian Immigration policy changes, emphasizing that education and skills of the applicant are to be the main criteria for entry to Canada. This leads to the "Points System" in 1967 which is considered more equitable for Blacks.

1963

Leonard Braithwaithe is elected to the Ontario legislature and is the first Black to serve in a provincial legislature in Canada.

1964

Harry Jerome of Vancouver, British Columbia, wins a bronze medal in the 100 metre dash at the Tokyo Olympics. Earlier he ran that distance in the world record time of 10.0 seconds. In 1971, he is awarded the Order of Canada "for excellence in all fields of Canadian life."

Segregation becomes against the law in Ontario, bringing an end to racially separated classrooms in Ontario.

1972

Rosemary Brown of Vancouver, British Columbia, becomes the first Black woman elected to a provincial legislature in Canada. (In 1999 she accepts an invitation from Vanier College Women Studies and in our very own Auditorium, makes a riveting and Inspiring presentation on her life and times.)

1974

Dr. Monestime Saint Firmin is elected Mayor of Mattawa, Ontario, making him Canada's first Black mayor.

1979

Lincoln Alexander, of Hamilton, Ontario, becomes Canada's first Black cabinet minister. He serves as Min-

ister of Labour in the federal government. From 1985-1991, he serves As theGovernor of Ontario.

1984-88

Daurene Lewis serves as Mayor of Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia. She is the first Black woman to be elected Mayor of a Canadian city.

1988

Ben Johnson, a Canadian Olympic 100 metre runner shatters the 100 metre sprinting record. Although later disqualified for steroid use by the IOC, he was for a short time the fastest man ever to run that distance in all of history.

1990

African National Congress leader, Nelson Mandela, who has just been freed from South African jail, visits Canada. He speaks to huge crowds in Montreal and Toronto.

1991

Jean-Bertrand-Astride, the President of Haiti, who was forced out of his country when the military seized power, visits Canada. He meets with Prime Minister Mulroney and is warmly welcomed by the large Haitian community in Montreal, where he had studied at the University of Montreal in the 1980s.

Julius Alexander Isaac, a native of Grenada, is named chief Justice of the Federal Court of Canada. He becomes the first Black Chief Justice in Canada and the first to serve on the Federal Court.

1996 Donavan Bailey, of Oakville, Ontario becomes the fastest man in the world by taking the 100 metre sprints at the Atlanta Olympic Games. Donavan broke both the Olympic and World records.

2005

Michaëlle Jean, a Montrealer of Haitian origin becomes the first Black Governor General of Canada. In February 2006, she sends Vanier College a Black History Month message! (see p.11).

This "Time Line" is wide open: you are invited to add events and people that are an important part of your Canadian history. Send them to Dany:

brownd@vaniercollege.qc.ca

Dany Brown, one of Vanier's secret treasures, is not one to blow her own horn. When asked for a description of self, she demurred at first, then replied: "Hmmm...what can I say? She's big, she's brown, she's round!" Born of a Jamaican father and a French Canadian mother, Dany works in Student Services where she juggles several portfolios: Service Education, Black History Month, Multi-Cultural Food Fair, Nite of Nations, self-defence courses for women—to name a few. She is also the energy, organizer and motivator-in-chief for the children's St. Laurent Basketball League. You will always find an open door and a warm welcome to her office in C203-E.

The VCTA Executive is willing to go to your Department meetings to answer your questions. Contact VCTA@ 7053 or 7054.

Calling for Reps!

Representitives from Science & General Studies and Applied technologies are needed to sit on the Teaching Excellence Award Committee. Contact VCTA @ 7053 or 7054.

Professional Development Funds

The maximum amount available to individual teachers is \$500. Teachers with less than a full time workload receive proportional funds. I.e. half a workload = maximum of \$250. It is possible to combine 2 years of PD funds for one event (maximum \$1000), with a letter addressed to the VCTA prior to filling in an application.

Guidelines and application forms are available at the VCTA office: C101. Applications should be submitted to the PD Committee, c/o VCTA Office, 3 weeks before the start of any activity.

You do not need to submit an application for Employee Fitness activities or CPR renewal courses, but you do need a receipt to claim the expense.

Members of the bipartite PD Committee for the 2005-06 year are Ian MacArthur for the VCTA and Nancy Wargny for the Administration.

Web Sites for Black History Month

Suggested by Lyne Marie Larocque

The Ontario Black History Society

<http://www.blackhistorysociety.ca/> &
<http://collections.ic.gc.ca/obho/>

The Ontario Black History Society (OBHS) is a non-profit registered Canadian charity, dedicated to the study, preservation and promotion of Black History and heritage. The Society aims to foster public interest and encourage the interest of Black History through; Recognition, preservation and promotion of the contributions of Black peoples and their collective histories through education, research and cooperation; Sponsorship and support of educational conferences and exhibits in this field; Promoting the inclusion of material on Black History in school curricular.

Black History in Ontario

http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/english/exhibits/black_history/history.htm

Researchers interested in looking further into the history of the black community in Ontario can consult these achieves and others sources.

Some Missing Pages: The Black Community in the History of Québec and Canada

<http://www.qesnrecit.qc.ca/mpages/>

Blacks have continued to make a positive impact on Canadian society though largely missing from popular texts and public documents. This document focuses on their contribution. The material is directly compatible with the History of Québec and Canada program (History 414). Many of the items included can also serve as valuable content in a variety of subject areas and grade levels.

Works on Black Canadian History:

<http://www.qesnrecit.qc.ca/mpages/bib.htm>

A web and paper-based activity:
A Soldier's Life: The History of Black Soldiers and their Impact on the Status of Blacks in Canada. Based on: *Some Missing Pages*

African Canadian On-line

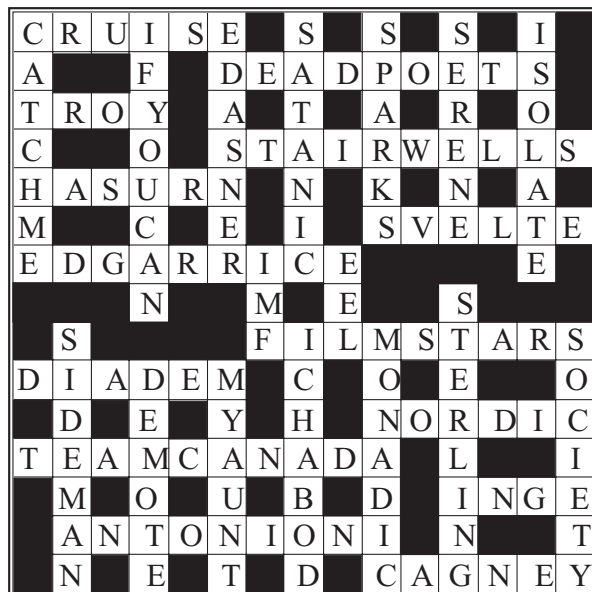
<http://www.yorku.ca/aonline/index.html>

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Crossword Solutions

"The Celluloid Kingdom"



Solution to "The Celluloid Kingdom" - The puzzle appeared in the Dec. 2005 issue of the Newsletter.

"Herstory"



Solution to "Herstory" - The puzzle appears on pg. 33 of this issue of the Newsletter.



The Bluest Eye

Toni Morrison

"Each night Pecola prayed for blue eyes. In her eleven years, no one had ever noticed Pecola. But with blue eyes, she thought, everything would be different. She would be so pretty that her parents would stop fighting. Her father would stop drinking. Her brother would stop running away. If only she could be beautiful. If only people would look at her."

The Bluest Eye is Toni Morrison's first novel. It is a book with the most beautiful language, and such boldness to it that it is, well, just overwhelming. Set in Lorain, Ohio, it tells the story of black, eleven-year-old Pecola Breedlove. Pecola prays for her eyes to turn blue so that she will be as beautiful and beloved as all the blond, blue-eyed children in America; children like those her mother, employed as household help, cares for during the day.

Pecola will get her blue eyes—yes, indeed—after a tragic summer, where the poverty and the racism that afflicts the black population in the 1940s in the USA will change her life forever. I leave it for you to discover how her eyes change colour...

The Bluest Eye is one of the most unforgettable novels I have ever read. I strongly recommend it.

Lyne Marie Larocque teaches Sociology, Methodology and Explorations.

AFTER A WHILE

Sometimes referred to as 'Comes the Dawn'

Veronica A. Shoffstall

After a while, you learn the subtle difference
Between holding a hand and chaining a soul,
And you learn that love doesn't mean leaning
And company doesn't mean security.
And you begin to learn that kisses aren't contracts
And presents aren't promises.
And you begin to accept your defeats
With your head up and your eyes open
With the grace of a woman, not the grief of a child.
And you learn to build all your roads
On today, because tomorrow's ground
Is too uncertain for plans, and futures have
A way of falling down in mid-flight
After a while you learn that even sunshine
Burns if you get too much.
So you plant your own garden and decorate
Your own soul instead of waiting
For someone to bring you flowers.
And you learn that you really can endure...
That you really are strong
And you really do have worth.
And you learn and learn...
With every goodbye you learn.

*Thanks to **Lyne Marie Larocque** for this submission.*



Gloria Di Murro (con't from pg. 4)

One of the greater moments was when she brought a picture of her dad (Léo) with the D.G. and yours truly at the 2005 Retirement Celebration, and blurted out, «I never would have recognized you if you hadn't told me.» Hmm...maybe it was the two weeks of living the novel «*Orifices Revisited*» (not to mention the hospital gown and no make up), that made me seem a little different from that evening.

Baby, you ain't seen nothing yet!⁶

The liver biopsy confirmed a malignant carcinoma which had metastasized to the liver. The 7cm mass was ON, not in, both my liver and pancreas (and the duct that connects the two together). After all those tests, they still hadn't found the primary source and they would be sending me home the next day, Friday Dec. 23rd (day of my original ultrasound appointment and my niece Vanessa's birthday!).

That Thursday evening (Dec. 22), the oncologist graced me with his presence at 8:30 pm (AFTER I'd swallowed my little pill, and AFTER Patrice had left). Asking for a prognosis I was told, for the third time (I'm stubborn, what can I say?) that it could be 3 weeks, 3 months, or 3 years. And for the third time I said, "That's what YOU think, buddy. I ain't going nowhere."

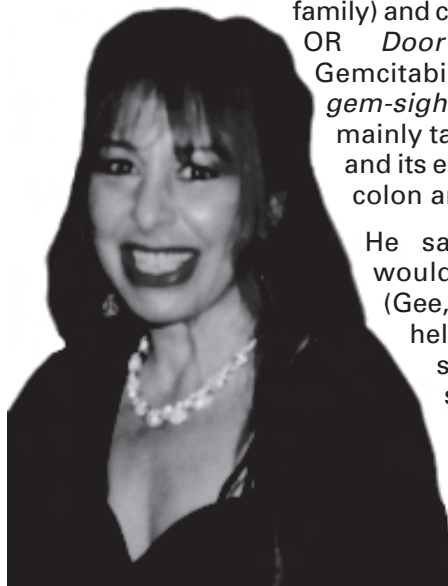
He then presented me with options. First, *surgery* was NOT an option: I would get hepatitis and die. They didn't think it was coming from the pancreas but couldn't do a biopsy 'cause they'd have to remove it and I'd die. *Radiation* was NOT an option as the liver and pancreas seemed healthy and were functioning well so radiation would kill them and I'd die.

So, okay, Mr. Sunshine, when does the 'option' part come into play? Well, that would be *chemotherapy*.

Good night, Mrs. Kalabash, wherever you are⁷

Lucky me, I was given the 'option' of *Door Number One*: Carbo Toxol, which targets the lungs (I am/was a smoker), breasts (history of it in the family) and colon (who knows?); OR *Door Number Two*: Gemcitabine (pronounced *gem-sight-a-been*), which mainly targets the pancreas and its environs (and lungs, colon and breasts).

He said that Door #1 would cause hair loss. (Gee, is that supposed to help me make a decision?) Who gives a s...t about hair loss?! Will it work? "Ont ne sait pas, Madame. On espère." The treatment plan



was to be 'aggressif' with only four 3-hour chemo sessions at 3-week intervals.

If it didn't work, I asked, could I switch to Gemcitabine? To which he replied, "Non, Madame" (I must have heard those two words at least 50 times in two weeks). At this point I was seriously waiting for Monty Hall⁸ to peek behind the curtain yelling "Will it be Door #1, or Door #2? 15 seconds!" (Maybe it was the little blue pill I had just swallowed.)

This oncologist was asking ME for a treatment plan! ME to take an uneducated gamble with my life! For ME, this was NOT an 'option'. So, I put on my imaginary blonde wig, stuck a finger in my dimple and said, "Merci, Monsieur". Go ahead, schedule me for your 'decapage' treatment (which was to be Friday Dec. 30 at 10am).

The next morning, I packed my bags and got the hell out of Dodge.

La Casa Nostra

Throughout my ordeal, I was comforted, visited by and on the phone with my rather large family, who, being Italian, also said the doctors were *pazzo*. "Who is this guy?" "Is he crazy?" "What's he talking about?" These were the more polite utterances.

With Gilda at the helm (read: in the middle) of the Montreal network, and my mother (trilingual that she is) working the Montreal-Toronto-Florida circuit, the rather large family with which I have been blessed acquired a miraculous and coveted appointment the following Wednesday (Dec. 27) with "Dr. House" of the Jewish General Hospital's Oncology Department, Dr. Lawrence Panasci. This Department has won many awards for its research in and advancement of cancer treatments. Amen.

This coup couldn't have happened without my sister Gilda (who should be a nurse), my sister Melissa (who IS a nurse at Princess Margaret in Toronto), my step-aunt Anna (who works in Pathology at the Royal Vic), my mother (many of you will remember her from her days at Vanier) who rounded up the troops and bel-lowed and bullied everyone into shape, my great Aunts who have invoked their preferred Saints (Ste. Thérèse, St. Joseph, Ste. Anne, etc.) and the many healing masses being said out there for me.

With Patrice (always) on one side and Gilda on the other, I went to my appointment and was immediately put at ease. The good doctor reviewed my test results from Sacré-Coeur with his aide Dr. Al-Rafae and ex-claimed that I was a very interesting case (We all could have told him that!) as I had no symptoms, no weight loss and—except for that mass jabbing me at every opportunity—was feeling great.

He told me not to worry, scheduled a PET (Positron Emission Topography) scan that was to be rushed (the next appointment being at the end of February) and told me to go home and relax. There were plenty of different treatments they could try and had many clini-

cal trials going on. So basically, I wasn't dying in 2 weeks (Told ya!).

Again, with my family and Jesus with me, another mini miracle occurred. I had a PET scan 7 days later. Alas, as before, everything else was clear: no primary source. Just the 7cm beast within.

Follow the Yellow Brick Road⁹

At this writing, I am about to have my third chemo treatment (*Door Number Two*, by the way...thank God for second opinions) at the JGH's new treatment centre on the 8th floor and seem to be tolerating it (Day 3 felt like a Mac truck hit me, but I digress). As tough as I am, alas, my veins aren't. The many months of intake and output have left them small and feeble (unlike their owner). For Valentine's Day I was given a PICC line (a small tube with two valves inserted in my inner right bicep) as a present: no more needles!

I was absolutely stunned at the warm wishes and prayers sent to me. The wonderful gifts, flowers and thoughts have kept me determined to come back (even though I keep saying I can't wait to leave), and are very much appreciated. (*Thank You* cards are coming, I promise.)

I can't wait to celebrate 30 WORKING years at Vanier on May 24 (I've been running around the place since before its 1970 opening), and my retirement in 5 years. I will continue to keep in touch with members of my Vanier family (I can't stay on the phone ALL day though) and hopefully will speak to more.

You are all in my thoughts and I'll continue to participate from the sidelines. I now have some time to contribute to a few pet committees (which I had to forfeit

with the new job), and will start with International Women's Day (March 8).

All of you are part of my spiritual journey (whether you like it or not) and may God (or Allah, or Whomever you believe in) bless you all.

Stay tuned for the next issue...*Living the Organic Way...* or, *Living La Vida Loca*

¹Song by *The Carpenters*

²Line by *Groucho Marx* in the movie *Duck Soup*

³Trademark saying: Alfred E. Neuman of *MAD Magazine*

⁴Credit: The Olympics?

⁵Adapted from the song by *Doris Day*

⁶Song by *Bachman Turner Overdrive*

⁷Signature Sign-off: *Jimmy Durante*

⁸Game Show Host, *Let's Make a Deal*

⁹Song in the movie *The Wizard of Oz*

Gloria Di Murro has been at Vanier since 1976 in various incarnations: *Gert the Bag lady* (pictured at the top), union rep (1980's & 2000's), Office Manager (*Secretarial Services*) Sector secretary, graphic artist, poet, Vanier Woman of the Year (1999), caterer extraordinaire, organizer of all manner of Vanier get-togethers including the Retirement Party(ies), the Women's Champagne Breakfast, the Vanier Happy Hours.

Should the spirit move you to send along good thoughts and wishes, address them to:

Gloria Di Murro
289— 83rd Avenue
Apt. 1
Laval, QC
H7W 2V3

ON OUR NOBLE PROFESSION...

The future of the world is in my classroom today, a future with the potential for good or bad.... Several future presidents are learning from me today; so are the great writers of the next decades, and so are all the so-called ordinary people who will make the decisions in a democracy. I must never forget these same young people could be the thieves and murderers of the future. Only a teacher? Thank God I have a calling to the greatest profession of all! I must be vigilant every day, lest I lose one fragile opportunity to improve tomorrow.

- *Ivan Welton Fitzwater*

There is an old saying that the course of civilization is a race between catastrophe and education. In a democracy such as ours, we must make sure that education wins the race.

- *John F. Kennedy*

One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feelings. The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is the vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of the child.

- *Carl Jung*

A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.

- *Henry Brooks Adams*

Odds 'N' Ends

Be Alert for Students in Need of Economic Support

Too often, economic difficulties get in the way of student success. Even if a student works part-time and qualifies for a full bursary/loan, the monies may not cover all the costs of living. A gesture of support can make all the difference in the world. You can drop off non-perishable food items as well as other necessities of life (toothpaste, shampoo, toilet paper, soap...) at the VCTA Office C101. You can tell your students about the **Emergency Fund Committee** and direct (or accompany) them to its members:

Peggy McCoy, Student Services C201, Ext. 7964;
Hilda Schwartz, DG's Office H316, Ext. 7066
Dave Peters, Special Care Counseling F228, Ext. 7629

Contribute to the VCTA Newsletter!

The *VCTA Newsletter* welcomes contributions of all kinds from all members of the Vanier College community. A memorable encounter with a student? Struggles in the classroom? A Vanier employee you want to praise? Professional development ideas? An opinion about union issues? A social justice issue? Poetry? Music review? Best/worst teaching moments? Get to it! Send your idea/contribution to Shirley:

pettifef@vaniercollege.qc.ca

ethiquette.ca for responsible consumption

Responsible consumption is a way of integrating concerns for the environmental and the social effects of economic activity into our purchase decisions. It is about how we can use our buying power to contribute positively to society, to the environment and to the world as a whole.

ethiquette is an information service which brings responsible product and service choices to Quebec consumers. Their website, www.ethiquette.ca is for conscientious consumers looking for options that reduce harm to the environment and help improve social conditions. They also work to support innovative businesses that have decided to take the high (and difficult) road towards incorporating a culture of sustainability/responsibility in the marketplace.


To contact ethiquette Inc., send an email to: info@ethiquette.ca

New Semester Etiquette Reminder

— Loosely inspired by Dr Seuss

Erase your  , think of others —

You'll be so much  by other teachers.


Be sure your students pick up the 

So the space is **prime** for the next batch.

If the  have been moved

Hurray for your **pedagogical tools!**

But for your **colleague** they may differ

Please  be sure to leave the room in order!

Thanks to **Lyne Marie Larocque** for this reminder!

Whoever first coined the phrase 'you're the wind beneath my wings' most assuredly was reflecting on the sublime influence of a very special teacher.

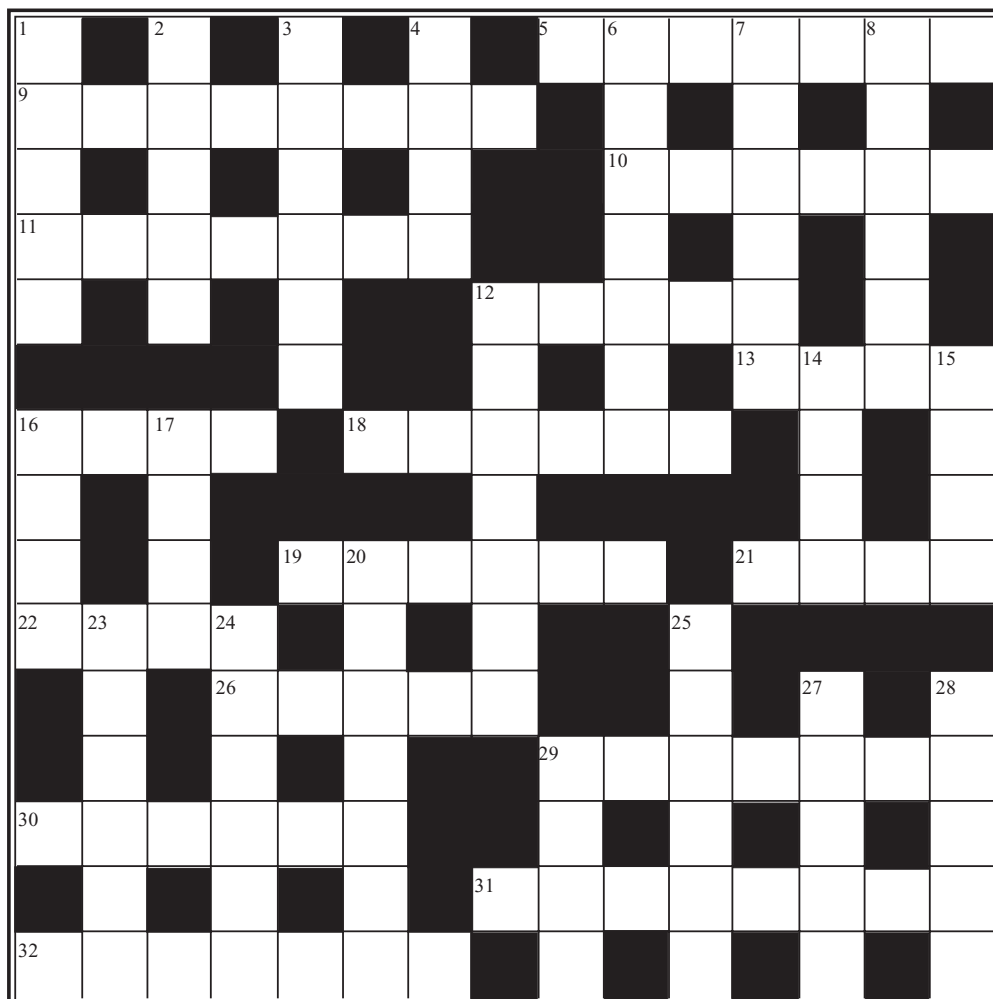
- Frank Trujillo

"HERSTORY"

by Valerie Broege

ACROSS

5. Big city artist invites women to dinner. (7)
9. For the Bible to be missing a book is cruel. (8)
10. Hair treatment? It leads to license! (6)
11. In the direction of two hospital rooms. (7)
12. Former first lady I ring in the courtyard. (5)
13. What is necessary for a primal garden in disarray. (4)
16. Force French garlic on her. (4)
18. Creative expression in a neutral color can lead to a striking design. (6)
19. Run to the phone. (6)
21. Tom with a ball behaves like a Stoic. (4)
22. Lucille loves to dance. (4)
26. Is Mr. Brown renowned in these places? (5)
29. As for the tree I cleave, I have had enough of work. (7)
30. Kennedy, I hesitate to say, can suffer from boredom. (6)
31. Service station with colloquial spelling in the evening turns into a jewel. (8)
32. "Some corn for the deer," said the pilot. (7)



DOWN

1. "Ain't I a woman?, she asked, and that's for sure! (5)
2. Save a letter from a woman whose writing helped start a civil war. (5)
3. Glass of beer partially emptied becomes last name of this feminist. (6)
4. Does she lead a double life? (4)
6. Apathy I disavow when an illustrious woman wastorn apart in Alexandria. (7)
7. Woman scientist puts out 100 deliberately set fires. (6)
8. Stern, key players in the abolitionist movement. (6)
14. Actress turns me around so that in the end I earn a college degree. (4)
15. Did only thing she thought she could, ending the life of a queen. (4)

16. Food for an insect? (4)
17. Billy says, "I do, lady!" (4)
20. Some unpackaged moly *per diem* can be found in the 23. Is a cherub a radical? (6)
24. "Hit Lil!," excitedly shouted Adam to his wife. (6)
25. Country and woman who are pro-temperance smash liquor bottles. (6)
27. Egyptian god wallowing in booze needs Ceres' gift. (5)
28. What an abductee and a sightless woman may have in common. (5)
29. Woman got up for a flower. (4)

Valerie Broege has been teaching Humanities at Vanier since 1974, and taught mature students for several years as part of the Explorations Program. In the summer of 1995 while on a train to Toronto, she had a "cryptic crossword creation epiphany" and spontaneously tried her hand at making a cryptic crossword of her own. She hasn't looked back since!

Benefit for Gloria

COME JOIN US IN THE THEATRE ROOM - B323

MARCH 1ST - UB- FACULTY POETRY SLAM

\$20

FEATURING BRIAN LEWELLYN-AP-DAFYDD * RAY SHANKMAN * MYRA DAVID *
MARCIA GOLDBERG * KEVIN BUSHELL * ROGER GUETTA AND OTHERS



UNIVERSAL BREAK

march 1st