

# POSTURE, MOBILITY, & FLEXIBILITY

by Adam Schuster

Hello everyone! Hopefully you're all doing well. I know that as the semester draws to a close you'll all have tons of studying to do. All of this studying however can lead to a sedentary lifestyle. So this week I wanted to step back from the weight training and talk more about mobility, flexibility, and posture—something that I am personally trying to do much more of. If you take a moment to look around, you might be surprised by how many people have terrible posture, myself included. Perhaps when you were growing up your mother would tell you to sit or to stand up straight, but why? What if I told you that sitting, sleeping and standing are bad for you. You might think that I'm insane but stick with me because my point's coming. Your posture and how you align your body long term has a huge effect on your long term health. Learning how to stay properly aligned can reduce the chance of

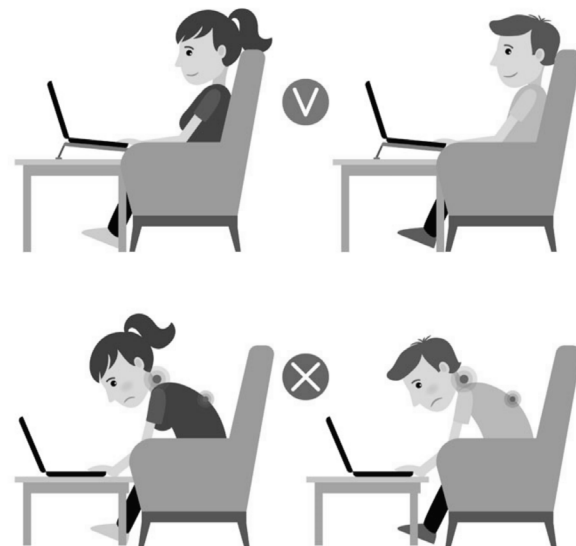
injury when performing strenuous activities and exercise. Before I go any further I just want to clarify that I am not a physiotherapist in any sense of the word. Everybody is different and people's histories of past sports injuries, posture, flexibility & mobility all play into how their body functions, moves, and performs today. It's complex to say the least. Today I just want to address some of the basics. Firstly, kyphotic posture: this is something many people who sit a lot will have to some degree. Imagine someone who slouches when sitting or standing. A handful of problems arise with this position such as a weak core and mid-section due to lack of support for your torso. While we naturally consider sitting down to be a time to relax or decompress, it is not optimal for our bodies long term. Leaning over also puts a lot of pressure on the spine and the many muscles of the back that are meant to keep your shoulders pulled back and in a good, healthy position. When your shoulders roll forward while sitting or standing, it causes the front of your shoulders and the muscles of your chest to become tight,

so the muscles in the upper back have to work even harder to try to pull them back into place. This process significantly weakens the upper back, hence potential shoulder pain. Also, while sitting, various muscles in the legs such as the hamstrings and hip flexors can become very tight. These issues can cause imbalances in the hips, possibly causing them to lean front, back, or even tilt to one side causing excessive back, hip, and knee pain. It's incredible that all of these problems are caused by simply sitting or standing in poor positions, and this barely scratches the surface of all potential issues. Can you imagine sitting, standing or sleeping in a poor or dysfunctional position and then having to go play a sport or perform an

activity that demands your body to not only be functional but also to perform well? What I want you to take away from this article is to try to become more aware of how your posture is while standing, sitting, sleeping, etc. Also try to incorporate a regular stretching routine into your schedule if you haven't already. Even something as little as 10-20 minutes before bed is a great place to start. Finally, I leave you with a challenge: if you can't touch your toes right now, you know where to start! Goodluck.



## Fitness



# The Bolt

a csa publication

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importance of community

the people's advocate

shell shocked



retro issue

## BILL 1: AN ACT TO REDUCE SCHOOL FEES

by Kohan Eybergen

The Alberta NDP provincial government kicked off the month of March by unveiling bill 1, an act to reduce school fees. The reduction of school fees was one of the NDP party's strongest platform items during the 2015 provincial election, and it's great, especially being an NDP voter and an education minor, to finally see this issue addressed. This bill is designed to reduce school fees by about twenty five percent, and will eliminate some of the costs that families with children in school have to pay at the start of every year. Bill 1 will affect many Albertan families with children who attend school, and it will use government of Alberta funds to cover the cost of school necessities such as school bus fees, and textbooks.

During the government of Alberta live broadcast, after receiving a question about why the NDP decided to move forward with this bill, Premier Rachel Notley is quoted stating that "families need support, they shouldn't be paying for this out

of their pockets. Everyone should have the same access to a good foundational public education". Further on in the broadcast a reporter in the crowd posed the question of where the money was going to come from. David Eggen, the Alberta Minister of Education answered that the funds would come from "within the existing government budget", including the existing education budget for Alberta schools. This seems to indicate that no new tax will be initiated in order to cover the expenses this bill is intended to cover.

This is important because it will cut down on costs for families with children, and will especially help out lower income families, and young families that are just starting out. The average school bus fee for one child in Alberta is about three hundred dollars per year, and this fee adds up immensely from year to year for families with multiple children in school. The beginning of the school year fees are a constant dread for all parents, especially because these fees are unavoidable as all school kids will need textbooks, and many of them take the school bus since most of their parents work full time.

Unfortunately, many Albertan children who live in cities such as Ed-

monton and Calgary, need to be bussed further than 2.5 kilometers to schools out of their district. This occurs when the school that is closest to them within their district is overfull, so they have to be sent to attend a different school that is further away. Often times this forces families to buy a school bus pass since it is just not practical for parents to drive them when they already have long commutes to work. In these cases it is too far for the children to walk to school, especially young children in the long winter months. Similarly, children who live in rural areas of Alberta also often require bussing to and from school since they live too far away to walk or bike. It is extremely unfair and unjust that some families are charged for bus passes that are a necessity, just because they have lost the postal code lottery.

In addition to this, the government of Alberta is also investing in building many new schools throughout the province, which will hopefully provide more choices for parents who are deciding on where their children will get their education. This will also help deal with the overflowing schools and the thirty student classrooms that are all too common in the larger Albertan cit-



# Politics

ies and suburbs. However, it is uncertain how bill 1 will affect families who choose to homeschool their children. The controversial issue of homeschool funding is one that is frequently brought up by these families to the Alberta government. Homeschooling has always been a fairly common choice among rural families, families with children with disabilities, families with many children, and families who are highly religious.

Bill 1 will alleviate some of the expenses that families face at the beginning of every school year, as these school fees only one of the many things that parents need to pull out their purses for during the fall season. Parents also often need to purchase new clothing for their children at this time, not to mention back to school supplies such as notebooks, binders, and writing utensils. Hopefully the passing of this bill will give Albertan families a leg up at the beginning of the oncoming and future school years.

was hard. Knowing that in total 18 soldiers that left Canada with us in February did not make it out alive. That will forever weigh heavily on me.

**How long ago was this?**

9 years ago.

**What was your career at the time?**

Military Medic (similar to a paramedic in the civilian world, but with a higher tactical trauma skill set.) I was at the time embedded with the Afghan National Army as part of a mentoring team.

**Have there been people in your life that weren't able to support you, or more that were able to provide a good support system?**

My wife was and still is amazing. I also have a tight group of military friends who went through the same experiences. We are our own support group and we all lookout for each other. Talking about our experiences is very helpful.

**Have you seen a psychologist/ psychiatrist for this?**

Yes.

Initially I was assessed by a psychiatrist as I knew things were absolutely not right with me after I got home. My wife encouraged me to go, as well the military indirect-

ly lead me to the mental health clinic. The military has a strong mental health component and many mental health awareness programs. I was seeing the psychiatrist initially once a week for about a year. This eventually tapered off to one visit every three months or so, for about 2 years. Mainly this was to monitor medications, talk, and review how I was doing with regards to working through the signs of PTSD/depression/anxiety.

**Has it gotten better over time?**

Absolutely! To be honest there is not a day that goes by where I don't think about what we did over there. PTSD never truly goes away, but with the right tools and using the proper coping strategies it will continue to get better.

**Has it changed your perspective on everyday life?**

Be happy with what you have. Do not take anything for granted. It doesn't matter how strong you are. There really comes a time when if exposed to enough severe traumatic events that the human mind can no longer function properly.

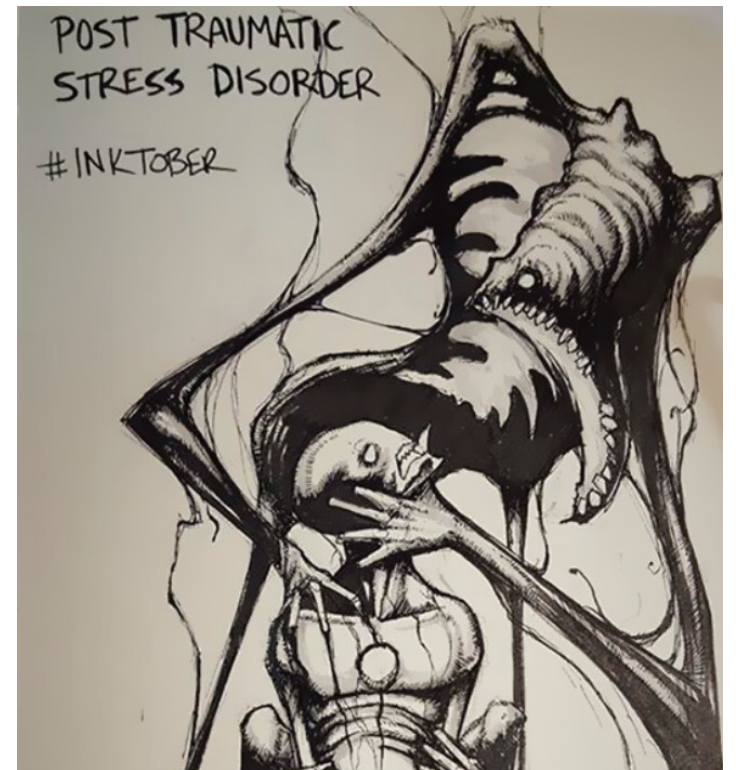
**If you could describe what living with PTSD is like to someone that doesn't have it, how**

**would you describe it?**

That is a very difficult question. At the beginning it was quite difficult, it consumed me. It was difficult trying to pretend nothing was wrong. On the outside things appeared normal however they weren't on the inside. I found myself hating being around large crowds and I would try my best to go out of the way to avoid these situations and would find myself hyperventilating. The sound of fireworks was terrible for me, sometimes even something as simple as a bass beat in a song would set my panic off. I found myself reliving memories, second guessing decisions that I had made. I would have intense nightmares that would be the re-

peated every night. I became depressed, experiencing survivor guilt in the worst way.

We can't even begin to comprehend the things that he's been through, but PTSD is a mental illness that affects many people, not just veterans. Trauma can be caused by car crashes, natural disasters, sexual assault, or other events that may lead someone to think that their life or the lives of others are endangered. There are many types of treatment available, so if you're suffering, or you know someone who is, don't suffer in silence. There is nothing to be ashamed of, as this is often the brain's natural reaction to a traumatic event. Speak up if you need to, seek help if you need it.



## SHELL SHOCKED: A CLOSER LOOK AT POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

by Lexie Switzer

For those who don't know much about PTSD it can be difficult to understand. In order for my readers to learn more about Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, I have interviewed an army veteran that was more than willing to share his story.

52 year old male army veteran:

**Can you share a bit about your experience with PTSD and the event(s) that caused it?**

It was the culmination of a number of events that were related to combat operations while I was in Afghanistan. The fact that we were in a combat zone and that people were actually trying to kill us was hard for us to understand in many ways. Most of us had participated in earlier peacekeeping operations so this change was hard to comprehend. Walking into hostile territory knowing full well

that the Taliban was out there waiting for an opportunity to attack us was extremely stressful, and at times terrifying. While we were out patrolling we never knew if the person standing out in a poppy field was good or bad; as generally it was the same ones who were shooting at us. Imagine being at that level for seven months. It was very hard when we got back to Canada as Afghanistan had conditioned us to remain focused and diligent. The day to day issues of normal life often seemed very trivial. We did not have a period of time to wind down from that. Going from such a high to such a low was difficult, and I think for me that's when my trouble began.

Working in the extreme environment of Afghanistan was draining; the amount of energy required to get up and get going was hard. Living in very austere conditions, and always being on guard with very little sleep was exhausting and dehydration for us was a critical concern. Having to patrol, and conduct meetings with the village elders was difficult as we had an incredible amount of weight on us, from body armor, ammunition, grenades, etc. I also had the added task of carrying all of the emergency medical supplies.

Having to point loaded

weapons at children and civilian vehicles was very hard. Seeing the fear that you have just inflicted on another human was devastating for me. We were told not to encourage or trust children to interact with us. The Taliban knew full well that soldiers love to hand out treats to children and had previously strapped a bomb onto a child and had exploded it in a market among patrolling soldiers.

Witnessing daily what the locals had to do in order to survive and the intense poverty and squalor that the locals lived in was shocking: the lack of basic education, the destruction of schools and homes, absolutely no respect for girls or women. For me having to deal with injured children was very hard. I was responsible for 200 plus Afghani soldiers, this in of itself posed significant problems because of the obvious language and cultural barriers. Thankfully I had a pretty decent interpreter. The worst was having to deal with critically injured soldiers with traumatic injuries. Trying to keep them alive while a medical helicopter was called in to bring them to the surgical hospital was a huge responsibility.

Noises. Routine and often unannounced air strikes to compounds near us (aerial bombing) always

## Breaking the Silence

made you jump. Towards the end of the tour there were daily IED strikes out on the highway, so much so we stopped responding to them.

The armored vehicle that I was traveling in was blown up by a buried IED as we were driving in the desert. The chaos and fear associated with that, the darkness, the noise, the overpowering smell was insane. I also stepped on an IED while there which never went off. It was an Afghan soldier who noticed it, and ultimately saved me. Thankfully the person at the other end of the detonation wires had already been killed so he was not able to initiate the detonation. Putting a friend who had been shot and killed into the back of a cargo plane to come home to his family in Canada still haunts me. Having a friend get killed in an IED attack on the last day before we were coming back to go home to Canada also remains high on my list of terrible events. Worrying about family back home was always a concern. Trying to remain upbeat

## DAY TRIPPER

by Allison Crawford

Yesterday I attended my first world café. It was quite different than what I had expected it to be. I knew it was for a school event as I had been invited by a fellow classmate and friend who happens to be in the same class. The course runs for three weekends throughout the entire semester – six hours on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. I was briefly informed on what the purpose of the world café was – it was to bring people from around the world together to discuss current environmental issues. I thought that each person in the class would state where they were from along with an environmental issue from their country, region, town or city; however, the event went on to be like a group brainstorming session about sustainable tourism.

Sustainable tourism is one topic of environmental concern that I believe does not get enough attention. Scientists and society always talk about sustainability, and by now, the word “sustainable” has become a label which has been plopped onto signs and in front of

titles so that consumer believes they are doing the environment good when purchasing or taking part in certain activities. The word sustainability, defined by The Oxford English Dictionary, is the ability to be maintained at a certain rate or level; in the perspective of the environment. The definition states that “sustainability is the avoidance of the depletion of natural resources to maintain an ecological balance.” When we consider the definition given to us by The Oxford Dictionary, we should ask ourselves if everything that has been advertised as sustainable, actually meets those standards. In most cases, the answer is no because we live in a society that is more focused on the economy rather than the environment. By slapping words like sustainable or eco onto products, consumers are more likely to buy. As a society in general, we much more often try to see what we can exploit from the earth to make a quick buck rather than waste time and money protecting it for future generations.

So, what is sustainable tourism and is there even such a thing? How does tourism affect the environment and society as a whole and separately? These are just some of the questions

that we tried to answer during the world café. It was interesting to hear from people around the world with an age span of 19 to 60. It was even more interesting to learn that we had similar ideas of ways to combat the practices of non-sustainable tourism that are carried out today. Iceland for example, was shockingly different than Alberta on how they operate their tourism industry. As an overview, Iceland has very few national parks, three to be exact. These three national parks, Snæfellsjökull est. 2001; Þingvellir est. 1928-30; Vatnajökull est. 2008, are supervised by the Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources as well as the Ministry for the Prime Minister; however, much of the famous tourist attractions are privately owned and some natural wonders are even situated on farmers' lands. These privately-owned places of interest lack the infrastructure for such a massive influx of people, either because they do not want to spend the money or in farmers' cases, they do not have enough financial resources to go through with it. It is interesting to note that during my studies in Iceland I've learnt from many other foreign students, that the countries of North



America are part of a rare club in which they charge for one's entry into national parks. Europe, including England amid their Brexit vote/crisis, do not charge for one's admission into national parks. This is quite interesting seeing that here in Iceland, with the rapid increase of tourism over the past few years, and the expected high of 2.3 million tourists this summer, the government has yet to come up with a plan to build infrastructure (such as bathrooms) needed in tourist areas. With the lack of infrastructure in place, the environment becomes severely damaged as people do things such as walk off trails to dispose of garbage amongst other things. Therefore, the need for infrastructure is critical in countries such as Iceland in order to minimize human impact on the environment.

As a reader and concerned citizen, what do you think sustainable/ sustainability means, and do you think there is such a thing as sustainable tourism?

# HOW CAN I GET EXPERIENCE IF I CAN'T GET A JOB?

by Taris Breaux

Recently my thoughts have been revolving around careers and the future. Part of this stems from the approaching summer break in which many of us need to find a summer job. This has led me to think about graduating university and what exactly I want to do once I'm done. Despite this being my first year, the speed of which this year has gone by has made me realize that my graduation will come quicker than expected. As for many others, that graduation date is much, much sooner.

Growing up, people always told me that going to university would guarantee me a job and that it was the only option out there. Now, I believe that has changed. I've learned that having a degree doesn't always mean I'll be handed a job the moment I graduate. It has also made me realize that employers are looking for much more than just a degree. The childhood ideal that university meant

a high paying, wonderfully exciting job has been crushed. So what exactly are employers looking for? What else do they want besides "completed degree at so and so university" on my resume?

What they want is experience. There's an ongoing idea that employers want a certain amount of experience, but students are unable to get this necessary experience without first being hired for a job, beginning an endless cycle. So how does one get experience and build up their resume so they're able to get a job? Here are some tips I have scrounged up to help make your resume look amazing and get you the job you want, whether it's for after graduation or for work during the school year or summer.

1) Take university courses that give you skills that help you both in the real world and in a job environment. Besides the courses you need for your degree, most of us have some extra courses that we need to take to get the required amount of credits. There are so many courses that will help build your skill set for the future such as: personal finance if you feel you need to improve your money management, public speaking if you want to build up your communication skills, or

principles of management to enhance and understand the skills needed for management. These are just a few. I'm sure there are some more that would help build your skill set.

2) Network. Build a platform, social media is making this incredibly easy, and get to know some people in the field you want to enter. Knowing people does help. This can give you opportunities that you may not have qualified or heard about before.

3) Jobs, internships, and volunteering. All of these things help build and improve upon your skills. This may seem like an obvious one, but going beyond just a

# Student Life

job (internships or volunteering) can really set you above others. 4) Get references that will reflect your skills needed in the field you want.

There are probably many more tricks to help you out but these are just a few main ones. Good luck to everyone looking for a summer job and even more to those graduating this coming May!



## SHOW TIME!

Here's what's playing this week:

**Beauty and the Beast**

PG

**Kong: Skull Island**

PG

**Logan**

18A

**The Lego Batman Movie**

G

**Ballerina**

G

**Before I Fall**

PG

**Fist Fight**

14A

**Get Out**

14A

**Goon: Last of the Enforcers**

14A

**John Wick: Chapter Two**

14A



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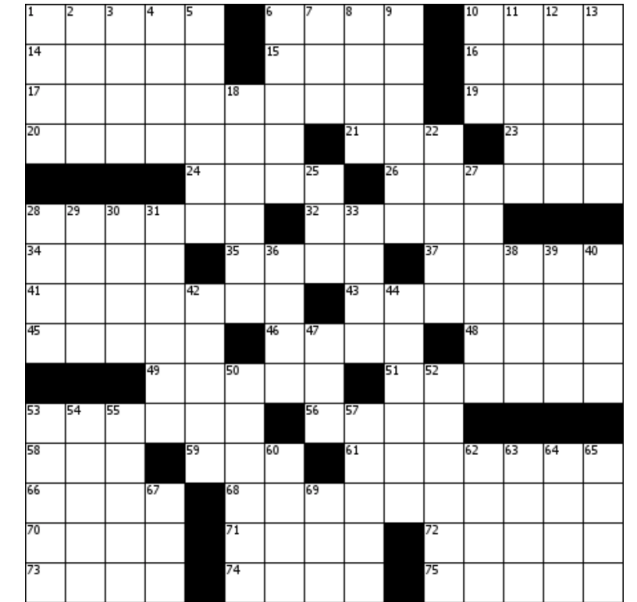
# SUDOKU



# CROSSWORD

### Across

- 1. Apple drink
- 6. Elects
- 10. Tool house
- 14. Stage whisper
- 15. Commandment start
- 16. Shopper's delight
- 17. Eye-opener
- 19. Fair
- 20. Almost grown
- 21. Recipe measure (abbr.)
- 23. Nov. preceder
- 24. Sour in taste
- 26. Puts up
- 28. Confidential
- 32. Up to the time of
- 34. Hint
- 35. Vagrant
- 37. Smooths wood
- 41. Sports VIP (hyph.)
- 43. Type of paint
- 45. Math proportion
- 46. Location
- 48. Deer
- 49. Like old bread
- 51. Afternoon nap
- 53. Delighted
- 56. Conceited
- 58. Animal doc
- 59. Bathroom rug
- 61. Form again
- 66. Acknowledge
- 68. Certain fortuneteller (2 wds.)
- 70. Dealer's car
- 71. Elm or pine
- 72. Cloudless
- 73. Other than
- 74. Ran
- 75. Experiments



### Down

- 1. Wagon
- 2. Words of understanding (2 wds.)
- 3. Plunge
- 4. Biblical garden
- 5. Narrate
- 6. Water mammal
- 7. \_\_\_\_ Beta Kappa
- 8. Horn sound
- 9. Dusk's start time
- 10. Opposite of NNW
- 11. Great destruction
- 12. Choose by ballot
- 13. Fender dimples
- 18. Author \_\_\_\_ Christie
- 22. Light bender
- 25. Bathing place
- 27. Go by
- 28. Old wound
- 29. \_\_\_\_ Fitzgerald
- 30. Religious sect
- 31. Fight back
- 33. Jot down
- 36. \_\_\_\_ hygiene
- 38. Seines
- 39. Mild expletive
- 40. Heroic narrative
- 42. \_\_\_\_ pole
- 44. Simpler
- 47. Clergy mem.
- 50. Conforms
- 52. Butterfly, e.g.
- 53. Escape
- 54. Smooth
- 55. Tiny particles
- 57. Carrying a weapon
- 60. Field cover
- 62. Robust
- 63. Citrus drinks
- 64. Bog fuel
- 65. Does wrong
- 67. Misery
- 69. Grant's enemy



## AIMUN 2017 AT CUE

by Whitney Thomson

Perhaps unbeknownst to many of you, on the weekend of March 4-6, Concordia's Model U.N. club hosted the Alberta Intercollegiate Model United Nations (AIMUN) Conference. Students from Model U.N. clubs at universities and colleges all over the province descended upon our campus, wearing their best interpretation of "western business attire"- suits and ties, skirts and heels included- to represent the country of their choice on the issue of Building and Developing Sustainable Urban Centres. The conference was hosted in the auditorium (so yes, we did have to schedule our time so as not to interfere with the rehearsals for Urinetown), but it was a great honour for our club, as it is the first time it has hosted AIMUN.

Sitting as chair for the conference was our very own CSA President Kelsea Gillespie, vice chair was filled at the last minute by MacEwan's Athiang Makuoi (a member of MacEwan's Model U.N. club), and the man behind the madness- devoting much of his time organizing the conference- was Ian Lee (this year's Model U.N. President and next year's CSA President). As far as conferences go, it went off without a hitch, which is

largely due to our great volunteers, organizers, and participants in the conference. I extend my sincerest gratitude to the Drama department, for sharing the space, and for the many students from it that helped us setup for the weekend. Also, to our CSA volunteers, Brandon Vollweiler and Laura Hebert, who took so much time out of their weekend to run notes back-and-forth through the auditorium for our participants. There were many more who put their time and effort into making sure the weekend was a success (included the members of the Model U.N. club), all of whom I deeply appreciate, but do not have the space to name individually.

The conference began very early Saturday morning, so of course I stumbled into the auditorium, sleepy, with my contraband coffee in hand. We went pretty quickly into speeches, so I was happy when, as Kenya, we were not called to do ours until after I had finished my coffee and woken up a bit. The opening speeches in an AIMUN conference give delegates a two minute opportunity to speak (as their country) on the issue at hand and give their position on it, therefore expediting the debate process to accommodate the condensed timeline that such a conference has to work with. To clarify, an international Model U.N. conference goes from Wednesday to Saturday, with Thursday and Fri-

day being full fourteen-hour days spent in committee; so only spending an eight hour Saturday and a four hour Sunday in committee at an AIMUN conference means a lot needs to get done in a short amount of time! This resulted in us entering straight into debate and paper writing after speeches were concluded, with first-round paper edits due by 4:30pm.

I was happy to be apart of three different working groups, which included one paper I began hastily writing twenty minutes before the first deadline. We had a total of twelve papers from different groups submitted to our chairs before voting began on Sunday morning, and eleven of them were accepted by the committee through majority vote. The innovative solutions proposed in the papers for sustainable cities ranged from addressing healthcare and technology needs, to building cities in a more compact way and supporting environmentally friendly modes of transportation; the only paper to get voted down was from the Russian Federation and the USA (among others), which proposed "defunding climate change action". All around, this speaks to a highly successful conference with a great deal of teamwork and diplomacy from everyone who attended.

Now, this is the part where I tell you why you should join Concordia's Model U.N. club, as I am



## CUE Events

an obsessed club member and next year's President of the club! Model U.N. is such a great opportunity to develop or build upon all of the skills you will ever need for landing that perfect job when you graduate from university. This includes public speaking, negotiating/networking, writing and research skills, which can be applied to any job you may be seeking. You also get to meet such great people and have unbelievable experiences. For example, at our banquet for this most recent conference, Minister of Advanced Education, Marlin Schmidt gave a speech and opened the floor for students to ask him about all of their pressing issues regarding their university education- from tuition freezes to mental health initiatives. Furthermore, our senior club members attended the international Model U.N. conference in Kobe, Japan in November of last year, which is surely the highlight of many of our university careers.

Whatever your reason is for being interested, I look forward to seeing you at our meetings on Mondays at noon in HA 019!

## KEEP THE RHYTHM: MUSIC AS THERAPY

by Ester Latifi

Music is something everyone enjoys. Whether you prefer to listen to rock, country, or classical, there's something out there for everyone. In a previous article, I mentioned that sometimes, what we listen to reflects whatever mood we're in— for example, if I'm angry, I tend to listen to angrier-sounding music, and if I'm in a good mood, I'll probably be listening to something on the more mellow end of the spectrum. As well, we listen to music when we're stressed, excited, sad, happy, you name it. Music is just as much a mental thing as it is auditory, so it may not surprise you to hear that music can actually be used by licensed therapists to improve both physical and mental health.

The Canadian Association for Music Therapy (CAMT) defines music therapy as the "discipline in which credentialled professionals use music purposefully [...] to address human needs within cognitive, communicative, emotional, musical, physical, social, and spiritual domains." This can mean many things. Music therapy is open to people of all ages and can be used to treat a whole range of

things from AIDS to substance abuse to speech and language impairments. This is amazing, because it presents us with a whole different perspective on what music can be used for. It's incredible that the very thing we turn to for everyday enjoyment is also something so powerful that therapists use it to treat such a wide array of issues. When I first heard about this form of treatment, I remember thinking, "this is cool, but how much of it is actually legit?" My mom sent me an article and I decided to look into it, and as I scrolled through the page, I was amazed. Music therapy isn't just a neat idea; it's actually backed by extensive research. So what exactly about music gives it properties that spurs doctors to refer patients to a therapist whose sole resource is music?

According to The Cardiovascular Society of Great Britain, music with a repetitive rhythm can help decrease blood pressure and reduce a high heart rate. Furthermore, you may already have heard that listening to the music that you enjoy lowers your levels of cortisol (the "stress" hormone) and heightens your dopamine, and since dopamine is the brain's pleasure-enhancing hormone, music can actually make you feel happy. Additionally, studies suggest that those of us who play music produce more HGH (human growth hormone)

than those who do not.

A research-based study in the neuroscience field at the University of Liverpool has actually asserted that early childhood development is stimulated by just half an hour of musical training. Because playing an instrument involves multiple parts of both the central and peripheral nervous systems, gross and fine motor skills are absolutely necessary for musicians. This is something that music therapists attempt to work on in their patients with motor impairments or trauma related to a stroke or head injury. For those who already have prior experience in playing an instrument, this skill is revisited, renewing their sense of enjoyment. For those who do not have previous experience, this form of therapy can potentially increase their self-esteem as they learn a new skill.

Simply listening to music can be used in a therapeutic situation as well. Cognitive skills, such as attention and memory, are exercised through it; a study done at the U of A in 2013 on the link between music and stress found that patients between ages 3-11 who listened to music while getting a shot reported less pain and significantly less distress compared to patients who did not listen to music. Additionally, those who listened to music were easier to give IVs to. Aside from playing in-



## Music

struments and listening to music, therapists employ singing, rhythmic-based activities, improvisation techniques, composition, and image-based experiences into treatment. Music is undoubtedly beneficial in terms of mental health and coping with stress, but it's incredible that it is being used by health professionals to treat such a wide variety of conditions. I certainly don't know a whole lot about it as I only recently came across the subject, but as a musician, it's really cool knowing that by playing the piano, I'm not purely honing my skills at Beethoven's Pathetique—I'm actually helping myself mentally. For those of us who feel calm after listening to our favourite music, it actually is calming us down!

If you or someone you know can benefit from music therapy, I would highly recommend talking to your doctor and finding out whether or not it would be practical for whatever you are struggling with. I'm excited to see music therapy grow as a form of treatment and see it help people recover both mentally and physically!

# MEN'S RIGHTS MOVEMENT

by Taylor Jevning

When you're someone who considers themselves to be a feminist while simultaneously having an internet connection, it's likely that you're going to be doing things online that support your feminist beliefs; seeking documentaries, educating yourself on ways to fight inequality, and discussing prominent issues that affect yourself and others. The fight for equality is a grueling one that has been made more efficient through technology, yet with the good that the internet brings, there is also the bad. There are groups that consider themselves to be "men's rights

activists" which, at a surface level, seems to be such a positive thing. However, my experiences with these groups tends to be less than positive.

I believe that issues specific to men exist, which I personally, as well as many others, address through feminism rather than identifying with the men's rights movement. These issues include unfair rulings in custody battles, lack of long term reversible birth control, expectations of masculinity, on top of many other issues. If these men's rights activists were fighting to solve these issues, I'd believe there was at least some validity to their movement, however, the issues that I've seen these groups address never seem to be the ones that are major societal issues for men. Where there

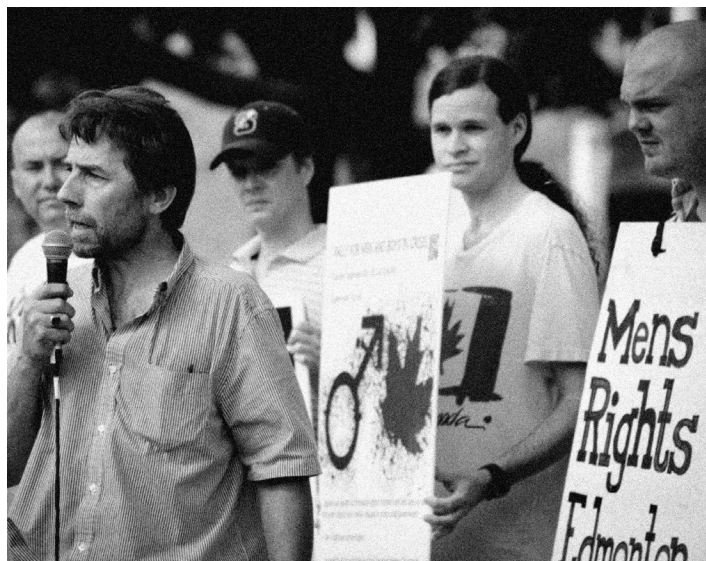
could be advocacy for programs to help male victims of domestic abuse, I instead see these individuals trying to disprove women's claims of abuse. In place of fighting for mental health resources for men, these groups seem to use statistics of men's suicide to prove that women do not need resources and protection. It seems that any actual example I come across where there could be valid possible progress for bettering the lives of men, men's rights activists instead try to prove that women aren't oppressed. In a movement that claims to be about the rights of men, it is evident that men's issues come second to the dominant upheld ideology of anti-feminism.

There are many modern branches of the men's rights movement, including TheRedPill subreddit, which, in my time spent there, I gained nothing but a sense of unease and deep-seated hatred in both myself and the (mostly) men who spend their time there. The metaphor of the "red pill" comes from the movie The Matrix, and represents a coming to terms with your own harsh reality rather than choosing to live in the dark. Masquer-



## Opinion

ading as a safe space for men to discuss difficulties they face on a systemic level in a structured format, I've seen more men exercising their "freedom of speech" to trash talk women and minorities. In any of my experience with TheRedPill or any other men's rights movements online, the most frustrating part for me is the lack of focus on lifting other men up, but instead, on tearing "other" people down. At the time I'm writing this, the most popular threads in the subreddit talk about how women are using men for money and trapping them into relationships with pregnancy, the desire for power so that you can be appealing to women, and something titled "where the quality bitches at" which I'm frankly too scared to click on. I'm hopeful for men to one day have a platform where they can discuss openly with other men when they've been sexually assaulted




## CUE Events

participants] as well as new [participants] is engaging in new topics," Lee said. "What the experienced participants are interested in doing is engaging with other people in debate, in intelligent conversation while learning new things and in engaging in different topics," he said.

Lindsey Comeau and Tyler Paetkau, of Grande Prairie Regional College, won best delegation at the 2017 Alberta Intercollegiate Model United Nations conference.

Best individual delegate was awarded to Peter Fajner of the University of Calgary (U of C), and best opening speech was given to Phillip Swallow of MacEwan University. Honourable mentions were made for Devin Tuttle of MacEwan, Gavin Marchak of the U of C, and Austin Caron of the U of C.

## AIMUN 2017 UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA GUEST SUBMISSION

by Jonah Kondro

The 2017 Alberta Intercollegiate Model United Nations Participants of the 2017 Alberta Intercollegiate Model United Nations (AIMUN) spent over one and half days at Concordia University of Edmonton developing solutions to real global concerns within a simulated UN assembly.

Approximately 50 delegations worked together in a simulation of a United Nations general assembly. 2017 AIUMN's topic was building and developing sustainable urban centres, which adopted its themes from the Oct. 2016 UN Habit III conference and its focus to implement the New Urban Agenda. Student participants of the 2017 AIUMN conference were from the University of Cal-

gary, Concordia University of Edmonton, Grande Prairie Regional College, MacEwan University, Mount Royal University, and Red Deer College.

Model UN delegations met within formal and informal sessions to construct working papers and form draft resolution papers, which get subjected to the voting block during the conference. 10 of 12 draft resolution papers were passed as resolutions: nine won majority vote and one was adopted by acclamation.

Kelsea Gillespie, Concordia Students' Association President, was one of the 2017 AIMUN's conference organizers and chaired the Model UN dais. The dais is responsible for moderating the debate and ruling on points and motions as well as reminding the delegates' of their decorum. A large aspect of Gillespie's responsibilities as chair of the dais was to edit delegations' working papers and approve the working papers so that they become draft resolutions for the delegations to further refine.

One particular work-

ing paper, "Working Paper Awesome", noted the inadequacies of the UN and decided that it would be best if some of the delegations divided up control of the world, she said. The working paper was deemed highly inappropriate, because it was not under the mandate of the committee that we were simulating, she said. However, Gillespie and the co-chairs of the dais did recognized that it was submitted in jest.

"I am very pleased that the (participants) did not decide to incorporate any of the (returned) edits and in fact just scrapped the entire working paper. (Working Paper Awesome) did not enter into a draft resolution form or into our voting block today," Gillespie said.

Ian Lee, President of Concordia Model United Nations Club, co-chaired the Model UN Dais. He said participants who are encountering a Model United Nations for the first time will be introduced to the community of the Model UN, the goals of humanitarianism, and global co-operation.

"The take-away for the experienced [par-

## A PASS FOR YOUR CLASS & THE PERFECT CUP OF TEA

by Whitney Thomson

With the end of the year almost upon us (yeah, I'm not sure how that happened), we are all going to be spending a lot of extra time studying, and hastily trying to get papers done before their quickly approaching deadlines. This means you'll soon be scouring the city for that perfect study spot, one that includes the best latte and reliable internet. However, it is easy to forget how many university students from around the city will be doing the same thing, when you've gotten so familiar with Concordia's small campus. I am finishing my third year in Concordia's Political Economy program, so this is something I am very familiar with. Now, there really is no such thing as an "undiscovered" café that will promise you endless hours of silent studying perfection, so I can't give you that. But when you're growing tired of the clamour at Remedy or even our very own busting-at-the-seams library, these are my two favourite places that you


might also appreciate:  
**1. The Muttart Conservatory (9626 - 96A Street, Edmonton, Alberta)**

Average cost per visit: \$12.50 for admission, but you can use a bit of that tax return money to purchase an annual pass for \$45. In my opinion, this is one of the best investments for your mental stability you can make! Why I love it: The Muttart is a little chunk of paradise in the heart of our city! Wandering through the four different pyramids, each containing a unique landscape of plants, waterfalls, and koi fish, is the best escape from winter, stress, and whatever life might be throwing at you. My favourite time to go is Thursday night, as it is the only time the Muttart is open until 9pm, which means you avoid the school field trips that are known to traipse through during the day. Each pyramid is lit with funky coloured lights at night, which makes for an enchanting place to write. Top tip: You cannot take food or drink into the pyramids, but their café is excellent (and an option for when you want a good tea or coffee)- it also has one of the best brunches in the city!

**2. The Tea Girl (12411 Stony Plain Road NW)**  
 Average cost per visit: A small pot of tea is \$5, and

you get unlimited refills of hot water. I would also highly recommend their soups and pastries (vegan options available), which start at \$1.50. Why I love it: Whenever I have a tea craving, a paper to write, or a friend I need to catch up with, this is where I go! Their tea selection is one of the largest in the city, covering two full walls, and includes speciality teas like hand picked white tea from Kenya. The best part is the price- the fact that if you spend a few hours here, you still have something to drink without spending \$5 on another latte. The other great features of this place include its eccentricity, lovely staff, and abundant options for comfy seating (regardless of whether your ideal study position is tucked into a wing-back chair or at a proper table). Top tip: The wifi here is excellent! Password: lowercase. They are also open 10am-10pm, seven days a week to accommodate all of your studying needs!

A few other favourites of mine are: **Zocalo (10826 95th St), District Cafe & Bakery (10011 109th St), Credo Coffee (locations on 104th St & Jasper and 124th St & 103rd Ave), Cafe Blackbird (9640 142nd St), Block 1912 (10361 82nd Ave),** and when it's nice out the **Legislature Grounds** or anywhere along the



## Student Life

river valley is wonderful.

Also remember to take care of your mental health during exam time! Try to get as much sleep as you can, stay organized, eat well, and take breaks. It is easy to get overwhelmed when there are so many deadlines, but sacrificing your mental health is not the answer. Life will always be stressful, so it is much better to learn how to handle that stress now, as it will only serve to benefit you later on. Take advantage of on-campus help such as counselling services and financial aid, and attend all of the fun events planned for the rest of the year. My go-to places for taking a break are the Edmonton Humane Society (because cuddling cats is life), and the Garneau Theatre (for when you want to take a break without completely shutting off your brain, attend one of the documentaries or film festival films playing daily).

Best of luck to everyone in their studying endeavors, and have a great summer!

without facing harsh ridicule. I want men to have paternity leave and be able to exercise their rights to be successful fathers without their "masculinity" being challenged. As a feminist, I fight for these things for men too and speak up when I feel that men are being discriminated against, but when I'm accused of being a man-hater because I am a feminist by the same men who think their rights involve getting laid, I want to shake my head. I'm here fighting for your rights too, so what reason do you have for not joining me?

The reality is, until I

see improvements in the ideologies of the men's rights movement, I can't call myself an equalist, egalitarian, or a (shudders) "meninist." The thing that frustrated me the most is that these men have such powerful voices in this world to speak up for the rights they deserve, yet the movement that claims to be fighting for them doesn't allow them to channel their voices correctly. If I were a man, I would be incredibly frustrated to have to explain that even though I was fighting for my own rights as a father, husband, and son, I don't have anywhere to clearly express these

thoughts without gaining a following of people that want less rights for marginalized groups. If you're a men's right's activist reading this (a real one with bigger issues than women not sleeping with you), I say you should look into what the feminist movement has to offer you. Feminism is defined as the political, social, and economic equality of the sexes, and even though there is an obvious focus on women, you'll likely find that a lot of the things that you struggle with in society have to do with the fact you are believed to be too feminine. You can't take time off work to

raise your family because that's thought to be a woman's role. You don't have long-term birth control because that's believed to be a woman's responsibility, leaving you unable to protect yourself. By de-stigmatizing femininity, you'll help make the world a better place not only for yourself, but for everyone around you that is harmed by the hatred of femininity. The irony of this is that many men I've met won't identify as feminists for fear of being thought of as feminine. Don't worry men, whether you're onboard or not, we'll be here fighting for you too.



# EXECUTIVE ELECTIONS

## ELECTIONS GENERAL INFO MEETING

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29 12:00-1:00PM HAO10

# IMPORTANCE OF HAVING A COMMUNITY

by Alexa Larocque

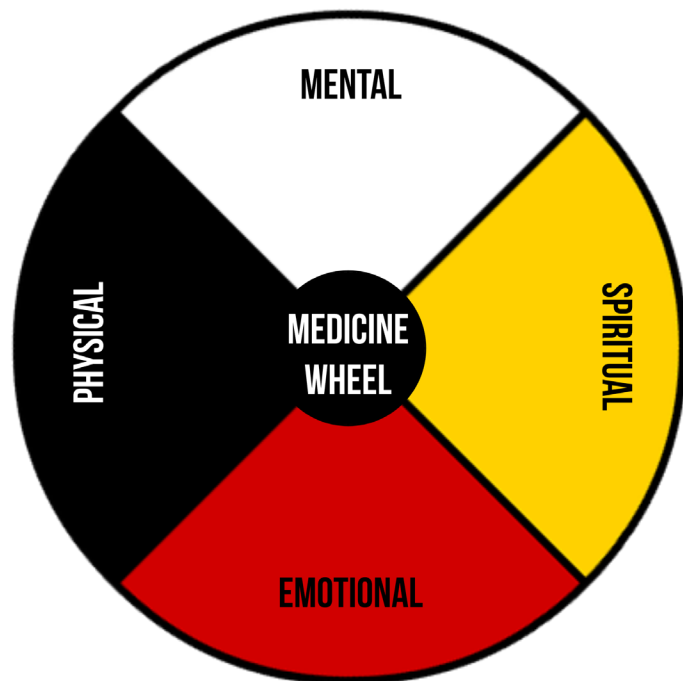
The Importance of Having a Community by Alexa Larocque

Walking through the doors of Concordia in my first year was daunting. Not only because I was a first-year student living on my own and away from my family, but because from my point of view I could not see anyone else who identified as Indigenous. For that entire year, I did not meet another Indigenous person. It was not until my second year that I met and became friends with another self-identified Indigenous person. After my second year of school, I decided to become more involved with the Indigenous community around Edmonton, so I spent my summer doing exactly that. When I came back for my third year however, I could not find such a community at Concordia. It was not until I was invited to meet with the Indigenous strategy adviser Lewis Cardinal, Concordia's Dean of Students Dr. Barb Van Ingen and Concordia's new president Dr. Tim

Loreman, in a group setting to discuss Indigenous relations at Concordia that I met others who identified as Indigenous. It was that meeting that kick-started the creation of the Indigenous Student Council. Any student who wants to take part in the meetings of the ISC are welcome to attend at any time. The creation of the ISC and the new Indigenous voice on campus is a huge step forward for Concordia. Currently, only eighty students have self-identified as Indigenous students. That is an incredibly small amount for an institution who has more than two thousand people attending. With the building of the Indigenous center and the new council, Dr. Tim Loreman states that he hopes to see the Indigenous community grow at Concordia. Right now, the percentage of people who are Indigenous at Concordia is five percent. By 2021 Dr. Loreman wants to see that percent grow by seven. With the introduction of the Indigenous center and the ISC, the group wants to see a wider variety of classes that teach Indigenous language as well as history and even literature. As an English major, I would love to take a class studying Indigenous literature, as it reaches far

into the past and creates a strong sense of self for others like me. The main focus of the ISC and the Indigenous center is to create a strong sense of community for self-identified Indigenous. It is with high hopes that we wish to see a strong and prospering Indigenous community integrating with the whole student body of Concordia. The ISC does not want to close its doors to people who are not Indigenous. Instead we are welcoming to everyone. We want people to explore and learn about Indigenous heritage. For some of us, reaching the point of loving our heritage and loving who we are because of our heritage is a long journey. It is not easy to be a part of a place where you have

no community. When meeting with other people who are proud of themselves and proud of their ancestry, it helps to strengthen and solidify your own identity, because suddenly you are not alone. This is our aim as the ISC. We want to be a community for all. We want to be the group and the place that allows people to develop their sense of pride and sense of self. Ultimately, we want to see more people becoming proud of their Indigenous heritage.



# From the Editor

okay to tax them. Why should my tax dollars go to keeping smokers and drinkers alive?" They're aware there will be minimal pushback, because we can't argue that these substances won't be detrimental to our health. They're taking the easy approach to increasing taxation knowing this route will not cause a substantial outcry from the population. I ask again, why is it not a pragmatic approach? Why are we paying for individuals who have terrible diets and self-inflict disease and illness through their diets?

Tax all sins, or don't do it at all, end of story (not really, I have more to say). Brothels and "massage parlours" openly operate; fast food chains fill their meat products with soy and filler products and toss them into the deep fryer. It's gotten to the point where it's almost assumed that fast food products and processed foods are garbage, they even have to advertise they use "real" products. It's comical.

If they want to protect people from harming themselves, let's address the entire issue, or live and let live.

# THE SIN TAX HYPOCRISY

by Kayle Sieben

If you're like most people, you've indulged in the odd alcoholic beverage (I mean who am I kidding this is a University newspaper). Perhaps you've even had a cigarette. Did you feel wrong or dirty for doing either of those things? As if you were doing a disservice to the population? My guess is probably not.

With the most recent Canadian budget we've seen yet another increase in sales tax on cigarettes and alcohol, deemed the "Sin Tax". The rationale being that these substances are detrimental to our health, thus increasing the workload of our healthcare system and demanding more money is spent to keep us alive and well. Alright, that I can make sense of. What I can't seem to make sense of is why it's limited to those two substances.

If the goal of our government is to force us to be healthier via taxation, why are we not taxing other products which are detrimental to our health? Refined sugars and deep fried fast foods may not harm us to the same extent, but are still not considered healthy options. In moderation, fast food provides a convenient and tasty option. When consumed daily or even multiple times per

day, health and quality of life is noticeably declined. I speak from personal experience as well as through observation, having been obese just four years ago because of my terrible diet and habits.

As I've lost over 60 lbs I've witnessed a sharp increase in cognitive ability, self-confidence, and both physical and mental health. The correlation is that I've cut drinking pop daily; I've cut eating fast food, chips, and candy multiple times a week. But I've continued to consume the odd adult beverage and the odd cigarette. It's almost as if moderation is the key! Well, that's exactly it.

I'm not arguing for or against a "sin tax", simply pointing out the hypocrisy in its rationale. If the government wants to change human behaviour through taxation, it should do so pragmatically by looking at all sides of the case. The stigma attached with smoking was and is perpetuated through government campaigns and blatant branding of the risks associated with it. Why is there no stigma for fast food potentially creating obese, physically dormant citizens? Instead we preach acceptance of body shapes of all types. It seems to be a blatant contradiction in my mind. Alcohol carries less of a stigma, and yet it's actually the most harmful to our bodies, causing permanent damage every damn time we consume. Which raises the ques-

tion, at what point is the government crossing the line in imposing their ideals upon us? In a "free" country, people are stigmatized and forced to pay more for something that's perfectly legal. Paternalism is defined as "the policy or practice on the part of people in positions of authority of restricting the freedom and responsibilities of those subordinate to them in the subordinates' supposed best interest." Our government is not banning anything, only restricting access to them.

As a young adult, this is the third increase in taxation on these substances I've witnessed in my adult life (six years), both at the provincial and federal level. The government is clearly demonstrating that it won't go as far as to ban the substances completely, just make these substances out of reach from the general public. For instance, Alberta has banned all flavoured and menthol tobacco, yet cigarettes are still sold at every corner store.

In just six years I went from buying a 6-pack of beer for ~\$10.00 to ~\$15.00. Bars and pubs have a minimum amount they can sell booze for, so farewell to the coveted days of dollar drafts and highballs. Doesn't seem like much, but it's been a substantial increase.

This is getting a bit ridiculous! They cater to the audience who may all agree "yes, these are bad for people so it's



# A Call to All Students: Check Out Concordia's Philosophy Club!

Every Wednesday at noon, in HA 310 join us for presentations, discussions and debate on a wide range of philosophical topics. Always open to new participants and presenters, so if you are passionate about the philosophy of anything, come share it with everyone! Some topics we have covered are: humour, artificial intelligence, animal rights, and the notion of infinity. If you are interested in learning more, email [philosophyclub@student.concordia.ab.ca](mailto:philosophyclub@student.concordia.ab.ca) or come join us for the following event:

## The Greatest Possible Being

-a Reading  
Presented by  
Dr. Jonathan Strand

March 29  
12:00-12:50pm  
HA015

\*event focuses on the thought experiment of what the perfect being must be like

"Wisdom begins with wonder" - Socrates



## PORTRAIT OF A MARTIAL ARTIST

by Orrin Farries

Jen Millen has never been to flight school. She has never been one to fly, electing to stand her ground, to dig her heels into the dirt and hold her own. This delicate balance has allowed her the freedom to impart the aggression and violence of life into focus and discipline. In standing her ground to belie on fighting instincts, Jen found her path. The path is not the fights themselves, those are just roadside stops along her path of martial arts. What started as a journey in self-worth, hoping to find serenity in the development of her fighting skills, has now transformed into a journey of growing in the love of the sport. Recently, (March 11th), Jen was involved in the Phoenix Taekwondo club's tournament that gave host to over 400 youth martial artists. In her spare time, she broke piles of wooden boards in fashionable attire, staying cool as a cucumber. So what brought about this shift in perspective? What sparked the iden-

tity change? Jen says it was her first major tournament loss, a loss that came as the result of kicking open the blood-gates of her opponent's nose, resulting in a disqualification. As Taekwondo favours head level kicks, I figure that meant she ought to have won. Jen likely feels the same, and channels that loss into every kick she feeds to her unlucky opponents.

Let's go back to the beginning. Putting her foot in the door of Taekwondo in 2005, what seems like a lifetime has felt like a passing moment for Jen, whose day to day schedule is now dominated by martial arts. Little did she know back in 2005, when she was following her friend's footsteps into the dojang (Taekwondo dojo), that in 10 short years she would be competing for Team Canada in the ITF World Cup in Italy. As fate would have it, Jen would hyperextend the knee of her plant leg two weeks before this competition, a welcome reprieve from the hectic cycle of training, but a tragic impediment to her success at the tournament. She finished Bronze in the patterns phase of competition, however on the fighting side the injury resulted in a first

round loss to the eventual champion of the tournament. To us, the non-fighting contingent, losing to the eventual champion would feel like consolation for the training, the trip, and the sting of the loss, but the heart of champion doesn't beat so. Jen was malcontent with the effort, reluctant to even mention the results. Now, she's driven, determined to capture a World Cup title, achieve professional success in Muay Thai, and open up her own Dojang.

On any given day of the week Jen can be found training others and sparring at Phoenix Taekwondo in St. Albert, or down the street at Complete Martial Arts, working on developing her Muay Thai skills. Inherently proud, Jen's current fixation is to make right her 0-2 Muay Thai record, and to establish a winning record for personal validation. What is so intriguing about that desire, is that it is reflective of the mentality of Jen Millen: martial artist. Her humility seems to be in line with her self-confidence. She has said that the moments following her losses were some of her most humbling, bringing her to tears once (and only once), and reigniting the fire that



## Student Life

brings her back to training every damn day.

Jen most recently competed March 18th at the Arashi-Do Muay Thai and Taekwondo tournament, taking Gold in Muay Thai, she was also undefeated in the black belt point-sparring competition. Needless to say, Jen is in great shape, and she will be ready when she gets her next chance at a world title later this year in Holland, where she will be competing in the ITF Taekwondo World Championships. I'm sure her presence will be Thunderous. For those of you interested in Taekwondo and eager to learn, Jen does private lessons for beginners, as well as teaches a boxing class at Phoenix called Strike2Sweat. I'd like to thank Jen for taking the time to let me interview her, as well as for kicking some ass over the last weekend for my viewing pleasure.

Writing not fighting,

Orrin Farries

# SARAH DHARSHI: THE PEOPLE'S ADVOCATE

by Kayle Sieben

Sarah Dharshi is a colleague of mine who has been an advocate for the #MakeItAwkward campaign as well as mental health issues. She's unwavering in her belief that everyone is entitled to feeling safe and valued, even in the face of adversity. I wanted to take some time to revisit the #MakeItAwkward campaign and remind the world that both discrimination and mental health are still at the forefront of issues we need to address as a society.

**Kayle: Earlier in the year I mentioned #MakeItAwkward in an article about racism, but it's more than that, isn't it?**

Sarah: Although the #MakeItAwkward campaign was created in response to an act of racism, we work to draw awareness to all types of bigotry including racism, homophobia, sexism/misogyny, xenophobia, ableism, etc. We're essentially here to call out bullies, hold them accountable for their actions, educate them, and maybe act as a catalyst for positive

change if the individual is receptive to the idea of it.

**How has the reception been to the campaign? Have you noticed much of a change so far?**

S: The reception to the campaign has been primarily positive - we have seen an enormous amount of traction from the hashtag and have received support from the likes of various small businesses, schools, fellow anti-bigotry campaigns and even from the Prime Minister himself! In terms of change, I have sensed a shift in mentality amongst people I interact with. The entire premise of our movement is to stimulate seemingly uncomfortable yet necessary dialogue about these human rights issues and although the views stated in conversations that surround me don't always align with mine, actually discussing these topics and bringing them to light shows me that we're on the right path. We cannot eradicate bigotry unless we acknowledge it and educate ourselves - these small steps are so crucial in our quest for social justice.

**How can we as individuals help force an impact from this campaign?**

S: In order for individuals to create an impact, all I can do is encourage conversation. If you feel strongly about a human rights topic or initiative, do all of the research you

can so that when you find yourself engaging in conversation regarding these issues you're prepared. Don't shy away from the tough topics. Ask questions, stand up for what is right, educate people, and try to understand why they feel the way that they do. Maintaining composure through these uncomfortable conversations is extremely taxing but is necessary. On a more hands-on level than speaking up, attend protests and charitable events, donate your time or funds to worthwhile causes, and be the very best ally you can be by reaching out. You can't make an impact without action.

**Being a woman as well as a minority, you are someone who can be on the front end of many forms of intolerance. Was there an event or occurrence which in-**



## Local Spotlight

**spired you to take action?**

S: As a woman of colour, I am often subject to various forms of intolerance. The most memorable occurrence did not happen in the workplace but as I was simply crossing the street this summer. I was crossing between 107 Street and Jasper Avenue when two men leaned out of their truck windows at the crosswalk and yelled, "Hey babe, take your top off for us!" along with other obscenities. Me, being the person as I am,



walked over to the car and politely but firmly said to them "You cannot speak to women or anyone that way. I am a person, not an object." One of them hopped out of the car carrying a water bottle, which he subsequently poured all over me. He got back into the car and his friend sped away, as he yelled "Suck my dick, slut!"

This situation obviously didn't sit well for me and I took to Facebook to share my story and opinion on the matter. I received an overwhelming amount of support, including over 200 Facebook shares and over 40 messages from strangers who had been subject to similar misogynist treatment in our city but were afraid to speak up. One of these people connected me with Jesse Lipscombe (#MIA founder) who reached out to me about the incident. After a long chat and discussion about social justice, he asked me to join the team and the rest is history.

**Okay, hypothetical: I'm at my next family occasion and one of my uncles says something mildly racist while trying to be funny. Is that where we should step up and say something? If not then, in what circumstance should we step up?**

S: In my opinion, hell yes call out the casually racist uncle! There's no need to spark animosity or a full-blown food fight but I would recommend ex-

plaining the concept of microaggressions to him and providing examples of ways that his words could be harmful in other settings. Turn it into a learning experience for everyone and if he's still skeptical, ask him what drove him to use those words in specific. It may be awkward but hey, at least you'll come out of it with a new family dinner story.

**Your experience extends beyond the campaign; you're also an advocate for speaking up about mental illness. Why did you begin to speak publicly about your issues?**

S: I decided to publicly speak up about mental illness once I realized that I had been blessed with this incredible platform to be publicly honest about the things that matter. I have struggled with high-functioning anxiety and clinical depression for years and I was afraid to speak up because I was worried that it would lead to people distancing themselves from or judging me. I am now in a place in my life where I can be proud of myself, flaws and all. Being honest about my mental illness has provided me with an entire support system that I didn't even know existed and it prompted me to seek medical therapy which has allowed me to live my life to it's fullest and most productive extent.

My personal relationships

have flourished since allowing myself to be vulnerable about my mental health issues, I feel like the important people in my life are finally able to understand me and what I'm going through. Speaking publicly has proven to be therapeutic for me and I hope that my experiences can help others seek the help they need too.

**I don't know if anyone can ever truly rid themselves of all mental illness, but they can be treated and kept at bay enough not to disrupt daily life. Having had to overcome your own mental health issues, what do you do to ensure a healthy mindset?**

S: I don't think I've overcome all of my issues but I have definitely learned to balance them. In order to stay mentally healthy, I rely on the support of friends, family, work colleagues and my boyfriend. In turn, being honest with them and discussing my feelings candidly is extremely important in order to receive help. Dance is both a physical and artistic outlet for me and has been alleviating my depression for as long as I can remember. I eat as healthily as possible and stay diligent with my weekly fitness routine that consists of spin classes, dance and weight training. I have an incredible mental health therapist who I schedule sessions with whenever I can, and most importantly I en-

sure I set aside at least one hour of personal time to be alone and reflect every single day. Having a high level of productivity has always contributed to my mental health in extremely positive ways so finding the balance between staying busy while also finding time to relax, eat and sleep well is what's always been important to me.

**What advice would you pass on to individuals currently suffering mentally?**

S: If you are suffering mentally, do not be afraid to seek help. Whether it's from a mental health professional, a friend, a family member or a mentor; find someone you trust and talk to them. You are not alone and mental health is nothing to be ashamed of. You are a warrior - take it day by day, develop a routine that will contribute to your personal happiness, speak to the people you trust and remember to breathe. It always gets better but taking the first step is on you.

Many thanks to Sarah for taking the time to shed light on societal issues as well as her own mental health. Courage is something within us all, and I want Concordia to rise up together and make the changes we wish to see in the world. Value the differences amongst us, encourage each other to be weird, and treat everyone with dignity regardless of their circumstances.