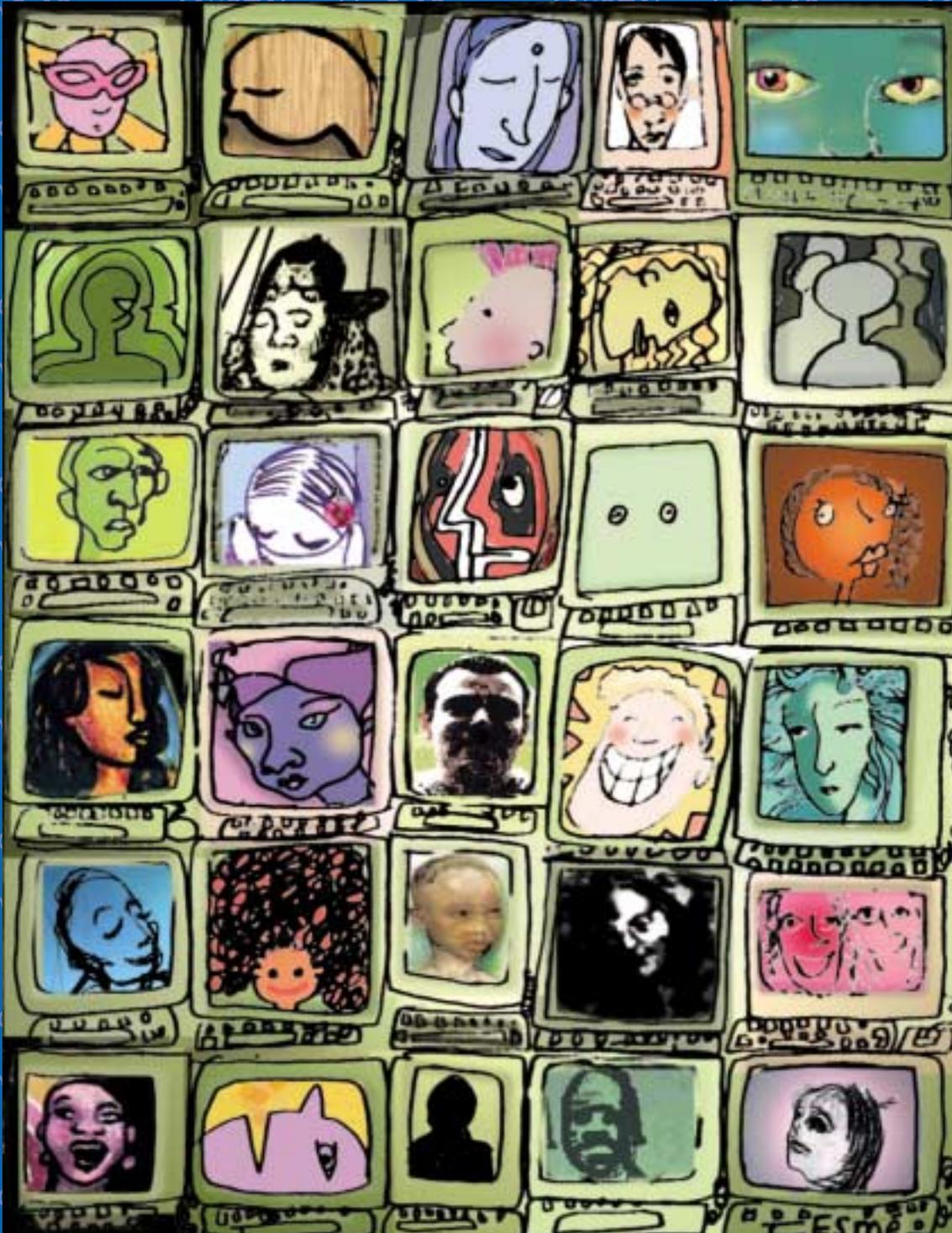


SCRATCH



B U ● A Ghost town in the Kootenays? ● Scratch this new Website
What's Sexy ● Top 10 Reasons to live here ● The F- Word

FREE

Destinations

However long the road,
No matter what I'll have to go through
And the effort I have to put in,
I'll follow my own destiny, my own direction.

This time, I don't want to listen to the whispering sounds of the wind,
Instead, I will be looking for a light on the other end.
Even if I don't encounter everything that I'm looking for along the way,
I hope I'll never fail to be who I truly am.

*Judy Feng, 16
Trail*



Artist: Cameron Morris, 15, Nelson

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COLUMBIA BASIN TRUST
a legacy
for the people

IN S I D E

The self-image and self-esteem issue

Editorial Stuff

- 4 Letter from the Editor
- 5 Why SCRATCH?

Word on the Street

- 23 Top 4 jobs
- 9 Youth and the media
- 16 Do appearances matter?

Get Moving

- 18 Trail guides
- 18 The Valhalla Wilderness Program

B U!

- 14 Top 10 List
- 6 Don't Buy it!
- 7 Reality Check
- 10 This Woman's Body
- 11 Girly Girl
- 9 Defining beauty
- 7 Dysfunction is a Function
- 7 Woman's To Do List

Chatroom

- 8 What is sexy?

Say what ya' think!

- 17 Bringing Skateboards to Montrose
- 28 Will Kimberley be a ghostown
- 29 Get off the Couch!
- 31 The F-Word
- 30 Heads up!

The Written Word

- 12 Skyscape
- 12 Stranger
- 13 Was/Is
- 15 Goat Beach
- 19 My First School Dance
- 20 Dating Violence
- 21 It's a Mistake
- 22 Love for the sake of loving

Live it Up

- 23 Tenants, You've got rights!
- 21 Local Women's Centre
- 14 Photo Tips

Plugged In

- 27 On-Line Sites for Artists, Writers & Musicians
- 27 Scratchonline.ca

Trust stuff

- 26 Join the Youth Committee!
- 26 Looking for funding?
- 24 Experience Youth Links
- 25 Columbia Basin Map

From the
cover

A
Ghost Town
in the
Kootenays?
Page 28

What's
Sexy?
Page 8

The
F-Word
Page 31

Top
10 Reasons
to live here
Page 14

Scratch
this new
website
Page 27

A zine by and for the Columbia Basin Youth

Welcome to the first issue of Scratch!

For those of you who were at last year's Basin Voice Youth Action Forum, you will know that this 'zine has been a long time coming! Young people there got together from around the Columbia Basin and dreamed of a youth-driven, alternative media source that celebrates rather than trashes youth culture. They talked about the need for media that profiles some of the cool things we do rather than all of the problems we have, and a source that would cover issues that are real and really matter to us. So, here is the first step!

When we put out our call for submissions to Scratch, we worried...what if we don't get anything? What if no one has anything to say...? And, of course, we fretted in vain, and were flooded with works from youth around the region! What you see here is a mix of art and thoughts on topics that you were inspired to put forward, as well as our theme for this issue, "Self-Esteem and Self Image".

How we see ourselves, feel about ourselves and who we're told to be were topics that came up a lot in our discussions at the Youth Action Forum and that many of this issue's writers have tackled. Find out what's sexy (page 8), and how the media controls our minds in Don't Buy It (page 6), and how some of us lived to tell a high school dance survival tale (page 19).

Both the 'zine and website were produced by students in the Columbia Basin

Special thanks goes to many for pulling this off, but especially to all of the contributors, our selection committee members, Kootenay School of the Arts, Selkirk College, the Columbia Basin Trust Youth Committee, Joah Lui, Warren Clark, Rebecca Penz, Sean Kilpatrick, Daniel Johnson, Jake Skakun, and our organizing queen Lynne Betts!

Don't forget this is a pilot issue and we're relying on you to let us know if we should keep scratching! Let us know what you like, what you hate, and what you think. Give us feedback at www.scratchonline.ca, go to the message board by June 30 and win fabulous prizes!

Editorial Committee:

Andra Louie

Shauna Shkuratoff

Stacy Barter

Give Us Feedback!

Congrats to Stew Carlson, 24, of Nelson for coming up with the winning name for this new 'zine.

WHY SCRATCH ?

Welcome to Scratch magazine, published by and for the youth of the Columbia Basin.

This 'zine is yours - take it and use it. The words and pictures come from your classmates, your neighbours, your friends, yourself. Those who understand that, when it comes down to the scratch of it, none of us really know what we're doing. We're all making it up as we go along.

By now you've noticed that being young is no picnic, especially on a planet as confusing and confused as this one. Everyone seems to be in it for themselves sometimes, and money is no object. The media isn't much interested in helping anybody but the media—they'd

rather tell you what's wrong with you than encourage what's right.

What you are holding is a voice. It's a forum for your concerns, an outlet for your rage, a podium for your dreams. This is a place for you to give and to get. Offer your thoughts, your ideas, your opinions and insight and experience. At the same time, expose yourself to someone else's. Share your unique perspective. Teach about life, the universe and everything. And find out what's going on inside the heads around you. Some of what you see may be familiar and comfortable to you, some of it may be eye-opening and mind-expanding

So start. Got an idea? Scratch it

down and send it in. Think there's more out there than meets the eye? Scratch the surface. Want to leave your mark?

Scratch your name. Tired of hearing the same old recording played the same old way? Scratch.

Something bugging you? Something under your skin? Got an itch? Then Scratch it

Mark Timko, 30
Nelson



Photo: Erin Grayson, 17, Fruitvale

DON'T BUY IT

The last Rolling Stone magazine I flipped through astounded me with at least eight pages of full color, gloss advertisements before the table of contents! It was like being harassed by some sedated clothes salesman. I could look no further.

Rolling Stone is one of the more, if not the most reputable popular culture magazines, why would they have such a blatant barrage of ads, why the sell, sell, sell? In an 80 plus page magazine that is 70 percent ads you would think there would be a noticeable decline in readership. If there was not a decline in readership then there must be a decline

in readership intelligence. Or perhaps we are more than willing to ante up seven dollars to be shown what we ought to be wearing or hearing, eating or thinking. Does corporate pop culture inspire

uniformity as a trend?

Does it play on our insecurities and in fact enhance our insecurities? When we see an ad for jeans and the model is a 14 year old anorexic with dark make up around her drowsy eyes, do we think that we should look the same? Is such an image propagating a trend in style? If we don't look like the model, do we feel insecure about ourselves and how we look? Will buying the jeans make us look like the model? Do we aspire to having ourselves in glossy magazine advertisements?

It should be noted that the basis of marketing strategy is telling the consumer or target exactly what they need and how what they are using now is inferior to what is being dangled in front of them.

If I go buy the jeans and the starched white shirt after getting a haircut like Ricky Martin, am I cool? Am I as cool as the guy who just bought a big yellow puffy jacket and baggy straight leg pants like Snoop Doggy Dogg? Perhaps we are both just minor representations of someone else's culture, someone else's ideas.

I would argue that it is like putting on a uniform, and when we put on such a uniform we cannot be ourselves. How do

we express our ideas, and ourselves when we are already following the 'buy this culture' order? Do we in fact lose the desire to express ourselves as individuals?

This is of course a zeroed in focus on one aspect of the corporate, look this way, buy this way, think this way blanket. When the focus comes upward somewhat we must look at the same effect on communities.

It must be understood that the youth are who will recreate the community, from Nelson to Trail to Rock Creek to any distinct neighborhood in a larger center, for instance, Mount Pleasant in East Vancouver.

It is us who will make our communities unique as the older generations and their power structure fade away. How will we create unique communities with uniform views? Will the community of the future be structured for a buy it effect, like the sprawling hillside suburbs of Port Moody, or the blocks of sterile apartment complexes in

Kelowna? I don't think there is enough time left, judging by the speed in which the ground beneath our feet is being sold to the corporate sector, to have any insecurities about who we are as individuals and as British Columbians and even as Canadians. Are we going to let someone else, some marketing strategist in some musty office somewhere beneath the spotless asphalt of America Street in Disneyland to tell us what we need?

I would say that continuing to buy, buy, buy is going to be detrimental not only to us as individuals but also to our freedom of expression, because the more we look outside of ourselves for culture and entertainment and style and the more we lose our own.

How do we break free of the buy this culture scam? Well, why buy Rolling Stone magazine when you can make your own? Are there any bands in your town? Why not start your own? What makes your community unique? It is the human experience that makes art and culture. We don't need to buy it.

“Do we in fact lose the desire to express ourselves as individuals?”



**Writing & Art By
Stew Carlson, 24
Nelson**

B e Y o u r s e l f

Dysfunction is a Function

I figure maybe there's just something wrong with me. Maybe I have some sort of undiscovered disease – yet when I think, who's to say what's normal when it comes to mentality? Who's to say you're too sad, too happy, not sane or crazy? Maybe they're insane for thinking so. Who knows? It is a proven fact that many, many successful people in history were “mentally insane”. Some were so smart that they were incapable of normal, everyday activities. Take Picasso for an example. A world famous artist and he was a nut! Yet, also depressed. Which is another mind disorder that is considered “abnormal”. Too sad. Yet, thousands of people on earth suffer from it. It can't be that abnormal if that many are diagnosed. And some of those “depressed” people use their dysfunction as an advantage to their art. They express it through writing, or art, singing, musical talent, dance... many, many medias. It puts a real passion into the media because the feelings being portrayed are real. The black and the purple is not just a great combination that makes you understand sorrow, it is sorrow. And that low, sad tone of the clarinet does not just sound like weeping, but it is a form of weeping. It's not just an illustration, it's themselves. Themselves spilling out their

insides and what they truly feel. So how can these things be considered so “abnormal”, “far from average” or “unlike the rest” when so many people “suffer”? And how can it be called “suffering” when it produces such beautiful expressions? I refuse to be diagnosed with depression; instead, I will be proudly awarded with it.

Erin Grayson, 17
Fruitvale

A woman's to do list

Pluck my wooly eyebrows,
shave my hairy skin
and starve myself to look too thin

Color my natural hair,
paint my ordinary face
and always walk around with grace

Buy cellulite creams,
dream wrinkle free dreams
and sign up
with the Weight Watchers team

Wear high heels that warp my feet,
wax my bikini line, hold in the
scream,
tape my nipples, squeeze my breasts
into a push-up bra two sizes too small

Makes me wonder
why we were all born different
after all

Jeanine Caron, 26
Nelson

REALITY CHECK

Eighty per cent of 10-year-old American girls diet.

One million teenage boys have eating disorders and as many as 400,000 are steroid users.

Steroid use can cause acne, lower a guy's sperm count and make testicles smaller.

The average American woman wears a size 10 or larger (not a 2 or 3, like your average model).

Twenty years ago, the average model weighed 8% less than the average woman; today, models weigh 23% less.

One in eleven ads has a direct message about beauty.

60% of high school girls with eating disorders or related symptoms do not believe they need counseling.

Between 1996 and 1998, teenage cosmetic surgeries nearly doubled, from 13,699 to 24,623.

source:
http://www.pbs.org/inthemix/selfimage_index.html

Want more on-line resources on self-image and self-esteem? www.scratchonline.ca

SO WHAT IS SEXY?

Find out what Pamela Anderson and Margaret Atwood have in common.

A Dialogue with
Michelle Klassen, 27
John Fornelli, 29
Mark Timko, 30
Sean Kilpatrick, 25

Interviewed by
Stew Carlson, 24
Nelson

Stew: Do you see a difference between what you see as attractive and what you are told is attractive? By told, I mean what we see on covers of magazines, tv, newspapers, etc. Do they differ from your opinions on what is attractive in the opposite gender?

Sean: Yeah, being 'sexy' is commercial, but what attracts me is what's on the inside.

John: Commercial definition and my definition; its certainly changed as I've gotten older. When I was younger they were probably tied closer together than they are today, but I would say being sexy is attitude more than anything.

Mark: It's always seemed that there is a big difference between good looking and sexy. Someone, like say, Barbara Streisand or Glenn Close, are not terribly good looking by the traditional standards, but are very sexy and there's a difference. You see lots of physically good looking women who are not at all sexy.

Michelle: Yeah, there's a huge difference, from what the media tells me is sexy in a man and what I find sexy. It is very much an internal thing. In terms of women, women are told to 'put on' sexy. I agree with Sean, it does come from inside. There's certainly a difference in definitions as well.

Stew: OK, just a quick survey then, when you see Pamela Anderson or whoever, covered in make up and tight, low cut suit etc, is that sexy to you?

Mark: When I see still photographs of her done up in make up?

Stew: Or in a movie, whatever, is she sexy?

Mark: I've seen her act and, it's been a while, but yeah she has this sort of, fun vulnerability to her that can be sexy from time to time. Over all, I would say it's not a terribly sexy, appealing image.

Michelle: Physically, she's sexy, but I agree, there might be something that shines through her that is more than that.

Sean: I don't think she's sexy at all. I think she's fake looking.

John: I think she's sexy, physically and her attitude. I like it.

Stew: Sean, you thought she was fake and it's obvious she has breast implants and perhaps other modifications to look a certain way. You don't find that attractive?

Sean: She doesn't leave anything to the imagination. There's something about that...

Defining Beauty

Webster's dictionary defines beauty as something that gives great pleasure to the mind and senses. Sure, beautiful people give great pleasure to the sense of sight, but what about the mind?

Brittany Spears is nice for, let's face it, all guys to look at, but who is to say that she would have anything to say that they found even remotely interesting? And, what about Brad Pitt? Every girl I know could sit and look at him for hours. Although, I couldn't say for sure if any girl would want to sit and talk to him for hours.

This is not a personal attack on either of the above-mentioned. We all know they are talented at what they do. And, yes they are good-looking people. Are they beautiful? Well, if we go by the correct definition of the word, we can only say for sure that they give great pleasure to our sense of sight.

I'm sure that this is not going to change the fact that when you look in the mirror you may not like what you see. The truth is, everyone at one point or another has felt exactly the same way.

Anyway, the next time that that somewhat geeky looking guy passes you in the hallway, or that weird looking guy comes into where you work to strike up a conversation, stop and consider this; What is it that gives your mind and senses great pleasure? Not only that, but which is more important in the grand scheme of things?

Just a thought to think about the next time you call someone beautiful, or think that you aren't.

Rhonda Piche, 22
Invermere

Streeter

What do you think about the way young people are portrayed in the media?

Jean Ann McKirdy, 17

Valemount

There are a lot of different ways in which young people are portrayed. They are portrayed as more rebellious than they are. They are also portrayed as new, adventurous. Not all the ways they are portrayed as bad. In fact, some are pretty positive. An advertisement on C.B.C. for monster.ca is looking for youth. The advertisement is positive in terms of what the youth say.



Johanthen Anthony, 17

Valemount

I think our society revolves around young people. And in the media, you don't see real people. It seems like there is stress that younger is better. I don't see older people playing big roles in the media. Youth are also shown in a positive way. The skater look is not positive. Movies and TV treat the younger people in a negative way at times. And those stereotypes stick with you.



Miwa Hiroe, 15

Valemount

In the media, I think adults treat young people as children rather than young adults. Also, the media seems to focus on the bad kids. The good kids are out. Because of that, kids also tend to try and do supernatural or bad things just to get into the media.



Kyle Francotti, 17

Valemount

I think young people in the media are portrayed as rebels. They don't show the good stuff that youth do. I would like to see more positive images.



Mathew Hooke, 23

Valemount

I think that young people are portrayed positively such as being active, involved in sports and community services. An example is the ICBC's advertisement on Counter Attack and drug awareness for young athletes.



Streeter by Rashmi Narayan, 30, Valemount

Photos by Andru McCracken, 27, Valemount

This

Reclaiming Femininity After Abuse

Woman's Woman's

Body

Fear of being desired has been the bane of my sexual existence. As a hopeful-escapee from the effects of childhood sexual abuse I am renegotiating this fear in order to reclaim the essence of what I am: a woman. I was taught early on that I exist to be desirable and that desirability is an invitation to be attacked.

The messages were contradictory, so common in the abuse experience, and the reason why survivors often cycle between extremes of sexual behaviour. I grew up fearing the consequences of manifesting my sexuality and from the time I was three years-old I began teaching myself to suppress my femininity. I was a slut at heart who tried to make herself asexual. Finally, at age twenty-seven, I realize that everything I was taught about sexuality as a pre-adolescent was garbage. Now I want to move myself from feeling like the genderless slut to feeling female simply feminine at all times.

I've built a buffer against the threat of sex behind which I can explore the mental and physical aspects of femininity. It is the

hard-won knowledge that I do not have to allow anyone to touch me for the rest of my life. I have the right to be untouched sexually, and no one who can demand otherwise of me. I hold the rights to my own body and use of my sexuality. I was taught from an early age to only relate to my body sexually; but there is a difference between sexuality (internal, unique part of being) and sex/sexualness (external, desire directed at body parts). To reclaim my sexuality, I am removing the sexualness (slut) that was imposed on my body by others and allowing my own sexuality to emerge. Simply put, my nipples are body parts, as are my vagina, breasts, etc. They were not created for the purpose of serving others sexually. Sexuality is an inherent part of my being but not a requirement that I use it for sexual purposes! I am a human being first, and a sexual being if I choose to be. So I have

begun to learn to relate to my body non-sexually. Sometimes this involves talking to my body, sometimes it involves touch and affirming ownership over the abused parts. It is proving very effective over time.

I have also found that taking baths instead of showers where I scrubbed this thing that claimed to be my body and rushed out, barely looking at myself has been a helpful tool. I can observe that I exist physically and choose to think about my body, or just notice it and feel its boundaries where the water touches it. It is a gentle way to come home to myself again.

I hover in this place where I still feel anger towards my body and its pesky fears, but yearn to love it as well. I need this love but I still fear being desired/attacked

because I was taught that I/my femininity are not worth defending. Attempts to stand up for myself were fodder for humiliation. Overcoming the fear of being exposed as worthless and loving myself are simultaneous projects, and my endeavours on behalf of both are slowly overcoming my fear of being desired.

Femininity is a word that requires personal definition, and I cannot always find it by acknowledging myself. Sometimes I feel my femaleness is obvious, but I often have stretches of days where it eludes me no matter what I do. I am learning to be compassionate with myself on those days because I lose more stability than I gain by fighting it. It is more important to not dwell on it at these low times. When I do happen to question myself I just affirm that yes, even though I feel less feminine now than I'd like to, my femininity is inherent because I am a woman. What more proof do I need!

I have been working with a sexual abuse therapist for a couple of months who is helping me to deal with my spectrum of abuse-related feelings. The best thing to come out of these sessions so far has been this question: What if I had been born into a family where my special, unique beauty was celebrated? I have moved beyond blaming anyone for the fact that this was not so and am beginning to celebrate my beauty, and the beauties of all the human beings around me. I would never have believed even a month ago that I would feel so excited about owning me, myself, this woman's body! My sexuality is mine and my femininity is real! And turning an abused little girl into a self-defining woman has been the most frightening, most precious labour of my life.

*Michelle Deanna Klassen, 27
Nelson*

Sexuality is an inherent part of my being but not a requirement that I use it for sexual purposes!

I have never been a “Girly Girl”. I never really understood the point of putting on make-up or getting dressed up to go shopping (I do mean grocery shopping!). Though since turning 16, I have seen the light! Okay, maybe it is just the flickering fluorescent bulbs or the endless lines in the grocery store that make the guy bagging groceries seem a lot cuter, but I have a feeling there is more here than meets the eye.

I am not under the impression that I am the hottest thing under the sun. Though you have to admit, it does give you a boost of confidence when a car of guys drives past looking out their windows. Then a guy you like includes you conversation, another gal friend compliments on your new flared pants, and that car of guys seems to have taken a wrong turn and is driving around the block again!

When I turned sixteen I didn't change suddenly and become a boy-crazy ditz, I just realized that for the past 8 months I had been slowly changing. I would be taking a second glance at the make-up counter, spending extra time dressing in the morning, and trying out things like artificial nails. Before my change of personal image I wore baggy jeans, dyed my hair bright colors, and tried to look disinterested in just about anything anyone had to say. I wanted to fade into the background and be a mysterious wallflower, or a rebel that was always blaming the world for the injustices done to me. These personas seemed easier to handle than what I truly was, a girl who is shy around guys and can't find much to gab about with girls

Katie Potapoff, 17
Castlegar

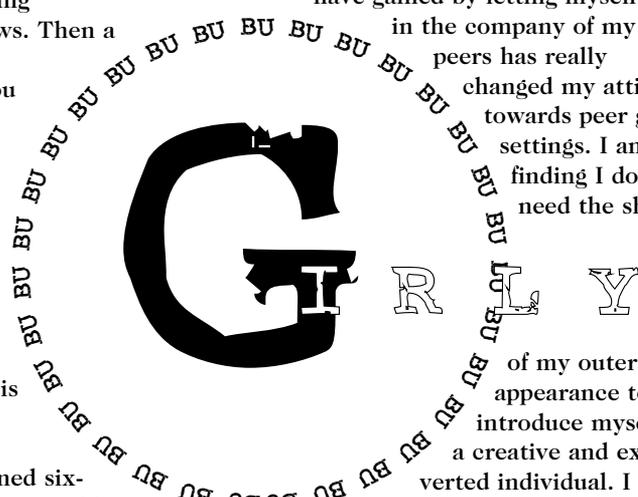
her own age.

My mature thought patterns don't easily fit into conversations about whose legs were shaved in physical education, but I am slowly learning to relax and enjoy being myself in different situations. I try not to worry that I'll say something wrong when the topic of “Smackers” lip-gloss is raised in the conversation. I am honest with myself and with others around me. I don't pretend to know whether the sparkles in the lip-gloss will dry out your lips but I have figured out that “Strawberry Milkshake” tastes a lot better than “Mint Chocolate Chip!”

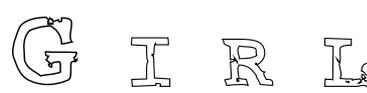
The freedom and enjoyment I have gained by letting myself relax in the company of my peers has really changed my attitude towards peer group settings. I am finding I don't need the shock

of my outer appearance to introduce myself as a creative and extroverted individual. I get to show people my true self from the inside out. I am sure there will be times when I can wow a crowd with movie knowledge or surprise the gals with an eye for clothes. When those times come around it will be natural and my voice will be confident and clear as I make a joke, ask someone where they got their hair colored, or where the group is meeting for coffee later.

At the moment I am enjoying the idea that I don't have to be what people perceive me to be just to fit in. Right now I like being myself. I may change, the friends might change the people and conversation might change, but I'll be ready for it. I know what I am capable of and that is what matters. That is what is important.



Artist: Kelsey Frank, 15, Castlegar



Poetry

SKYSCAPE

Mountain ridges tuck me inside

deep blue-green shadows,
daytime dusk far more welcome
than stale grey buildings that scrape
smog-thick skies.
Better than billboards that clutter sky
like city crows, and
tower to flaunt
the face
the money
the body
I don't have.

These ads force my eyes
toward windows, to examine

how my clothing hangs
on my small breasts, and
generous hips, my flesh
appraised in an exhale.

The curves of mountain ridges
roll endlessly, unmeasured.

The tangled beauty of their contours
beckons my eyes upwards

where crows burst
from crooked limbs of trees, a

white crow punctures
dark clouds of feathers,

stunning in her difference, and
obvious belonging.

*Allison Hack,
Winlaw*

Stranger

Walk with me stranger,
tell me your concerns
for I see deep within you
a heart that yearns

Why are you so sad?
What makes you angry?
Why do you wake up at night,
with a head full of worries?

Is it injustice?
Is it war?
Is it the rich?
Is it the poor?

Is it because you aren't accepted
for who you are?
Or because you're adored
for what you are not?

Is it the buzz in your head
or the noise on the street?
Is it your own selfishness
or world greed?

Are you afraid of the truth?
Would you rather hear lies?
About pollution, death
and nature's cries

Are you happy within?
Are you happy without?
Are you hopeless?
Or just looking for a way out?

Dear stranger, don't concern yourself so much
for every stranger I meet feels just as lost
And the solution is easy, the answers so clear
Be kind, be simple, be innocent, be authentic
Be

*Jeanine Caron, 26
Nelson*

Was / Is

there have been
only twenty years
of me
and if my plans
to reach one hundred
should work out,
that leaves me
at least
four more lifetimes
all over again,

except they keep
telling me that
the older you get
the faster the years fly,
so maybe i've exaggerated,

either way
i'm still quite young
with so many years
ahead of me.

i shouldn't worry
as much as i do
that i've lost
too much time;
there will always be
someone ahead of me
and someone behind.
i needn't be ashamed
of where i run
in the race.

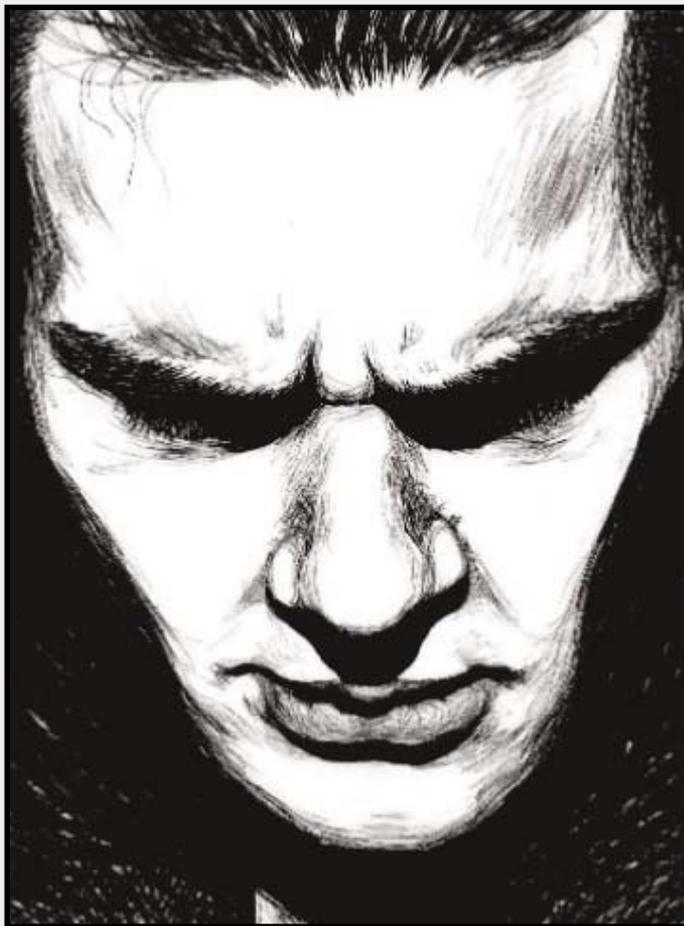
my life, my whole
twenty years,
how much of it
spent that is lost now
how much is just
a soupy mixture
of criss crossing memories
and long, vague
areas of time?

i look at photographs
of myself
taken only a few years ago
and i can't remember
what it felt like
when the camera clicked,
such a little amount of
time
before i forget so much
or is it all there
in some dusty file
somewhere in the back
of my mind?

if i could invent
a drug that could
dredge up all those
memories into
perfect crystal clarity
i'd be rich
i try to imagine
feeling five again,
seeing the world
thru those eyes,
not self-questioning
but full of questions
about the fascinating
all-possible world
surrounding me

and I might spend the next
eighty years
before I realize
that I can never learn
about it all.

*Amanda Millard, 20
Nelson*



Artist: Amanda Millard, 20, Nelson

FRAGMENTS

adjusting your point of view
can be easy
like climbing a mountain
or watching a movie

you may feel trapped
angry that the unbreakable
statues you created
broke
and the pieces
now crazy glued together
look a little warped

*Jenny Wolczuk, 26
Cranbrook*

Top Ten

reasons to live in the Columbia Basin

1. Wicked backcountry opportunities
2. No traffic problems
3. Great biking, boarding and skiing
4. Mountains and lots of snow (yeah!)
5. No threat of tornadoes or earthquakes(huh?)
6. It's beautiful!
7. Going to a big shopping mall is an adventure
8. Fresh water (gulp)
9. The Columbia Basin Trust that funds youth programs!(yeah!)
10. It's just cool to say I live in the Basin



Sometimes we get a lucky shot but most good pictures are created. If your people pictures are boring.

- **Make your subject the center of interest in the photo.**
- **Show clear strong images.**
- **Try placing your subjects off center in the photo.**
- **By the way, your subject doesn't always have to be looking at the camera.**

Submitted by Studio Milan, Castlegar

Photo
Logan Swayze,
22
Trail



It's the hottest day of an unbearably hot summer, and my toddler and I are taking refuge at the sweetest spot around; a sliver of pebbly beach about half-way up the Slocan Valley, close to where we live.

Clutching hands, we make our way over the jagged rocks of the old railway bed, and scramble down the steep slope to the river's edge.

It's crowded today. We wave and shout hello to familiar figures sprawling on colourful blankets and wading in the shallow water.

This is a magical place. The river is clear and fast, narrow enough to swim across to banks of blue clay. And the slopes rising on either side of the Valley here have yet to be spoiled by logging.

But what makes this spot remarkable is the crowd that gathers here: parents and kids from up and down the Valley, as well as their four-footed counterparts from the neighbouring goat farm.

The other thing, of course, is that everyone here is naked: tiny babies, toddlers, teenagers, pregnant women, mamas and papas of all ages, shapes and sizes. Even the goat herder tends his flock in the nude.

Before I came to this Valley, my only experience of nude beaches was the racy stories from my childhood about Vancouver's Wreck Beach. Vendors there sold everything from sushi to magic mushrooms - in the nude! - and entire teams of naked men and women played volleyball in the sand.

There was always something slightly suspect about

those stories: the suggestion of leering old men waiting to prey on curious children, and I never made it beyond the "Clothing Optional" sign on the steep, wooded path down to the shore.

But there's nothing remotely sinister about this place. A family shares sandwiches and lemonade on their picnic blanket. A couple with inner-tubes lets the current carry them lazily towards Winlaw. Small children fish for minnows in the quiet back eddies.

I don't fear for my daughter's safety on this beach full of naked people. On the contrary, I celebrate the way being here

Life in the
Columbia Basin

Goat Beach

normalizes nudity for her, and exposes her to a diverse range of body sizes, shapes and colours. And I hope, as she grows, these blissful summer afternoons will help steel her against the feelings of guilt and shame that haunted so many girls of my generation.

But, in the meantime, we pull off our clothes, and my daughter stands patiently while I fasten the strap of her sun-hat beneath her chin and spread sun-screen across the dimpled curves of her behind.

Someone shoos a curious goat from their picnic basket, the sun roars in the blue sky, the river rushes past us, and my toddler laughs.

Erin Maconachie, 29
Appledale

Know a cool adult
that deserves
some recognition?
Tell us.

Streetier

Typically it's women who wear make-up, worry about their appearance and even surgically change their body. Why do women do this? Why don't men?

Kyra Kush 19

Nakusp

Because women want to attract men.

A lot of guys do put more effort in their appearance these days. It puts a lot of pressure on kids to be like that.



Nik Beckie 19

Arrow Park

From an impressionable age women they are ingrained with this media image of girls who wear make-up and look amazing. Men have been engrained with the idea that they do not change the way they look. Fake, plastic world. Entertained as well as disgusted that people take that view as reality.



James Madden 18

Cressent Bay

Women do it because they want to look and feel like something they are not. And men don't care, that's why they don't worry about their appearance. It's sick and disturbing, portraying something that isn't true.



James Inglis 18

Nakusp

Women feel they have to look a certain way to feel in. And men are the ones who chase the prey.



Jessica McNalie 18

Nakusp

Women lack self confidence and appearance is just not important to men. Young role models today are large-chested bimbo's. I don't really pay much attention to that stuff.



Photos and Writing by Joseph Hughes, 18, Nakusp.

SO
WHATCHA
GONNA
DO?

Write/email local and major media outlets like magazines, newspapers and TV stations. Ask them why they don't designate more time/space to highlighting positive youth involvement. Explain your concerns (in a clear and respectful manner of course) and suggest material they could start off with successful youth programs, entrepreneurs, people etc. A few minutes on the internet can find you tons of media contacts

Wanna' Be a Scratch Writer? Photographer? Cartoonist?
Scratch wants to feature more arts, music, sports, reviews and website stuff.
Get in touch. sbarter@cbt.org Attention: Youth Media

I live in the Village of Montrose and have recently joined the Montrose Youth Action Team.

We are trying to get a skateboard park in our community. I participate in regular meetings, get petitions signed, answer people's questions, and have been to Village Council meetings.

The first time I went to a council meeting I was nervous and I slurred my words. It doesn't bother me anymore since I have talked to so many people. **I now realize that if you want something in life you have to speak up and voice your opinion.** Since we've started this project, I find it easier to talk to people. My ability to speak to adults has improved greatly, and hope it improves more by the time this project is over.

So far, this has been a good learning experience for me. My self-confidence has really improved and I hope to learn a lot more. I'm

finding out how things work in the real world and how to get things done. Sometimes I wish things moved faster than they do.

No doubt, you know that communities need a place for youth to spend their time. That is what



Making It Happen!

skateboards and other sporting equipment. This sport will help draw families to this area which is good for Montrose. I have lived most of my life in Montrose and I love this community. I hope to watch and skate with my kids in the same park.

Lance Siebert, 14, Montrose

we are trying to accomplish. We don't want to spend our time hanging around the corner store until late hours. **I want the community to come and watch me skate rather than criticizing me for my sport.** It makes me feel bad and skateboarders are not bad people.

Our community and area is known as the Home of Champions. One of the local professional skaters Josh Evin is coming to the Montrose School Gym to speak and support us.

He learned to skate elsewhere because there was nowhere to skate nearby. Most of my friends and I don't drive and would like to skate to our park. The closest place to skate is Nelson and it is a one hour drive. That is just too far away when you want to skate every day.

While it is true we have three parks for kids to play in, they do not meet the needs of kids my age. We don't play on swings and slides anymore. I feel we need a safe place to use our

For local skateboard parks and "how to" info to start your own, check out the Scratch website.

Valhalla Wilderness Program

Where The Outdoors Is Your School

Do you enjoy being in pristine wilderness and dream of doing outdoor activities such as mountain biking, skiing or snowboard touring, kayaking and rock climbing? Now imagine being in Grade 9 or 10 and getting high school credits for participating in these activities and learning about backcountry travel in the mountains. The Valhalla Wilderness Program could be your dream come true! The Valhalla Wilderness Program (VWP) is based out of WE Graham School in Slocan City located at the start of the Slocan River and on the boundary of Valhalla Park and mountain range. Since the mid 1990's, this unique program has combined wilderness experience with classroom studies.

In an average year the VWP has six week-long out trips and one day trip weekly. The year normally consists of a hiking excursion into the alpine, two biking and camping trips, two winter camping and ski tour trips and a grand finale kayak-

ing or canoe trip. By year end, students can anticipate to have biked hundreds kilometres of dirt covered trails and summited at least a couple of local peaks by foot and ski, and spent a week paddling a lake. All this is done in their own back yard – the Columbia Basin.

The 2002 graduating class will mark the program's first hundred students in its history. Grade 9 student Cassidy Sherrington said her most memorable moment so far, was being on top of Mt. Brennan standing tall at 9800 ft. after hiking up. "It was the happiest moment of my life, I felt very accomplished." She adds that at the VWP, "It's the best life experience. It might seem a little scary at first but when you get down deep it's really fun. You also learn about yourself and your capabilities. You get to explore the area around where you live. Plus I feel more confident, communicative with others, and more willing to be open and cooperative with my peers."

The Valhalla Wilderness



Program is recognized and supported by the community partly due to the personal growth evident in graduating students. In an education study done in 2001 looking at girls' self esteem it was concluded that the program promotes and supports development of young women's self-esteem.

Interested? Contact WE Graham School at 355 2212.

Jeanie Dwyer, 30
Winlaw

Top trail guides for the Columbia Basin and beyond

Kootenay folk seem to be getting spring fever as I see more and more Mountain bikes ripping around town and along side highways. To get the season rolling I've collected a list of great trail guides for the Kootenays and BC. If there are trails that you can't find in one of these resources go into The Sacred Ride (Nelson) or your local bike shop and get someone to draw out the trail on your map.

Nelson area - Ticket To Ride, this is a fold up map you can purchase at The Sacred Ride and other local shops.

Rossland - The Rossland Mountain Bike Trail Map, you can find it at The Sacred Ride or Chamber of Commerce

Mountain Biking British Columbia, Second Edition by Steve Dunn and Darrin Polischuk, this is an updated version of the first edition. This guide lists a couple of trails for all levels of riding through out BC. It doesn't list all the local trails but it covers a variety of trail difficulties. This guide includes area maps, photos and a rating on trail difficulty. It also includes information on local hot spots to dine and camp.

Check out the scratch website for trail guides and news.

Jeanie Dwyer, 30
Winlaw

my first school dance

Deciding that humanity in general would be better off if Kevan Gilbert knew how to dance, on the Thursday afternoon of our school's 2001 Halloween festivities, I bought myself a dance ticket. This was the first dance ticket I'd ever purchased, since this was, in fact, the very first school dance I'd ever been to in my life. After you stop laughing at me, I'll continue.

I arrived late - it was 8:36 when I reached the doors. My entire life flashed before my eyes as the vice-principal came barreling out of the doors chasing an intoxicated

Grade 9 student to his parents' waiting car. As an irritated mother held the door open for her staggering son, I nodded my head at her and helpfully pointed out, "You look happy." Unfortunately, she could not respond, as at that exact moment, her son crashed into the car and was peeled off the pavement by the principal. I could already tell this was going to be an exciting evening.

I stepped into the gymnasium and was immediately confused. For a moment, I thought I had died and accidentally been sent to a hell, where people are eternally tormented by rapidly flashing lights and bad music videos. In the centre of the room, there was a small wrestling ring of sorts, in which several people were having back spasms and uncontrollable limb seizures. I assumed that this ring was where the most chronic spasm sufferers were sent to if they had been especially bad on earth. As my eyes tried to adjust to the light whose sole purpose seemed to be to prevent my dilating pupils from ever actually doing so, I soon realized that the entire gymnasium was filled with people having back spasms and uncontrollable seizures.

I swung down onto the gymnasium floor, and began wading through the thrashing masses, searching for a familiar face. It didn't take long, and in the same instant that I discovered a friend, I also discovered two interesting facts about school dances:

1. You cannot understand what anybody else is saying, and
2. Neither can they.

This friend of mine approached me happily, and emitted a string of randomly selected phrases from a "Hebrew Hooked on Phonics" textbook; I had no idea what she had just said. I shrugged sympathetically. Well, apparently when you shrug at someone, it means you wish to dance with them. As she put her arms around me, I discovered two more interesting facts about school dances:

1. "To dance" comes from the French word meaning, "To hold your partner's waist and wobble back and forth

while going in circles," and
2. I can't dance.

"I CAN'T DANCE!" I yelled at her, but she shook her head and hollered something in Czechoslovakian. I didn't feel confident enough with my wobbling-back-and-forth-while-going-in-circles skills, so I sheepishly broke away halfway through the song and wandered around aimlessly.

As she put her arms around me, I discovered two more interesting facts about school dances.

The night went on, and I slowly gained confidence as far as wobbling and rotating was concerned. After one hour and 87 dance partners, I felt I

had successfully mastered all the skills that are required to be an active participant at a school dance. Yessss, I thought to myself. I am one with the gyrating multitude. I had officially discovered...

How To Survive a School Dance

First, you must find yourself a dance partner. This is done by walking around the outer edges and carefully avoiding stray couples who have somehow rotated away from the flock. You must make eye contact with every person of the opposite sex who is not currently engaged in the wobbling process. If another person meets your gaze, walk towards her. Proceed then to shrug at her. If she wishes to dance with you, she will shrug back at you. (Note: The shrug is the universal sign for "Will you dance with me?" The alternative to shrugging is yelling "YOU WANNA DANCE?!" in the other person's ear, which is often misheard as "IGUANA PANTS?!") This tends to cause confusion.) After a successful shrug exchange, the two of you must begin to wobble back and forth while rotating in small circles. A common practice during this dance technique is to place your hands on your partner's slimy back while stepping on her feet and yelling, "OOPS, SORRY!" in her ear. When the song has come to an end, you must hug your partner, and thank her for the "dance".

At the end of the night, when the music stops and the DJ kills the strobe, the ugly lights come on. The ugly lights are lights which allow you to see who you were actually wobbling with. This is why the parking lot always empties so fast after a school dance. If you wish to avoid the shock, you may wish to keep your eyes closed for the rest of your life - or at least until the next school dance rolls around and you simply can't resist that sweet, soft voice next to your ear seductively shrieking...IGUANA PANTS?!

*Kevan Gilbert, 18
Trail*

dating violence

One Woman's Story

I AM A SURVIVOR OF DATING VIOLENCE AND RAPE. It has been nine years but it still affects every aspect of my life. Though I am a survivor, the pain does not go away. I am hardly alone—one in six females has been the victim of a sexual assault. Those numbers are astounding. I look at five of my friends and figure, I was the one, I guess they are safe. The truth is, none of us is immune to the dangers. Maybe we don't go out walking alone after dark, we don't go places with strangers, we watch out for the scary looking guy on the street. We all know what rapists look like, right? Sleazy, unshaven and leering. What if, though, he is actually our neighbor, the cute guy on the basketball team, our own boyfriend? My rapist was not some scary stranger—he was a man I had been in a relationship with for almost a year.

Dating violence is something far too many girls deal with. That is how my story began—with an insult here, a shove there. As it always does, it escalated. Before long, my waterbed had been slashed because I wasn't home on time. I was thrown into a wall because he didn't like whom I spoke to. I was humiliated publicly and stalked wherever I went.

So, why would I stick around? There are many aspects to the dynamics of an abusive relationship. I didn't feel at the time that I had anyone but him. He had isolated me from most of my supports: my family and friends. He made himself the most important person in my life. Also, abusers don't behave that way all the time. As cruel as they can be, when they are nice they put just as much energy into making you

feel good as they do to tearing you down later. When my boyfriend wanted to, he could make me feel like the most loved, special, beautiful woman in the world. At first he made me feel that way a lot. If 80% of the time I felt this amazing love from him I could put up with the 20% of the time he wasn't so nice, couldn't I? Then the 80% becomes 60%, then 40%. By then you are caught up in the vicious cycle. You begin to believe what he's telling you, that it's your fault. If you'd quit pissing him off so much things would get better. You can never give enough, though. He will always find a reason to hurt you.

Finally, I had enough. I ended the relationship. The stalking continued. He was always there, watching every move I made. I applied for a peace bond. Three days before my application was to be heard in court, he broke into my apartment and raped me repeatedly and threatened to kill me. Nothing has been the same in my life since.

Why do I tell this story? Why do I want to rehash the most intimate and painful moments of my life? Because if my experience can help one person be more vigilant, to really listen to their gut instincts and to protect themselves, then I will not have gone through this for nothing.

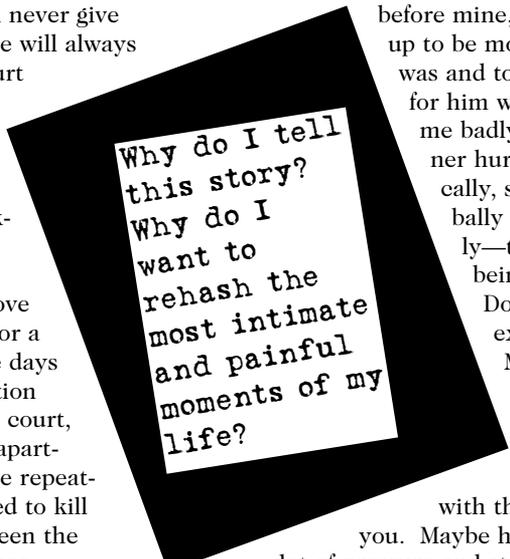
There are many warning signs that I ignored, many behaviors that I excused. The truth is no one has the right to hit you, insult you, threaten you. Love does not hurt—physically or emotionally. If someone truly

loves you they will want to lift you up and nurture you, not tear you down. People who love us don't make us doubt ourselves or make us responsible for their behavior. And definitely, people who love us don't beat us.

My former boyfriend is the only one ultimately responsible for raping me—there is no one else to blame, he made the choice. During the relationship, however, I made several choices as well—choices that were not in my best interest. I made the choice to put his needs before mine, to build him up to be more than he was and to make excuses for him when he treated me badly. If your partner hurts you—physically, sexually, verbally or emotionally—then you are being abused. Don't make excuses for him. Maybe he did have a rough life growing up—but he needs to deal with that, not hit you. Maybe he does have a

lot of pressure and stress—don't we all? It is wrong and you need to take the necessary steps to protect yourself. Most communities have a women's centre and/or a transition house. These are wonderful, supportive, non-judgmental places to turn.

Rapes are often not reported to the police, or to anyone—the victim suffers in silence. Women are ashamed—sex crimes are not something we talk about. Don't let the term 'sex crime' mislead you. Rape has little to do with sex and everything to do with a need for power,



Why do I tell this story?
Why do I want to rehash the most intimate and painful moments of my life?

If you are in an abusive relationship, you need to protect yourself.

control and violence. Sex is simply the method perpetrators used to exert this need for power. Whether to report to the police is a personal decision that only a victim can make. I reported my rape and found that in a small way it gave me some control back in my life and empowered me to get through the experience. Even if you don't feel comfortable going to the police at first, tell someone. Do not try to make it through alone. Turn to a friend, a family member, a counselor, a women's centre.

If you are in an abusive relationship, you need to protect yourself. No one can make that choice for you. The relationship will not get better, the likelihood is that it will get worse. If your partner is jealous and possessive, it is not because he loves you so much—it is a warning sign. If you find you are being isolated from your friends or family, be careful. If your partner abuses alcohol and/or drugs, be aware that is another common danger. Be careful whom you let into your life—we all deserve to be loved, not to be hurt.

*D. Schmidt, 30
Cranbrook*

it's a mistake

An Internal Monologue

GOD I'M SO STUPID. Why didn't I think? That's it; I hate men and all they stand for. This is his fault. I should really start paying attention to what the teacher is saying; but I can't. ACK! I can't even tell my friends, let alone my parents. I already talked to my boy- err... ex-boyfriend; he said to get rid of it. He hasn't even returned my calls for the past week. All right, I've got to think: abortion. Oh God, the teacher's going to ask me a question, and I didn't even look at the work she assigned us. Phew, she asked someone else. Okay, first off, to abort a life is immoral... or at least that's what my friends say. For some instances it's okay to get an abortion; like, a rape victim, for example. On the other hand, the child could grow up to cure cancer or something. Plus, I'm no rape victim. Oh God,

why does this have to happen to me? If I don't abort the kid, my parents will kick me out. I can't raise a child; I'm still a kid, myself! What if there really is a God? Then, I'll get punished for killing another human being. Say I do get an abortion: I live in a small town without even a hospital. The closest clinic that performs this type of operation is a three-hour drive away. I would have to find a ride there and back. I don't even have gas money for someone to take me. Plus the fact that I would have to rest for a week afterward, or so that's what I heard. How am I going to rest (that means not going to school for a week) without anyone (especially my parents) noticing? What if this is the only child I'll ever be able to have? Who knows; the doctors at the clinic might mess up my insides, rendering me sterile. Then, I'd wind up a barren old hag with no one to love her. Second period: time for English. I know my friends would support me in any decision I make. I know that one, especially, would want me to keep the child; she'd probably help me raise it, too. Even if I don't have my parents helping me, I would have her and her parents. Alternatively, I must go to college. I need to think ahead. Do I want to raise a child? Can I raise a child? Pfft, the father sure won't help me raise it. I would be helping society as a whole, sort of, in that I wouldn't be contributing to over population. That's just stupid. I shouldn't even think like that. But, how am I supposed to think?

*Sheena O'Keefe, 17
Sparwood*

Women's Centres:

- Cranbrook 426-2912
cwrc@cyberlink.bc.ca
- Fernie 423-4687
fwrc@elkvalley.net
- Golden 344-5317
mntwomy@rockies.net
- Nelson 352-9916
wkwomyn@netidea.com

Love for the Sake of Loving

To love for the sake of being loved is human; to love for the sake of loving is angelic.”

-Alphonse LeMartine.

I remember it well: Amanda stood on the sidewalk, her jacket lightly covered by fat snowflakes. The snow in her hair began to melt, and a bead of water ran off the end of her nose.

“Hello,” I said.

“Hey,” she said, as she put her hand up to suggest waving.

We kiss; her lips are cold but her tongue is warm and I get that wonderful feeling of more tongue than I expected, because she’s only sixteen and still kisses in a sloppy, high school way.

Our lips pull apart and I look at her. The snow has continued to fall and melt and make her face wet. Her cheeks and nose are rosy from the cold and she seems to glow.

“Dylan, I...” She sighed, and tried again.

“Dylan, it’s over.”

Now she looks different, older. The baby fat in her cheeks has all but disappeared, leaving her face with a different shape than the one I remembered. But her smile was still the same.

“I love you.”

“I love you, too.”

Amanda rolled over and kissed my face. It had been two years since we had gone separate ways: school, travel, and spending time in other people’s beds. It had been two years since she left me and I left town; travelling and feeling sick over my loss. But something had happened. Something had changed in Amanda, and one day she showed up at my door and wound up in my bed.

“Dylan, I want to be with you. I love you. I’ve always loved you and Dylan, please, before you close the door, hear me out.”

Amazed, confused, and somewhat in shock, I did nothing.

“I want to live with you. I want you to love me. I want to run away with you and be happy forever.”

Well, no, she didn’t say that.. Here she was-wanting me, needing me. She could have said anything. And then we made love.

The next morning I awoke to Amanda’s white skin bathed in winter sunlight. The smell of vanilla and sex and freshly laundered cotton brought me back. I poked Amanda’s forehead and mussed up her hair. She was still asleep. She snorted at me. I got up and made coffee.

Amanda was the most beautiful girl I have ever met, but I couldn’t tell you why. She did have a great body; big lips, big hips-it had a shape, damn it. Anorexic thinness leaves you with sharp edges. No one wants that. It’s like making love with a coat hanger. Or so I’ve been told. But a warm body is a warm body; on those nights when you can’t sleep because your bed is empty, lonely, cold—on those nights you’ll do anything not to feel so desolate.

And when those nights are every night, it’s just too much; you go out and find another You.

Someone who is as sick as you are—you stroke egos and privy bits, but it’s phoney and meaningless. You close your eyes and think of something else until you come, and then you go. I won’t have to do that anymore, I thought.

I liked to kiss Amanda. Those lips—ah, those lips: big, soft and full. I dreamed about those lips. Kissing Amanda was the most beautiful thing I have ever done.

“What time is it?” Amanda yawned.

“Ten after nine.”

“Uugh. . .too early.”

“Get up, there’s coffee.”

“I don’t drink coffee”

“Well, you’re still young. There’s hope for you yet, kiddo.”

Amanda got up. Her hair was sticking out, one eye was still closed. She stuck her tongue out and made that groaning noise you make when you get up too early. She was wearing only my t-shirt, one she had given me back in high school. “Let’s go back to bed.” I said.

“I just got up.”

“But you’re so cute. I want to touch you.”

“I have morning breath. I’m gross.”

“I like it when you’re gross.” I said, and pushed her down on the comforter.

She smiled and put her arms around my neck. Twenty minutes later, we fell back to sleep.



Amanda Millard, 20 Nelson

When I opened my eyes, Amanda was awake and dressed. “I have to go.” she said. “I need to go home and shower before work.”

“You can shower here.”

“I need to get some clean clothes, too.”

“Fair enough” I said.

She turned towards the door. “The Duellists is on tonight at ten. Will you come over and watch it with me?”

“Sure.” I said

“I wouldn’t be leaving if I didn’t have to.”

“Go. Go to work. I need to write anyway.”

“I’ll see you at ten.”

“Bye.” I said, and closed the door behind her.

I walked over to the window and watched her come out the main entrance.

The world was finally starting to make sense.

*Brendan Burke, 19
Nelson*

Are you off line?
Check out your local public library or school for free or low-cost internet access

Thirsty for more? Get a great smoothie recipe on-line from Scratch

Scratch our on-line calendar for events near you. Add your event

Got an idea for the next issue? Let us know

Streeter

What do you think are the top jobs for young people in the Columbia Basin?

John Barnes
Urban renewal worker

- Movie industry
- Greenhouse operations (Cranbrook gets lots of sunlight!)
- Peer support worker for youth



Troy Hunter
Aboriginal support worker

- Outdoor adventure tourism guide
- Anything to do with arts and culture (be a musician, work in a gallery)



Herman Alpine
Ktuxana language teacher

- Resource management
- Teacher
- Youth councillor



Renting? Know This

When you rent a new place, you are signing a contract. You and your landlord are both legally bound by it, even if it's just a spoken agreement.

- Landlords have to keep your place in good shape.
- You have a right to privacy. Your landlord can only come into your home with proper notice and a good reason.
- Your landlord needs to have a good reason to kick you out. You have a right to fight the eviction.
- Tenants often have a hard time getting back security deposits. There are ways to protect yourself.

Tenant's Hotline: 1-800-665-1185

2001 Tenant Survival Guide, Tenant's Right Action Coalition

In Trouble?
Try the
Legal
Services
Society
of B.C.

www.vcn.bc.ca/lssbc/

Youth Links.

Youth Links.

Youth Links.

Looking for a great experience? Like to travel and meet new people? Read on.

Youth Links, funded by the Columbia Basin Trust, is for people 17 – 19. Applications are being accepted now and twenty participants will be chosen by late April.

The program begins with a few days of team-building at a remote lodge, then two teams travel around the Columbia Basin doing things such as helping with Streetfest in Nelson, building the Williamson Lake trail in Revelstoke, and creating a garden at Invermere's Cultural Centre. Projects for this season are being finalized now. When the travelling is done, the participants work on a Follow-Up project. Participants are paid \$100/week, plus a \$500 (completion) bonus and \$500 follow-up bonus.

Want more information on Youth Links? www.cbt.org/youth or youthlinks@earthmatters.ca or 354-7261.



It's more than just an experience...

What you don't see in the program description is the profound changes that occur in the 20 people and 4 coordinators who take part. Just ask Callie Chatten (17) from Winlaw, Mark Ballard (18) from Crescent Valley, or Alicia Gibson (19) from Revelstoke. All three stressed the positive change in their self-esteem as one of the big benefits of this summer adventure program that saw them hiking, touring dams and sharing tents. But that's not all. Callie says, "Because of Youth Links I gained a better sense of community and social, economic issues and conflicts." Since taking part in the program Callie has found herself creating new roles for herself in commu-

nity committees." It's a similar story for Alicia. "It helped me to sort out my thoughts so I can follow my passion instead of doing what everyone else wants me to do." Alicia felt she had many possible paths and her travels with Youth Links enabled her to see opportunities outside of Revelstoke. She hopes to enter a fashion design program in Vancouver.

Mark adds that Youth Links is made up of a diverse group of people and that there is a place for every one. What he discovered during Youth Links will no doubt influence his future – it already has. Being able to lead the garden crew in Invermere motivated him to spearhead the

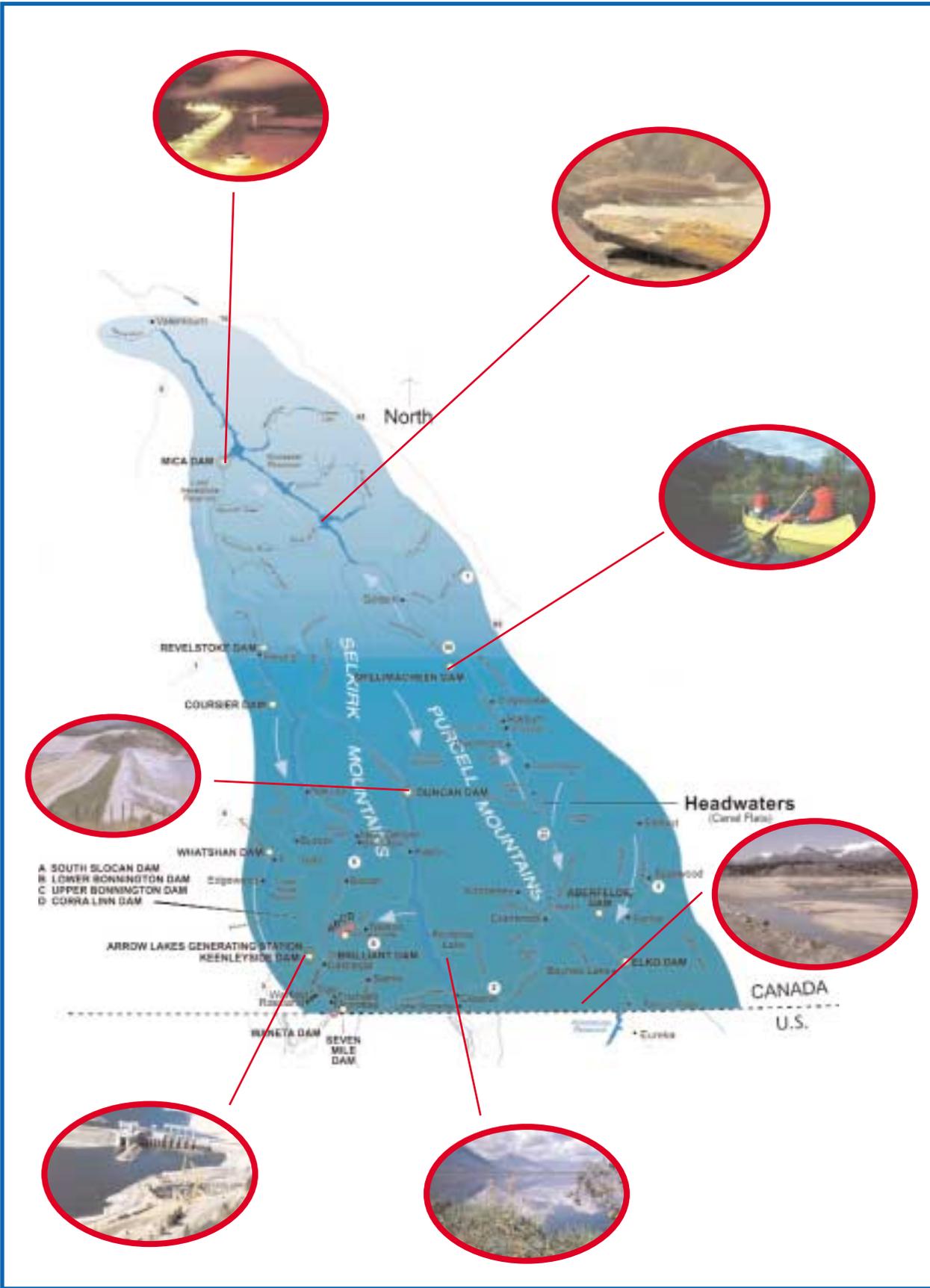
Shuzenji Garden in Nelson, which had seen no progress for more than four years. He and other Youth Linkers Liz Blakeway and Logan Hart have put in hundreds of volunteer hours on the garden.

For the twenty chosen each summer the benefits of this good-works-through-hard-labour program are many. For a summer holiday it sure makes a person grow.

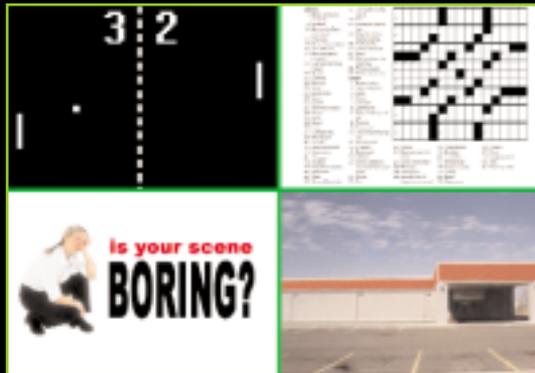
*Michelle Deanna Klassen, 27
Nelson*

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The Columbia Basin Trust is a regional organization that promotes social, environmental and economic well-being in the communities of the Canadian Columbia Basin.



got an idea to make it better?

funding available to support youth community projects

for more information, or to submit your ideas for a project that involves youth, ages 13-29, contact Columbia Basin Trust at:

1-800-505-8998

email: cbt@cbt.org <http://www.cbt.org>

Get Involved! Make a difference.

Being a part of 'the solution' can start locally. Young people throughout the Basin are doing it as we speak. From Rossland to Valemount, Nelson to Invermere (and most towns in between), Columbia Basin Trust Youth Committee members are hard at work. What are they doing? Putting your ideas into action. Monthly meetings across the Basin has given a better opportunity to discuss local and regional issues facing people our age. The Youth Committee's mandate is to encourage youth involvement and leadership in Basin communities. We are building a network of active youth around the region that works to address youth issues and create new opportunities for young people. New members are being sought now to begin in September 2002; don't miss your chance to have your voice heard and get active.

Andra Louie, 25
Youth Committee, Invermere

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ANYTHING ON THIS PAGE, OR TO GET CONNECTED TO A YOUTH COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE IN YOUR AREA, CONTACT STACY BARTER, CBT YOUTH COORDINATOR AT 1-800-505-8998, EMAIL SBARTER@CBT.ORG

Plugged In

The Interactive On-line Art Community and some links to share

If the internet has a spirit, and if that spirit hasn't been corrupted or rendered mute by corporate interests, is it to share information - generously, enthusiastically, relentlessly, like a benevolent info-commie on crack. It is in this spirit that I am going to share with you some of the best web resources for contributing, discussing, and processing work that I've found.

For writers, there is Moontown Cafe (www.moontowncafe.com), the ultimate web destination for writers in search of a creative community online. The bulk of the site is a huge forum segregated into several attractive and easily navigable, genre-specific message boards where thousands of users post their works of poetry and prose. Integral to the site is the system of rating, reviewing, and commenting that goes on in a continuous, thread-jostling bustle. If you've just completed a poem and want suggestions, praise, criticism, or wildly inaccurate interpretations of that brilliantly subtle metaphor you've come up with, Moontown is the most convenient resource out there.

Next to the music category. TOS - The Other Side BBS (www.theothersidebbs.com) is an entirely non-commercial website for musicians who work with MIDI (a file format that allows one to compose music using a computer and sequencing software). In addition to MIDI sequencing, TOS forums extend into the realm of audio editing, composing, and music in general. The meat of the site is the Monthly Midi Contest, a competition where anyone can enter their piece of digital music to be posted online, scored, and reviewed by judges. The

comments are the most interesting part of the process, and a vital source of feedback. Submissions are varied and encompass all genres, from techno, to classical. Sorry, no lucrative cash prizes for the winners, just prestige and a nifty animated GIF to put on your home page. All in all, a richly rewarding site, easily the best of its kind.

Then there is MP3.com which has become the premiere location to host music for people who prefer the MP3 audio format. Signing up with MP3.com is free and is a great way to make your music available for listening to as wide an audience as possible. MP3.com offers a range of features for maintaining a community and connecting musicians together including charts and various kinds of rankings, link pages, and streaming radio stations.

Now to the visual arts. For participants in the ever-growing field of 3D rendered images, there are "user galleries" like Digital Blasphemy's (www.digitalblasphemy.com/userg) which showcase the work of amateur artists and link to a ring of other galleries. For quick feedback and discussion, software specific message

boards like the Bryce Forum (forums.delphiforums.com/bryce) dedicated to 3D rendering programs like Bryce and Poser, are incredibly useful and enjoyable to become involved with.

For people who waste far too much time fiddling around in their "non-pirated" copies of Photoshop with creative image manipulation, forums like Fark (www.fark.com) and Something Awful (www.somethingawful.com) are terminal hangouts. The art of altering photos by changing the context and juxtaposition for the sake of surrealism, social commentary, and crude humour is exercised in crazy, and competitive threads.

For the filmmakers, there is IFilm (www.ifilm.com). Is this the MP3.com of the movie scene? Not quite, but close. It's not totally devoted to amateur content, but supports it. IFilm hosts thousands of user submitted clips, videos, animations, and shorts. Anyone can submit, but uploads are not accepted automatically. If your film is not accepted, you can pay to have it hosted.

This article is merely a rough guide. Do your own exploring and you'll surely unearth more links than I could review in a 20 volume tome. We're all a big, inbred, dysfunctional family here in the global slumtown, so we might as well do our part and share the info, the good, the bad, and the snuff, the wonderful snuff.

*Jonathan Deon, 20
Nelson*

Funky, edgy and informative is a way to describe the newly launched www.scratchonline.ca website for youth, aged 15-30 in the Columbia Basin. Scratchonline.ca is an interactive website that allows youth to voice their opinions, talk about Basin culture, share ideas, and connect with other youth in the Basin using an online message board. The website hosts an on line calendar where youth can post events. You can also post your artwork and writing and get published on-line! The site will also have links to employment opportunities, as well as links and information to youth resources and services the Basin. The website is also a way to provide updates on the work the Columbia Basin Trust Youth Committee is doing. As with most websites, scratchonline.ca will be constantly changing, so check back often for new info, or post your thoughts.

GOT A GREAT WEBSITE YOU WANT TO SHARE? POST IT ON THE SCRATCH MESSAGE BOARD.

COULD KIMBERLEY BECOME A GHOST TOWN?

POLITICS, GOLF COURSES AND MORE

Have you ever wondered what it's like to live in a small town? Well wonder no more! I will explain to you just what it is like to live in a small town like Kimberley, B.C.

Where is Kimberley? Kimberley is in the Kootenays of British Columbia. It is close to the U.S. border and right next to the Alberta border. The small Bavarian theme city is a charming neighbor to Cranbrook; in fact most Kimberley residents do the majority of their shopping in Cranbrook, since it is only a short drive away. Kimberley's main attraction would have to be the ski hill, Kimberley Alpine Resort, a beautiful and majestic ski resort. The Sullivan mine, which is now closed, has been the engine to the small city, and has powered it for over 100 years. Kimberley is a small town changing its industry.

One of the main advantages to living in a city like Kimberley is some of the fun that can be had here. Between the ski resort and the many snowmobiling trails that can be found for anything from cross-country skiing to snowmobiling and dirt biking, Kimberley can be a lot of fun for any season. With the many festivals and events the tourists always come. Many people make fun of this and downgrade the tourists for interrupting our peaceful little town. The truth is that tourists keep our town up and running, and now, more than ever we will rely on them because of the Sullivan mine closing down. For most people, all during school, they vow to leave Kimberley as soon as they can, and some do for a while. Most of them end up missing their parents, or something else about the small town. For some it's the powder snow for skiing, where for others it may be the many community events, but they almost always end up coming back. Although there are many good things about Kimberley, what is the reason so many young people want to leave? I do not know! Maybe there is something wrong with the city itself. One of the main problems is that there

is never any new developments going on that directly benefit the youthful population. For example, we have at least two golf courses in Kimberley, and there is now a new one being built, rather than an aquatic centre which would have been developed instead. I believe the reason for this is that the majority of the council members are old "golfers" and would rather personally see a golf course than an aquatic center.

In conclusion I would say that a few new facilities would do the town good to keep the younger generations

here. But I don't believe it will happen in the near future. Because of this I predict that there will be many people moving away. This cannot be good for our city. With the mine closing and the town going down this is the worst time this could possibly happen, and the council members should seriously re-evaluate their priorities. I don't want to see Kimberley turn into a ghost town.

*Kalen Dickey, 15
Marysville*



Adam Greenwood, 24 Nelson

OVERCOMING OUR "NOTHING TO DO" SYNDROME

Before I start off, I'm assuming that most of you reading this are actually interested in "doing stuff" (that's why you even picked up this magazine in the first place). So I'd suggest that you take a look at the following and remember it for your many conversations to come (and you can be sure they will come!).

I have heard a particular set of words strung together hundreds of times (no exaggeration). I suspect it is familiar to most of you. Maybe you've even been the one expressing such lament. It goes like this: "There's nothing to do around here!" In deed, doesn't it sound familiar? And in what context would this be uttered? To justify getting stoned or drunk every weekend, as an excuse for just "hanging around" outside the convenience store,

one's plea to the correctional officer after being caught for the nth time... Yep, great for just about anything. Except there lies a problem: is there really nothing to do????

"It's such a small, go-nowhere town, no arcades, no discos, no all-nighters, none of the stuff you'd find in a big city." O.K. So it seems that many Basin youth are feeling that our area doesn't offer the huge variety of activities they feel would "give them something to do". If this were the case, we should expect to find that youth in L.A, Montreal, or Vancouver would not be suffering from such an ailment of boredom. We should find that if the real reason for hot-boxing cars and slurping hard lemonade is lack of activities, then in the city which offers all these things, youth wouldn't be so involved in the above. But guess what? Same story there too. Yes, I've actually spoken with youth from Vancouver, Montreal, L.A, and they are very familiar with this "nothing to do" affliction. So the answer does not appear to lie in city life versus country life.

A question for you: Could you grab your mountain bike and take off exploring from your apartment in downtown Vancouver? Could you pack your skis, drive an hour from your home in L.A and end up at an amazing ski resort? Could you go hiking in the backyard of your Montreal residence? Catch my drift? One's whole concept of activities shouldn't be limited by city ideas.

We're not in a city! Stop wishing we were in one! Think of the awesome stuff we can do out here in this gorgeous back country: swimming, tubing, water skiing, dirt biking, snowboarding, snow shoeing...why do you think city-dwellers like to escape to the country for their holidays? Why does our region get so many tourists from all over the world? Why are so many city youth amazed at our freedom and space? Certainly not because we offer "nothing to do".

Our Nintendo generation is so caught up with instant satisfaction that we've forgotten that we even have a sense of creativity, adventure and innovation. (That's right, it's not just those computer game manufactures that come up with good stuff). Instant food (drive-throughs sprouting up everywhere), instant entertainment (just select your player and press GO), instant cash...yep, we are not used to planning anything for ourselves anymore, never mind actually accomplishing whatever it was. What's wrong with us????

Let's stop blaming our boredom on our environment. If anything, our amazing surroundings provides endless opportunity for hard-core adventurous weekends. We just have to overcome our apathy, for this (or laziness to be precise) is the true culprit of our collective youth illness.

*Stephanie Lepsoe, 19
Castlegar*



Adam Greenwood, 24 Nelson

Heads Up! A toque says a lot

It's more than just a brain warmer

Every day billions of people milling around on a little floating rock make decisions. These decisions affect not only their lives, but also the lives of those around them. To live with your own decisions requires responsibility, and to live with those of others requires tolerance. One look at the evening news shows us that tolerance is in short supply now, and it seems the little that is about is not being applied as it should. For proof, I give you the inexplicable popularity of microwave bacon, poutine, and Enrique Iglesias. Of course, not all pop culture disasters have had the benefit of consumer patience, Pauly Shore and Crystal Pepsi sharing a nice hot rock in hell being all the proof I need of that. However, one fad that should be sharing a neighbouring rock but lives on is the blatant misuse of the toque.

For the uninitiated, catastrophically stupid, or American, a toque is a knit cap good Canadians wear upon their head when it is cold, and only then. The name "toque" itself is Native Canadian in origin, meaning literally "My frozen ears seem to have fallen off, could you pick them up, please," cementing its place in the drawers of winter ware. My concern is that when citizens of the world began to wear the toque during the summer months, it was accepted. They were not laughed at or violently assaulted; they were simply left alone. First popularized by naturalists, the fad spread up the social ladder to crackheads and other substance abusers, and then invaded the "gangsta" scene.

The fad has now reached such a point of saturation that good Canadians who are honestly, truly cold, cannot walk down a street in their woolen finery without fear of derision. Not two weeks ago, I was walking down the boulevard in my small mountain community, wearing a toque, where I received, at the least, four headwear related barbs from passing fashion critics in as many minutes. To answer the question before it's asked, my headwear is not overtly goofy, being of a plain black with no design, pattern, or God forbid,

pop culture saying. This crass debasement of our beloved wooly friend is a sad reminder of what misplaced tolerance has done to our society. Had the hippies been forced to remove their toques, wash their hair and get real jobs, we good, law-abiding citizens would be able to stay warm without recourse.

I can't do much about buses blowing up in far away lands, and I can't do much about small-minded people hating what they don't understand. I can, however, continue the fine Canadian tradition of donning a ridiculously fuzzy piece of headwear exclusively in subzero temperatures, flying in the face of ignorance. I can also hope that when the world's tolerance for stupidity runs its course, the connoisseurs of taste who mock our headgear are enjoying the public transit of far away lands. Tell them to say hi to Pauly for me.

*Brennan Storr, 29
Revelstoke*



toque donated by Julian Peters, 30. Nelson

The Empowering F-Word

Based on the title, you're probably wondering how a four-letter word that rhymes with hockey puck could be empowering. Even though that four-letter word can feel pretty good when you're really angry and need to let off some steam, this word doesn't seem so empowering. That's because I'm not talking about a four-letter word that rhymes with hockey puck. Rather, I'm talking about an f-word that can be just as taboo these days. Feminism.

Many young women today refuse to align themselves with feminism and what they perceive it as. They assert they are not man-haters, that they feel equal, and that they can do whatever they want. They read about rabid feminists in the mainstream news and magazines, and don't identify with the mainstream media's definition of feminism. I wouldn't either.

However, the mainstream media's definition isn't true. Feminists do not hate men, women do not have equal social status with men, and women cannot do whatever they want. Feminism is not about getting rid of men or making women superior to men. Feminism is not about women taking over.

Feminism is a movement about identifying the social struc-

tures that define men superior to women, dismantling them, then building a society based on equality of all people. Feminism is about women stepping out of traditional ideas about femininity and asserting their humanity.

Feminism is about women developing their inner-strength and working together to overcome oppression, inequality and subjugation.

Feminism is about women empowering themselves by creating social change.

We live in a society where women still only make 75% of what men do; women are still the primary domestic labourers; and women are victims of domestic violence 95% of the time. Women cannot do whatever they want because rape, barriers in the workforce, and sexist social attitudes continue. It sounds bleak. But take into consideration that more men are primary domestic labourers than 10 years ago: 20% of two-parent families. More women are finding success in jobs that used to only be available to men; women Members of Parliament are such examples. More women are asserting their sexuality, learning self-defense and

refusing to let rape make them a victim. Not so bleak when you account for the many strides women and society have made. The initiator behind such social changes: feminism.

Feminism has challenged the traditional sexist image of women and allowed women to find positive self-images. Feminism provides women with a self-concept that defies the Britney Spears/Marilyn Monroe/Pamela Anderson ideal. Feminism is the idea that women are not commodities, objects, subjects or property, but that women are human beings with a beautiful diversity of ages, shapes, sizes, colours, cultures, sexualities, abilities, and lives.

The women's movement has created much change, and things are still changing, and many things need to be changed. Women can be a part of change and can make change possible so that human beings realize equality of respect, social status, opportunity, and access to community participation. Learning that you can make a better future for our daughters changes the way you see yourself in your community and what you can do for your community. Creating social and/or individual change is empowering. Feminism is about positive change within our society and ourselves. Feminism is about women's empowerment.

No four-letter words here.

*Michelle Mungall, 24
Nelson*

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