Mock Trial fails to disappoint, again

TRAVIS WEAHANT
Editor-in-Chief

ON FEBRUARY 12 and 13, some of the most committed Ozzies around put their talents together and put on a spectacular revue of the best legal humour in North York. This Editor attended the Thursday night performance, which is typically the rowdier event. The packed Moot Court room did not disappoint. Business Manager and performer Brendan Monahan reported before the show that there were no tickets left for sale, and the atmosphere in the room was one of a happy crowd.

The truth is that Mock Trial is not just a variety show; it’s one of the biggest Osgoode parties of the year. Second only to the week-long Orientation Week extravaganza and rivalled only by the Wendy Babcock Drag Show, Thursday night at Mock Trial is a hazy night of heckling and laughter. The festive mood often leads Obiter staff to trek down to the fridge in the office at intermission and return bearing gifts. Nonetheless, having volunteered to write this article, I promised myself before the show that I would try to remember the second act this year. Success was mixed. This is what I know:

1. Musical direction was stellar.
There is always vocal talent lurking in Osgoode Hall, and it came out to play at Mock Trial. Rosalind Ballanger, Joseph Cuyegkeng, Mitchell Rattner, and Hartlee Zucker obviously put in the hours necessary to give the performances something extra. The mere presence of harmonies on stage is a cut above in the world of law school variety shows. Rattner himself had an excellent turn as a sort of lawyer-Tevye in the second act opener “Tuition” (to the tune of “Tradition” from Fiddler on the Roof). The song lends itself to an ensemble performance, and the Singing Directors took full advantage. My congratulations. Congratulations are also due in particular to Busayo Ayodele, who waltzed out at the end of Act One and effortlessly (or at least it seemed that way) threw down several strong choruses of “Grades Fall” (to the tune of Adele’s James Bond theme “Skyfall”). WAY to go.

2. So was choreography.
You all know of what I speak. Tantalizing and mesmerizing, the Mance is a Mock Trial fixture that earns its revered status time and time again. I will not demean the performance by singling out any of the fine gentleman entertainers – they danced as one. For every second of Christina Aguilera et al’s cover of Labelle’s “Lady Marmalade”, I sat, humbled, before these giants of glitter, these superheroes in suspenders, these Mancers.

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The bigger they are, the harder they fall

THERE HAS been a lot of ink spilled over the fresh demise of Heenan Blaikie LLP. The legal landscape of downtown Toronto has been recently altered, as a well-known and prestigious mid-size firm unraveled before our very eyes. Every agonizing blow narrated, almost in real-time, by newspapers and legal blogs across Canada.

For many of us in law school, this is the first time that we have borne witness to such an implosion. For many of us, Bay Street firms are monolithic surveyors of the downtown core; steadfast and unwavering they stand guard on the Toronto grid. There is an understanding, a presumption even, that although the legal landscape will be fine tuned here and there, the main players will always be there. They will always get the big clients and have an OCI booth when the fall rolls around.

There are changes of course: a big partner makes a newsworthy move; the names on the doors occasionally vary through the addition of a well-known surname, and sometimes big firms get bigger (read: Canadian law firm Fraser Milner Casgrain LLP merged with two international law firms, Salans LLP and SNR Denton, to create Dentons in March 2013). However, the seemingly self-destructive collapse of Heenan Blaikie, the biggest firm to do so in Toronto, is rather unique and rather sad. The rapidity of it all left many in the legal field incredulous and confused, with many questions left unanswered.

Is there a lesson here? Is the search for career security futile? Is law really just politics with a few more books? The fall of one firm cannot begin to provide the answers to these questions, but it does provide reason to pause and reflect. The dissolution of Heenan Blaikie will not markedly change what it means to be a Bay Street lawyer and it will not change Bay Street. Rest assured, there are still many firms, bigger and smaller, out there who are still hiring, who will still practice in the same way they always have, and whose largest concern at the moment is who to poach and who to pull from the wreckage.

Lesson: Life goes on, with or without you (or Heenan Blaikie). This month’s current events should suggest to us that you, they, the legal industry, Bay Street, and Toronto, are not untouchable. No one is outside or above politics, change, trends, (dis)loyalty, and competition. It is incredibly dangerous to ever get lulled into a false sense of security, or worse yet, complacency. Many lawyers who were part of the great exodus of February 2014 remarked that in fact, things were good, things were turning around, and there was a general sense of optimism in the air. Overall, the firm was very profitable; this was not your typical business breakdown story of bankruptcy, fraud, and missing funds. yet, within a month, sweeping departures of senior and mid-level partners from various outposts hit the firm hard. Blow by blow, it all came tumbling down at an alarming speed, and under very unceremonious circumstances, a partner’s meeting was held, and it was over as soon as it had begun.

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Michael Mandel

DEAR EDITORS,

I recently became aware of the passing late last year of former Osgoode Hall Law School professor Michael Mandel. Many of the hagiographic obituaries, such as that in the Canadian Lawyer Magazine, portrayed one element of his impact on legal education at Canada’s largest law school.

I attended Osgoode in the mid-1980s and had a different perspective on the quality of education offered by professor Mandel and other members of the staff. After having studied political philosophy at the undergraduate level where left-wing ideology was always in fashion, I was happy to be able to go to Osgoode where I expected and hoped to acquire a solid grounding in the technicalities of law and prepare for a career providing expert advice. It did not take long before I succumbed to the disappointing realization that a number of professors at Osgoode at the time were more obsessed with the promotion of their own extreme left-wing views and impregnating students with the seeds of their own cynicism against “the system”. Not only were they not focusing on law, but the public policy discussion in class was excessively loaded with irrelevant and anachronistic Marxist rhetoric. While universities should promote intellectual inquiry and critical thinking, some of this stuff was simply embarrassing and inappropriate in any serious institution of higher learning.

In my labour law class I remember professor Harry Glasbeek responding to a question by suggesting that the only way to improve employer-employee relations was to have a revolution and abolish private property. When I pointed out that this had been tried in places like Russia with no clear improvement in the plight of the working class, the professor replied that “real communism” has not yet been attempted. What about the use of martial law to squash the Solidarity Trade Union in Poland? Again, that was not “real communism”.

In criminal procedure class professor Alan Young repeatedly told the students that the greatest threat to our civil liberties was the police and CSIS. He entertained the class once by playing a punk rock song and distributing the lyrics, which included a passage about confessions made under duress. I wondered how much this would have made Andrey Vyshinsky convulse in fits of laughter.

In first year civil procedure Professor Alan Hutchinson peppered his class with denunciations of the legal system using different words under the umbrella of the “critical” school of thought. It did not take long to figure him out. On the exam at the end of term I showed as much communist propaganda about the bourgeois oppression of the proletariat into my answers as I could within the time allotted (my previous degree in political philosophy and visits behind the iron curtain came in handy). I was so grateful that the exam writers were only identified through anonymous numbers. When I thanked Professor Hutchinson for the “A” that he gave me as my course grade, his jaw dropped and he said “If I had known it was you, I would not have given it to you”.

I disliked many of these teachers for spoiling my law school experience with their own personal political agendas and wasting precious time. However, the question that bugged me the most was “who hired these guys?” It seemed to me that they would be more appropriately giving lectures at the Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow. In my third year of law school a new Dean was appointed and I asked for a short meeting. In his office I told him that I had a suggestion for improving the quality of teaching at Osgoode. “What is it?” he asked. “Fire half the faculty,” I told him. He quickly showed me to the door. I was thinking about writing an article about the degeneration at Osgoode, but subsequently read William F. Buckley’s God and Man at Yale and realized that the same tragic phenomenon of the quality of university education going down the drain had already been brilliantly described decades earlier.

However, my favourite memory of Professor Mandel was when he invited another left-wing activist lawyer by the name of Harry Kopyto, to come to the law school and give a talk about the difficulty of practicing law “in a conservative society”. Professor Hutchinson cancelled a class so that we could all attend and have the principles of his doctrine reinforced. Professor Mandel gave Mr. Kopyto a glowing introduction. Mr. Kopyto’s speech included a discussion of his pride of representing communists in quarrels with the RCMP Security Service and his claims that the courts and the cops were stuck together “like crazy glue”. Notwithstanding his initial claim to wanting to dialogue with students, my question about how did he resolve the conundrum of using liberal democratic institutions to protect totalitarianists who would destroy them (and him) if they came to power, was summarily dismissed. A few years later, Mr. Kopyto was disbarred for overcharging the legal aid system. Apparently, he charged for more than 24 hours of labour in a day. The difficulty of working in a conservative society, indeed. With the passage of time a new generation of professors will take over the teaching duties at Osgoode. I wish future students good luck!

ANDREW KAVCHAK
Osgoode (’85-’86)

Concerns about racial profiling at Osgoode

DEAR OBITER:

In November 2013, a Black female law student at Osgoode Hall Law School was racially profiled while studying in the Osgoode Hall Library. The student was asked by an Osgoode staff person to provide identification because “she did not look like an Osgoode student.”

The Black Law Students Association (BLSA) at Osgoode is deeply concerned about incidents of racial profiling and discrimination that affect the quality of education and success of Black law students. Students are entitled to feel safe in their university, and racial profiling produces the exact opposite effects: exclusion, victimization and demoralization. No student, much less students who have historically been precluded from attending law school in Canada, ought to be singled-out and asked to prove his/her right to occupy these spaces. It is admirable that Osgoode has taken an interest in changing the composition of the students in our hallways. Unfortunately, Black law students continue to experience racial profiling at Osgoode, sometimes even at the hands of our administration. BLSA is aware of racial profiling incidents occurring in the 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 academic years, and it is our position that such incidents constitute institutional racism.

Osgoode’s administration has been quick to provide an individual response to the student but slow to act on addressing institutional racism. We hope that BLSA’s efforts to address racial profiling at our General Meeting on January 20, 2014 will encourage the reexamination of Osgoode’s complicity in systemic racism. As we move forward, BLSA aims to continue these conversations to hold our law school accountable to its students, the broader legal community, and principles of justice.

BLSA Executive 2013-14

DEAR OBITER:

The incident which is the catalyst for the BLSA Informational Statement on Racial Profiling is deeply troubling, and at least one of the earlier incidents referred to led to an institutional dialogue with York Security and we continue to review our applicable policies and practices. Each incident may have features that are distinct to its context which require specific responses (for example, the heightened focus on student identification when the library policy of restricted access to study space during exams is in effect may call for specific guidelines for that policy).

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Monday, February 24, 2014
Labour Minister gives special lecture at Osgoode

CITLALLY MACIEL
News Editor

LAST FEBRUARY 11, Ontario’s Minister of Labour, the Honourable Yasir Naqvi attended Osgoode to give a special lecture on “Employment Law, Politics, and the Stronger Workplaces for a Stronger Economy Act”. As it turns out, the day before, the Obiter received an unexpected email with an invitation from the Minister’s Director of Communications to interview the Minister after the lecture. I accepted, of course. The perks of being Obiter Dicta’s News Editor!

Minister Naqvi completed an LLB at the Faculty of Law at the University of Ottawa. Although a proud alumnus of the said university, he began his lecture by confessing that Osgoode rejected his application three times. “I can tell you that you are far smarter than I am,” the Minister said without a hint of jealousy or regret. Indeed, after he finished law school, Ottawa became the Minister’s permanent home. He has now been representing the riding of Ottawa Centre for the past six years, and the lecture marked a one-year tenure as Minister.

Within the past year, the Ministry of Labour has implemented a number of policy changes, including the recent increase to the minimum wage. Someone once said that the first step toward change is awareness, and this is advice that the Minister seems to have taken seriously. Indeed, many of the new policies and initiatives have resulted from consultation with different stakeholders.

In regards to health and safety, the aim is to transform the approach from reactive to a more proactive and preventive one. Most of the accidents and fatalities that take place in the workplace are preventable. In order to change the approach then, different concerned groups are being included in the conversation about prevention. Accordingly, Ontario is the first Canadian province to have, as of July 2014, mandatory training for all workers and supervisors that aims at giving them a basic understanding of their rights (i.e. the right to refuse unsafe work, ask questions, etc.).

The next step is to take this program beyond the workplace and into classrooms (and other related places) so that when students get their first summer job, they are aware of their rights and are not exposed to unsafe workplace conditions. The toughest part of his job, the Minister said, is to read the emails he gets every time the Ministry’s investigators are dispatched to investigate workplace accidents. As the Minister put it, “when people go to work in the morning, we need to make sure that at the end of their shifts, they go home safe.”

The lecture did not go on without some tough questions and critical comments. In particular, it was noted that the changes taking place in regards to health and safety, do not include a focus on harassment or, in general, the respect of human rights. The issue, the Minister said, is the definition of health and safety; and although this definition is expanding, there has not been a lot of attention paid to mental health. The topic has been slowly incorporated to the basic training program. In addition, a report is soon coming out on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in the workplace, specifically among first responders. There is not a lot of information on the impact and prevalence of the disorder in the workplace. So the report is expected to shed some light on the issue and lead to important changes.

Another two important changes include the increase in the minimum wage and Bill 146. Consistent with the theme of wide-range consultation, changes regarding the minimum wage came from the input of a multifarious panel composed of participants such as students and members of a poverty group, tourism and retail industries. An interesting aspect of the minimum wage reform is that it “takes the whole notion of determining minimum wage out of politicians’ hands” which, like the Minister put it, “is a very anti-politician thing to say.” Indeed, the recommendations of the panel include that the rate be revised every year and adjusted according to changes in the Consumer Price Index.

In terms of Bill 146, there are four big areas in which changes are being implemented. The Bill is a response to the recommendations made by the Law Commission of Ontario in respect to changes to the Employment Standards Act. One change concerns the issue of unpaid wages. Previously, a worker could only bring a claim to the Ministry for up to $10,000 within six months. This is now being changed so that there is no limit in the claim amount, and the limitation period is being increased to two years. This is in an effort to make recovery of wages easier and more economical for employees. Second, joint and several liability is being introduced among temporary help agencies and their clients for both unpaid wages and WSIB compensation. A third change is increased protection for foreign national workers under the temporary foreign workers program, especially when it comes to live-in caregivers. Finally, the last change concerns internships. Although internships and co-ops are included in the Employment Standards Act, they are not covered by the Ontario Health and Safety Act. This is because the definition of employee does not cover these individuals. Accordingly, the definition will be repealed and replaced.

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Russian government considering extermination of stray Olympians

Evan Ivkovic
Staff Writer

The Winter Olympics in Sochi have produced some memorable moments thus far, including the release of photos revealing the construction of side-by-side toilets, complaints of poorly designed courses, Russian cronysm inflating the cost of the games, back room dealings amongst figure skating judges, and reports of the comically small beds being slept on by the respective men’s hockey teams. But once the games are over, the Russian government has to deal with an impending problem: what will it do with all the stray Olympians? Unless the issue resolves itself, Russia says it might exterminate them.

Public reaction to the possibility of Russia exterminating stray Olympians has been largely muted and apathetic in character. However, one charity organization, Adopt-An-Olympian, has been strongly opposing the decision to exterminate. Jamie Greenwich, president of Adopt-An-Olympian, has been running his charity organization for the past 20 years, finding homes for over 1000 stray Olympians thus far. Jamie Greenwich also said, “It’s unfortunate that it happens after every Olympics. Once the games are over, people realize how useless it is to sponsor a professional athlete in an esoteric sport such as the always hilarious two-man luge. And once people realize that, they sort of just leave the athletes behind. But at Adopt-An-Olympian, we make sure we find homes for as many stray Olympians as we can, while also trying to find the best match between them and their adoptive parents. In fact, I adopted a Chinese gymnast from the last Olympics, and I even got her an adorable Olympian-house in the backyard for her to sleep in. Not only have I saved the life of a stray Olympian, but I’ve also been richly rewarded myself.”

I attempted to approach Putin for a comment. After nervously waiting for him in his office as angry Russian men continually leered at me, Putin gloriously rode his steed into the room while wearing the pelt of a bear he recently killed, caressing two naked blonde women and being shirtless. With my knees trembling in the presence of his magnificence, I asked Putin about Russia’s plan to exterminate stray Olympians. As his lips began to move, I fainted. After waking from my comatose state 5 days later, I managed to successfully ask the same question to Putin without passing out. Putin said, “Listen, it is like, what you say, troublesome situation. We are dealing with it in best way we can. And to Russians, best way involves guns. Lots of guns.”

The situation involving Gus Kensworthy poses unique problems for Putin and the Russian government, as well. Kensworthy has delayed his flight back to the United States in order to resolve issues involving his adoption of stray Sochi puppies, many of which have already been exterminated in brutal and horrifying ways. But in case the world-beating efficiency of Russian bureaucracy is not timely enough, Russia may have a stray Gus Kensworthy problem on its hands. After slamming back a shot of vodka, Putin described extermination as the solution: “It’s like killing two birds with one stone. Or as we say in Russia, four puppies and an American with one AK-47.”

Nevertheless, Russia is not without opposition. Half-hearted disagreement by the general populace threatens to annoy the Russian government enough to not bother actually doing anything. For those of us with a soft spot for Olympians without a family or home, that may be our only hope.

The 2014 Dean For A Day Contest
TRADE PLACES WITH THE DEAN AND RULE OSGOODE FOR A DAY!

Dean Lorne Sossin is offering one lucky student the opportunity to set forth his or her vision of the future of Osgoode Hall Law School and an entire day to make it a reality.

Continuing a tradition that was originally established by former Dean Harry Arthurs, the winning student will assume direction of the Law School for one day. He or she will be able to:
- Occupy the Dean’s office
- Chair meetings of the Law School’s senior administration
- Enjoy a free lunch with a guest
- Contribute a video to the Osgoode History Project
- See Hedley on Thursday, March 27 at the Air Canada Centre with a friend

Meanwhile, Dean Sossin will go back to school, attending the student’s classes for that day, armed with numerous multi-coloured highlighters, sticky notes and his trusty iPad for taking copious notes.

CONTEST RULES:
- All Osgoode students are free to enter.
- Contestants are required to submit a short essay (maximum 500 words) or video, setting out what they would do if they were appointed Dean of Osgoode Hall Law School for the next five years.
- Essays or videos must be submitted to Virginia Corner in IKB 1016-B or by e-mail to vcorner@osgoode.yorku.ca no later than noon on Thursday, February 27.
- All submissions will be reviewed by Associate Dean Poonam Puri and Assistant Dean Mya Bulwa who will select the winning entry. The name of the winner will be announced on Friday, February 28 and the winning essay will be published in Obiter Dicta.
- The winner will serve as Dean for a Day on Thursday, March 6.

Win a pair of tickets to see Hedley
Air Canada Centre, Thursday, March 27

Monday, February 24, 2014
The CSR research pilot program: fostering sustainability through collaboration

OSGOODe SOCIETY FOR CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND OSGOODE SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

The CSR Research Pilot Program looks at various areas of “soft law” or voluntary regulations, such as the United Nations’ Principles of Responsible Investment or the Carbon Disclosure Project. Students will be interviewing leading institutions from around the world to better understand how these voluntary regulations are put in place and the success rates thus far.

While the subject matter of the research is fascinating, the collaborative structure makes the initiative a model in inter-club and inter-university collaboration. The idea to investigate this partnership developed into the current pilot project, allowing students to assist in primary research about the use of the Principles for Responsible Investing at top institutions.

The CSR Research Pilot Program is currently underway with a team of 20 determined Osgoode students. The data collection phase will take place over February and March 2014. Then the Research will be made public.

Longer term and separate from the direct research with UoT, the OSCG and the Sustainability Committee are interested in exploring the feasibility of using responsible investing practices here at York. In keeping with the trend of other Canadian universities, such as Carleton’s “Responsible Investing Initiative” and the University of Ottawa’s signing of the Principles for Responsible Investing, York University’s Pension Plan could also consider ESG factors when investing. At this advocacy stage, the Sustainability Committee will take an even more prominent role, drawing on its past experience and success in implementing green initiatives (such as spearheading the “Lug-A-Mug” campaign and bringing back fair trade coffee to the bistro to name just a few!).

We invite students to keep apprised of the CSR Research Pilot Program and related responsible investing activities as they evolve over the coming year. We hope we can count on your support to make sure your tuition dollars are going to make the world a better place.

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The Obiter Dicta
**Dress For Success Clothing Drive**

CALLING ALL students, faculty, and staff!

Over Reading Week, take a quick visit to your closet, a parent’s closet, a grandparent’s closet, to consider... is there any professional attire in here that is no longer being worn?

If so, the Osgoode Women’s Network (OWN) wants to help you find the perfect place to donate your gently used clothing. Dress for Success (DFS) is an international non-profit started in New York City in 1997, dedicated to improving the lives of women in our community. The organization “promotes the economic independence of disadvantaged women by providing professional attire, a network of support and the career development tools to help women thrive in work and in life.” OWN will be holding a clothing drive at Osgoode to aid DFS in achieving this goal.

Some interesting facts about DFS: visit http://www.dressforsuccess.org to learn more!

The first time a client visits the organization, DFS provides the individual with a suit (and accessories if available) appropriate for the interview she is attending. Upon securing employment, this client can return back to DFS to create several different outfits establishing the basis for a professional wardrobe.

The Professional Women’s Group (PWG) program provides clients with ongoing support beginning with the transition into the working world, continuing throughout her career.

Dress for Success offers a Career Centre, helping women build professionalism and confidence, while also developing technology skills for job searches.

From the week of February 24 to 28, 2014, please bring in items for collection. DFS accepts clean & ready-to-wear, new and gently-used, women’s and men’s professional attire of all sizes including:

- Modern two-piece suits
- Blazers
- Dress pants
- Skirts
- Dresses
- Dress shirts and blouses
- Cardigans
- Purses
- Accessories: jewelry, belts and ties
- Professional outerwear: coats, scarves, and gloves
- Dress shoes & boots
- New (unopened) toiletries, hygiene & grooming products
- New (unopened) hosiery & undergarments

Greatest Needs are for:
- Women’s clothing in size 0-2 and 14+
- Women’s shoe sizes 4.5-6 and 10+
- Purses
- Men’s small and regular two-piece suits sizes 36, 38 & 40
- Men’s dress shoes

The collection bin will be located in Gowlings Hall. Thank you for your support in advance. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us at ownlaw@gmail.com. Remember to search your closet during Reading Week!

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**Want to teach in China?**

INTERESTED IN combining a challenging job with travel in a fascinating foreign country? Why not follow in the footsteps of other Osgoode graduates who have taught law and legal English at the Southwest University of Political Science and Law in the city of Chongqing, located in the province of Sichuan, Peoples Republic of China?

For the past twelve years, Osgoode has sent between one and three graduates to teach in this program. The lucky few who are hired leave Canada near the end of August and return the following year at the end of June, unless, of course, they decide to spend some time traveling in Asia before returning. The Southwest University pays roundtrip air travel costs to Chongqing and back to Canada.

The monthly wage is the highest standard for foreign experts teaching law courses at Southwestern University, (5000 Yuan approximately $900.00 CD$). This is high by Chinese standards and more than sufficient to cover living costs in China, although it does not, of course, compare to “Bay Street” salaries. In addition, an extra month of salary is paid in January to enable the visiting teacher to travel in China or elsewhere during the month-long Chinese New Year holiday period between the two semesters. An up-scale rent-free apartment within 10 minutes walking distance from the “new campus” is also provided. Meals in a foreign visitor’s dining room are subsidized, but one may always shop in local stores and markets and cook for oneself.

Graduates who have taught in China all espouse that the experience is a rewarding and enriching one. Many take the opportunity to enroll in Mandarin courses while there, although a facility in Mandarin is not necessary for the position, since teaching is conducted in English.

Previous Osgoode graduates taught graduate seminars on topics such as International Business Transactions, Comparative Law, WTO and International Disputes Resolution, as well as Legal English. Osgoode teachers are treated as “law faculty” and can participate in the research and teaching activities of Southwest University. There may also be opportunities to participate in other activities inside and outside Southwest University.

We expect to send two graduates this year in August.

So if you are looking for a change of scenery or the stimulus of living in a rich and ancient foreign culture, why not consider teaching in China? All you need to do is to submit (a) a current resume, (b) one copy of your law school and undergraduate transcripts, and (c) a cover letter addressed to Professor Jinyan Li. In your cover letter, explain your interest in teaching in China and highlight any experiences or qualifications that are particularly relevant. You can leave your application with Angela Monardo (4th floor – 4050 b). The deadline for receipt of applications is Monday, March 3, 2014. Applicants will be contacted for interviews by email the week of March 10th. For further information about the SUPSL, please visit their website at www.swupl.edu.cn.
The Osgoode Society for Corporate Governance tours the OSC

MICHAEL CAPITANO
Staff Writer

IN CASE you missed it, on Friday, January 31, the Osgoode Society for Corporate Governance (OSCG) organized a tour for Osgoode students to the Ontario Securities Commission (OSC). As the first tour of its kind, it was a unique opportunity to learn about the work of the OSC and potential career opportunities.

Located conveniently beside the Eaton’s Centre, the OSC is Ontario’s main regulatory body on securities law, provides investor protection from fraudulent practices and seeks to foster confidence in the capital markets. With a diverse range of practice areas, from securities litigation to policy development, the OSC is an interesting place to start your law career as an alternative to a firm.

The tour began with an introduction and overview of the OSC. The OSC itself is responsible and accountable for protecting the public interest and according itself with good governance practices. To do so, it utilizes a host of committees to ensure the integrity of the commission and that risks are properly managed. The OSC also discussed its policy-making function and the challenges it faces managing the multiple roles of its members.

The day then transitioned into talks on corporate governance. In particular, the presentation focused on a proposed OSC amendment to National Instrument 58-101 Disclosure of Corporate Governance Practices, regarding representation of women on boards and in senior management. The presenters highlighted the government’s support for broader gender diversity on boards and senior management of business. Public roundtables and other consultations have been conducted. The general objective to encourage more effective boards, better corporate decision making by requiring greater transparency for stakeholders regarding the representation of women on boards and senior management of reporting issuers. The proposed amendment focuses on corporate governance disclosure requirements for companies on the issue.

The day ended with a networking lunch, giving attendees the chance to mingle with members of the OSC.

If you want more information about the OSC, please visit their website at www.osc.gov.on.ca.

For more information about the OSCG, our cool initiatives, and what we’re all about, visit our website at www.oscg.ca or contact us at oscg@osgoode.yorku.ca.

MICHAEL CAPITANO
Staff Writer

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ATJ working groups release final reports

JESSE COHEN
Contributor

EIGHT YEARS AGO, our Chief Justice, the Right Honourable Beverly McLachlin, called on Canadians to improve access to justice in Canada, or continue the slow but unacceptable march towards legal inequality – for as she has so rightly repeated in her ensuing campaign, “there is no justice without access to justice.”

Two years later, in 2008, Justice McLachlin made access to justice a national priority, the Action Committee on Access to Justice in Civil and Family Matters was formed under the leadership of Justice Thomas A. Cromwell. Composed of a cross-section of Canada’s foremost leaders in civil and family justice as well as public representatives, the Action Committee was tasked with developing consensus priorities for national and local reform.

Over time, four distinct themes, which became four working groups, emerged in the Committee: court process simplification; legal services; prevention, triage, and referral; and family justice.

This past year, the Action Committee and each of the working groups released their final reports. Drawing these reports together, the Action Committee released its final report “A Roadmap for Change” in October. The final report identifies the need for change, establishes guiding principles, and develops a set of goals – A Nine-Point Access to Justice Roadmap to help improve access to justice in Canada (visit www.cfcj-fcjc.org/collaborations for the report). Years of research and deliberation culminated in a comprehensive response to the Chief Justice’s challenge. But the work had just begun.

On January 27-28, eight Osgoode students volunteered as note-takers at the Action Committee Colloquium, hosted by the Canadian Forum on Civil Justice (the CFCJ) and Osgoode Professional Development. The purpose of the Colloquium was to gather together a wide variety of justice stakeholders to discuss concrete steps that could be taken to start down the road laid out by the Action Committee’s final report. The students sat in groups large and small, surrounded by the full gamut of access to justice leaders – from Supreme Court Justices to heads of Pro Bono associations – and they documented the future of access to justice in Canada.

The goal of the Colloquium was to channel talk into action, a goal that is ongoing and ultimately massive in scope. The road will be winding. From the students’ notes will come a report that documents the Colloquium and charts a more definite course for the future. The long campaign for access to justice marches on.

Justin Trudeau throws sick Liberal party

JOHN SWEENEY
The Tuite Oke (University of Toronto)

MONTREAL (CUP) — Strip poker followed by a serious debate about strip mining were among several of the activities in Justin Trudeau’s Montreal home last week, as police discovered. In an effort to connect with “the next generation of voters,” Trudeau threw what would be called “the sickest liberal party” at his home.

Witnesses say that the event began shortly after 7 p.m. last Friday night, when they noticed the neighbourhood seemed a little less quiet than usual. Liberal MPs from all across the country started to make their way to the Trudeau residence, followed by curious onlookers shortly thereafter. The event featured several activities aimed at luring in new voters and to “just have a good time.” There was even an appearance from ‘the Pipeline’ an elaborate beer bong designed to teach partygoers about the dangers of using oil.

Scarborough MP John McKay was reported to have been seen wandering the streets in the party’s aftermath wearing nothing but a tie. Another partygoer, a Montreal resident, was found screaming obscenities off the roof near midnight. It took 4 MPs to get him down.

When finding out that Trudeau had held a party without extending him an invitation, Prime Minister Stephen Harper reportedly revoked Trudeau’s invitation to the Prime Minister’s birthday party. Michael Ignatieff and Stephen Dion were invited, but given the wrong address.

“I can’t believe he didn’t invite me to his party!” Harper said tearfully in an interview. “I thought we were friends!”

Police responded to a noise complaint at the Trudeau residence at approximately 2 a.m. and were shocked to find the house full of drunken and stoned political representatives.

Sales of Powerade and sunglasses at the 7-11 next to Parliament Hill were reportedly at an all-time high the next morning as the hungover MPs slowly filed into the House of Commons.
Who really needs access to justice?

DANIEL ADLER
Contributor

IT IS an inescapable fact that our lives as lawyers will be guided in part by ethical considerations. For some of us, studying law is an opportunity to pursue social justice. For the rest of us, professional obligations require us to practice ethically and act in the public interest.

And one issue that will affect all spheres of practice – from the lowly legal aid clinic to the high society Bay Street boardroom – is the issue of access to justice. Whether it is doing pro bono work for an impoverished client, or ensuring diversity in a large firm, improving access to justice becomes a fundamental concern of the legal profession.

Yet, we learn about this issue as though the only groups that lack adequate access to justice are minorities, women, and the socioeconomically disadvantaged. While improving access to justice for these groups is undoubtedly important, there is another group in Canadian society whose current situation is far more desperate. It is a group so neglected that they are not even mentioned in the legal ethics curriculum. It is an access to justice problem so massive that it hasn’t even yet been recognized as an access to justice problem.

I’m talking about animals.

How massive is this problem? In Canada, over 630 million animals are tortured and killed on factory farms – each year. Animals are forced into tiny, dirty cages or pens, where they are kept in the dark and unable to move. Chickens have their beaks amputated, cows are branded and castrated, and pigs have their tails cut off – all without anesthetic. Chickens routinely die from suffocation, dehydration, or being crushed alive. Dairy cows are forcibly impregnated, and their calves are separated from them soon after birth. Over a million unwanted piglets are lifted by their hind legs and slammed onto a concrete floor until they die.

The bigger problem, though, is that this represents only a portion of all the animals in Canada that are ignored, underrepresented, and inadequately protected by our legal system.

Despite the scope of this problem, it strikes many as minor compared to the ongoing struggle for equality and justice among humans. After all, protecting animals just isn’t what the law is about. The law is about regulating human affairs and protecting the interests of humans.

While that might be the way the law is now, it is certainly hasn’t been that way for very long. There was a time – in fact, it was most of the time – that the law was for white, Christian men. When it came to women, blacks, Jews – well, that’s just not what the law was about. Over time, as our ethical considerations expanded, so too did the scope of the law. We came to recognize that all humans are entitled to protection under the law.

But why should we stop at humans?

Most people would say that we are fundamentally distinct from non-human animals; there are certain qualities possessed by humans alone; and it is this that entitles us to more and makes us more important than any other species.

But what qualities are these? Many animals have more sophisticated language, more developed consciousness, a stronger sense of self, and richer emotional experiences than many humans – including infants, the severely cognitively disabled, and the comatose. Yet we all recognize that to do to these humans what we do to animals would be unequivocally wrong.

But if there are no qualities or capacities that are unique to humans alone, then to draw a distinction between non-human animals and ourselves is to draw a distinction solely on the grounds of a genetic difference. However, genetic differences alone are ethically irrelevant. The fact that another being has different genes does not justify treating it however we want.

It was our failure to recognize this truth that allowed people to justify their racism and sexism. We saw people with different skin colours and sexual organs and decided that those facts alone justified our mistreatment of them. If we now recognize that such a view is mistaken, then how can we justify our mistreatment of animals solely on the grounds of genetic differences?

Simply put, we can’t. Animals are entitled to ethical consideration because they are conscious and sentient and capable of experiencing a wide range of physical and emotional states. As the philosopher Jeremy Bentham put it in 1789: “[T]he question is not, Can they reason? nor, can they talk? but, can they suffer?”

It is time that the law reflects this. It is true that there is federal and provincial legislation aimed at ensuring some protections for animals. But a 2001 report led by Professor Lesli Bisgould of the University of Toronto Faculty of Law concluded that these laws are far from enough:

Something is rotten in the state of Canadian agribusiness and we found no evidence within the confines of our study of any real attempt by government (who has the legal

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LUNAR NEW YEAR just wrapped up this past week, and with that spirit in mind your intrepid food sleuths undertook to scout a Toronto downtown dim sum hotspot. Cha Lau is an authentic and budget-friendly option for dumplings, steamed dishes and other “small plate” Chinese goodies.

**Venue:** Cha Lau Dim Sum Restaurant - 476 Yonge Street (2 blocks south of Wellesley Station)

**Cuisine:** Dim Sum

**Food:** (shared) beef and Chinese mushroom dumplings, Chinese olive and pork dumplings, ultimate shrimp rolls, shrimp and mango rolls, beef spare ribs, sesame balls, duck pastry, egg tart. Also, beef brisket noodle soup (Dan) and chicken noodle dumpling soup (Luke)

**LLBO Licensed?** Yup. However, Dan had filmed “Drunk Cases” the night before and was in no condition to imbibe anything other than tea or water.

**The Pick:**

**Dan:** Ok Luke, I consider myself a food adventurer. But seriously, I’m not a “dim sum person”. I know people love this stuff, but honestly I just don’t understand the appeal. Whatever though, it’s your pick this week, and I resign myself to being gingerly guided through what is almost guaranteed to be a grim misadventure. Also, please do be gentle. I had a bit of an over-commitment while filming for Mock Trial last night and will not be removing my sunglasses or attending class today.

**Luke:** It was clear to me from the outset — when you walked in with pallor the colour of steamed rice — that this week’s column was going to be a misadventure. I really like dim sum, but I know that it’s not for everyone. In many ways, dim sum flips western food conventions; the palate doesn’t always know what to expect from bite-to-bite.

Part of the adventure, for me at least, is trying entirely novel taste and texture combinations.

**At the restaurant:**

**Luke:** Ready for a variety of squishy and sticky delights my friend? You look like hell!

**Dan:** Just order whatever man. I am literally sweating out whiskey right now.

**Luke:** Ok, Ok. Let’s slow down a bit. First off, I like the ordering system here. While you take deep breaths and re-evaluate your life-choices, I’ll enjoy reviewing the extensive menu, which is loosely divided by appetizers, soups, dumplings, fried items and desserts, with items ordered by checking boxes on a ticket.

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ArTS & CoLuTuRe

Avant Garde volume 3: Annie Chu

BY NOW a good majority of the Osgoode community has taken a virtual culinary journey across the world, thanks to our own culinary critic and food-blogger extraordinaire, Annie Chu. Through her blog, Chu on This, Annie’s creativity and inner-foodie has really taken off. Chu on This (www.chuonthis.ca) offers an epicurean voyage, as she documents the sights, smells, and tastes of famous eateries and hidden treasures in Toronto and abroad. When Annie began this project, it was initially no more than your regular personal blog. But Chu on This is special because she shapes her imaginative intuition with her humorous narrative and captures her love of life throughout her posts.

In undergrad, Annie did a Bachelors degree in Social Sciences with a specialization in International Studies and Modern Languages with French Immersion at the University of Ottawa. Indeed, it is a mouthful to say, much like how it gave her the chance to study a wide variety of subjects with flexibility in more than just the political and social science disciplines.

Annie comments, “I also did an exchange in France where I took courses such as equestrian, contemporary dance, and art history. I have always considered myself a creative person but that year really unleashed my thirst for art and food appreciation.”

Annie’s undergraduate degree was not only helpful in developing her creativity, but was also instrumental in giving her the tools to be a better writer and critical thinker. Being substantially cultivated both creatively and academically has helped her find balance in law school. She comments that her creative side keeps her calm during times of stress, but at the same time, she notes that her lax approach to classes causes difficulty keeping focused for long hours.

Annie’s artistic presence is well known by many at Osgoode through her blog. However, she is a noted artist in her own right, having explored many forms of media and projects. For instance, Annie was a major contender in last year’s JCR Art Battle. Recently, as her blog has taken off considerably, she has begun new endeavors in traditional media such as calligraphy. As fellow law students, we may ask how she can find the time to do all this; Annie says that it is important to have creative outlets, no matter how busy you may be, to maintain a happy and balanced life.

“Regarding Chu on This (the name of my blog, and my just-about-registered trademark): it started as a blog about my exchange year in France, but I soon realized most people were most interested in what I had to say about food,” she says. “So, the blog evolved, along with my writing and photography, to become a food blog that seeks to take people on journeys through restaurants in the city where I happen to be living, and also on my culinary adventures around the world. I’m really excited that it is growing and expanding and will soon have a new design and a new collaboration (stay tuned, friends).”

Her ability to find fresh inspiration every time is, in itself, inspiring. In fact, Annie seems to be inspired by just about everything. When it strikes, she is ready, camera in hand, to capture the sights and experiences around her. Whatever material she gathers may lead to a new blog post or other art project, and every time she goes on a trip to a new place she returns with a brain full of ideas. Currently, Annie is participating in the Aboriginal Intensive in Taiwan, and will hopefully find a bit of time to squeeze in some blog posts as well about this amazing experience.

On a less existential level, she also adds, “You know what else inspires me? Pinterest. I know it’s not very deep, but it’s the truth.”

Looking forward, Annie says she will continue to work intensely on her blogging and has a new collaboration and design in the works. Rest

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AVANT GARDE VOLUME 3: ANNIE CHU

MARY PARK
Layout Editor

ANNE ENJOYS PHOTOGRAPHY, AND HAS APPEARED ON TELEVISION TO SHOWCASE HER COOKING PROWESS.
A Little Sheep Asked Me: Should you date a girl who travels?

ANGIE SHEEP
Arts & Culture Editor

IN THE past few weeks, there has been a lot of discussion in the blog-o-sphere about whether one should date or not date a girl (or guy) who travels. It all started with the article “don’t date a girl who travels” which was met with a surprisingly large amount of positive feedback. But of course there were also many female travelers who adamantly opposed it and took their revenge in a number of “do date a girl who travels” comebacks. And surely, as a fellow backpacker and world “gallivanteer”, I am itching to give my two cents on the issue.

I want to take a more balanced approach to the topic and let you make the decision of whether it is wise to get involved with a girl in a permanent state of wanderlust. And no, this is not a real psychological illness so don’t even think about committing her to keep her in one place! I can definitely see both sides of the argument; they are points that I have struggled with myself too. I guess once you contract the travel bug, it is almost impossible to get rid of it. So I will let you decide Osagoode: are we wanderers utterly “undatable” or maybe more interesting than ever?

She lives in the moment BUT she lives in the moment

After gallivanting around Asia, North/South America and Europe, I have become increasingly prone to losing myself to the moment. In the confines of ordinary life, we tend to behave, think before we speak and play nice because that’s what is socially and professionally acceptable. But when you’re traveling, all that withers away and suddenly there’s nothing holding you back. Your “image” no longer exists. You don’t have a reputation to live up to. You do what feels right and you live in the moment. And this absolutely freeing sensation is so hard to let go of, so you incorporate bits of it into your regular, “at-home” life. Dating a girl like this can be wonderful because she will find ways to make everything interesting. She will propel you to do things that you thought you would never want to. She will also be willing to partake in the odd activities you call “fun” and be in good spirits all the way.

But dating a girl like this also has a significant disadvantage. When she’s in the moment, she’s really in the moment. And when she loses perspective and ignores all repercussions, it can lead to relationship-breaking behavior. Quite frankly, there is a lot of eye candy out there. Also, travelers are awesome, so there definitely won’t be a shortage of ones with great personalities too. I guess this is where you have to be more careful with your heart. I’m not saying that we’re incapable of being faithful! But you can see how it runs counter to our whole live in the moment, you only have one chance philosophy right?

She has a good grasp of who she is BUT she knows she will be fine without you

A girl who travels has a good understanding of herself in the sense that she knows what is important to her and the big things she wants out of life. She is also confident in her abilities because she’s had to overcome rough patches along the way. I’ve been forced to deal with homelessness on a number of occasions, being scammed by an airline, almost being drugged and much more. But I guess the twisted part of it all is that when looking back, I don’t regret any of that. These experiences greatly sharpened my instincts and helped me become a less naïve and ignorant person. Through these turbulence, a girl who travels defines herself and gets to know exactly what she is capable of. At the same time, she also finds out her limits and even though she will always try to push that, she won’t go too overboard because she is comfortable with the fact that she is not ready for that yet.

Because she has gone through some worldly trials (which can be much worse than a breakup), she knows that she will always be able to bounce back. This girl is a firm believer in what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger, so don’t you dare think she’ll be crying over you for the next months. She will actually be having the time of her life on some exotic Brazilian island. This attitude can be a detrimental ingrediant to a long-lasting relationship because she is so comfortable with moving on. She knows she will be fine and she definitely knows there are more fish in the sea, so when there’s a bump in the road, she’d rather peace out then work it out.

She has so many good ideas BUT can never make a decision

I am constantly reading about all things travel. As a result, I have accumulated a huge list of places I want to see before I die (or become one of those super busy law-bots that cannot go anywhere... hopefully not). A girl who travels loves to research, she wants to learn the art of travel because she wants to make sure no corner goes undiscovered. She will always come to you with tons of ideas of where and what and why you two should do next. Yes, of course you will get a say, but if you make the wrong selection, she just might pack her bags and go it herself. We are quite comfortable with doing things alone. If you do make the right choice though, you will have the best tour guide, historian, party partner and foodie ever.

There are simply too many places to see given the time and money restraints, so sacrifices must unfortunately be made (at least for now). But we can never figure out what to cut because instead of top 5 places to visit, we have a list of top 10 or 20 adventure spots. At this point you might try to feed her your input and some insight about being realistic. But it’s likely that she will get irritated and think that you’re raining on her parade. We don’t want to believe there are boundaries. We know they’re there, but if no one speaks about it, maybe they don’t really exist. This is where you have to just let her come to the realization herself.

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A few weeks ago, Citlally Maciel wrote an article on these pages describing, among other things, the National Football League’s (NFL) history of condoning “acts of homophobia, bullying and discrimination” amongst its executives and players. No one could have predicted how timely this article would prove to be, as the league’s collective attitude towards tolerance, respect, and acceptance is going to be put to the test like never before over the coming months.

On February 9th, Missouri defensive end and NFL draft prospect Michael Sam publicly announced that he is gay. If Sam gets drafted he will become the only openly gay player in the NFL and in major North American pro sports. Several players have come out after they retired, and there are likely others who have chosen not to come out however, Sam would be the first player to have his sexual orientation publicly known during his active playing days. The timing of the announcement is impeccable, not only because the NFL has come under fire for locker-room bullying and a discriminatory atmosphere as of late, but also on account of the Sochi Olympics, and the associated backlash against Russia’s laws against homosexual “propaganda.” While this is certainly just a coincidence (the timing of the announcement was largely driven by Sam’s realization that his sexual orientation was becoming widely known in the football community and he wanted to control the message himself), the topic of gay-rights in sports is on the minds of many right now.

It goes without saying that Sam is an incredibly brave man, and a possible trailblazer for other gay athletes. Missouri coaches and teammates, the media, current and former current NFL players, as well as President Barrack Obama have extolled his courage. Any negative reaction to the announcement has certainly been drowned out by the celebration of Sam’s fortitude.

However, as the news settles in and the applause begins to dwindle, one question will remain. What’s next for Michael Sam?

It would be naïve to believe that Sam’s announcement will not impact the way teams view him in the lead-up to the NFL draft. Sam had an excellent senior season at Missouri, recording 11.5 sacks on route to being named the Southeastern Conference (SEC) defensive player of the year and Missouri’s most valuable player. However, he is somewhat undersized for an NFL defensive end, at 6’3” and 260 pounds, and may need to convert to the linebacker position at the NFL level. As a result, he is projected to go somewhere around the third round of the draft. A Sports Illustrated survey of NFL executives and coaches suggested that Sam’s draft stock will be negatively impacted by his announcement. The belief is that, with other qualified players available, teams will pass on Sam in order to avoid the “distraction”. It is uncertain how coaches, teammates, and the media will react to Sam’s presence, and many believe that, in short, he might not be worth the risk. What is certain is that Sam is no longer just another defensive end prospect. All potential NFL draft picks are put through the wringer at the NFL Draft Combine, which is intended to test both the physical and mental abilities of prospects in advance of the draft. Sam will no doubt be put under particularly intense scrutiny at the Combine, as teams assess whether he has the mental toughness to handle the constant attention he will receive as a pro.

It is possible that a team with stable management and a strong coaching staff (the New England Patriots, Green Bay Packers or San Francisco 49ers for example) could see Sam’s announcement as an opportunity to obtain an excellent defensive prospect at a “discount.” Alternatively, a small market team (such as the San Diego Chargers or Buffalo Bills) may see it as an opportunity to “make a splash” in order to increase media exposure and sell merchan-
The Food:

Dan: A swarm of servers have dropped off a bunch of small plates. What are these things? I immediately regret having you “guide” this experience. I recognize steamed dumplings, and this soup looks palatable but what is this shiny tubule-like item? I went for it with good-faith gusto and the result is honestly torture. This “mouthfeel” is so bad right now. Why is it hot and slimy? Slime is not a desirable food experience.

Luke: Yeah, you were struggling. Highlights for me included the Chinese olive and pork dumplings, dumpling casings were a little too sticky, but in this price range, Cha Lau is very good.

Dan: Apparently cheung fung is a tube made out of rice, intended to look/feel like pig intestine. It’s the perfect hangover cure, Osgoode. Serious. The ribs were legitimately only bone and fat, but somehow delicious. My soup was ok, though the broth was a bit weak. I was pretty much doomed to never taste my beef dumpling since it stuck to the dish it arrived on, then stuck to my chopsticks, then stuck again to my plate, ripping and spilling everywhere. Dessert was redeeming though. The egg tarts were interesting, and the duck pastry was nicely flaky - though meat desserts are not really in my wheelhouse. The sesame balls were really cool, though I’m glad you warned me they were full of black sesame paste, or after everything else I may have fainted.

Luke: I too thought the meal finished well. The line between dim sum main course and dessert is, without a doubt, somewhat blurred to a beginner. Still, the sesame balls were like spicy timbits and the duck pastry was crumbly and rich. I would come here just for tea (which is complimentary) and desserts!

Amenities and service:

Dan: Cha Lau is nice inside; the gray tile and black leather booths reminded me of a high-end sushi spot. Service was generally prompt and courteous. However, I was blown away that not one of the 3 people we asked could (would?) correctly identify that mystery food item. I swear you ordered it to see if you could literally make me die inside. We’re going to have to do some trust falls before your next pick, Luke.

Luke: The atmosphere was relaxed yet tasteful. I thought the food service was paced well and the servers were professional. Given the strip of Yonge Street on which Cha Lau is located, which is known for “adult” entertainment and “hemp” clubs, I was also pleasantly surprised the bathroom was modern and the restaurant was completely free of bleach and dishwasher odors. If you like dim sum, this place is definitely worth a trip!

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Luke: Yeah, you were struggling. Highlights for me included the Chinese olive and pork dumplings, which were tender and creatively-spiced, and the shrimp and mango roll, which was a refreshing take on the usual deep fried take-out version. The soup was fine but definitely not remarkable. As for the unknown, unnamed and unordered slimy dish, it was horrifying! I can’t decide if they mixed us up with another table or just saw your face and wanted to mess with you. After some cursory web research, I believe it may have been cheung fung. This dish confirmed the worst preconceptions (and your worst nightmares) about this type of cuisine. In general, though, I thought most of the dumplings and the tender riblets were great. The preparation was somewhat hurried and the
dumpling casings were a little too sticky, but in this price range, Cha Lau is very good.

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Mock Trial

» continued from front cover

My mouth was probably hanging open a little bit. However, the highest praise in the room came from a certain friendly ghost who called the for the duration of the performance. Who let him in, anyway? Congratulations to Hilary Fender, Kate Henley, and Stephanie Marchello for successfully harnessing so much raw talent.

3. Sketches were consistently funny.
I'm sad to say that some past Mock Trials fell victim to the vortex that forms when alcohol and attention span come crashing together. Sketches can easily be too long; songs can have too many verses, and there can be too many of both. Not so in 2014. In particular, I recall “Zombies at Osgoode”, in which two students stuck in the library following the zombie apocalypse weigh the legal implications of bludgeoning one of their former classmates, and the “Social Justice League”, in which several heroes with questionable superpowers hash out their struggles in preserving access to justice.

Reprising past success were the Bad Idea Bears, though I must say one half of the disruptive duo has taken a turn for the provocative — there was a great deal more hip-thrusting than I expected from Jean-Paul Bevilacqua. Not that I'm complaining. Also returning was the ever-popular Drunk Cases. It’s taken me three years to realize it, but the name of this sketch is a double entendre: the participants attempt, despite their intoxication, and with varying degrees of success, to recount the facts of a case, which invariably involves someone doing something ridiculous or dangerous in a drunken stupor. In any case, this sketch was late in the show, so I don't remember the name of the case, and I don’t remember who was in the sketch (though the Obiter's Dan Mowat-Rose talks about the aftermath of filming in this week's Jurisfoodence). All I remember is laughing like an idiot.

4. MTB delivers.
Lead guitarist Mike Shep's returned from Denmark and hit the ground running with this year’s Mock Trial Band, which includes the Obiter’s Alvin Qian, saxophonist extraordinaire, and Contributor Jesse Cohen, a closet harmonica virtuoso. This year's budget allowed the string section to rent wireless units, permitting a sortie into the community pub night afterward. Producers Jean-Paul Bevilacqua, Hilary Fender, and Quinn Harris have done justice to the tradition.

All in all, Mock Trial was everything one would expect from a law school variety show: plastic soda bottles with the wrong colour liquid in them, flasks, singing, dancing, laughs, and a capacity crowd. Congratulations to Hilary Fender, Kate Henley, and Stephanie Marchello for successfully harnessing so much raw talent.

Letters

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That said, we share with BLSA the view that we need to do better as an institution and as a community. For this reason, in December, we decided to reach out to York’s Centre for Human Rights, a national leader in equity and inclusion, to provide training for Osgoode staff beginning in 2014. With input from the Centre for Human Rights, we also plan to develop specific guidelines relating to the library’s restricted access period, and other contexts where we think additional clarity and resources are needed. Building on these institutional initiatives, combined with the advocacy of groups like BLSA, and in keeping with Osgoode’s historic commitment to providing a supportive environment for all our students and community members, I am confident we can and will do justice to our aspirations of ensuring Osgoode is a positive, respectful, and welcoming space for all.

Lorne Sossin, Dean

Labour Minister

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When I asked the Minister what he thought of Quebec’s Charter of Values, he replied: “This is a document that is anti-Canadian...our country and our Charter of Rights and Freedoms are about respecting each other, being tolerant and inclusive, and respecting each other’s faith. I and our government oppose the Charter.”

Finally, for those law students who are thinking about a career in politics, getting involved in the community is key, says Minister Naqvi. Public service is “a rewarding experience” and “an amazing way of building one’s community.” The best part is that, as a law student, the individual is already equipped to cope with the challenges of public service: problem solving. Anyone interested in municipal politics?

The Obiter Dicta
Access to justice
» continued from page 10

So, what now? Have I convinced you? Which way did you end up voting? It really all comes down to your personal interests. If your passion does not revolve around the same things, it’s better to just let this one go. It will be miserable for both sides trying to keep up with someone who does not share the same goals.

I think wanderlust comes at all shapes and sizes, so find someone who has been plagued with the same kind of travel bug. The question is not “should you” but “can you”. Chances are, you can; it just takes a little bit more understanding and adjustment. And once you find your match, hold tight and prepare for the incredible adventures to come.

Daniel Adler is the 1L Representative for the Animal Law Society.

Little Sheep
» continued from page 13

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Avant garde

» continued from page 12

assured, Osgoode will watch it grow and expand, following along with an appetite for food and travel. As for how she will manage the blog after graduation and entering practice, she is not worried; with stricter scheduling and the right time management, Annie says she will continue to keep blogging.

When asked if she would have done anything differently in her life so far, this is what she tells us.

“In life? Probably shouldn’t have had three lattes today. But other than that, I have no major regrets.”

Annie gives these words of wisdom to all students and readership community: “Do what makes you happy and don’t let other people tell you what law school is supposed to be. If I had listened to everyone’s advice, I probably wouldn’t have lasted past 1L. Everyone in law school is brilliant in their own way and we can all learn from each other.”

Michael Sam

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dise (Exhibit A: Tim Tebow). Perhaps the savvy general manager will consider the makeup of its fan base and city before drafting Sam. Would he be better positioned for success in San Francisco or Seattle than in Jacksonville or Tennessee? These are the kinds of questions that will be asked over the coming months. In any case, Sam will be amongst the biggest stories leading up to the NFL Draft, and once the third round hits, every team in the market for a pass rusher will be scrutinized for their decision to take, or not to take, Michael Sam.

Assuming that Sam is drafted into the NFL and earns a roster spot, he will face another set of questions and challenges. First off, how will Sam’s sexuality be received by his teammates? It proved to be a non-issue at Missouri, and I believe that the same would hold true in the NFL. For all the criticism directed at professional athletes, they remain professionals. They have a job to do that requires their undivided attention, and I believe they would welcome any teammate who helps their team win. Similarly, Punter Chris Kluwe was deemed expendable by the Minnesota Vikings, allegedly in part due to his affiliation with gay rights groups and the attention that this created.

It is undeniable that Michael Sam faces challenges and uncertainty as the first openly gay active player in NFL, and major North American professional sports, history. One hopes that he will find the level of acceptance, respect, and success in the NFL that he did at Missouri. Sam’s coach at Missouri, Gary Pinkel described Sam’s announcement as “mammoth.” It will remain the biggest news story of the NFL off-season and the early part of the NFL season before the hostile few amongst the NFL’s fan base attempt to have their voices heard. It is up to Sam, and other true football fans to turn the other cheek and ignore any detractors, under the understanding that their views are driven by ignorance and prejudice.

The conduct of opponents is another issue that Sam likely faces. While one would hope that opponents have the professionalism and maturity to treat Sam like any other player, the fact remains that trash-talking is a part of the game and opponents will go to great lengths to get under a player’s skin. It is possible that Sam may be the target of directed taunting based on his sexuality. While I am sure he has tried to prepare himself for this, it is up to the league, and opposing coaching staff’s to take a zero-tolerance approach towards this kind of behaviour.

Unfortunately, teammates and opponents are not likely to be Sam’s harshest critics once he enters the league. It is only a matter of time before the hostile few amongst the NFL’s fan base attempt to have their voices heard. It is up to Sam, and other true football fans to turn the other cheek and ignore any detractors, under the understanding that their views are driven by ignorance and prejudice.

The most difficult aspect of Michael Sam’s ascent into the NFL, however, is likely to be the media circus that will follow him, his teammates, and his coaching staff around all season. Sam has proven to be highly articulate and is aware of the repercussions of his announcement. It remains to be seen how teammates and coaching staff will react to the constant media attention. Tim Tebow was deemed too distracting for most NFL teams, despite showcasing (some) talent as a quarterback and ball-carrier. Similarly, Punter Chris Kluwe was deemed expendable by the Minnesota Vikings, allegedly in part due to his affiliation with gay rights groups and the attention that this created.

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Since 2007, almost 80,000 former students have received a Common Experience Payment (“CEP”) as part of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. CEP recipients are now eligible to receive non-cash Personal Credits of up to $3,000, for either themselves or certain family members, for educational programs and services.

What are Personal Credits? Personal Credits may be used for a wide range of educational programs and services, including those provided by universities, colleges, trade or training schools, Indigenous Institutions of Higher Learning, or which relate to literacy or trades, as well as programs and services related to Aboriginal identities, histories, cultures or languages.

How much are Personal Credits? Adequate funds are available for each CEP recipient to receive up to $3,000 in Personal Credits, depending on your approved educational expenses.

Which educational entities and groups are included? A list of approved educational entities and groups has been jointly developed by Canada, the Assembly of First Nations and Inuit representatives. If an educational entity or group is not on the list, please consult the website for more information.

Will I receive a cheque? No. Cheques will be issued directly to the educational entity or group providing the service.

Who can use Personal Credits? CEP recipients can use the full amount themselves or give part or all of their Personal Credits to certain family members such as a spouse, child, grandchild or sibling, as defined in the terms and conditions. Personal Credits of multiple CEP recipients can be combined to support a group learning activity.

How can I get Personal Credits? Each CEP recipient will be mailed an Acknowledgement Form. If you do not receive an Acknowledgement Form by the end of January 2014, please call 1-866-343-1858. Completed Acknowledgement Forms should be returned as soon as possible and must be postmarked no later than October 31, 2014.

How do I redeem my Personal Credits? Once approved, you will be sent a personalized Redemption Form for each individual using Personal Credits at each educational entity or group. Once the Form is received, provide it to the educational entity or group listed. The educational entity or group must then complete and mail back the Redemption Form postmarked no later than December 1, 2014.

What happens to unused Personal Credits? The value of unused Personal Credits will be transferred to the National Indian Brotherhood Trust Fund and Inuvialuit Education Foundation for educational programs.

For more information, including how Personal Credits can be redeemed by certain family members of CEP recipients that are deceased, visit www.residentialschoolsettlement.ca or call 1-866-343-1858.

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