

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2006

VOLUME 12 ISSUE 2

CATCH DA FLAVA

www.catchdaflava.com

THE IMMIGRATION ISSUE

LOCAL IMMIGRATION STORIES

IMMIGRATION SURVIVAL TIPS

ASSIMILATION: A MYTH OR REALITY?

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION: IMMIGRATION'S DARK SIDE



DON BARTLETT / Los Angeles Times

Border Patrol checks car with suspected illegal immigrants in trunk.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

VIOLENCE ON TV AND YOUTH VIOLENCE

REGENT PARK REVITALIZATION

SOMALIA: A HISTORY LESSON

Youth Health and Culture Magazine Serving Regent Park and the Greater Toronto Area

VOLUME 12 ISSUE 2

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2006



LET CATCH DA FLAVA BE YOUR VOICE

CATCH DA FLAVA youth magazine is published by the Regent Park Focus Media Arts Centre. The magazine is distributed free to libraries, community groups, and selected schools across downtown Toronto.

CATCH DA FLAVA welcomes letters and articles from young people (up to 24 years of age). Submissions should be **NO LONGER THAN 1000 WORDS IN LENGTH.**

If you would like more information about how you can contribute to **CATCH DA FLAVA**, call us at **(416) 863-1074** or submit directly to **CATCHMAIL@CATCHDAFLAVA.COM**

NEXT DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS:
November 15, 2006

CATCH DA FLAVA reserves the right to edit submitted articles for space and clarity.

CIRCULATION:
6,000
(including 85 community sites in downtown Toronto)

PUBLISHED SINCE 1995

THE REGENT PARK FOCUS MEDIA ARTS CENTRE IS COMMITTED TO THE USE OF COMMUNITY-BASED MEDIA TO PROMOTE HEALTH AND ENGAGE YOUTH. REGENT PARK FOCUS IS HOME TO: CATCH DA FLAVA YOUTH HEALTH AND CULTURE MAGAZINE, CATCH DA FLAVA ONLINE, CATCH DA FLAVA YOUTH RADIO ON CKLN 88.1 FM, EYE VIDEO YOUTH PRODUCTIONS, THE ZAPPAROLI STUDIO FOR PHOTOGRAPHY, & THE UNDERGROUND MUSIC RECORDING STUDIO

PROGRAM CO-ORDINATOR: ADONIS HUGGINS

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: JAMES SANDHAM

LAYOUT DESIGN: AJ FRICK

TREASURER & ADVERTISING MANAGER: EMMANUEL KEDINI

YOUTH WRITERS AND EDITORIAL STAFF: JENN FUSION, SAM LAO, BO WEN CHAN, MARIE GEDGE, TYRONE MACLEAN-WILSON

GUEST WRITERS: AMATHUM NESSA, ASMA JAHAN, JUAN DAVID GAVIRIA, LUDA ZADOROVICH, SALMA AHMED, SULTANA YEASMIN, TAHMINA BEGUM, JOSH DA SILVA

CATCH DA FLAVA IS SUPPORTED BY: THE TIPPET FOUNDATION, THE ROTARY FOUNDATION, UNITED WAY, THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH PROMOTION, AND THE CENTRE FOR ADDICTION AND MENTAL HEALTH.

REGENT PARK FOCUS YOUTH MEDIA ARTS CENTRE IS LOCATED AT:
600 DUNDAS ST. EAST, TORONTO, ONTARIO, M5A 2B9
(ENTRANCE AT REAR BASEMENT).

TEL: (416) 863-1074

WEBSITE: WWW.CATCHDAFLAVA.COM

© 2006 NO PART OF THIS PUBLICATION MAY BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE EXPRESS PERMISSION OF THE PUBLISHER, REGENT PARK FOCUS.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EDITORIAL...3

WHAT'S YOUR BEEF: The Reality and Myth of Assimilation...4

LOCAL VOICES: Looking Back from Far Away:

My Childhood in Bangladesh...6

FEATURE: What You Should Know Before Immigrating...7

LOCAL VOICES: How I Met My Husband...8

LOCAL VOICES: Change, Adaptation and Dreams in a New Country...9

FEATURE: Welcome to the Promised Land:
Immigration Horror Stories...10

MUSIC: K'Naan: On the Trail
of the Dusty Foot Philosopher...11

LOCAL VOICES: Rediscovering Family in Regent Park...12

FEATURE: Somalia...13

FEATURE: Local Businesses Optimistic about Regent Park
Revitalization...14-15

FEATURE: Sexual Exploitation: Immigration's Dark Side...16

FEATURE: Violence on TV and Youth Violence...17

FACE OFF: Reality and Myth of Assimilation...19

LOCAL VOICES: F.O.B. and Proud of It...20

POETRY CORNER...21

COMICS...22-23

Editorial:



There are a variety of stereotypes that often surface in discussions of immigration. This has been especially true following the events of 9/11. Since then, an overarching narrative has developed in much of the media regarding the threat posed to society by outside, foreign elements. There is a fear of the Other. Since 9/11, the Other has come to be seen not as contributing to the diversity of society, but as threatening its fundamental values. The Other is often presented as dangerous or at least parasitic.

In this issue of Catch da Flava we look at the issue of immigration and seek to dispel some of these myths. We seek to re-present the immigrant experience through the words of

people who have experienced it directly. Our Local Voices section tells the immigration stories of several members of the Regent Park Women's Group. Amathum Nessa writes about her childhood in Bangladesh and the differences and changes she has noticed since immigrating to Canada and Regent Park in particular. Salma Ahmed tells the story of how she met her husband and eventually made the move to reunite with him in Canada. Tahima Begum talks about her experiences coming to Canada, and the changes and adaptations the move has entailed. And Asma Jahan rediscovers family in Regent Park in her article.

The Regent Park Women's Group are not the only ones to tell their stories in this issue. Omar Hassan gives a brief overview and history lesson of Somalia, and details the injustice of Canadian society's refusal to recognize the foreign credentials so many immigrants possess. And Luda Zadarovich writes about her experiences as a Russian Jew and world traveler. Her article details the moves her family made from Russia to Israel and then finally to Canada. Plus, our staff writers contribute arti-

cles on immigration horror stories, things you should know before immigrating, and other topics.

All in all, we have tried through these stories and articles to present a perspective on immigration as understood by immigrants themselves. And while there are undeniably unifying themes that emerge through these stories as a whole, the experiences and challenges described are simultaneously and incontrovertibly unique in each case as well. This deconstructs common assumptions about immigration and "the Other," and shows how each new addition to Canadian society brings their own distinct set of abilities and contributions to the social mosaic.

These are some stories from Regent Park.

JAMES SANDHAM, ED.



LOCAL IMMIGRATION STORIES FROM REGENT PARK

This issue of Catch da Flava features stories of immigration from Regent Park women.

In no particular order:
AMATHUM NESSA, ASMA
JAHAN, SALMA AHMED AND
TAHIMA BEGUM

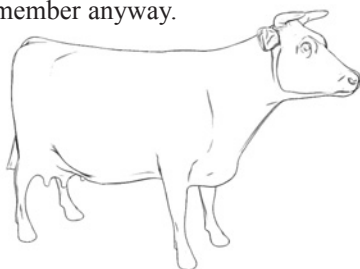
What's Your Beef:

DO YOU THINK CANADA
SUPPORTS IMMIGRATION?



PHIL

Right now with the party with the PCs, the Canadian government doesn't really support immigration. Because the Tories have always had a longstanding thing about being very cautious when it comes to immigration; as far as I can remember anyway.



SYLVIA

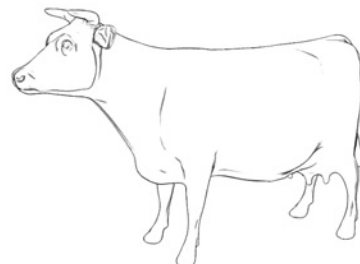
Canadian immigration policies are really restricted and shut out people without financial resources, who don't have language or technical abilities. That's never been part of Canadian immigration policies until I guess the late 1960s and early 70s, when they opened up immigration to racialized communities and people from Asia, Africa and the Caribbean; then all of a sudden the policies became far more restrictive. These policies are really penalizing people of color.

By da Flava's
TYRONE MACLEAN WILSON



ADRIANE

I think the Canadian government supports the immigration; depending on what country you're coming from, they are more supportive.



REGENT PARK FILM FESTIVAL

November 8-12, 2006

Nelson Mandela Park Public School
440 Shuter Street, Toronto

All Screenings Are Free!
www.regentparkfilmfestival.com

Young Moms Group

**For Moms
25 yrs of age and younger**

**NEW TIME!
FRIDAYS 1-4 pm**

**416-362-0805
33 Belshaw Place**

**Ask about our
FREE diapers
& vouchers**

**For families living in
Regent Park, Moss Park & Oak St.
High quality
childcare provided**



Time flies like a bird. A poet once said “time and tide wait for none”. Oh my childhood - how sweet and colourful it was. It was incomparable and it was indescribable.

I had so much fun in my childhood that I do not forget it even in my busiest days here. If I were to write about my childhood, it could fill a whole book.

I grew up in a simple, middle-class family. There were ten children. All of my aunts, grandparents and cousins lived in our *bari*, or village home. Altogether, we were 35 people, living in six different homes.

My family's home was very large. It was situated in the heart of our city, Sylhet. It was like a big amusement park and it had almost everything you could imagine. Times spent there were always enjoyable.

In the days of my childhood, there were no computers or internet. There were TVs, but they were not common as they are today. My family didn't have a TV. We had none of the modern toys that exist today.

Instead, we made all of our toys from natural things. I remember we used to make our own cars. We got round seeds from a certain tree to make the wheels, and biscuit boxes to make the body. We played with these amazing cars, and played many different sports and games in each different season. In Bangladesh, the climate is tropical so the weather is very enjoyable.

We had only two hours of school each day. The rest of the time we were free to play. We spent our time being very active: running, swimming, climbing trees, fishing, gardening or playing games like cricket, badminton, *Hadodo*, blind man's bluff, Tarzan and tag. Nowadays, I often hear children talking about being bored. In my childhood, we had so many things to do that we didn't have time to feel bored.

We also had a big pond, twice as big as the Regent Park pool. When we were tired after all of our running and playing, we jumped into our pond. In the summertime we used to bathe 2-3 times a day. Everybody in our family learned how to swim when they were 4-6 years old. I learned how to swim when I was five.

We had different sports and games such as backward swimming, diving contests, and tag. At the edge of the pond there was a Neem tree. We used the branches of the tree like a diving board. This experience is unforgettable for me.

On rainy days we stayed at home and told stories to each other. We also played board games and word games. As a special treat on these rainy days, we got to eat crunchy foods.

In winter, we would collect dry leaves to make a bonfire. We would sit around the fire and enjoy its heat. Winter was also the season during which we flew kites. I never had a



chance to fly a kite but always wanted to. My job was always to be a kite catcher.

Sometimes I feel sorry for my children. We live in an apartment and if I don't take them outside, they have a very limited space to play in. But they have fun in different ways.

How free we were in childhood. Now those days seem like they were a dream. You cannot imagine how wonderful it was. We were given the gift of many natural things which made us feel very happy and fulfilled.

Now I live in Canada. It is a privilege to live here because it has one of the highest standards of living in the world. I like Canada very much but I still miss my childhood. I wish I had my childhood back.

AMATHUM NESSA

What You Should Know Before Immigrating



THINKING OF IMMIGRATING? JENN FUSION GIVES YOU THE INSIDE SCOOP ON WHAT TO EXPECT.

CATCH 22

If anything is true about immigrating to Toronto, it is that you are put in an impossible situation. No one will hire you on full-time salary without a visa. They can't afford the fees, time, gamble and effort when there are plenty of Canadians with experience to do the same job. Yet ironically, you can't get your visa unless you have an employer that's willing to sponsor you. Getting sponsorship may be easier in medical, engineering, manual labour or "skilled trade" technological fields.

EXPECT TO WAIT

I've been here for over three years and I'm still waiting for my approval to go through. The paperwork never ceases to be shuffled around from department to department as various pieces are sent back for review. Mysterious "supplemental information" is always requested that wasn't listed on the website.

Everything from credit checks to love letters and photographs can be requested, depending on your reasons for immigrating. You will need to prove to the government that you don't plan on leeching off their aid programs as well, so you'll need at least a couple grand in the bank to prove you can support yourself here. Everyone I know who successfully made it through the visa application process has done so with the help of an immigration lawyer, which I plan to utilize as well (but beware of scams here as there are a lot of so-called "consultants" without proper credentials!)

HEALTH INSURANCE HANG-UPS

"Just find someone who looks like you and use their identity," everyone told me when I got here. Luckily I haven't required any major medical work since my arrival, but to be honest, I'm not sure what I'd do if anything ever happened. You won't enjoy any benefits of being a citizen until all your paperwork goes through, which could realistically take years. As a contract employee you could feasibly work for six months at a time without having anything covered. The government website claims you can apply for OHIP once you've been here a year and apply for permanent resident status, but the reality remains that you'll have a hell of a time getting covered until you have that visa in your hand.

APARTMENT AGONY

My first place in Toronto was at Jane & Finch. I figured it wouldn't

be too bad since it was near a college, but turned out to have one of the most notoriously high crime rates (for robbery, at least) in the city. My place was big but I still paid \$1000/month and there were cockroaches perpetually scuttling across my floor. You'll most likely end up living in Scarborough, the Danforth or Parkdale when you arrive, as these are the places with cheaper housing. You will rarely find a one-bedroom downtown for less than \$900 and, unless you have (reliable) roommates, it could be a disaster situation. Many times landlords won't rent to a non-citizen as well.

SAVE SAVE SAVE

If there is one thing I could have done differently, it's this: **SAVE MORE MONEY.** While I truly feel just jumping into this headfirst and coming here was the best way to get started (rather than try to deal with the bureaucracy from the other side), my measly \$3000 barely lasted me three months here. Paying first and last rent, security deposits, furniture costs, Uhauls, food, bills, outrageous gas prices, parking and immigration fees really takes its toll on the wallet. It takes a while to find a job. Don't underestimate the financial impact of this move. Tally up all projected expenses for six months of living here first, save and then make your leap.

By da Flava's
JENN FUSION

Local Voices

We got married in 1995. After marriage we spent only 10 days together. Then my husband left me and flew back to the USA. We were apart for three and a half years.

Ours was an arranged marriage. We didn't know each other very well. In the airport he said to me, "I love you and I will be always with you." After he left, I realized I lost something. I felt alone in the world. It was a long path and I had to walk that path alone.

Waiting for someone is hard; waiting for my husband was excruciating. I waited three and a half years for him. I passed my time by thinking about him because in my house the telephone was not very accessible.

He called me every month and wrote me several letters. The letters were so beautiful and continue to mean a great deal to me. I read those letters

numerous times. There were often moments where I found myself crying for him. I prayed to God, "Please help me pass this time."

After many years of waiting it was finally time to meet him. I had to take a 24 hour flight from Dhaka to New York. After such a long time waiting to meet him, I began to get butterflies. I was thinking about his feelings of seeing me. Three and a half years had passed but I am still a new bride to him. I was excited and shy at the same time.

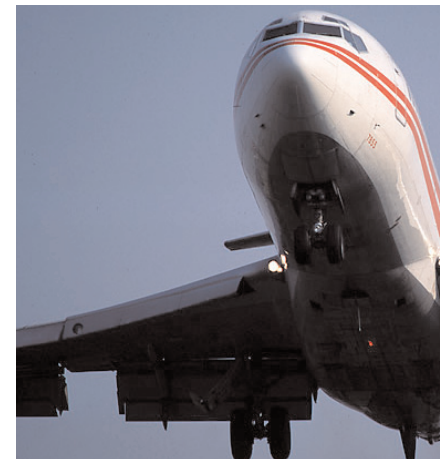
When I landed at JFK airport there were so many things rushing through my mind. I was now on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, in New York. There were many people waiting for their loved ones. I started to feel it was going to be hard to find my husband.

Although I waited for a long time I still felt I had very little time to pre-

HOW I MET MY HUSBAND

pare myself. I wanted to run away because I felt so unprepared for this moment. But, on the other hand, it was the for which moment I had been waiting for three years. Suddenly a man came in front of me. He said "hello," and I looked into his eyes. We had no need to exchange words. He hugged me and I realized this was the moment of my dreams.

SALMA AHMED



Wanna Produce Your Own Tracks For FREE?



Come check out the underground music studio at the Regent Park Focus. Work with industry professionals and learn to mix, record and produce your own beats for FREE.

**Where we're at: 600 Dundas St. E (rear basement)
How to reach us: Call 416-863-1074
Our website: www.catchdaflava.com**

I was born in Bangladesh, a small country situated in south Asia between India, Myanmar and the Bay of Bengal. A population of roughly 126 million people live in its 147 570 square kilometers.

The land is a deltaic plain with a network of numerous rivers and canals. This means that a lot of Bangladesh is covered by water.

I have three brothers and three sisters. My father is retired. He used to work for a gas and transmission company. My mother is a housewife. She used to tell me that when I was a baby I was very calm and quiet and that she never had difficulty taking care of me. While growing up she has become my friend, my counsellor, my support and, most specially, a loving mother to her children. She showed all of us in our family equal love and care. To me she is the best mom in the world.

I completed my education in Bangladesh. I attended elementary school, college and university. In my final year of my Masters of Social Work, I got married. It was an arranged marriage. This means my parents chose my husband for me. Many marriages in South Asia are arranged in this way.

After I got married, my husband wanted me to come to Canada with him. I was a bit scared. Bangladesh is my homeland and Canada was an absolutely unknown place. But I thought to myself that in any decision, there are always positive and negative sides.

On one hand, I loved my family. I also loved the natural beauty of my native country.

On the other hand, in Bangladesh there was no fundamental justice. The Government doesn't provide social security for each individual. Law and order always favor the ruling class. Corruption is highly prevalent as well. There you could often get what you want by giving government employees a cash gift called *baksheesh*.

In Bangladesh most people are not very aware of their civil rights and constitutional responsibilities. Women in particular lack social equality. Male domination is strongly established in the family and in society. Most of the marriages are arranged marriages. Women have no power to choose their life partner. Although sometimes this works out well, like with myself and my husband, often women find themselves in difficult situations because of a match that has been made for them.

Gender discrimination exists throughout the society. I felt like the whole atmosphere was suffocating me. I believe that free thought is an essential aspect of any dynamic society. Unfortunately, it does not exist in Bangladesh. So I decided to come to Canada.

When I got Heathrow Airport I was shocked. I thought I could speak English but it seemed to me that English was a different language because of the pronunciation and accent. Eventually, I could understand most English but, even though I could speak it, I still found it hard to reply. But slowly I become more confident with the language. In Regent Park, the multicultural place in which I live, I have opportunities to improve my English further.

Sometimes I feel like this is not my country. I feel like I have to be careful when I step out the door. I know there are people who don't understand who I am. They don't understand the clothes I wear and what it means to be South Asian. I have heard people make comments about the smells coming from my cooking because it is different. These are things that make me unhappy.

Back home, family is like a big umbrella where you can meet together and people hold you close. Our family has advantages and disadvantages. At several festivals during the year, we get together with all of our relatives and friends. I miss this closeness in Canada.

As a Canadian my dream is to enjoy equality, respect, social security and fundamental justice in all its aspects. I hope my sisters and friends will work side by side with men, enrich their lives, and help to make people happy. Their role is not just to stay at home, nurse children, cook, and taking care of the home. Here, there are other choices as well.

For my family, I want them to get a proper education and to be empathetic to mankind. It doesn't matter what religion a person belongs to. I expect our next generation will select of right from wrong paths and become good citizens. I hope and pray for my daughter that she will also hold onto her Muslim faith and Bengali culture. If these things happen, I believe that the future will be bright.

TAHMINA BEGUM

Welcome To The Promised Land:

IMMIGRATION HORROR STORIES



IMMIGRATION PROMISES MANY THINGS FOR MANY PEOPLE. THE REALITY, HOWEVER, CAN PROVE TO BE QUITE DIFFERENT, AS JENN FUSION EXPLAINS.

HORROR FOR CANADIANS

The Toronto Sun recently ran the ultimate immigration horror story – not for the immigrant but for the victim who sponsored him. After finding a Cuban department store manager online, single mother Cindy thought she was truly in love and after daily correspondence and numerous trips, they married in Cuba. Next she filed paperwork for 15 months, paid \$60,000 in expenses and got Eduardo to Canada. He

seemed “cold” during the transition phase, demanding that she send more money to his mother in Cuba, finish his resume, and find him a job. Less than three months later he was gone, taking with him all the jewelry and perfumes he had ever given her, and leaving his cell phone so she couldn’t ever contact him. The bill revealed that he had been secretly calling his Cuban ex-girlfriend who had recently been sponsored by her husband in Toronto. “He played his game very well,” Cindy concedes.

And the kicker? Not only had she been utterly duped, but the government told her that based on the fine print of her marriage contract, she is FINANCIALLY RESPONSIBLE for this shady character should he decide to go on welfare or public assistance in the next three years!

HORROR FOR IMMIGRANTS

In 2004 you may recall seeing the headlines broadcast worldwide - “21 members of an Al-Qaeda Sleeper Cell Arrested Just Before the Second Anniversary of 9-11”. Plots to blow up the CN Tower were reported in what was described by media and government officials as a “break-through bust” and proof that the government watchdogs were winning the war on terrorism.

But what you probably didn’t read about was how one of these prison-

ers was an Indian computer programmer from the University of Windsor and how they were flagged simply based on the fact that all their names were Mohammad, all but one hailed from Pakistan, and were all studying international business in Ottawa. After the bust, heavy chains were placed around their necks, and they were cuffed and blindfolded in their transport to the maximum-security Maplehurst prison.

No reason for the arrest was given and they were placed in dark solitary confinement without permission to call lawyers or family members for five days. They were asked how many times a day they prayed, if they had trained in terrorist camps, if they celebrated the anniversary of 9-11, if they met Osama Bin Laden, and were threatened to be force-fed pork against their religion. One of the accused had his jaw broken, another his arm dislocated.

In the end, after evidence was non-existent and an attempt to fabricate an illegal visa claim failed to hold up in court, the men were simply deported. “The flashing of our pictures all over the world as alleged terrorists destroyed our careers, shattered the prospects of good jobs and further study for us and subjected us and our families to immense mental torture and suffering,” one detainee cried out.

By da Flava’s
JENN FUSION

Music: K'Naan

ON THE TRAIL OF THE DUSTY FOOT PHILOSOPHER

I don't listen to hip-hop. At least, that's what I would have said until I heard K'Naan's *Dusty Foot Philosopher*.

Of course, that hadn't always been the case. In high school it was one of my favourite genres. A Tribe Called Quest, Brand Nubian, Das Efx – these were the sounds that spilled incessantly from the headphones wrapped round my skull. I discovered Dre and PE; Eminem came on the scene – it was all, in the words of my rhyme-spitting idols, “real dope shit.”

Then I started listening to DMX, Ja Rule, MOP. I don't know whether it was the music that had worsened or simply my particular selection of it. Either way, I abandoned the hip-hop genre – for good, I thought – as I completed my OAC year. The emergence of 50 Cent and G-Unit as rap superstars only confirmed, in my eyes, the validity of my choice to part ways with the music. Its *élan* had gone, replaced instead by uber-American macho posturing. I won't go into detail about how Flava Flav's *Strange Love* affected my perception of the hip-hop world, but suffice it to say that this kind of brash commercialism was another thing that had turned me off in the first place.

It took K'Naan to bring me back to the fold.

Perpetually behind in what's happening now, it was just the other week that I first listened to his 2005 freshman release *Dusty Foot*

Philosopher. But better late than never, especially in this case.

DFP blew my mind almost as severely as K'Naan's biography. Over the course of its 18 tracks *DFP* delivers the cure to much of what ails contemporary commercial hip-hop. Chronicling K'Naan's early life growing up in Mogadishu, Somalia, before moving to Harlem, NY, then Rexdale, Ontario, *DFP* weaves together traditional Somali musical influences with contemporary beats, K'Naan's unique form of lyrical poetry and, in some cases, electric guitar and found noises.

The lyrical content is equally diverse. K'Naan incorporates Somalia's traditional myths and contemporary history with his own experiences as a refugee and artist in North America.

Much of the content carries a high political charge. In “Hoobale,” for example, he asks “How can you teach your kids to love when it's killin' their memorizin'/ How can they go to war with terror when it's war that's terroizin'.”

But such a political bent is perhaps unsurprising for someone who narrowly escaped execution by armed gunmen at the age of 11 and whose brother was imprisoned at age 13 for bombing the federal court building.

Stories of similar experiences riddle the lyrics of *DFP*. In “What's Hardcore,” K'Naan describes how, living in Mogadishu, he began “everyday by the way of the gun/ Rocket-propelled grenades blow you away if you front/ We got no police, ambulance or firefighters/ We start riots by burning car tires/ They lootin'/ And everyone starts shootin'/ Bullshit politician talk about solutions/ But it's all talk.”

Unlike many North American rappers, K'Naan's lyrics are not uninterrupted boasts about his street credential, masculinity, or willingness to kill. Often beautifully written and always of powerful content, the oral tradition that K'Naan continues through his music truly returns rap to its rightful status as, in his words, “the poor people's weapon.”

By da Flava's
JAMES SANDHAM





I am a woman of Bangladesh, a tiny independent south Asian country. Although we don't have any surprising stories to tell, we have so many things to be proud of.

I was born in a very ordinary family. Including all my brothers, sisters and parents we are ten family members. There are seven daughters and only one son in our family. My father was a Government employee and mother was a house wife. It makes me sad to tell you that my respected father passed away in 2003, just 10 months after I was married.

Now that I am also a wife and mother, I can hardly believe that my parents managed such a big family with their limited earnings and resources. They sacrificed all their desires and aspirations to take care of us. I really don't know how to give back to them what they have given to me. I don't know what language best describes

my gratefulness to them. I bow down my head to Allah (God) and say, "Oh God! Please grant them the best paradise in the hereafter."

When the eggs arrived, we started our egg festival, making various items of food from them. We ate as many as we wanted and they were cooked in so many different ways: fried, curried, cutlets, mutton etc...

My bond with my family is very strong. From my family I learned things like understanding, sharing and cooperation. As a result, there was nothing - not even sorrows or difficult situations - that could defeat us. In fact, I think I never would have realized what a gift my family was if I hadn't left them to come to Canada.

It seems to me that everything is available in Canada: food, clothes, luxury items, technology, and many

other things. Yet still I feel that something is missing. In the absence of that something, I feel at times like everything is like just colorful balloons that can be burst by a soft touch. Human beings living in this country are sometimes left alone and helpless. Often elderly people are put in nursing homes or hospitals instead of staying with their own families. I wonder where the family bond is or where the social ties are. Sometimes it feels to me like people are running around rootless.

It has been about three years since my husband and I have migrated to Canada. Since then we have been living in the Regent Park area. That is why I would like to build a community family group named 'Regent Park'. This will be like my family in Bangladesh, a place where our bonds and relationships will be unconditional and selfless, establishing love, affection and respect. This will be a Regent Park where people's identities will be established based on moralities and values. No artificiality, dishonesty and hypocrisy will take place. My dream is that Regent Park will become a Peace Park. It is my only dream and my only desire. I know one day this dream will come true. I am ready to work together with others to see it happen. I also know that the partner of all of the best deeds in this world is Allah, the all mighty Allah. He will give us help with this task.

ASMA JAHAN

Somalia:

A HISTORY LESSON

Somalia is a long and narrow country located in The Horn of Africa, bordering both the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean with its neighbours Ethiopia, Djibouti and Kenya. Somalia's modern history began in the late nineteenth century when various European powers began to trade and establish themselves in the area. Since 1991, there has been no effective government as various clan militias have fought against one another. Civil war had erupted because various tribes are trying to gain control of the country. The fighting and drought conditions have disrupted food supplies resulting in famine and death from starvation.

The major languages in the country are Somali, Arabic, Italian and English. The capital city of Somalia is Mogadishu. This is the city where I was born and raised before I came to Canada to live a better life. The main exports are livestock, fish, bananas and especially rice. The restaurants of the Somali community present you with a number of opportunities to experience traditional meals. Somali foods include a selection of Africa's domestic meats and vegetables, Italian pastas and spicy cuisine from a variety of countries that also share the coastline of the Indian Ocean. A typical meal includes goat, lamb, chicken, fish, or camel meat, generally served with a large portion of rice or pasta, and vegetables or salad on the side.

Religion is very important to Somalis. Islam and poetry have been described as the twin pillars of Somali culture. All Somalis are Muslims, followers of the Islamic religion. Somalis follow the five pil-



lars of Islamic faith: the profession of faith, daily prayers, alms-giving, going on the pilgrimage to Mecca (if possible), and fasting during the month of Ramadan.

My experience in Somalia was very difficult. My family was in danger while the civil war was going on, until my father decided to move to Russia. We weren't used to the weather because we came from a hot region. When we came to Canada I did very well in school. I learnt English quickly and averaged 90% in my subjects. I was pleased to have been awarded Valedictorian and Student Achievement Award. At that point, I realized that the education in Somalia is much more advanced than in Canada. If you were in grade eight in Somalia, you would be learning the same curriculum in Canada in grade 10. But my father, who graduated at the University of Somalia, wasn't able to get a salary job here. He ended up

doing manual labour. I do not understand how you can come from a third world country and possess so much knowledge, but not get a decent job.

The overwhelming majority of Somalis come to Canada as refugees fleeing the civil war in their homeland. Hundreds of thousands of Somalis have fled the country since the outbreak of the civil war in 1990. After dealing with the trauma of being forced to leave their native land, Somalis have had to adjust to a different language, culture, and a whole new lifestyle. Somalis face many barriers in immigration, education, employment, culture, and the economy. These barriers are sources of frustration for the Somali community, many of whom came to Canada with the dream of being able to live freely and make a contribution to society. When will the larger community let them in?

OMAR HASSAN

Local Businesses

OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE REVITALIZATION OF REGENT PARK



It's midweek in August, the sun is shining, and the corner of Gerrand and Parliament is bustling with people.

Look south on Parliament and it's the same scene all the way down — families with strollers, women in hijabs, kids on scooters, men with bare chests and tattoos, bikes, buses, and colour. There seems to be someone from every walk of life on every available inch of ground.

That is, until you reach the corner of Dundas and Parliament. In the midst of this frantic, buzzing, dazzling sea of diversity is something that manages to stand out even in this most diverse of neighbourhoods — a gaping hole of an empty lot. It marks the first stage of

Regent Park's revitalization project.

Regent Park was built more than 50 years ago and is one of the oldest publicly funded housing communities in Canada. Covering over 69 acres, it was intended to be an idyllic post-war community removed from the bustle of the city, boasting gardens, parks removed from the streets, and pedestrian-friendly roadways. But as many who have lived in the Park can attest, this utopian dream was never quite realized.

While Regent Park's 2087 units of low-income rental housing — rent-geared-to-income (RGI) housing, as it's called — have been homes to thousands of families over the years, the neighbourhood itself has also become home to a range of society's seedier elements. As former Toronto mayor John Sewell opined in an article for *Eye Weekly*, "the self-policing that's available in most neighbourhoods — through a public-street

system, front doors on those streets, and corner stores — did not exist here, and drug dealers found it was an almost perfect place to practise their trade without police harassment. Problems were intensified by bad management practices by OHC [Ontario Housing Corporation] and then MTHA [Metro Toronto Housing Authority]."

The Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) plans to begin, 2500 market units (mostly condos) will also be added in an effort to recreate Regent Park as a mixed-income community.

Call it pretence, gentrification, or a step in the right direction. Either way, the idea is to maintain and grow the diversity of Regent Park while transforming the neighbourhood into a robust, welcoming,

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...

Continued from previous page...

and prosperous community. According to local business owners, it's something that has been a long time coming.

While not wanting to give her name, an employee of Regent Park Fish and Chips, located on Parliament Street directly across from the first stage of the redevelopment plan, reports that customer levels have definitely increased. And according to her, they seem pleased with the revitalization plans.

"There's the idea that Regent Park is some big, scary place and this [revitalization project] might help change that," she says.

Her sentiments were echoed by Matt, no last name given, owner of The Big Slice on Parliament and Gerrard. He concurs that Regent Park as it stands is "a tough neighbourhood, so hopefully the new one will be better than this one. I'm not saying it's bad, but it's tough," he says. The benefits the new condominiums may bring is something he looks forward to, "but other than that I don't know much," he admits.

Jafar Mhadi has owned Dollar 4U at the corner of Parliament and Gerrard for the past seven years. While his experience so far tells him that "for the short term [the revitalization] is very bad for business," he

is confident that "after four or five years more buildings will bring more people." And while that may mean increased property taxes, "I don't care about the taxes," he says, "I care about customers. If there are no customers, there's no business."

**"THERE'S THE IDEA THAT
REGEN PARK IS SOME
BIG, SCARY PLACE AND
THIS [REVITALIZATION
PROJECT] MIGHT HELP
CHANGE THAT," SHE
SAYS.**

But not all local business owners are as enthusiastic about the coming revitalization. Sayed Rahman of Surma Grocery and Variety Inc., has run the store with his uncle for almost five years, "and we're doing pretty good in this place because this place was always crowded with people. But now they demolish this place and here there was once 500 families in this block who are now gone.

"It has had a big effect on our business," he continues. "We used to do good business and now people are gone from here. The time range they've given for rebuilding this place, I don't think they can [achieve it]. They're moving very slowly and if it continues like this, then I don't know. If it's still like

this in a few months we may have to close the store. We had a store right beside this place that we closed last month. We can't handle the rent and hydro and gas... I had to cut out an employee from this place, and I'm working six days a week, so it's really tough. Business here is bad."

So while many owners seem optimistic about the promised benefits of Regent Park's revitalization, among some there remains the fear that the community in which they have grown and grown to love may disappear around them. With new demographic changes, it is uncertain whether current client bases will remain or be forced out by rising rents and property taxes.

Ultimately, like all communities, Regent Park is one in a state of emergence; it never simply is, but rather is always becoming. What it will become post-revitalization is something about which many of its current residents and business owners have great hopes; but what it becomes in reality may, as it did upon the Park's first inception, turn out to be something completely different. But if there is one thing that characterizes the Park, it's a sense of hope. And with hope, things can only get better.

By da Flava's
JAMES SANDHAM



Listen to Catch da Flava Radio
Live on CKLN 88.1 FM
every Tuesday at 7:30 pm

Sexual Exploitation:

IMMIGRATION'S DARK SIDE

"White slavery is something that's traditionally [associated with] Third World countries," Metro Toronto RCMP Inspector Ben Soave told the *Globe and Mail*. "Suddenly it's here, in our backyards."

Currently, the Solicitor General has reported the economic impact of migrant trafficking to be estimated between \$120 and \$400 million a year.

A 1997 bust revealed that twelve 16 - 30 year olds were purchased weekly for \$15,000 and trafficked into Canada where they were sold into \$40,000 bondage at brothels in Markham, Scarborough and Toronto, according to the *United Press International* and *Toronto Sun*. These women had sex with about 400 men to end their initial contracts, after which they were paid 40% of their tricks for the rest of their stay in Canada. The major crackdown in the late 1990s scooped up illegal operations by the hundreds, with one trafficker charged with 750 counts of trafficking women from other countries as sex workers.

Employment Union reportedly issued 1,000 employment authorizations for "exotic dancers" annually in the late 90s, exposing a devastating loophole in immigration and employment policy that still reverberates today. One girl was hired as a nanny from Russia, had all her travel expenses paid for, and was forced to work at a strip club to repay her debt once she arrived in Toronto. The EU went on to describe one case in which eleven Russian dancers came forward with tales of being lured here by "talent agencies" promising high-paying modeling careers, only to find themselves thrust into a world of sexual bondage and unable to speak enough English to seek legal recourse.

"Destination western nations and originating countries both are complicit and complacent, and rife with corruption, all of which contribute to the growth of a new criminal industry - the illegal trafficking of women for sex," says Canadian author and CTV correspondent Victor Malarek, author of a compelling book titled *The Natashas - Inside the New Global Sex Trade*. The worldwide sex industry is organized crime's fastest growing new business involving up to two million perpetrators, he adds. According to the United Nations, trafficking women is the third most profitable industry after drugs and arms.

The sad reality is that in many cases economic reasons willingly drive many women from places like Thailand, Taiwan, The Philippines and Russia into lives of prostitution, pornographic film and stripping.

"We get girls phoning every day to be in porn movies. We don't have to coerce them," says Paul Markham, a pornographic photographer from the Czech Republic. "In short, for the vast majority of the adult industry there is no need to enslave the girls, they are lured by the money."

In similar fashion, mail order brides are on the rise. What started during the World wars as a means for women to escape poverty has now proliferated due in large part to the internet. Some women report being beaten, raped, isolated, having their passports stolen and promises of repaying their families revoked. Others report living a relatively good life in their new country. "Sometimes my husband kicks me out of the house and tells me not to come back anymore," bride Teresita admits. "I didn't leave because I don't want him to have me deported. Even though he insults or vilifies me, I bear with it and ignore every insult he says to me." Sometimes

these women are bullied and trapped, lorded over by husbands looking for culturally submissive and shy wives.

In contrast, some women feel thankful for the opportunity to have a new life.

"I was making only two and a half pesos per day back home," a mail-order bride named Nela says of living in The Philippines. "That was in the 1980s. Then my mother said I had to work as a helper so I went to the city. Now my situation is good. ... I have to cook for him because he is working for all of us, not only for me but also for my parents in The Philippines. So I have to give him a favour too, like give and take. If I can just send them \$200, it's ok. My parents don't have to work anymore."

A *Macleans* article from October of 2002 cites several examples of mail order brides who have successfully integrated into society, finding community gatherings, having children with their new husbands, attending school and sending home food and money to family members. There's a fine line between voluntary and involuntary human trafficking. At first it may seem financially sensible for many immigrants, but it's rarely emotionally satisfying. Gaps in immigration reform policy leave much to be debated in coming years and clearly allows for a lot of the corruption that goes on today.

"If what we're doing is so bad, then why are police officers and politicians some of our better customers?" one sex agency owner tells the *Toronto Star*. And I think that is the sickest part of all.

By da Flava's
JENN FUSION

Violence on TV:

LEADING CAUSE OF YOUTH VIOLENCE?



Turning on your television nowadays can be a bit of a risk. You are instantaneously besieged by a nauseating amount of brutality. There are an estimated 100 violent acts relayed per hour and, alas, in this contemporary society, abreast of the latest novelties and subjugated by the media, there is almost no amelioration. It is unfortunate, as violence on television is internalized by youth and manifests as the leading cause of youth-related crime. Violence on television has skyrocketed over the last 20 years and, correspondingly, the homicide arrest rate has more than doubled for 17 year olds.

"WHEN TV TELLS AN IMPRESSIONABLE KID HOW TO FIT IN AND PRESENTS AN APPEALING ARCHETYPE, EMULATION IS INEVITABLE."

Advertisements and programs are profoundly violent. Since the youth demographic is the most impressionable, they yield to it. The media dictates what is "in" or "cool" and broadcasts this knowing their targets are susceptible. One of the earliest examples of this was the James Dean zeal of the 1950s. With the release of the hit movie *Rebel*, kids had to have a red Dean jacket and Chesterfields. The difference now is that they've traded in their jackets for "trendy" impenetrable vests. When TV tells an impressionable kid how to fit in and presents an appealing archetype, emulation is inevitable.

With family time taking a back seat to late hours at work and other affairs, kids are left to a common babysitter: the television set. Vegetating in front of the TV, they are subconsciously indoctrinated with its ideals. Studies have shown that most

kids cannot discern reality from fantasy in television programs. With 100 violent acts per hour being broadcasted, this seems a recipe for disaster. And the Television Violence Act hasn't helped either. More and more programs get away with impetuous depictions and kids become further imbued with the ethics of television.

The evidence is there and the statistics reflect the problem. Yet nobody is doing anything about it. Why? One possibility is the profit factor. Violence on television is a multi-billion dollar business. Whether we like it or not, violence sells, and the youth buy into this business fanatically. The same kids enamoured with what they see on television buy their favorite characters' trimmings and emulate their hostility. Meanwhile, the business class triple their capital. Nearly 10 thousand American homicides per year are related to television exposure. But apparently, these casualties are acceptable to make a buck.

Television programs are absolutely deplorable. Looking at the statistics is frightening. The violence on TV multiplies and the homicide rate consequently increases. As mentioned, in 17 year olds it has more than doubled. It is clearly the leading cause of youth-related violence. Before long it could be too perilous to let youth watch TV - a scary thought for broadcasters. After all, how else are they supposed to make money?

JUAN DAVID GAVIRIA

REGENT PARK FOCUS LAUNCHES INTERNET TV

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 8, 2006, AT NELSON MANDELA PARK PUBLIC SCHOOL

The negative portrayal of Regent Park in the media has long been problematic for residents of the community. This stigmatization has especially caused hardship for young people in the neighbourhood.

With this in mind, Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre has announced the launch of a new series of community news and drama programs made for youths by youths. These 5-10 minute segments will be available on the Regent Park TV website (regentpark.tv), with a new episode produced every week.

Adonis Huggins, the Program Coordinator of Regent Park Focus, believes that the programs will help promote positive attitudes about the area. He says, "Regent Park TV will challenge stereotypes about area by showing what really goes on in the Regent Park neighbourhood. It will also feature all kinds of entertaining and thought provoking episodes. All of the youth at Focus are really excited about it."

RPTV will be an opportunity to showcase Regent Park and the talents and creativity of its youth. The shows will feature video episodes on issues that are important to young people and to residents of the area. Episodes on the redevelopment, tenant elections, rising TTC fares, student stress, and break-dancing are already in post-production.

Regent Park TV will be officially launched in the fall. Those who are interested in learning more about RPTV should visit www.catchdaflava.com or call Regent Park Focus at 416-863-1074.

Regent Park TV is funded by Toronto Community Housing.

BY SAMMY LAO

B I K E M A N



**AND OTHER FILMS PRODUCED BY YOUTH
AT REGENT PARK FOCUS**

**PREMIER
WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 8TH 2006**

**REGENT PARK
FILM FESTIVAL**

**(NOVEMBER 8 - 13)
AT NELSON MANDELA PARK SCHOOL
440 SHUTER STREET**

**6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
FOR COMPLETE FILM LISTINGS
WWW.REGENTPARKFILMFESTIVAL.COM**

In a globalize market economy is assimilation inevitable or will people continue to retain their cultural traditions and identity? Da Flava's

Marie Gedge vs da Flava's Bo Wen Chan

YES

ASSIMILATION ISN'T A POSSIBILITY- IT'S A REALITY

Assimilation isn't a possibility, it's a reality. With each generation, immigrants alter their orientation from their original country towards their new home.

Historically, different races developed because groups of people were isolated from each other. Today, global travel has made genetic and cultural mixing possible, the consequence of which is assimilation. As this mixing accelerates with increased globalization, differences

between groups of humans will lessen.

Rigid racial and national identities will therefore be rethought over time. Clinging to cultural differences may slow down the process, but the force of total global homogenization is unstoppable. This does not have to be perceived as a threat to minority cultures, because assimilation is both active and passive. New immigrants affect the development of the culture they are accepted into,

adding to the majority culture as they assimilate.

Assimilation is an inevitable, positive force. The fading away of racial differences means freedom for people to define themselves and not be restrained by the limitations of racism. Assimilation can be something that enables us to celebrate what we have in common: our humanity.

By da Flava's
MARIE GEDGE

NO

GLOBALIZATION AND ASSIMILATION: NOT SO EASY

In almost every major city across the globe you are bound to find a MacDonald's, the Gap, and many other major Western franchises. Turn on your television and you'll see news bites about the States or about a Hollywood blockbuster. Yes, North American culture has invaded many once remote corners of the earth. The march of progress continues, but this has generated several major concerns: Are people becoming increasing similar? Is global diversity over?

Probably not.

First of all, 15% of the world's population, mostly in North America and Western Europe, is consuming over half of the world's natural resources. In other words, it would take six planet earths in order to

accommodate everyone in the world living the American lifestyle. It is therefore physically impossible for all people to partake of the luxuries that characterise life in the developed nations.

Furthermore, just because American goods are *available* worldwide doesn't mean everyone wants them. Foreign citizens are just as patriotic as North Americans and often prefer domestically produced products. For example, in Latin America, American soap operas can't compete with domestic mini-series portraying local settings, characters, and languages. Global marketing campaigns aside, viewers still need something to relate to on a personal level.

So even though television is still dominated by white actors, there are

more ethnic performers getting air time than ever before. This is mainly the result of increased demand for diversity from increasingly multicultural consumers.

Total globalization and cultural assimilation are unrealistic fears. Even if we try, we can't all look alike, talk alike, move alike, act alike, and live alike. It's physically, economically, and culturally impossible - not to mention undesirable. It's not to say that traditions and cultures are not evolving as a result of the omnipotent Western influence in many societies, but traditions are never lost, merely changed, and the trends of today can easily become the traditions of tomorrow.

By da Flava's
BO WEN CHAN



Immigration in this country is quite common. But ever wonder how it really works? The immigration process is as complicated as it is lengthy, and believe me – it's not easy.

Coming to this country requires many things. You must be able to understand some English, have a desirable education and profession, and successfully write a test on Canada.

At least, that's the official version. I never took a test, nor did I have to fill out a single form. That's because I came to Canada when I was 10 years old.

My personal experiences allow me to be thankful for the ability to immigrate. Everywhere I have lived seems to be a problematic place. I was born in Moldova only a few years before the fall of Communism and the USSR, and my family could not practice religion freely and even

had to meet secretly just for the exchange of ethnic food.

Because of this, in the 1970s and 80s most of my family members immigrated to Israel. My mother and I followed in 1990. I was almost 4 years old.

It was great – a place to practice religion freely, excellent sight-seeing... but then conflict began. In 1991 the Gulf War swept the Middle East. Five of us crammed into a room in our apartment, gas masks on, radio on, sirens wailing outside the window. After witnessing the assassination of our prime minister on television in 1994, and countless suicide attacks, we decided to immigrate. I will never forget those sirens, nor will I ever forget those gas masks. They scare me just as much now as they did when I was five.

So we came to Canada. My family and I settled in Vancouver, BC, our

first destination. But we found life for immigrants rather difficult there. We were reduced to one parent delivering newspapers and pizza until all hours of the night, and the other forced to go back to college. My mother had been an accountant since the age of 18 in Moldova, and continued working when we immigrated to Israel. But when we came to Canada, she was forced to attend college and receive certification again to be able to acquire a job. Many of us immigrant children must observe as our parents try to put their lives back together, and start from scratch.

So like many other "fresh off the boat" immigrants, we counted our pennies, went on welfare, and shopped at the Salvation Army. But after two years in Vancouver, we decided to come to Toronto. Like many other Russian Jewish immigrants, we settled in an area known for our ethnicity, at Bathurst and Steeles.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...

...CONTINUED FROM LAST PAGE

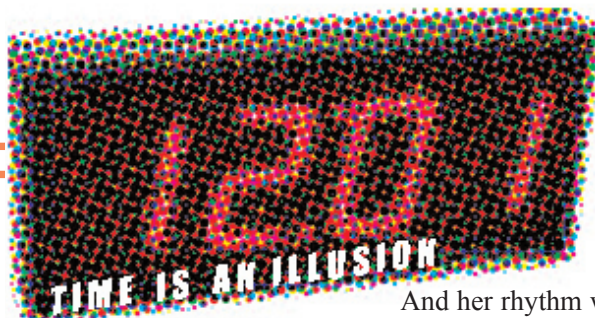
Now at the age of 20, if I had remained in Israel, I would surely just be finishing my two years of mandatory service in the Israeli army. And yes, even girls are required to serve when they turn 18.

In Canada, landed immigrants wait three years and apply for citizenship. At five years it is usually processed and you have to go and sit in a room

of about 30 and "swear your allegiance" to Canada. Others who are refugees must go through a longer and harder process, and sometimes deportation occurs. Overall, there are millions of immigrants with millions of intriguing stories about the experience of immigration, but conclusively many are thankful every day of their lives for the opportunity to immigrate here.

These are reasons why people immigrate and leave everything behind. Even if it means coming here with five dollars in your pocket, it's worth it to know you are safe.

LUDA ZADOROVICH



Time is but an illusion
The past does not exist
And tomorrow never comes
There is only the present
In which we must live
For each moment is unique
And in realizing this,
The thread of time unravels
Only in this way can we be free
To live for ourselves, our friends,
Our family
And to not enslave ourselves
To the master on our wrists
Father Time does not exist
Only the Mother is real

And her rhythm will guide us
As it does all other living things
The birds know when to migrate
And the bears when to hibernate
So why do we insist on enslaving
ourselves
To the time on our watches,
To the dates in our planners
To the alarms on our clocks?
We save for the future,
But such actions are futile
For the future is near,
But never here
And so as we give up today
For the tomorrow that never comes
We measure time and watch
ourselves grow old

Waiting for tomorrow and never
living in today
Because as they say
"There's always next time"
But is there?
If every moment is truly unique
If every beat of your heart and breath
that you take
Is truly different from the last,
Then no - there is no next time
Because there is no time
There is no past
And tomorrow never comes
There is only today
There is only this moment
Live in it

JOSH DA SILVA

Poetry Corner

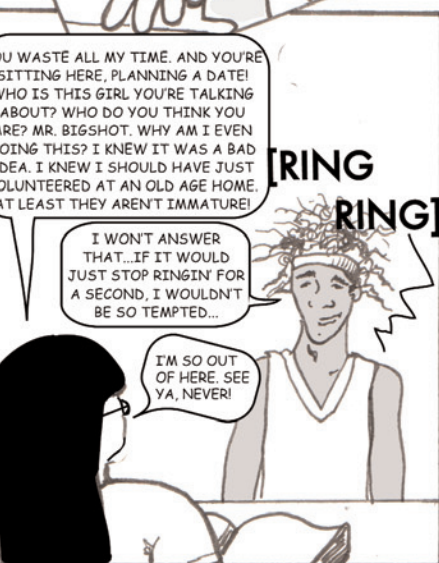
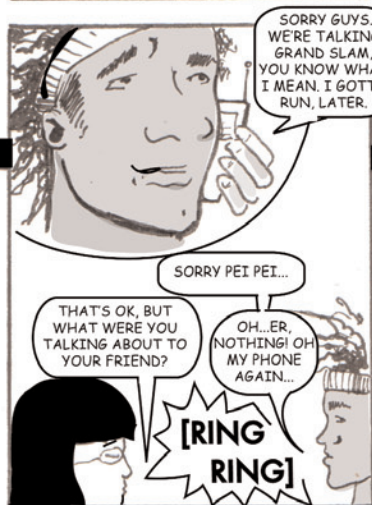
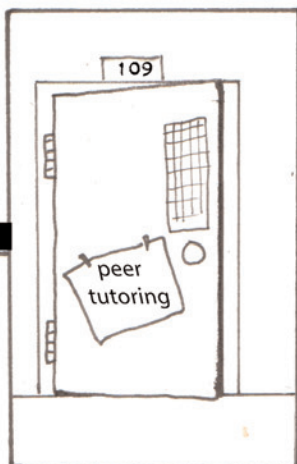
MUNICIPAL VOTING DAY

NOVEMBER 13th 2006

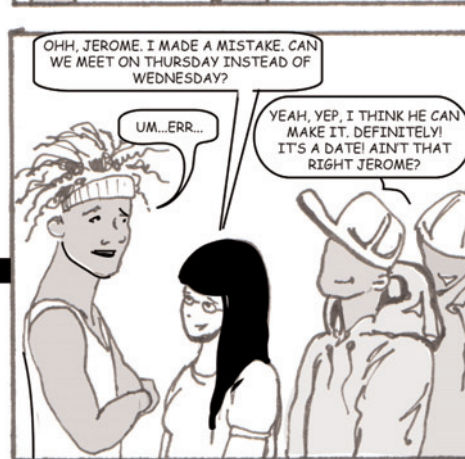
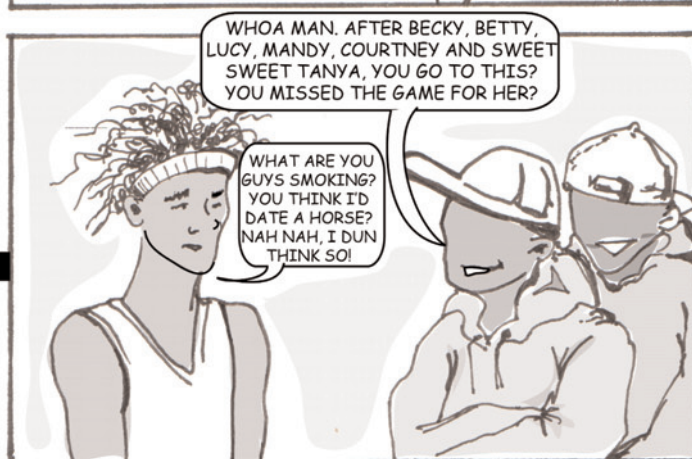
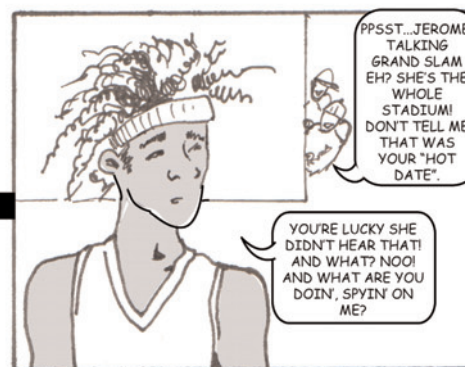
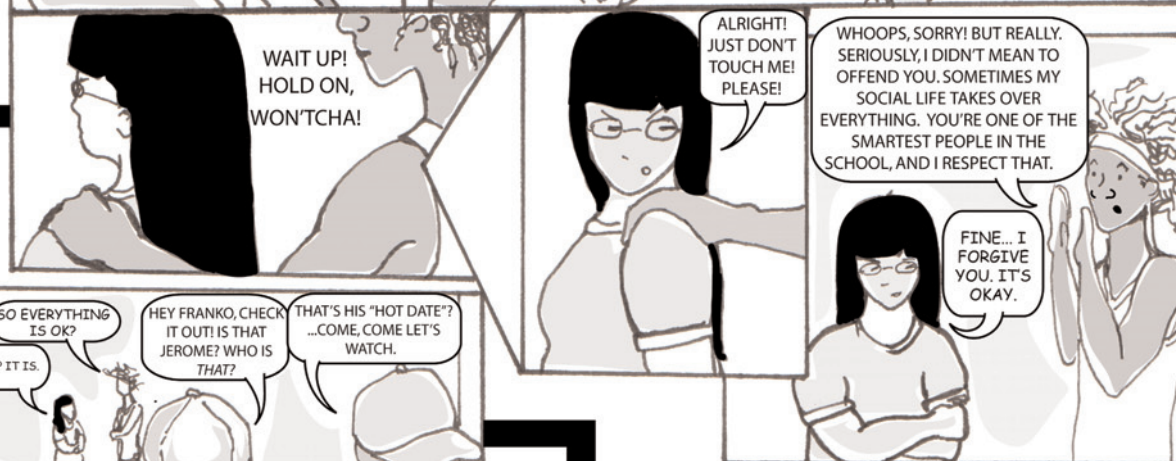
HAVE YOUR SAY IN WHO RUNS THIS CITY

RIVER HIGH

IAIN LEW KEE



BY IAIN LEW KEE



ITAIN LEW KEE

CONTINUED...

What's up in Regent Park

SAFE WALK HOME PROGRAM COMES TO AN END

The Safe Walk Home program is a community initiative that provides supervision to children travelling from local schools to after-school programs and back to their homes. In June 2006 the Safe Walk program was a proud recipient of the Mayor's Community Safety Award, receiving recognition as one of four recipients out of over 400 applicants.

Unfortunately the Safe Walk Home program has come to an end due to a lack of resources. Thanks to all and in particular to community agencies for efforts and support on this initiative.

The Kiwanis Boys and Girls Club along with their partners will continue to seek solutions to get this program back up and running.

REGENT PARK FOCUS FALL PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE

MONDAYS

Digital Photography

Ages 9-12

4:00pm - 5:30pm

Internet

All ages

4:00pm - 5:30pm

Yoga

Adults

5:30pm - 7:30pm

TUESDAYS

Radio & Newspaper Journalism

Ages 15 and up

5:00pm - 8:30pm

Break Dancing

Ages 12 and up

4:30pm - 6:30pm

Music Production

Ages 15 and up

Ages 12-14
4:00pm - 6:00pm

6:00pm - 8:30pm

Internet

All ages

4:00pm - 7:30pm

WEDNESDAYS

Young Women's Program (Divas)

Ages 9-14

4:00pm - 6:00pm

Internet

All ages

4:00pm - 6:00pm

THURSDAYS

Video Production

Ages 15 and up

5:00pm - 8:00pm

Music Production

Ages 15 and up

5:30pm - 8:30pm

Darkroom Photography

4:00pm - 8:00pm

Internet

All ages

4:00pm - 8:00pm

NELSON MANDELA SELECTED AS A MODEL SCHOOL

In January 2006 Nelson Mandela Park Public was one of three schools selected to be a Model School. The Model Schools program is designed to better support inner-city students in their quest to succeed. As a Model School, Nelson Mandela will receive additional resources for school community activities. Their experiences and practices will be shared with schools across the city.



Mayor David Miller joins Nelson Mandela Park School and the Regent Park community to celebrate the Model School Program.

BUILDING BRIDGES BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

On Saturday, August 19th 2006, Parents For Better Beginnings in association with Maritz Canada, the Toronto police, and City of Toronto Parks and Recreation hosted the Building Bridges three-on-three basketball tournament at the Regent Park Community Centre. Maritz Canada provided all of the food, equipment and prizes.



The winning team of the three-on-three tournament



REGENT PARK FOCUS
YOUTH MEDIA ARTS CENTER