

Alberta Public Interest Research Group ANNUAL REPORT 2003/2004



who we are

What is APIRG?

The Alberta Public Interest Research Group (APIRG) is a student-run, student-funded, non-profit organization dedicated to research, education, advocacy, and action in the public interest. APIRG exists to provide students with resources to be active citizens.

This annual report is a record of our growth from May 2003 to April 2004. We are proud to share our successes and challenges with the community. If you would like to know more about APIRG, please feel free to stop by our office at 9111 HUB Mall on the University of Alberta campus.

APIRG Staff

The APIRG staff brings knowledge and experience to the APIRG Resource Centre. They implement decisions made by the Board, and assist volunteers and members with a broad range of enquiries and projects. Because of their long-term affiliation with APIRG, they ensure consistency and institutional memory from year to year.

During the 2003/2004 academic year, staff and board members invested much time and energy into negotiations with the U of A Non-Academic Staff Association. As a result, APIRG now has a collective agreement in place.

APIRG currently employs three permanent, part-time staff:

- Financial Coordinator: Rose Yewchuk
- Working Group Coordinator: Lise Wilson
- Outreach Coordinator: Leah Orr



APIRG Board of Directors

APIRG Board Members are in charge of all of APIRG's operations. Board responsibilities include developing policy, setting priorities, reviewing funding proposals, doing community outreach, hiring and managing staff, and organizing events and publications. Sitting on the APIRG board is both challenging and rewarding, and an opportunity to learn and grow in myriad ways.

The student body elected APIRG's second Board of Directors in a general election in March 2003. Due to resignations over the course of the summer and fall terms, two new Board members were elected at the Annual General Meeting in November 2003.

2003/2004 Board Members

- Eric Kershaw (Resigned mid-year)
- Jen Lusk (Resigned mid-year)
- Leila Darwish (Resigned mid-year)
- Emilia Kennedy (Resigned mid-year)
- Alex Abboud (Students' Council Representative: Resigned mid-year)
- · Heather Mandin
- Maja Osmanagic
- Chris Drake
- Curtis Penner
- Kalin Jensen
- Kim Smith
- Mustafa Hirji
- Tyler Botten (SU Exective Representative)
- Erin Kelly (Students' Council Representatvie)
- Pete Presant (Non-voting)
- Craig Campbell (Non-voting)
- Tim Singh (Non-voting)
- Tracey Smith (Non-voting)
- Gordon Eadie (Non-voting)

Many thanks go out to all who participated in APIRG operations over the course of the year. Your time and energy are greatly appreciated.

Contact Information

APIRG can be reached at: 9111 – 112 Street, Edmonton, AB, T6G 2C5 p. (780) 492-0614 f. (780) 492-0615 apirg@ualberta.ca www.apirg.org

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Accomplishments for 2003/2004

The APIRG Board spent the 2003/2004 year building on the foundation laid in previous years. Much of the fall term was spent developing policies and completing bylaws. APIRG incorporated as a non-profit society in April 2004.

APIRG support aided in the creation of numerous Working Groups and helped students to attend conferences on issues ranging from international health (such as HIV/AIDS) to urban ecology, youth and labour organization, and the media.

Through generous donations of time, energy, and resources, the APIRG Resource Centre now boasts a collection of nearly 500 books, over 40 videos, and numerous magazines, literary journals and other publications.

APIRG also published two issues of "The Porcupine Quill," a newsletter created to provide APIRG affiliates with a venue for free and open communication of ideas. In addition, we hosted a successful Open Mike/Appreciation Night in April 2004. The Open Mike event was an opportunity for APIRG volunteers and funding recipients to meet and share their experiences and ideas.

Outreach activities such as tabling at the SU Clubs Fair, the Alberta Social Forum, the Global Visions Film Festival, and the Fair Trade Fair have increased APIRG's strength and efficacy. We have also collaborated with other Canadian PIRGs, local organizations, and student groups.

Some challenges we faced

Because the composition of the APIRG board changes every few months, staff members have faced a lack of continuity in contract negotiations and performance reviews. To remedy this, the APIRG Board entered a collective bargaining process with the University's Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA) in January 2004.

The collective agreement came into effect in May 2004, providing staff with increased stability, a training fund, and various other benefits. The bargaining process also included a complete overhaul of the job descriptions. The office is now staffed on a rotating basis by four part-time staff members, each of whom coordinates a specific part of APIRG's operations.

The APIRG board also took on the challenge of streamlining funding application processes. We reduced the number of funding periods per year and rewrote application forms to simplify the application process. Unfortunately, there are still a few wrinkles to iron out. In future years, we will continue to work on funding processes to ensure that they meet the needs of the campus community.

APIRG continues to work on on recruiting and sustaining a consistent volunteer base. Finally, in response to student concerns that the opt out process was too complicated and unwieldly, the APIRG board voted to change the process for 2004/2005 so that refunds are available diectly from the APIRG office.



events & projects

Speaker, Event, and Project Fund

The speaker, event, and project fund provides funding and support to individuals or groups who wish to bring in a speaker, organize an event, or undertake any other project, such as a research project or publication.

APIRG-sponsored speakers and events:

- David Orchard
- Making the Links: The World Says No to the WTO
- The Edmonton Anarchist Bookfair \$1300
- Bottom of the Barrel: Africa's Oil Boom and the Poor (lan Gary, Strategic Issues Advisor, Africa, Policy and Strategic Issues Division of Catholic Relief Services) – \$400
- ECOS Green is Gold Ecoconference \$1000
- ESPA's North of Nowhere Expo
- The Alberta Social Forum \$900
- The Parkland Institute's "Challenging Empire:
 Citizenship, Sovereignties, and Self-Determination"
 Conference (Dr. Michael Parenti, Naomi Klein, James
 Laxer, Chief Garry John, Tony Hall, Elizabeth May, and
 Monique Simard) \$2000
- Day of Silence \$300
- Edmonton May Week Labour Arts Festival \$1000
- PaulMartinTime.ca's 2004 Democratic Deficit Tour – \$500
- Norman Nawrocki's Educational Sex Cabaret "I Don't Understand Women" – \$800
- International Week 2004
- GlobalAware EnCana Tour: Canadian Connections to Oil Exploitation – \$400
- Tibetan Benefit Show
- Addressing AIDS: A Panel Discussion on Global HIV/ AIDS Issues
- Small change, big difference! Fair Trade Fair
- Speak Out! Speakers Series
- No-BMD Movie and "Missile Making" Nights
- Film screenings of: "Cry of the Snow Lion: A Tibetan Documentary," "The Corporation," and "The War for Oil and Drug Money,"
- One World Beat Global Music Festival
- An interactive forum with Dr. Saleem Qureshi on "South Asia: Religion, State and Society" – \$192.47

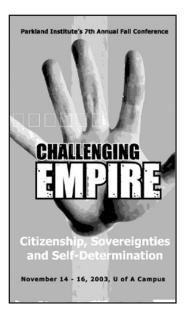
APIRG-sponsored projects:

- The Homeless Youth Project \$710
- Drama 507: The Coronation Voyage \$400
- "Lost Creeks and Wetlands of Edmonton" Map \$1090
- Tribal Directory \$200

Comments from funding recipients:

"This year's event was described by many as "the best Parkland conference ever," and indeed, by all accounts must be described as a success. Over 800 people attended both Michael Parenti's Friday night keynote and Naomi Klein's "Bomb it, Then Buy it" Sunday afternoon presentation.

The tremendous interest in this year's conference easily leads to the conclusion that Parkland Institute should continue to hold such events in the future. And although the level of student involvement and attendance in the Parkland conference is still not as large as it could be, the gains made toward this end are significant. We would like to express our sincerest appreciation to APIRG for its support



for "Challenging Empire" and we look forward to further collaboration on similar events in the future."

Jane Wiley, Programs Coordinator, Parkland Institute

"On Friday March 12th, 2004, the University campus was a little bit guieter. A large number of students and staff showed their support for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) people during the U of A's 2nd Annual Day of Silence. The event, which was created to raise awareness of GLBT issues and to fight homophobia and discrimination, was a huge success. We gave out over 200 buttons that read "Day of Silence," and had about 40-50 people attend the Breaking of the Silence in QUAD. At the Breaking of the Silence we had numerous participants (from SU president Mat Brechtel to students at large) share their feelings about the day. Participants expressed that the event made them more aware of what GLBT individuals go through, and gained a respect for GLBT individuals' strength. Overall, the day was a huge success with tons of support given and gained on campus."

Topher McFarlane, Day of Silence Coordinator 2004

financial report

Financial summary

2003/2004 was APIRG's second full year of operations on campus. We are still growing as an organization, which is why several budget categories show a difference between what was projected and what was actually spent. APIRG closed the fiscal year with a small surplus of \$4627.90, which will be invested in a long-term stability fund.

As required by Students' Union Bylaw 6550, APIRG has its books audited annually by the chartered accounting firm of Halpert Monsma Aquin. The 2003/2004 audit verified that our financial statements are in accordance with Canadian accounting principles.

Last year, APIRG provided \$48,926.12 in direct grants to individual students and student groups. The opt out amount paid to students shows up as zero because the opt outs were processed by the Students' Union and not by APIRG. The SU will deduct this year's opt outs from next year's fee payments, so they will not show up in the budget until the 2004/2005 statements.

The majority of APIRG's revenue for 2003/2004 came from dedicated student fees (\$143,031). Full-time students paid \$2.71 per term and part-time students paid \$1.35 per term. Additional income came from community memberships (\$143), bank interest (\$716.48) and office income such as t-shirt sales, button sales, and donations (\$956.83).

Plans for 2004/2005

APIRG has created a separate Project Fund to accommodate grant applications that fall outside of the scope of our Speaker/Event Fund or Working Group Fund. We have also reallocated the funding amounts in each category.

As of May 2004, APIRG staff became members of the University of Alberta Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA). Staffing costs will increase to meet the requirements of the collective agreement. However, the amount of rent APIRG pays to HUB mall is expected to decrease because we are now a registered non-profit society. We have applied for a property tax exemption from the City of Edmonton and expect it to take effect in by early 2005.

If you have questions about APIRG's finances that go beyond the scope of this report, you are welcome to make an appointment with APIRG's financial coordinator. Our books are open to the public and we welcome your feedback about our spending priorities. We are accountable to you!

APIRG Expenses for 2003/2004

Operations	Projections	Year end			
Conference Fund \$ 10 00					
Speaker/Event Fund	\$ 8 400.00	\$ 11 192.47			
Working Group Fund	\$ 35 000.00	\$ 24 205.41			
Programming	\$ 1500.00	\$ 515.76			
Library	\$ 2 000.00	\$ 2 041.32			
AGM	\$ 400.00	\$ 421.70			
Elections - CRO \$ 1 000.00 \$ 1 071.81					
Elections - Campaigns	\$ 2 000.00	\$ 1 495.93			
Board retreat	\$ 1500.00	\$ 848.80			
Total Operations \$61 800).00 \$55 32	1.44			
Office					
Rent & Utilities	\$ 12 000.00	\$ 12 882.73			
Insurance	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00			
Phone & Fax	\$ 1500.00	\$ 1157.88			
		92.78			
Photocopier 3 30	\$ 1800.00	\$ 1 349.38			
•					
Office supplies		,			
Total Office	\$18 250.00	\$19 018.46			
A					
Administration	÷ 200000	÷ 26720			
Publicity & outreach	\$ 2 000.00	\$ 3 667.20			
Opt-out administration	\$ 1000.00	\$ 1001.52			
Student opt-out	\$ 2500.00	\$ 0.00			
Contract work	\$ 2500.00 \$ 450.00 \$ 2000.00	\$ 0.00			
Audit		\$ 2590.26			
Total Administration	\$ 7 950.00	\$ 7 258.98			
Staff					
Coordinator	\$ 30 000.00	\$ 29 428.54			
Administrator	\$ 20 000.00	\$ 23 517.03			
Total Staff	\$50 000.00	\$52 945.57			
Contingency	\$ 5 000.00	\$ 5 674.96			
Total Expenses \$143 000.00 \$140 219.41					

Revenues for 2003/2004

Income		
Dedicated fees	\$143 000.00	\$143 031.00
Other income	\$ 0.00	\$ 1816.31
Total Income	\$143 000.00	\$144 847.31

Budget Summary

Income	\$143 00	0.00	\$14	14 847.31
Expenses		\$143 00	0.00	\$140 219.41
Surplus (Deficit)	\$	0.00	\$ 4	4 627.90

Conference &

Conference and Training Fund

The APIRG conference fund provides funding and support to individuals who wish to attend a conference or training session that reflects the APIRG mandate.

Conference and training fund applicants submit a proposal to APIRG and attend an interview with the Board. Recipients are required to provide a written report and make a public presentation on their experience. In keeping with APIRG's commitment to accountability and transparency, final reports are available in the Resource Centre, posted in the APIRG website, or published in APIRG's newsletter, "The Porcupine Quill."



Comments from recipients

"From Thursday May 22 – May 25 2003 I attended the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association's (CHHA) Annual Conference with the intent of

- a) Gaining new audio material for Hard of Hearing Radio (HOHRadio);
- b) Networking to find new & sustainable sources of information relating to hearing loss, and promoting HOHRadio; and
- c) Creating a picture of how online captioning works, how it may benefit HOHRadio's listeners, potential related budget considerations, and potential sources of funding.

As a result of the funding provided by the Alberta Public Interest Research Group Conference Fund, I was able to forge many new relationships and educate myself on new innovations relating to hearing loss. I obtained an enormous amount of audio material for airing on Hard of Hearing Radio, which will be aired on CJSR FM 88.5 in Edmonton and possibly a few other radio stations across the country. The new contacts I've made offer exciting possibilities for expansion of the scope and accessibility of Hard of Hearing Radio, and I'd like to extend my thanks on behalf of my listeners to APIRG for their role in making my attendance possible."

Adam Ungstad, Producer – Hard of Hearing Radio

"Following on the heels of the first three World Social Forums held in Brazil, the fourth WSF was held in Mumbai, India from January 16-21, 2004. As an alternative to the annual World Economic Forum held in Davos, Switzerland, the World Social Forum provides an open space to discuss strategies of resistance to globalization.

The model of globalization was developed at the World Economic Forum by large multinational corporations, national governments, the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO, which are the vanguard of these corporations (see 'Who We Are,' www.wsfindia.org). With a strong commitment to making 'another world possible,' the WSF encourages discussion on alternatives to neo-liberalism, facilitating the exchange of experiences and strengthening alliances among mass organizations, peoples' movements and civil society organizations. Thanks to the support of APIRG, we were able to attend the fourth installment of this critical international gathering."

Anika Henderson and Karen Okamoto

training fune

"Thanks to the generous support of the APIRG conference fund I had a chance to attend "Withinsight 2004," a conference dedicated to bringing the young leaders of today together from all corners of Canada. We met in Ottawa to build our leadership skills, meet with other Canadian youth, and have a chance to discuss regional issues in a national setting.

I can truly say my Withinsight experience broadened my mind to a multitude of issues facing Canadians. Thanks to support from APIRG, a student from rural Alberta had the chance to learn much more about what it means to be Canadian. I would strongly recommend any open-minded individual who would like to learn more about our nation to attend next year!"

Michael Janz

"On October 16, 2003, I was given the opportunity to experience the Bioneers' Conference in San Rafael, California. This trip was made possible by the inspiration and curiosity of my friend Leila Darwish, the Bioneers' Activism partial scholarship, a conference scholarship from APIRG and the ceaseless support of my parents Russ and Betty Reeves.

This 3-day conference featured over 100 speakers, workshops, art performances, films, and social gatherings covering a wide range of environmental, social, political, economic, artistic and global issues. The reality and depth of the global social and environmental crisis was solidified with topics such as global water issues, social inequality, corporation dominance, genetically modified food, and industrialization of agriculture.

Although my reawakening to the severity of these issues was profound and immensely heartbreaking, it complimented and actually intensified the hope, love and inspiration that I found in the speakers who spoke of grassroots initiatives, nature's powers and strengths, and moreover, in the combined energies of the 5000 people that gathered together at this conference.

The scale of the environmental and social movement is much bigger than we think. With alliances between individuals and organizations that are working towards a better way of life, be it through social or environmental goals, we can and will turn the current global situation around."

Rebecca Reeves

Fund Recipients for 2003/2004

Anika Henderson and Karen Okamoto – World Social Forum 2004 in Mumbai. India – \$1500

Edward Lee – Student University Network for Social and International Health Conference in Ottawa, Ontario – \$150

Carmen Gustafson – Environmental Problems and Policies in Growing Urban Areas Symposium – Helsinki, Finland – \$165

Rebecca Reeves – Bioneers Conference – San Rafael, California – \$400

Katherine Friesen – Solidarity WORKS! Youth Action Project – \$1500

Jason Bisanz – Global Leadership Program – Prague, Czech Republic – \$400

Kirsten van der Meer – AFS Interculture Canada Internship – Honduras – \$375

Adam Ungstad – Canadian Hard of Hearing Association Annual Conference – Calgary – \$75

Dustin McLachlan, Waleed Giratalla, Navid Tabatabai, Chris Germain, Carin Meleifste, Kelsey Chegus, Stephen Dunn, Lori Sitko – Engineers Without Borders National Conference – \$800

Pete Presant and Sheryle Carlson – Un-censoring: MediaMorphosis – Ottawa, Ontario – \$986.16

Joey Hundert – European Biofibres Mission – Germany – \$500

Jen Richardson, Gabrielle Tompkins, Crystal Haskey, Paula Meyler, Deena Hinshaw, Sarah Hughes, Sukhaina Hirji, Anna Uhlick, Anna Lundeen, Dawn Hare – HIV/AIDS Symposium – Saskatoon, Saskatchewan – \$817.08

Rita Sidhu, Randeep Purewall and Nina Suhkrani
– National South Asian Law Conference – Seattle,
Washington – \$1350

Michael Janz – Withinsight – Ottawa – \$350 Debra Douglass – WUSC International Seminar – Malawi - \$750

Dawn Hare – Prevention of HIV/AIDS Through Capacity Building and Advocacy Development – Botswana – \$500

Jeevan Nallainayagam – The National Model United Nations – Manhattan, New York – \$500

Sukhaina Hirji – World Model United Nations Conference – Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt – \$500

Tracey Smith – Learning Network Conference – \$120 Anne Aspler and Paula Meyler – Projet Integre pour

la Promotion de l'Auto-Developpement (PIPAD)

– Cameroon – \$600

University of Alberta Model United Nations Club
– Various members, various conferences – \$1190

working groups

What is a Working Group?

Working Groups (WGs) are collectives of students and community members who come together to work on a specific project or public interest issue. APIRG provides assistance, funding and resources to a wide variety of WGs focusing on local and global issues such as the environment, health, politics, education, law, media, alternative economics, human rights, gender issues and more.

One of APIRG's main goals is to provide undergraduate students with the tools to enhance and diversify their education and to realize their full potential as active citizens.

Groups funded in 2003/2004

The following list of Working Groups received financial support from APIRG during the 2003/2004 school year:

Name of group	Grant
iHuman Peregrine Falcon Webcam Resources for Academic Excellence Safe Zone Simplefood Organic Food CoOp S Sounds of Dissent	\$ 1 616.00 \$ 3 052.00 \$ 70.99 \$ 2 000.00 \$ 500.00 \$ 1 257.00 \$ 2 808.75 \$ 880.00 \$ 500.00 \$ 1 300.00 \$ 2 100.00 \$ 1 600.00
Total	\$24 205.41

Other active groups

A number of other Working Groups were also active in 2003/2004, but did not receive funding from the Working Group fund. Some of them only accessed APIRG's in-kind services and support; some had money remaining in their grants from 2002/2003, and some received funding from APIRG's Speaker Fund or Conference Fund.

- ASH (Affordable Student Housing)
- ACBES (Alternatives to the Canadian Banking and Economic System)
- ATOP (Alberta Taiga Oilsands Project)
- U of A CAWAR (Coalition Against War and Racism)
- ESPA (Edmonton Small Press Association)
- FUSS Feminist Collective
- Humanities 101
- Just Java
- Media Working Group
- SALSA (South Asian Law Students Association)
- SYC (Sierra Youth Coalition)
- Warchild

APIRG provides the following services and support to WGs:

- Start-up funding
- Help with promotion, publicity and recruiting members
- Networking with other WGs and community groups
- Web space and an email account on the APIRG server
- Priority access to Conference/Training and Speaker/ Event funds
- Use of the APIRG button maker, video camera, Resource Library, and office resources
- Free meeting space and room bookings on campus
- APIRG staff support, skills training, and consensus workshops
- Assistance with WG policies and structure



Working Group Year in Review

Upon reviewing this past year's APIRG Working Groups, there are some great achievements to celebrate, as well as some challenges to overcome. Managing multiple groups of people with diverse needs is no easy task!

Our achievements include:

- Accepting and providing assistance to a wide diversity of WGs, ranging in focus from environment to health, politics, education, law, human rights and gender issues.
- Witnessing tangible results of APIRG support, such as successful WG events and projects.
- Overseeing the appropriate use of APIRG funds, frequent reporting, and group accountability.
- Providing WGs with training in consensus, web design, and APIRG financial reporting.
- Holding two well-attended Working Group orientation meetings where groups had an opportunity to meet each other, meet APIRG staff and board, and review APIRG services and policies.
- Acknowledging and addressing problems when they arose.

APIRG's challenges included:

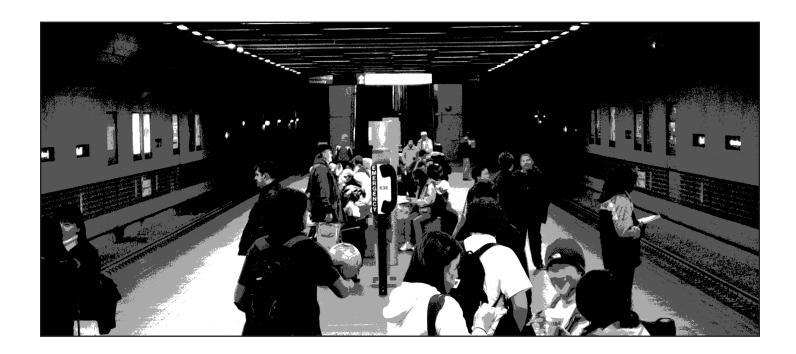
- Overextending ourselves: Spreading support and resources between too many groups and individuals.
- Stamina and sustainability: Groups that formed and

- disbanded without meeting goals, or lingered without becoming active...or disappeared without accessing their funds. Approximately 5 groups were accepted but did not follow through with accessing funds or support.
- Communication: Because 2 staff people and several 'liaising' Board Members were assigned to follow-up with WGs, communication could become convoluted, inconsistent, minimal or redundant.
- Financial accountability and progress reporting: In some cases, progress reports from WGs were infrequent or nonexistent, even when given opportunities to do so.

Recommendations from the APIRG Board:

- Provide more support for fewer groups. Less paperwork = more time for support
- Change the APIRG staff job descriptions to create a Working Group Coordinator and a Financial Coordinator to directly oversee WG operations and provide support where needed
- Review and revise WG policies to address communication, sustainability and financial concerns
- Review and revise the application, selection and follow up process to ensure consistency and efficiency
- Require all groups to have a financial contact person.
 Provide that person with training to fulfill their role.
- Provide more opportunities for WGs to network and share resources and skills with others.
- Provide an opportunity for WGs to offer constructive feedback to APIRG.





Summary of Select Working Groups

Here are the highlights from some of last year's active groups. You may go to www.apirg.org for a full description of each group.

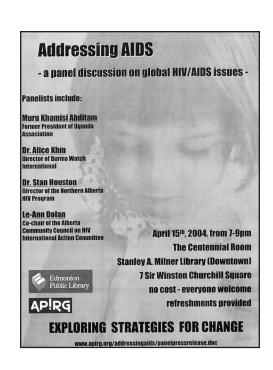
Addressing AIDS

This group hopes to increase public awareness of the local and global relevance of HIV/AIDS and the urgent need to arrest the free-falling cycle of infection. They are working to provide a supportive and integrative grass-roots approach to health care education, outreach, and advocacy for at-risk populations in Edmonton, especially those who "fall through the cracks" and have little or no voice in the community. Addressing AIDS hopes to rally the political will to devote more resources to addressing the HIV/AIDS problem and to empower people to break down the barriers impeding a solution to the AIDS stigma at home and the urgent AIDS pandemic abroad.

Achievements and Events:

- Members attended the WUSC Symposium on HIV/ AIDS and World Health in Saskatoon
- Hosted information tables at International Week's NGO fair and in SUB
- Hosted the Bill C-56 Awareness Campaign event at the Edmonton Public Library on April 15, 2004. The

panel discussed the potential impact of Bill C-9, an amendment to the Food and Drug and Patent acts that would allow generic drug producers to produce low cost versions of certain patented drugs – especially the anti-retrovirals key to treating HIV/AIDS – expressly for countries that need these drugs to address public health emergencies.



Alberta Taiga Oilsands Project (ATOP)

The Alberta Taiga Oilsands Project is dedicated to studying the social and ecological impact of the oil sands industry in Northern Alberta. We strive to make this information available to the public through digital and print publications.

In doing this we hope to give voice to the most marginalized groups and positions that are either ignored or side-lined by industry and pro-industry governments. Key interests include: land reclamation, forestry use conflicts, relevant statutes and regulations, social indicators of effects of worker transience, effects of new oil sands technology, industry presence in university research, and indigenous issues (especially land claims).

Achievements and Events:

- Created and maintained a website.
- February 2003: group trip to the Fort McMurray region to gather materials and meet with local groups and individuals involved in the oil sands industry.
- Summer 2004: supported an anthropology graduate student conducting research into how people in the Athabasca region perceive environmental dangers and risks associated with the oil and gas industry. Weekly journal entries and photographs were published on the ATOP website.

Biofreedom

Biofreedom is committed to consumer advocacy and education concerning Genetically Engineered (GE) foods. They plan to conduct a public awareness campaign about the issues concerning genetic engineering and mandatory labeling of GE food products, and to promote awareness of GE Wheat.

Achievements and Events

- Organized many public screenings of the NFB documentary, Mutant Food, and made presentations on the subject of GE foods.
- Created a petition letter to mail directly to the Minister Lyle Vanclief to show objection to GE Wheat.
- Tabled and presented at community centres, malls, Eco weekend, and at the Teachers' Convention.
- Successfully convinced Roots Organic Restaurant to put 2 permanent posters about GE foods inside their store.
- Created a website and event listserv.

Brazil: Social Democratic Governance

Goals: To develop a report on recent social change in Brazil, to provide observations on continuing political developments in Brazil, and to investigate how a social democratic government like the one represented by Lula can improve social development. Our WG will accomplish this through the development of a small library collection devoted to resources on Brazil, the completion of a comprehensive and interactive website, the production of a short 20 minute documentary about Brazil's current political environment, the continuation of presentations about Brazil, the compilation of a WG newsletter to print and distribute, and the sponsorship of a speaker from Brazil to do presentations about the situation in Brazil.

Achievements and Events:

- Summer 2003: one member conducted qualitative research on the new government in Brazil and the electorate's reactions, expectations, and concerns. This involved compiling a questionnaire and interviewing hundreds of Brazilians on their thoughts and feelings towards social change and development, and the prospects for such desired change with their new leftist Worker Party leader Lula da Silva as president.
- Other group members worked on a paper about the popular cultural influence of music in Brazil's change in government, and a paper about experiences while in Brazil during the election of Lula.
- Fall 2003: Several articles written by the founding member about the project were published locally.
- At the Alberta Social Forum, members facilitated a 1.5 hour discussion on the research compiled in Brazil.

SimpleFood Organic Food Buying Co-Op

SimpleFood is committed to the promotion and distribution of certified organically grown foods adhering to ethical and sustainable standards of production. Our group processes bulk food orders from organic food distributors, thereby providing low-cost organic food to the community.

Achievements and Events

- Acquired a space to store and distribute food at 10008 - 109th St.
- Created a Simplefood Website.
- Held regular meetings and coordinated several successful food ordering and distribution sessions.

working groups

Campus Community Garden

Goals: To produce food on campus without the use of pesticides, chemicals, genetically modified plants, or treated city water. To provide organic, fresh, and healthy food for students through the Campus Food Bank, a market garden, or another similar program. To create nature-connected recreational opportunities for students. To promote the cultivation of local, hardy, and easily managed vegetables.

Achievements and Events:

- Approximately 30 volunteers learned how to construct, plant, maintain and harvest the garden. We planted a wide range of plants, from tomatoes to zucchini to herbs.
- Workshops were held throughout the summer, including seed saving and companion planting.
- A fence was purchased and constructed
- The seven rain-barrels on site, which store 1400 litres of water, were sufficient to supply the garden with water for all but approximately one week of the summer.
- A significant amount of harvest was donated to the Campus Food Bank, including lettuce, cucumbers, potatoes, tomatoes, and squash

Festival of Independent & Underground • visual art • small press • film & video • music cabarets • d.i.y. skillshares Edmonton Public Library Oct. 9-17, 2003

Edmonton Small Press Association (ESPA)

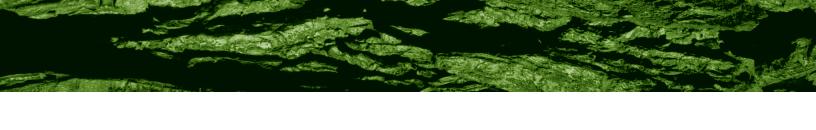
The Edmonton Small Press Association (ESPA), a non-profit arts society since 1998, is volunteer-operated, has an open, inclusionary membership policy, and maintains a socially-conscious mandate. As community cultural development facilitators, we are committed to fostering the awareness and development of independent small press ventures in Canada and beyond. To that end, we produce ongoing programs with the intent of fostering the notion that small press initiatives are viable artistic expressions, valuable tools for positive social change, and therefore valuable to global culture. We also maintain an extensive Small Press Library & Archive, represented by over 650 member artists and collectives from 29 countries.

APIRG directly assisted with funding and support for the North of Nowhere (NoN) Expo. APIRG's assistance with NoN was vital in supporting our overhead costs of hiring short-term coordinators and general production costs. In the new year, APIRG provided a portion of funding to support the ESPA-coordinated GlobalAware tour featuring filmmaker Nadja Drost, who has been documenting the human rights abuses and other social injustices suffered by Ecuadorians as a result of the unethical business practices of Alberta-based oil giant Encana. In addition, the ESPA has

made use of the fantastic button maker for several events! The ESPA is grateful for the support we have received from APIRG and we look forward to working with APIRG in the future.

Achievements and Events:

- Development and production of the inaugural North of Nowhere Expo, a multidisciplinary festival of independent and underground media featuring the underground work of hundreds of independent artists, approximately 20 local bands/musicians, 30 film screenings, 10 workshops and skillshares, all done in collaboration with dozens of other social justice and arts-related groups.
- The ESPA's 2003 programs and activities resulted in a combined attendance of approximately 4000 audience members, and received approximately 4200 hours of volunteer support.
- Spring of 2004: the production (with Biofreedom) of Edmonton's first "Small Change, Big Difference" Fair Trade Fair, facilitated by TransFair Canada.
- Using APIRG's button-maker, the ESPA produced and distributed thousands of socially-conscious buttons as a minor fundraising initiative over the past year, encouraging the public to become 'passive objectors.'





SafeZone

There are two basic aspects to the SafeZone mandate. The first goal is education. We hope to raise awareness about various Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (GLBTQ) issues faced by GLBTQ people at a University campus. The second aspect is to identify and train GLBTQ allies that exist at the U of A and beyond. For the upcoming year we are planning on expanding our presence on campus and hopefully getting more people from various groups and organizations on campus involved. We are also going to start giving our introductory presentation to people and develop more specific presentations on various topics.

Achievements and Events:

- Researched and compiled an introductory package.
- Developed an introductory presentation that will be able to work in conjunction with the package.
- Developed a logo and started to make buttons that we can disperse to people to identify them as allies/ SafeZone members.
- Made a presentation to the group InsideOut, which is a GLBTQ group on campus for staff and graduate students. There were also representatives at this meeting from the Student Distress Center, Human Rights, and the International Center.

Peregrine Falcon Webcam

Last year, the Environmental Coordination Office of Students (ECOS) initiated a project to plant a webcam in the nest of a peregrine falcon couple nesting at the top of the Clinical Sciences building here on the U of A campus. There are nine live 'nest-cams' in Eastern Canada; ours would be the first at this end of the country. We are now in the process of searching for additional funding to pay for the 'black box' that is necessary to record the data from the webcam, as well as the link-up of the camera to a website.

Achievements and Events:

- Donation of an old webcam. Funds for the installation of the camera, internet costs, as well as additional equipment are still needed.
- Hosted a fundraiser at the Alberta Provincial Museum as well as a live broadcast on CJSR, which together raised
- October 2003: One of the falcons was killed. The project was halted because we were not sure if the remaining falcon would return.
- Spring 2004: She did in fact return, with a new male partner.
- Summer 2004: Three chicks were added to the nest box: one, a male, on July 8th, and two females on July 15th. The parents adapted well to their new foster chicks.

Resources for Academic Excellence (RAE)

RAE is dedicated to forming relationships between the newcomer community and post-secondary students. University students will be paired with newcomer youth from the community to offer free tutoring services. The objectives of RAE are to focus on disadvantaged youth, promote equal opportunity for education, help establish consistent study habits, provide a positive role model, build communication skills, and establish a long-term program in the community.

Achievements and Events

- Recruited WG members and made contact with schools.
- Applied for charity status.
- Registered as a Student's Union group.

WORING OFOUDS

South Asian Law Students Association (SALSA)

SALSA aims to promote an understanding and appreciation of South Asian political, legal, and social issues with the overarching goal of highlighting the importance of legal discourse across borders. SALSA seeks to create a supportive community for law students, encourage South Asian involvement in the legal arena, and promote awareness of South Asian cultures and issues including, but not limited to, those of a social, political, and legal nature.

In particular, SALSA will examine legal issues pertinent to the cultural and religious practices of South Asian minority groups in Canada as well as pressing legal issues in South Asia today.

SALSA Achievements and Events:

- January 25, 2004: Special Talk: "Race and Law: The South Asian Experience," by Professor Anand Weir (held prior to securing APIRG WG status).
- February 13-16, 2004: SALSA National Conference, Seattle, Washington. Attendance was made by possible by APIRG, who provided conference funding for the event.
- April 2, 2004: An interactive forum with Dr. Saleem Qureshi on "South Asia: Religion, State and Society."
- SALSA Special Presentation Movie opening of "The Corporation" at the Garneau Theatre.



Sierra Youth Coalition (SYC)

In Spring (2003) a group of students formed an APIRG working group under the banner of the Sierra Youth Coalition, UofA Chapter. The plan was to form an environmental activist group on campus and create greater awareness about environmental issues, especially those pertaining to the campus ecosystem. The Environmental Coordination Office of Students (ECOS) was a contributing member of this working group.

The APIRG proposal highlighted the necessity for a guide that could be used by students and other members of the campus community to become aware of the campus as an ecosystem and access resources to reduce personal and institutional ecological footprints. Instead of 'reinventing the wheel,' we took an existing guide and reformulated it to include a comprehensive assessment of courses and programs on campus related to ecological and social sustainability and a personal resource section including topics on transportation, food options, ethical purchasing, resource issues, urban green space, and wildlife.

SYC Achievements and Events in 2003/04

- Funding from APIRG was secured
- As the Winter 2003 semester was coming to a close, it became evident that the human capital to drive the project was lacking. The original members of the SYC group left campus for the summer and did not return for the fall semester or did not continue with this project.
- In Summer 2003, the working group reformed. The Environmental Research and Studies Centre (ERSC) on campus agreed to a joint project to revamp the ERSC guide.
- The guide is now available at Faculty Offices, ERSC, APIRG, ECOS and Information Desks in HUB, CAB and SUB for students, faculty and staff at no cost..

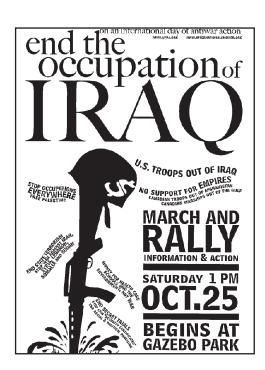
University of Alberta Coalition Against War and Racism (UCAWAR)

U CAWAR intends to create public space to debate and share information about democratic, humanitarian and egalitarian alternatives to war, militarization, and racism through actions like teach-ins, read-ins, theatrical agitation, and creating and reproducing antiwar publications for schools.

In 2003/04, our goal was to propose diplomatic, humanitarian and democratic responses to the terror attacks in the US on September11, 2001 and the bombing of Afghanistan. We actively oppose war and militarization and their deleterious effects on civil society. We oppose government campaigns of aggressive "defense spending" that divert resources from other critically needed public spending areas such as environment, housing, and education. Finally, we argue for strict limits on the international trade in arms. We study the relationship of war and racism to media and the economy.

UCAWAR Achievements and Events:

- In March 2004, APIRG assisted the travel of two UCAWAR members to attend the World Social Forum in Mumbai, India. A website was created including photos, information, links, and reports about the experience at the WSF: www.ualberta.ca/~kokamoto. Audio tapes and a video documentary were created at the Forum and presented upon return.
- A lie-in to protest the war in Iraq and help dramatize the cost of war was held on April 9th 2003 in the Business Quad at the U of A Campus.
- A Candlelight March and Vigil against the war on Iraq from Corbett Hall to the Legislature was held on April 12, 2003.
- Other teach-ins and read-ins were held on the U of A campus in the fall of 2003.



Youth Anti-Racism Project (YAP)

"Destroy your enemies by making them your friends." YAP's objectives are to recruit and train new volunteers and conduct anti-racism education workshops. YAP volunteers are committed to mobilizing other youth.

The dramatic techniques that are taught and practiced in meetings have become the hallmark of YAP's anti-racism presentations. Personal narratives around racism or discrimination are shared when new members come. YAP then uses those accounts to construct dramatic scenes that have the potential of stimulating critical discussion and solutions when presented before an audience. Discussions around appropriate behavior or coping strategies are then held.

Achievements and Events

- More than 1000 brochures were printed and distributed to all the public and Catholic school boards.
- Training/planning meetings for new and old members were held every Tues. from 6-8 at the University of Alberta.
- Presented numerous Anti-Racism Workshops in schools, providing opportunities for participants to learn new ideas on dealing with racism and taking individual responsibility for their own actions.
- Presented a workshop on racism during the Youth in Transition Conference II, April 4, 2004 at the City Arts Centre
- Participation in Expecting Respect (ER), an educational program that is steered by Community Services, Capital Health, Planned Parenthood (Edmonton), U of A teacher education, Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre, Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations (NAARR), Sexual Assault Centre, AADAC, and Canadian Red Cross. YAP is responsible for training peer educators in the following areas: discrimination, harassment, bullying, and racism.
- Edmonton's Police Hate and Bias Unit: YAP is currently collaborating with the constables heading this unit. We are also in the process of finalizing the details of coming up with a coordinated graffiti team whose work will be to clean up trashed areas within the city.

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APIRG and its working groups are always looking for volunteers and participants. Whether you have hours to kill or just a few minutes a week, whether your style is dynamic or laid back, APIRG has shoes for you to fill:

- Board participation
- University and community outreach
- Staffing the APIRG resource centre
- APIRG office support
- Media and technical support
- Arts and graphics support
- Skill sharing

Let us know what drives your passions. Call us at 492-0614, write us at apirg@ualberta.ca, or drop by the office in HUB Mall at the University of Alberta (9111 - 112 Street) and fill out a volunteer form! We would love to see you get involved.

APIRG thanks the contributors to this Annual Report: Darren Lau (poster scans) Jay Moore (graphics and photography) Leah Orr (content and proofreading) Lise Wilson (Working Group reports and proofreading)

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