

Forum

No one is "simon pure"

Edmonton East Tory MP Bill Lesick recently created a hassle when he stated that the Jews do not have a "simon pure" record. As an example, he cited the fact that Stalin placed a Jewish man in charge of the government plan to create a famine in the Ukraine. This famine killed approximately six millions Ukrainians.

Lesick generated a lot of anger because he phrased these remarks in a callous manner, because it was immature name-calling, and because he is a representative of East Edmontonians, many of whom likely do not share his views.

For these reasons, I am also angry at Lesick.

However, Lesick's remark in the context of the Damjanjuk trial contains a grain of truth. This trial thrives on publicity, so much that a fair trial is nearly impossible. Imagine the pressure put on the jurors when the entire country is watching or listening to the trial. The trial is also likely to be unjust because, after 42 years, it is difficult to prove anything, especially identities. Especially when the witnesses that would have last seen Damjanjuk (almost half a century ago) were living in conditions that deliberately intended to make them unhealthy in mind and body. Especially when the issue at stake is so emotional, involving the collective sorrow of a whole country.

Certainly, Israel has kept the holocaust alive in the memory of the world by massive publicity. And I don't deny that it is a thing that should not be forgotten. However, although the term 'holocaust' derived from the attempted genocide of the Jews during World War II, it should be remembered that the Jewish people were not the only religious or ethnic group that was subjected to a holocaust, or persecution.

In the twentieth century alone, there are many examples. In 1914, the Turks killed one million Armenians. In the early twenties, and again in the early thirties, the Russian government starved a total of nine million Ukrainians. The Gypsy population of Europe was almost wiped out in the Nazi death camps along with the Jews. Millions of Cambodians have died in the infamous "Killing Fields." The Tamils of Sri Lanka are tortured and killed for their religious beliefs. The Ethiopians are still being starved in their country. Several other groups are persecuted in Chile, South Africa, and the list goes on. In fact, no country, race, religion or ethnic group that I can think of has a "simon pure" human rights record.

It's useless to compare statistics (as Lesick did), to say that one group suffered more than another, or to name call (as Lesick did). But it's also useless to hold a show trial that seems to serve revenge rather than justice. It would be more useful to understand how these atrocities begin in the first place, and to work together to stop such persecutions that are going on right now.

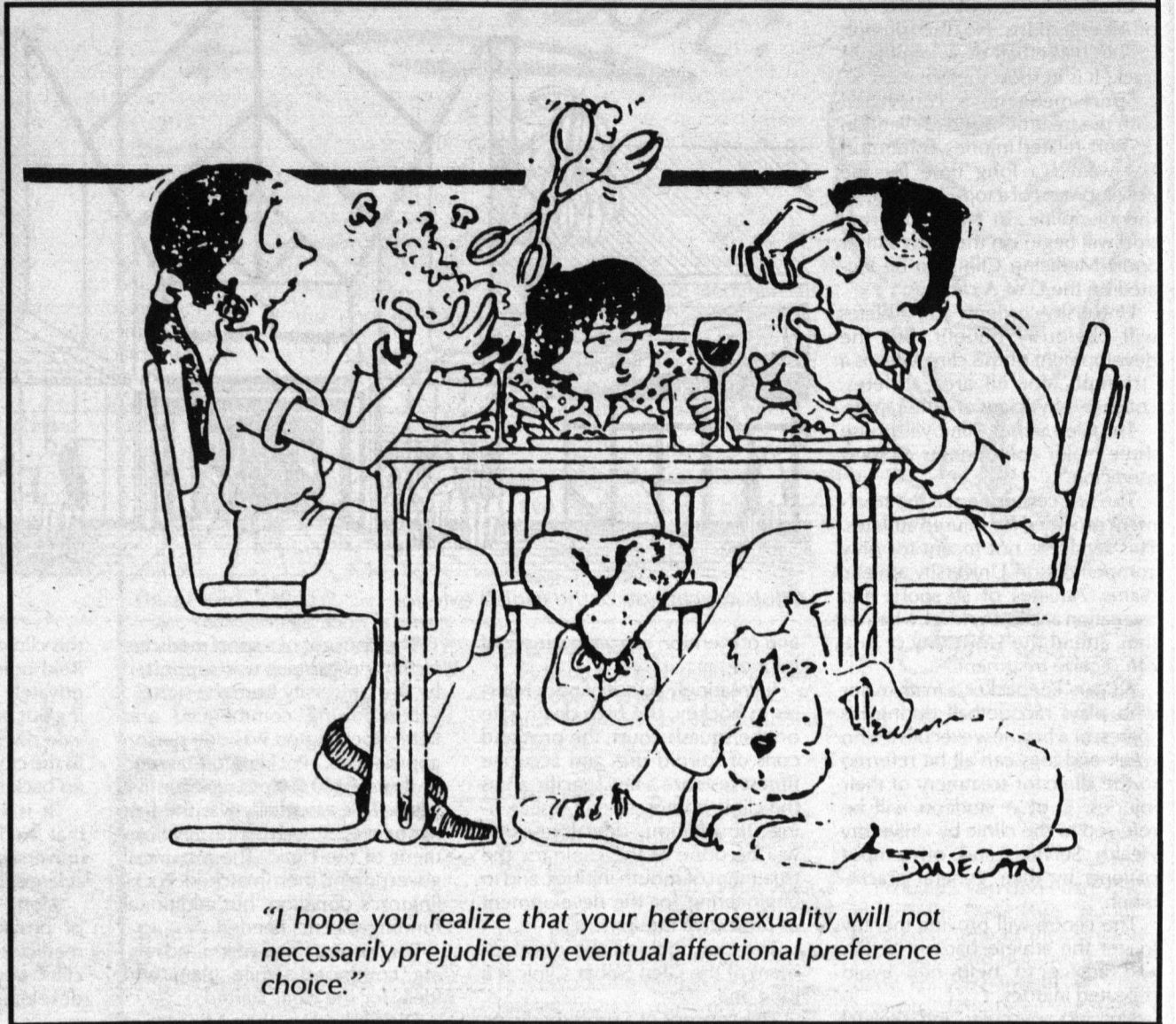
Elaine Ostry

The Gateway

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Green beer flowed freely as Dragos Ruiu, Carol Ostry, and Greg Whiting decorated the office with little shamrocks. K. Graham Bowers, Lisa Hall, Ken Dong, and Jerome Ryckborst forced Mike Spindloe to kiss the Blarney Stone. Roberta Franchuk in a leprechaun costume trotted across campus yelling, "Matt Hays and Alex Ball are Scottish!" Alan Small merely tipped back his Letterman cap and chuckled. Randal Smathers poured the Bushmills and Tina Cristini dyed it green. Glenn St-Germain and John Charles toasted each other's health, but Don Doran and Thomas Olsen had stolen their glasses. Melissa Sreaton and Sidney Lancaster proposed a hurley game, but Dan Skinner and Denise Kenney had taken the shillelaghs. Samson and Eric Janse were digging peat, while Nolan Berg was digging some harp music. "Oooh, aarrt," said Pat Stansfield, while a 16 ton weight fell on Randy McCoy's head. Lloyd de Vincenzi said, "And now for something completely different," when the penguins on top of the TV exploded.



"I hope you realize that your heterosexuality will not necessarily prejudice my eventual affectional preference choice."

Letters...

Thanks from hockey Bears

To the Editor:

I would like this letter to serve as a sincere "thank you" — on behalf of the Golden Bear hockey team — for the much appreciated financial and moral support provided to us in our recently concluded representation of our University, our province and Canada at the 1987 World University Winter Games.

It was a tremendously successful competition. We were satisfied with our Bronze medal finish behind an outstanding all-star team from the Czechoslovakian first division and an equally strong all-star representative from the Soviet Union.

The experience was one that the players will always remember and as a team we feel that we accomplished the performance and diplomatic goals that we had set for ourselves.

None of it would have been possible without the generous support of the students of the University of Alberta and its governing students' union. Thank you again.

Clare Drake

"Pornography" not intended

To the Editor:

This is to clarify a term used in my article in the last issue. In reporting on Dr. Malamuth's lecture entitled "Pornography/Mass Media and Aggression Against Women," I purposely avoided using the word 'pornography' except once in quotation marks.

Although I could not elaborate in the article, Dr. Malamuth made it a point to refer to the material used in his research as mass media messages which may lead to aggression against women.

He said that the issue of pornography is a very complicated one due to a lack of shared definitions. The term can mean different things to different people; one person's erotica might be another's pornography.

As a scientific researcher, Dr. Malamuth refuses to be drawn into the debate of defining pornography. Rather, he is concerned with defining various stimuli as scientifically as possible by the nature of the message being communicated.

In comparing the effects of similar messages (such as aggression towards women) in sexually explicit and non-sexually explicit contexts, the results were the same when the changing attitudes were measured in both cases. In other words, it is the message that really makes the difference rather than the degree of sexual explicitness in the

medium. A prime time TV program or a GP movie can be just as damaging to the image of women as an X-rated movie if the underlying attitudes towards women are negative or violent. Thus, social myths about women can be perpetuated by many subtle means as well as the more blatantly 'pornographic' material

Tina Cristini

Wheelchairs: use back door

To the Editor:

Much has been made recently of the new gallery located in the Fine Arts Building of the University of Alberta, and of its striking new main entrance to the building on its west side. The new entrance is indeed striking — not least because of its lack of wheelchair accessibility. There is no need to point out that the FAB is actually quite accessible via three of its other entrances, one of which is located just around the corner to the north of the new main entrance. The fact remains that the main entrance, the one so carefully designed not to detract from the bold features of the building, is inaccessible. Is this meant to imply that wheelchair users of the building are likewise a detraction, and as such must be relegated to back entrances next to loading docks and the like? We seem to welcome wheelchair users as long as they are content to wheel along our streets and our mountain highways, accompanied by vans and hordes of fans and reporters, but when it comes to allowing them into our buildings and our everyday life, much remains to be done. They should be invited in through the front door, and not be made to sneak in through the back.

Roma Quapp

Snide congrats for Chapelski

To the Editor:

I would like to offer my congratulations to CRO Shelley Chapelski for doing a fine job of running what has been a very tough election. Performing under pressure, she is doing an admirable job.

Yes, she not only managed to stop one slate from circulating literature for a couple of days, but even had one slate disqualified from the election entirely. Only one serious slate remains untouched — the slate consisting of present S.U. Executive member Tim Boston, a few members of the debating society, and some others.

Congrats, Shel! You did great! I think you should get some kind of special Grant for what you've done. I see a fine and promising career ahead of you as a lawyer, and if I ever need to get off of a murder rap on a technicality, I'll know who to call.

Carl R. Hahn

Letters to the Editor should not be more than 250 words in length. They must include your signature, faculty, year of program, I.D. number, and phone number. We reserve the right to edit for libel and length. Letters do not necessarily reflect the view of The Gateway.