

# aborted after suicide try suggest laws be changed

I believe that abortions should be legalized in this country.

My reasons for this are, to an extent, selfish, because three years ago, thanks to a co-operative hospital board, I was able to obtain one.

It probably saved my life, and certainly saved my sanity.

Mine was quite an ordinary story in the first year university. I fell in love with a campus wheel. We both thought he was wonderful. He wasn't.

But by the time I discovered this, it was too late. He had graduated and left for another university to do graduate work, and I was spending my mornings in fact, most of my time -throwing up.

So I took sleeping pills. Fortunately, I did not take enough, but when I woke up, I was in the hospital.

By this time, I was about eight weeks pregnant.

I was eighteen years old and had one year of university. I had been jilted, and the thought of having to carry his baby to term made me ill, physically and mentally.

I was, of course, seeing a psychiatrist - it's mandatory after a suicide attempt, they told me. He persuaded the hospital board of what was quite true - that I would either kill myself or go out of my mind before the baby was born.

After three weeks of entanglements and arguments, it was arranged.

Shortly after, I left the hospital. I continued to see the psychiatrist for two years, until I was able to cope with things again.

Many girls are, as I was, unable to go through with the process of bearing an illegitimate child. Married friends of mine have told me that it is difficult enough when you are married, when you want the baby, and your husband is there to help you.

But when you are deserted and sick, when your parents speak to you as if you had let them down - if, indeed, they speak to you at all - when every time you move or look in the mirror you are reminded forcibly of the child you carry and of the man that left you, for many girls this becomes an impossibility.

Hospital boards in Ontario are the only ones with power to grant abortions, and the law says they may do so only in cases where the mother's life is threatened.

This law ignores psychic damage to girls who are too immature to bear children - especially illegitimately. It ignores the victims of rape, who are forced to live with the product of traumatic moment in their lives. And it ignores special cases, such as the recent thalidomide problem, when the chances are good that the child will be horribly deformed.

It is time that this law was changed.

At present thousands of illegal abortions are performed in Canada each year. Most are done in completely unsanitary surroundings by unqualified women or disbarred doctors. They are dangerous and expensive, but for a steadily increasing number of women, they seem to be the only way out of an intolerable situation.

And every year hundreds of women in Canada die of these operations. Police can only estimate the numbers - many die of hemorrhages that are never recognized as abortion attempts.

And the victims come from all ages and levels of society. Mothers who simply cannot afford more children, girls who have been raped, high-school students who, through lack of knowledge have become pregnant.

Modern contraceptive techniques may cause the growing abortion rate to slow, but unaided, they cannot stop it.

The only way to deal with the abortion racket is to legalize abortion.

But such a move would meet opposition on the part of many of the more vocal minorities, it is argued.

Church groups, women's lea-

### EDITORS' NOTE

Probably the most controversial topics to occupy the editorial columns of Canada's student press this year has been the legalization of abortions in this country.

Last November, The Toronto Varsity published an account of a fourth-year woman student at the University of Toronto who became pregnant and, after she had attempted to commit suicide, was finally given a legal abortion.

Remarkd The Varsity: "It points up a legal and social problem which effects more and more people every year throughout the world."

An accompanying editorial comment, by The Varsity's Managing Editor, Robert Block, headlined "The Ovum and I" proposed that legalized abortions be provided "Those who genuinely need them for reasons of health and well-being."

Since November, the controversy has raged in the Varsity and in other student publication across the country.

The Gazette presents the account of the Toronto senior and the Varsity's editorial:

## The ovum and I

In today's Varsity, a woman student describes how she had to make a suicide attempt before she could get a legal abortion. She tells how she was jilted and eight weeks pregnant and so depressed that sleeping pills seemed to be the only way out. Her story is a tragic one, but she was lucky compared to many women. Many pregnant and unmarried women spend frantic and fruitless weeks searching for a doctor to do the deed, and finally wind up going to a hack.

An abortion performed in a hospital under and controlled conditions by a competent surgeon using the Dilatation and Curettage method is considered fairly safe.

An abortion performed by a little old lady, sometimes reeking of alcohol, by the "douche" method can and has resulted in death. The daily newspapers testify to this.

We personally know of several women who have obtained abortions. Some were performed by doctors by the D and C method. Others were performed by squirting a noxious fluid into the womb through a tube - the douche method.

One of these women underwent 10 attempts at abortion by the douche method. The strain on her was enormous. This was during a period when it seemed that the newspapers carried an abortion-death story every day.

Some time later, she suffered an acute attack of schizophrenia with accompanying delusions. She was hospitalized for over two months.

The problem is not simple. The law states that women may have abortions only if the life of the mother is threatened by childbirth. The law says nothing about the psyche of the mother or the condition in which the baby may be born due to pre-natal influences.

Should grounds for legal abortions be extended to include these latter categories? We regret to say we can only give a qualified yes.

We would like to give an unqualified yes, for our entire sympathies are with the unfortunate young women who are plunged into a world of despair and guilt because a simple and natural biological process has taken place.

It would be simply unrealistic to expect people today to indulge in abstinence as a means of avoiding the problem. Our mores no longer demand abstinence before marriage. But our mores still condemn the result.

The best answer, of course, is to allow every woman access to birth-control methods. It is not all that difficult right now for an unmarried woman to obtain a diaphragm or birth-control pills such as Ortho-Novum. Some doctors will prescribe them.

But obviously, many women don't get them. For one thing, many doctors are still leery about such things. For another, it is embarrassing for the woman, especially when she is frowned at by a druggist when he reads "Miss" on the prescription. For another, the law doesn't want women to know about such devices.

So until that happy day when the government comes around to the belief that if birth-control is good enough for other underdeveloped countries it's good enough for this one, the problem of abortion will be with us.

The arguments against abortion are philosophical, psychological and physical. We can't discount the ideas of people who believe that killing a fetus is killing a human being. We don't know to what extent women may be psychologically damaged by abortions. We don't know what physical effects abortions may have in terms of future pregnancies. We don't know of anyone else who knows the full answers to these questions either.

Nevertheless, women are dying and cracking up because of illegal abortions. It is stupidity to force them to this if they are determined to have abortions, when a legal abortion could be performed safely.

We hesitate to drag out the old "prohibition didn't work" argument, because it is not strictly analogous. Liquor, like hard work, never killed anybody. But surely it is valid to some extent to say that if women are going to have abortions anyway, they don't deserve to die for it. We don't even kill murderers any more.

Perhaps abortions shouldn't be doled out like smallpox vaccinations. But at least those who genuinely need them for reasons of health and well-being should be given them safely and legally.

gues are cited as unqualified opponents of abortion. Yet those groups which have any contact with the problem realize that something must be done, and many are beginning to concede the necessity of a new look at our outmoded laws on abortion.

Surely it is time we all took a second look at this problem.

# J.Vees Drop Impromptu Match, 7-6

BY HARRY MacDONALD



Dal defenders collide in front of Tigers' goalie. Dale Retallack in J.V. hockey action against Acadia. The visiting Axemen held on despite a late game surge by the Bengals to post a 7-6 win. (Photo by McCarter)

The junior varsity Axemen clung to the ropes as the game died to eke out a 7-6 victory over the scrappy J V Hockey Tigers last Saturday afternoon.

Everything about the game was quite impromptu. The Engineer's interfac goalie, Dale Retaleck, just happened to be around ten minutes prior to game time when coach Don Bauld was looking for a goalie, so he was quickly pressed into service and played a fine game turning away 29 shots. The rink manager was informed of the contest around the same time, while in between periods, the few spectators pitched in to scrape the ice.

Both teams were rather unpolished, but they played an exciting brand of hockey. By the half-way mark of the first frame, Dal had built up a 3-1 lead. The Acadians then slowly chopped away at this by playing better positional hockey so by 7:14 of the second stanza, they had jumped into a 4-3 lead. The Tigers tied it up but the visitors struck with even more determination for three more goals until full time was the saving factor for the faltering Axemen. Brian Bauld led the Tiger

attack with three markers while Doug Rowan notched two and Paul Clarke I. The Acadian first line of Shynal, Archbald, and Neve fired 4 goals and picked up a collective 9 points on goals and assists. Other scorers for the Wolville club were Baggs, Ironsides, and O'Connell.

Wide-open hockey was the order of the day as neither team could successfully contain the other. However, the Bengals tended to bunch together on the attack and this kind of thrust was not really too difficult for the Axemen to stop. The Acadians, on the other hand, did play their positions well and their passing was quite a bit sharper. This kind of opposition made the Bengals skate much harder on the defensive. The visitors were better conditioned by more practices while the Dal club has only had a limited number of get-togethers. Typical of the excitement offered to the few fans who showed up, was the wild melee before the Acadian net just as the game ended when Dal was threatening to score the equalizer.

## Junior Varsity Lose 69- 65 in B. Ball

The Mount Allison Jayvees overcame a four point half time deficit to defeat the Dal JV's 69-65 in a close hard fought game of basketball played at Sackville on Friday evening. The win by Mt. A. avenged a previous loss supplied at the hands of the Tigers. For coach Rutigliano's hard luck chargers it was their fourth loss in five outings.

In the fast moving game the Bengals opened a ten point lead mid-way through the first twenty minute period only to see the Hawk Jayvees close the gap in the last minute of the half in the brilliant shooting of Bill Craig. The half time score was 39-35 in favour of the visiting Tigers. Craig notched 15 of his teams points in the half while Peter Lacus and Frank Wilson had 9

and 8 respectfully to lead Dal scorers.

Early in the second period the Dal JV's outran and outscored their opposition in the early minutes as they upped their lead to 10 points only to see their lead vanish for the second time. The teams traded baskets for the better of the period until the hometown squad scored on a couple of fast breaks in the dying minutes to put the game out of reach.

A decisive and perhaps deciding factor in the game was the free throw percentages of the teams. The hometown Jayvees only made 24 field goals but clicked on 21 of 29 from the free throw line. We tigers had 28 baskets from the floor while only scoring a poor 9 of 23 attempts from the charity line.

High scorer for Dal and in the game was Lacus who made good on 9 field goals and two free throws for 20 points. Alex Shaw and Carl Thomas had 11 and 12 respectively for the Tigers while Jerry Clarke and Frank Wilson added 8 points each. Top scorer for the winners was Craig with 19 points while Doug Skinner had 15.

The J V Bengals make their next start tomorrow evening when they face N. S. Tech. The Tech Squad defeated Dal early in the year and are presently leading the city J. V. League. SCORERS DAL: Shaw 12, Thomas 11, Wilson 8, Carey 4, Lacus 20, Clarke 8, Longille 2 - 65

MT. A. : Chisholm 4, Hopkirk 10, Reid 10, Craig 19, Skinner 15, Rogers 7, Watt 1, Nichols 3 - 69.

## Meds Shutout Commerce 19-0

BY HUNTER STENTAFORD  
Gazette Sports Editor  
MEDS DOWN COMMERCE 19-0

In three of the five games played in interfac hockey last week, the scores were ridiculously high and the games turned out to be an ugly nightmare for the goalies. The most fantastic scorers were Meds, who netted nineteen goals against Commerce. Almost as ridiculous scores were amassed by Engineers and Pharm, and Ed, who beat Arts 13-0 and Dents 10-2 respectively. In the other games Science downed Dents 5-3 and Law squeaked out a 2-1 win over Engineers.

In the Engineers-Arts game, John Hines was the big scorer as he scored 5 of their 13 goals. Mal Murray scored 3, Craig Boyer 2 and Gary Mason, Bob Dixon and Larry Ehms got one each.

Mike Knight started Science off in the scoring in the first period and Bob Baillie scored in the second. In the third period, Don Feeney tied it up for Dents by scoring two fast goals. Science then rebounded to score three more by Paul Clarke, Andy Sherwood and Don Ling. Brock Rondeau added another goal for Dents but time ran out with Science on top 5-3.

In the Meds - Commerce game Meds started with 7 goals in the

first period, added 4 more in the second and they threw in 8 more in the third for good measure. Meds' scorers were Bill Buntain with 5 goals and 4 assists, Dave Murray with 5 goals and 3 assists, Harold Murray with 2, Dave Knickle 2, and Al Felix, Broxie Lantz, Frank Sim, Harry Callaghan and Steve Brown got one each.

The Law-Engineers game was the most exciting of the afternoon as Law came out on top 2-1. In the third period Engineers did everything but put the puck in the net as Law tried desperately to add their insurance marker. Craig Boyer started the scoring for Engineers in the first period and it wasn't until late in the second that Ted Margeson tied it up for Law. In the third John Burns put Law ahead with an assist from Ted Margeson to finish the game.

The third game of the afternoon was another goal studded game when Pharm, & Ed, trounced the Dents 10-2. Pharm, & Ed, took a first period lead of 2-1 and from then on Dents could not close in on the stronger team. Terry Betik, Gordie Ferguson, Wayne Patregan and Yvon Landry were the big guns for Pharm, & Ed., scoring two goals each and Mike Cummings and Ewan Taylor popped in the other two. Dents' goals were by Don Feeney and John Roach.

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