



En Garde!

by John Roggeveen

Psychologists have long sought a tenable personality theory. Their efforts haven't been tremendously successful. Of all the theories I have seen "explaining" what the human personality is, or why it operates the way it does, not one has been able to hold water better than a wicker basket. The ones that have been to some extent successful are the ones that attempt to explain the least. The sum total of all knowledge accrued from these theories is, thus, still very rudimentary. The hogwash accompanying the few genuine insights is, on the other hand, mind-boggling. Such is science though. It is indeed unfortunate science doesn't move faster. Right now, we could really use a personality theory. A comprehensive and tenable one.

Without this personality theory, we are left to guess why people are the way they are, why they do what they do and why they think what they think. Most of the time the existence of the world doesn't hinge on us making the correct guess. But it might.

Every second of every day human beings everywhere are in danger of being annihilated by a nuclear war. Most people in the world don't realize this possibility. Most of the ones who do realize it try not to think about it too much.

The crux of the problem, believe it or not, is our lack of understanding of human nature. Philosophers have argued this issue many times over in the past and, no doubt, continue to do so today. Some say humans are basically bad, others say humans are basically good, and some claim that humans are a *tabula rasa* (a blank slate). In the last hundred years or so, the psychologists have joined in the fray, but no solution to the enigma has been advanced without being ridiculed and ravaged relatively quickly and easily.

What we need to determine immediately, if possible, is whether we humans inherently seek power or whether we inherently seek security. The answer could help us decide on the position we take on the nuclear disarmament issue.

For, if humans are power-lusting by nature, disarmament on our behalf will do nothing but provoke the Soviets (and any other enemies) to

attack us, simply because we would be in a weaker position and they would likely manage to obtain the power they seek over us.

On the other hand, if humans are lovers of security by nature, disarmament by us would likely lead to the Soviets disarming as well. At the very least, they would not attack us. It would be in their interests to work with us, in such a case, rather than against us.

Until we can understand the nature of human beings, we are faced with this dilemma. Hopefully science will be able to find the answer before we blow ourselves away, literally. And, the endeavor is nowhere near as simple as I have presented it above.

For your sake and mine, I hope they find that human beings are inherently seekers of security, or that they are inherently indifferent to both security and power. The prognosis isn't a good one if they find us to be driven by power lust.

• A newspaper loses a good deal of credibility when it misspells words regularly. It may be originally due to shoddy writing or shoddy typesetting, but in the end it is shoddy editing that is responsible for misspelled words. Some gems from recent issues of the Gateway: gonorrhoea (a.k.a. gonorrhoea) and syphilis (misspelled in an article on herpes as gonoreha (sic) and symphillis (sic), tsk! tsk!); commensurate (misspelled as commencerate (sic)); and accommodate, which is frequently misspelled as accomodate (misspelled as accomidate (sic)). Arrrrrrggghhh!!! This has got to stop. No more silent m's in syphilis, please!

It's time to take action. Right here and now **You** can participate in the John P. Roggeveen First Annual *Find The Misspelled Words Contest*. It's really very simple. All you do is find and write down all the spelling errors in **this** issue of the Gateway and provide the correct spelling with them. I will accept entries at the Gateway office, room 282, SUB. Entries must be in by next Tuesday at high noon. The winner is the person who correctly corrects the most errors. The winner won't get any great and wonderful gifts from our sponsors, but I will see to it that his or her name gets campus-wide exposure in this column.

continued from preceding page

This was a clear infringement on the rights of all students - Arab, Palestinian, Jewish, Anglo-Saxon - who came to hear Col. Levy. It is laughable to suggest that such outrageous behavior was legitimate retaliation for Mr. Conway's shutting of the A.S.A. booth. Or justified by the defacing of posters by certain individuals acting, once again, without the knowledge or approval of Hillel.

Are we, as responsible members of the university community expected to swallow this sort of indignity? Are steps to prevent the re-occurrence of similar incidents deserving of the label "bullying tactics," as S. Black would have us believe?

The Dec. 3 incident must be evaluated objectively, free from the manipulative political overtones which Walker and others seek to cast upon it. Oscar, I am confident, can defend himself. He is taking responsibility for his own actions, not foisting the blame on the A.S.A. Why must Hillel be deemed responsible for all wrongs ever perpetrated against Arabs and Palestinians? Hillel and the A.S.A. are perfectly capable of resolving their differences without the interference of agitators such as Mike Walker.

Jessica Levental, Law II

If people go to university to learn how to think, one must be forced to conclude that the U of A has failed miserably in its task. Witness some of the awesome leaps of logic taken by some of its students:

Oscar Ammar sabotages a Hillel forum and successfully prevents the speaker from addressing the group. Hillel lodges a complaint with the university in response to a violation of freedom of speech.

According to M. Ingen-House, the issue here is the Palestinian issue, and "shouldn't be hidden behind a discussion on freedom of speech."

S. Black informs us that the issue presented is whether the Arab students have a right to human dignity. Evidently, S. Black believes the actions of Ammar et. al. are to be considered dignified (admirable too, perhaps?).

According to Mike Walker, omniscient guardian of What Is Right, Hillel is using this event to "divert attention from the most recent of Israel's outrages." An ingenious theory, given that Hillel invited the Israeli army colonel to discuss the very issue of Israel in Lebanon. Who knows, perhaps Hillel hired Oscar to disrupt the forum so Hillel could launch action against him and thereby divert the issue?

Mr/Ms Black further believes that poor Oscar merely violated a "technical law" (since when is freedom of speech a technicality?) in a fit of what Mike Walker described as "careless exuberance." Hardly. Frolicking in fountains at midnight is careless exuberance. Showing up at a forum for public discussion armed with placards and abuse and deliberately disrupting an organized event is nothing less than a premeditated act of malice.

There is no need to pity poor Oscar. He deliberately chose to violate the law and risk the potential consequences. It need not have been so. Mr. Ammar could have attended the forum, listened to the speaker and challenged him with questions. Perhaps Oscar could have raised some valid points from which the audience could have learned and benefited. Perhaps he could have gotten some answers, too. Evidently, Mr. Ammar didn't want to risk that. I wonder what he was afraid of.

As for using the harassment of the A.S.A. as

justifications for Ammar's actions, a few points need to be clarified. In particular, why did the A.S.A. not lay charges against the offending students? If they were guilty of harassment, they certainly ought to be punished. Just because the A.S.A. didn't take constructive action when they felt their rights were being violated is no reason why Hillel should not when faced with a similar issue. (Personally, I wonder why the ASA took almost 4 months to reopen their booth in SUB especially since the SU member responsible for the closing of the booth apologized long ago. I wonder if it was felt that the booth was more useful in eliciting public sympathy by its absence than by its presence). Regarding the defacement of posters, I again wonder why the ASA lay no charges against the perpetrators. Was it for lack of evidence in which case the allegations are based on nothing more than probability, or was it laziness?

There is one final fact that appears to have been overlooked to date: Thus far, there have been 3 Palestinian forums this year, featuring PLO speakers and Palestinian representatives. Not one of them was subject to the sort of sabotage and disruption Mr. Ammar saw fit to launch on the one and only forum featuring an Israeli speaker. In other words, students have had three opportunities to hear an official Palestinian view; they have had no opportunity to hear the Israeli one, thanks to you-know-who.

No, I am not taking sides on the issue of Palestinian rights. I do not condone the deaths of innocent Palestinians through Israel's actions any more than I condone the death of innocent Jews and Israelis at the hands of Palestinian terrorists. The Middle East situation is a critical issue that demands our attention, concern and most of all, discussion and dialogue. It is only in this way that a true understanding of the complex issue is reached and a solution can be proposed. Only hostility and violence can result when parties refuse to listen to one another and deny others the right to listen as well. That is truly criminal, and for that Oscar (and any others) should be sternly punished.

Audrey Macklin, Science III

Animal antics related?

After reading of a savage porcupine stalking RATT in the January 18 issue of "The Gateway", a friend and myself spent several hours trying to deduce who could instigate such a bizarre act. Though we did not arrive at a concrete conclusion, we were both able to recall a rather curious situation. Last week while making our weekly visit to the public library, we encountered well known television celebrity Jo Green of the CBC, exiting the Chateau Lacombe. Upon closer inspection we discovered, to our surprise, that she was sporting a rather large and very live racoon. Could there be a direct link between these two incidents? I, myself, am not one to say but I shall leave you with one thought; A wink is as good as a nod to a blind man!

R.M. Quinn, Sci. I
E.R. Brocklesby, Bus. II

Letters to the Editor should be a maximum of 250 words. Letters must be signed, and include faculty, year and phone number. No anonymous letters will be printed, although we will withhold names. All letters should be typed, if possible, or neatly printed. We reserve the right to edit for libel and length. Letter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Gateway.



HILLEL
STUDENTS
ASSOCIATION **Hillel/Chaverim**

622 sub 437-2189

are having a pool party

Time: 8-10 PM. Swim at the JCC
9:30-1:30 Dance to the music of ASI

Place: Jewish Community Centre
7200-156 Street

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