

Letters cont'd. from pg. 4

12th of Nov.

To the Editor:

The following is a poem I wrote in memory of a colleague who died during a student/police clash during my undergraduate days:

12th of November. It was a Friday.
Ten years ago. 12th of November 1976.
The day our friend Weerasooriya died at Peradeniya campus.
NO...!
The day Weerasooriya was shot and killed...!

After thousand suns,
After thousand moons,
No...! We won't forget...! No, we won't...!

Your blood and our tears... memories will never fade.
You are not dead brother,
Today a decade later,
You still live in our hearts.

Yester dies... for tomorrow to be born today.
Though hiding in the past,
You murmur about future,
In to our years every day.

Rivers go forward, they won't turn back,
Tears of today won't turn tomorrow black,
After every night, dawn should come...
Yes, we still dream about a bright sun.

No flower will sweeten the breeze,
No bird will sing its song,
On the day, our sweat mixes with blood,
On the day, we sing the war songs...!

Peradeniya University is the largest university (though small compared to U of A) in Sri Lanka.

In 1976, the government appointed a new president to the university in an obvious attempt to control student political activities.

New rules imposed by this president gave rise to a long strike by students which culminated in an attempt to take the president hostage. At one point, the president was trapped in his office while students blocked all the main entrances to the building demanding an immediate cancellation of the new rules. An entire night passed with no satisfactory solution. The following morning, the police opened fire on students, killing one student on the spot.

This incident happened during my undergraduate days and had a tremendous impact on all of us who witnessed this. The political changes that followed led to the defeat of the government, the election of the present government, and the near extinction of political activities in the universities there.

Ransirimal Fernando

China changes

To the Editor:

Which kind of facts better support one's opinions, those which are up-to-date or out-of-date? Nobody with an objective mind would choose the latter. But, curiously, this was the case with Matthew Hays' letter to the Editor in the Nov. 4 Gateway. He says that in China practically everyone dresses in an extremely similar fashion, everyone obeys the 'coach', etc.

It is true that there was a long period in China during which only extremely similar dress fashions could be seen. But now I am afraid the dress styles in China are too many for Mr. Hays to look at.

I hope that in the future Hays continues to use facts about China in his various arguments, but not out-of-date ones.

Qiunen Yu
Philosophy I

Not a game

To the Editor:

Re: The Survival Game

Lundrigan, followed by Harris, assert that the game is harmless. It is not.

I do not care to address the dubious proposition that there are no psychological risks. I wish simply to state that only a fool would ignore the risk of physical injury. Although such injury may be infrequent, it can be serious. Two years ago my son, then 17, while competing in the Canadian national championship races for kayaks, participated in a survival game. Although wearing the protective goggles provided, he was struck in the eye by a pellet and is now legally blind in that eye.

C.R. Wilson
Anthropology

Disco science

To the Editor:

I am writing in regard to the views expressed by Peter Harris in his letter to the editor (Nov. 4), in which he claimed "the aggressive instinct is part of our lives" and shaped by evolution, and thus justification for the vicarious thrill of the Survival Game.

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I have no quarrel with those who choose to stimulate themselves with the "vicarious" (but not sadistic, mind you) "thrill of shooting people." After all, tin cans are no substitute for human beings. I do object, however, to those who rationalize their aberrant behaviour with allusions to the so-called heredity of human aggression. I suppose that Mr. Harris feels that by stroking his ego and signing his name with "Honors Genetics" he is making his assertions less questionable. After all, what can explain human behaviour better than genetics?

Unfortunately, the hope that a more knowledgeable position would be taken by a budding young geneticist seems to have gone unfounded. "However, let's face it: human beings, shaped by millions of years of evolution," are still being led around by the nose when it comes to buying unsubstantiated musings by the likes of Desmond Morris ("The Naked Ape") — truly the disco music of science. Perhaps Mr. Harris' assertions are based on more recent scientific work, like the conservative pandering of a southern gentleman like the sociobiologist E.O. Wilson. His suggestion that the behaviour of humans, including aggression, is regulated by genetics is considered the definitive work by those who share his views. A rather grandiose scheme for something based on insect biology.

The truth is that no one has conclusively demonstrated that "the aggressive instinct is part of our lives." In fact, instinct is an antiquated concept no longer applied to most behaviours of humans and primate, if not all mammals. Instead, we rely on "innate" behaviours, which are the range of behaviours possible in response to certain stimuli, with the actual behaviour influenced by genetics, environment, and learning. Mr. Harris is probably correct when he states that a moral code is not inborn, but must be learned. However, the same can be said of an aggressive code. It is much more realistic to view aggressive tendencies to be a facultative, and not an obligatory, response to the combined force of socialization, environment, and "media indoctrination."

I have faith that this institute of higher learning will teach a bright and promising honors geneticist like Mr. Harris to be aware of the limitations inherent in hearsay, so that in the future he no longer defends his indefensible actions with unsubstantiated and controversial theories.

Happy hunting.

Michael Klassen
"Honors" Anthropology

The Round Corner

By Greg Whiting



Health hints

To the Editor:

In response to the article on hypoglycemia on Tuesday November 4, 1986, I wish to add some further information. Contrary to what the popular press leads us to believe, reactive hypoglycemia (that experienced several hours after eating) is a relatively rare condition. The physical signs associated with hypoglycemia are: palpitations, sweating, anxiety, hunger, and tremors. These symptoms are non-specific at best and can result from stress, emotional disturbances, plus numerous other disorders. The glucose tolerance test is not considered a very reliable method of detecting the condition as it does not approximate a "normal mixed meal." A definitive diagnosis can be very difficult to establish. The presentation of the aforementioned symptoms in an episodic manner can be improved by a more healthy lifestyle. This includes exercise, adequate rest, and proper eating habits. Nutritional advice includes a reduction in caffeine and especially refined sugar plus a diet higher in fruit, vegetables, and whole grain products.

Linda Blignault
Food & Nutrition IV

Grumpy gripe #2

To the Editor:

Re: Gainers Strike

The comment made by "Grumpy" on the Gainers strike left me fairly ill. This mysterious letter writer will have us believe that if we support pro-union legislation, all of us poor, honest, working folk will be perpetually victimized by the great and all-powerful unions. However, this "Grumpy" person does not seem to realize that Gainers' workers are not asking for power, but simply for their rights. Current labour legislation in Alberta deprives labour of rights it took years to win. If Peter Pocklington wins his battle with the union, other unions all over the province will fear a strike as they cannot be guaranteed that they will retain their jobs once the strike is over, indeed if it ever does end. Thus employers will be able to dictate quite freely the conditions of workers and unions could become relatively useless.

The invisible "Grumpy" does make a good point that some unions may have gained too much power (indeed, it was the ever-powerful construction union that caused the controversial labour legislation in the first place). Yet, he or she does not seem to realize that not all labour associations are that strong. For example, electricians for Sparrow Electric had to sign an agreement to bank their extra hours instead of being paid for overtime. On top of this, once the apprentice electricians in this company (and, I understand, in many other companies) reach a certain level of qualifications which would entitle them to a pay increase, they are laid off and new, cheaper labour is hired. These seem to be the kind of labour conditions "Grumpy" is encouraging.

To return to the Gainers question, many people do not seem to see the implications a union defeat would mean. Mr. Pocklington's employees willingly took a pay cut during the "hog wars", which not only saved their jobs, but also Mr. Pocklington's company. Mr. Pocklington, however, does not think it is necessary to reward employee loyalty. Now that Gainers has made it through the "hog wars", men and women, many of whom have put most of their working lives into Peter Pocklington's company, are denied any share of the rewards they helped Mr. Pocklington win. Instead, they are replaced with cheaper labour who, if Mr. Pocklington wins his fight, cannot be guaranteed either their jobs or their wage. (Already Pocklington is making noise in his *Edmonton Sun* column denouncing the minimum wage law.)

I realize that the Gainers question is old news, but the issue has not lost its importance. When the strike first began, I laughed at Mr. Pocklington's chances of winning. However, as the months have gone by, I have seen the strikers stripped of their rights. I am appalled that our justice and political system could allow this. If the union is defeated it could mean serious consequences to labour in Alberta.

Patricia Yuzwenko
Arts III

P.S. Congrats to Rod Campbell for his necessary condemnation of SU apathy in his column of Nov. 6.

Opinion



Loan-ly guy

The current controversy over the distribution of remission in student loan funding has pointed up clearly the difficulties of administering our governments' many and many-faceted social programs.

The chief objection I hold re the proposal as it stands is with the contention that a single student with a loan of \$4000 or less is somehow less in need of or deserving of remission than a married student with a higher loan. This contention brings up two classic questions which should be familiar to most of us. They are: 1) Is higher education perceived as a positive right in our society? and 2) Who is to decide who should have access to and derive benefits from social programs?

In dealing with the first, it would appear that higher education is considered a luxury rather than a right, despite the obvious benefits to a free society of having the maximum number of people involved in a positive activity rather than performing unfulfilling, unchallenging work or merely wallowing in unemployment. If 5,000 less people in Alberta were able to attend university because of funding difficulties, a good percentage of them would be utilizing some form of social services since that number of jobs isn't about to appear just because they're no longer in school, especially considering the current state of our economy.

Even if there won't be jobs for all of us if and when we graduate, although recent figures point to much lower unemployment levels for persons holding degrees, it is surely better to have a well-educated and hopefully, as well, reasoning population more capable of meeting the challenges our world presents. Social assistance is accepted as a positive right; why should not education be also? When society subsidizes students, it makes an investment in its own future. Most of us are willing to accept the responsibility of both working part-time and going to school, so why should we be less worthy of the most direct stimulus for growth or, alternatively, merely survival that society offers?

Concerning the second question then, students are eligible for neither U.I.C. nor provincial social assistance ("welfare"). A great number of us live partly on part-time income and partly on student loans that usually amount to consid-

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