

# SPECTRUM

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## "VISIBILITY"

By James Gill

Last week's issue of the *Brunswickan* has caused much discussion in the gay community on campus. I thank my readers for their expressions of dismay over the absence of "In the Pink" last week. I can assure you that the omission was due to an editorial decision concerning space, and not because of any failure on my part.

It was "Blood and Thunder" that caused the bulk of the controversy. Matin Yaqzan's letter ("Profound Ignorance") associated gay men and lesbians with "any sex deviate" and referred to us as "the fodder for hell." These are statements of profound ignorance indeed. As far as Richard Hall's letter ("Nauseam") is concerned, all I can do is remind Mr. Hall that Graval is available at very major pharmacy. This is the only way that I can stomach the idea of heterosexuality.

The most disturbing letter was that from "Chore Boy" ("Express Yourself") if for no other reason than its basis on so many fallacies. "Chore Boy" asserts that we have no right to complain because we can, "be secretive about our sexuality as most heterosexuals do" (my emphasis).

Since when have heterosexuals ever been secretive about their sexuality? When a man shows me a picture of his wife and children it is called "sharing" but when I show him a picture of my lover it is called "flaunting", and "gay people shouldn't flaunt it." It is OK for a woman to talk about what she and her boyfriend did on a date, but when a lesbian talks about what she and her girlfriend did then that is "flaunting", and "gay people shouldn't flaunt it." Heterosexuals are not secretive. They can walk in the park holding hands, go to the Senior Prom together, and show each other off to friends and family. They are telling me, and lesbians and gay men everywhere, "See what we are allowed to do that you aren't! (Nyah! Nyah)." That is flaunting and it is offensive.

I am gay. What's more, I like being gay, and I am proud to be gay. I do not want to be heterosexual and I do not want to create an image of heterosexuality. Because I am proud, I let people know in precisely the same way that I let them know that I am Jewish, or that I am a Canadian.

"Chore Boy" writes that Jews have a right to be angry because we were forced to wear yellow stars under the Nazis. That is certainly not what makes me angry. I am proud to be marked as different, I am angry that my difference is the justification for extermination. Relatives of mine living in the Channel Islands wore their stars, though they could have hidden, because they were proud of who they were, and they were not cowards.

The Nazis did not stop with the Jews. The Nazis also interned and killed homosexuals. Instead of yellow stars we wore pink triangles. That is the source of today's symbol of the gay liberation movement. We were subjected to the same type of systemic extermination, yet "Chore Boy" does not mention that.

Society denies us the right to hide, even if we want to. Joe Rose was brutally murdered on a bus in Montreal last year because he was gay, or rather, because his murderers thought he was gay. What would "Chore Boy" suggest that Joe could have done to save his life? We are, indeed, fighting for our lives. Joe lost that fight. Countless millions in Canada have lost their homes, families, friends, children and careers, and have been physically and psychologically assaulted because they were gay, or because people thought that they were. According to "Chore Boy" certain types of persecution against homosexuals are not justified - where does he choose to draw the line? Just what types of persecution against gay men and lesbians, or against any person, for that matter, are justified?

When Native Canadians want to look like WASPs, when Jews want to be no different from gentiles, and when black people want to look like white people, then "Chore Boy" can come and talk to me about hiding in my closet. Until then I want to be gay.

Next GALA Meeting: Tuesday, November 7 at 8:00 p.m. in Room 203 of the SUB.

Did you know  
that a 3 ft.  
pile of  
newspapers  
saves one tree  
if you recycle.

## Computers And The Law

As computers have become a part of everyday life, a body of law has evolved to protect the use of these devices. Even as computers continue to develop and become more and more refined, they are still vulnerable to "break ins" or illegal access because people are smart enough to figure out ways to do so. The law has attempted to keep pace with these new developments in order to protect the information stored in computer databases.

### UNAUTHORIZED USE OF A COMPUTER

It is a serious criminal offence to gain the use of a computer without authorization to do so. Any person who illegally gains access to a computer system by whatever means, such as a mechanical device has committed an offence which may result in a maximum punishment of a ten-year jail term.

It is illegal to fraudulently gain access to the university computer system in order to make use of it without paying for computer time. If you are caught, you will face University disciplinary measures. You may also be subject to legal prosecution.

### COPYING COMPUTER PROGRAMS

Anyone who owns a computer may make a copy of the programs he or she uses, as long as the original program is retained. It is legal to copy computer programs only if they are to be used by the person who owns the original program. Such copying is permitted so that the owner of the program can have a copy for back-up, in case something happens to the original, or in case he or she needs to alter or modify the program to meet his or her needs. It is illegal to copy or "pirate" programs for financial gain. When the person who has copied the program for his or her own use is no longer entitled to have lawful possession of the original program, he or she must also destroy the copy.

### MISCHIEF

Mischief is defined as the damage or destruction of the property of another of rendering that property to a useless, inoperative, or dangerous state. Mischief applies to the law surrounding the use of computers in that it is possible to destroy or alter data that is stored on a computer. The *Criminal Code* states that the following may constitute mischief with regard to the use of computers:

- destroying or altering data
- rendering data meaningless, useless or ineffective.
- obstructing, interrupting, or interfering with the lawful use of data.
- obstructing, interrupting, or interfering with any person in the lawful use of data or denying access to data to any person who is entitled to access thereto.

Mischief with regard to the use of computers is most commonly found in the form of the "computer virus". This problem occurs when alterations are made to the functioning of a computer system. These alterations may be of such a nature that they become progressively worse, and may be very difficult to correct. Mischief in the form of tampering with computers and data is a criminal offence which carries a maximum punishment of a ten-year jail term.

NOTE: THIS LEGAL COLUMN IS WRITTEN FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY. IT IS NOT INTENDED TO BE A REPLACEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL LEGAL ADVICE.

## A Spark Of Hope

To a society that has grown callous to the suffering of others in a world where right and wrong have become blurred almost beyond recognition, how can we not be moved by the desperate cry for freedom from a country half a world away? In this television age, where human suffering has been brought into our living rooms, how can we not remember the proudly defiant Chinese students who suffered terrible losses in a fight for the very thing that our culture is predicated upon? Who can forget the image of a young man who singlehandedly stopped an army tank from advancing? All of us have been changed in some subtle way by the events in Tiananmen Square this past summer. The horror of needless bloodshed, of wanton violence, of peaceful protest turned to untold suffering, all of this has shown us how precious freedom is. To those of us who may have taken our freedom and democracy for granted, we realize now how vital they are. To those of us who could not imagine a life without freedom, our worst fears were awakened. Freedom is a fragile, sometimes transitory, thing which must be protected at all costs. We in the West have come to believe that our way of life is something that cannot be taken away. The events in China only served to show us that we take our freedom for granted, and that it must be forever guarded and defended. It also showed us that we can no longer ignore the world around us, that we must help those who struggle for freedom.

To the capitalist West, freedom has become a commodity, desired by all but only available to those who can pay for it. China is only the latest example of this analogy. For instead of money, they pay for their freedom with blood and sweat, suffering and anguish. Yet for all of the brutal repression they have suffered, for all of the loss and suffering, for all the crackdowns, the executions and edicts, the privations and humiliations above all this the spark of hope lingers.

Recently, an official opposition group in exile, the Federation for Democracy in China, held its first meeting in Paris. It opened with a moment of silence to remember those who were killed by the army's crackdown during those infamous June days in Tiananmen. This new movement, inspired by the Solidarity movement in Poland, will seek new and effective ways to help China become free. But perhaps the most eloquent statement of their purpose was given by a man known as Wuerkaixi, a student who was one of the chief speech makers in Tiananmen Square, when he said, "Bringing democracy to China requires that we battle together, shoulder to shoulder. Our strength continues, we are hopeful. Be confident." The example of these defiant words can only show the spirit that these people hold within them.

It must thus be remembered so, from a tiny spark of hope, the flames of revolution ignite anew. We Canadians will watch and wait and hope for the day when another people will succeed, to dream the great dreams that our own ancestors dreamt not so long ago.

By Angela Williams.

October 27, 1988



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