

Opinion

Jeff Cowley



Free trade warped

Free trade talk is a strange and dangerous thing. It reacts on people; it changes them, altering their states of being — like the drug that turned Dr. Jekyll into Mr. Hyde.

At the free trade forum last Friday in SUB, I stumbled upon a hoard of well-educated sixth graders who were keen on politics and thoroughly briefed on the debate. Curious to understand what drives an eleven year old to a political debate, I asked them for their views. Saying things like "it sucks," "Mulroney is a hoser" and other assorted farting noises, they unnerved me, and I backed away wondering what their parents feed them.

Later it struck me that those angry elementary students represent what is happening on a national level: the government's warping of Canadian attitudes.

For example, the federal election, which has turned into a furious Mexican cock fight over free trade, is going to be decided more by lopsided leaflets and hellfire speeches than by an accurate consensus of what Canadians want.

The embargo on information has left voters blind and alone to figure the damn thing out for themselves. It's no surprise that Canadians can be swayed by Angry Ed's lopsided arguments or leaflets from Mulroney's Ministry of Propaganda.

Canadian voters need some sort of level headed interpretation of the deal — like a hockey program: perhaps the government should publish a booklet with an outline of the agreement, player profiles, and rows and rows of statistics.

Brilliant or bogus, free trade has been billed as the political issue of the century. Canadians deserve to know what the score is.

The Gateway

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The Gateway welcomes letters to the editor.

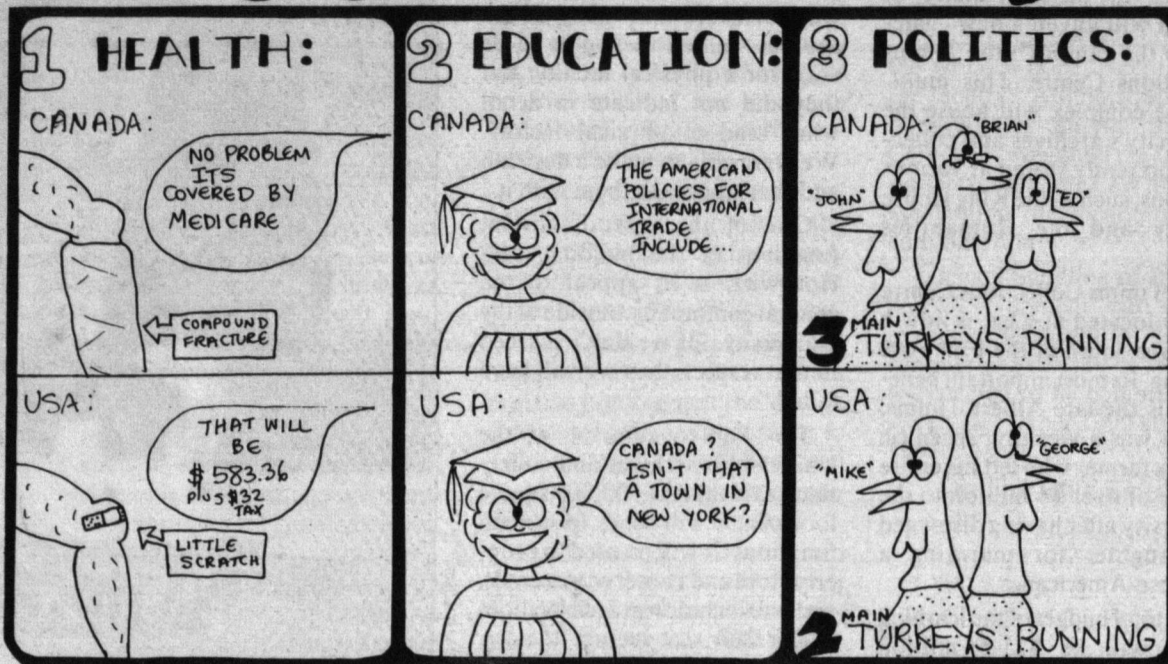
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Free Trade

ATTEMPTS TO SHOW: Cultural Differences



Letters

The Gateway welcomes letters to the editor.

The name, faculty and year of study of the writer must be included for publication. The writer's phone number and University of Alberta I.D. number must also be provided, but will remain confidential.

Letters should be double-spaced, and typed if possible. They must not exceed 300 words.

The Gateway reserves the right to edit for length or clarity. Material of a racist, sexist, homophobic, or libellous nature will not be published.

Please submit letters to Room 282, SUB.

Christians share cure

Re: Worship larches!

Mr. Ruiiu, before you condemn all Christians on campus as zealots and fanatics who force their faith, may I ask you a simple question? If you had a cure for cancer, a pill that could wipe out any trace of that deadly disease, and you kept it to yourself and never told anyone, especially those people who had cancer and really needed it, wouldn't you think that you were selfish and cruel? I know I'd be upset if someone knew something that could save my life, and they never told me. Do you see what I am trying to say? When those Christians approach you on campus, they are trying to share the cure of the deadliest disease to ever attack mankind — the disease of sin.

We as Christians believe that every person has done wrong (sinned) and that means that we are all in need of a cure for this "disease" in our soul. We also believe that the only cure is Jesus, asking Jesus, who died on the cross in our place, to wipe away the sin and replace it with His forgiveness and love. We, as Christians, are responsible to share the message of salvation with everyone, in love. Jesus told us to "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations..." (Matthew 28:19). If we don't share this truth, then we are as selfish as if we had the cure for cancer and didn't share that. But it is your choice whether to listen and talk with us and accept or reject what we are saying.

No one can force you to decide anything, we just want to challenge you to make a choice, and it is awfully hard to make a choice if you don't know the options. The most important decision you will ever make is whether you choose to accept Jesus and serve God with your whole life or whether you place God on a shelf and live your life without Him. Your decision will affect every area of your life. But that is your decision, we just want to present you with what God wants to do in your life. We may be 'fanatical', but that is because we don't serve God part-time, we serve Him with everything we have.

Yes, Jesus is a 'crutch' when we are weak (and who isn't at some time), but He is also a friend, a shepherd, a teacher, and a Savior. Jesus has changed my life for the better and given me so much peace and joy that how could I not share the greatest thing that happened to me with you? Next time someone approaches you, instead of making like a Druid, why don't you engage in an intellectually challenging discussion that, if you choose, could change your life.

Galyne Howard
 Education II

Words dangerous

"There can only be one truth about God and His purpose for mankind and, frankly, we have it."

These words of Ward Antoniuk of the Outerlimits Club demand a response. It is my duty and pleasure to do that.

These are dangerous narrowminded words. Even more dangerous is the fact that Antoniuk feels free to "confront and even challenge" us all with his beliefs. How far does he feel this should be taken? If only people who think like Antoniuk are to be tolerated, then the next logical step is that people should look like him. I can only hope that he doesn't want us to smell like him, because what I smell is the kind of religious fascism that has been tainting our planet since the alleged events of the year 0, "A.D."

Perhaps one day Antoniuk will wake up and realize that there are dozens, or perhaps even billions of people who are perfectly happy to think for themselves. Unfortunately, it appears that Antoniuk is a victim

of the over-zealousness typical of the fervent religious believer. It is an over-zealousness caused by slavish devotion to the unreasonable hope that praying to an imaginary divinity will get you to heaven, or not to hell, or a decent afterlife, or whatever. It is also a substitution for self-determination and responsibility. It's ok if I screw up; God will forgive me if I believe in him.

That is just my opinion, of course. To some, it will seem as unreasonable as Antoniuk's position seems to me. The difference is that I don't run around HUB Mall, declaiming the joys of atheism in an obnoxious fashion.

Apart from that, I would defend Antoniuk's right to believe what he wants to the finish. Would he do the same for me?

Mike Spindloe
 Arts II

West wants in

I wasn't especially happy to read Shelby Cook's article "Reform Party revs up" in the September 29 issue of The Gateway. The article contained a number of supposed statements of fact which are totally wrong and serve to fundamentally mislead readers about the nature and policies of the party.

The Reform Party of Canada is not a "western version of the Parti Quebecois", nor does it "inject a separatist option for voters." We are a federal party that seeks to achieve fair representation for the West within Confederation through systemic changes such as the Triple E Senate and the lessening of party discipline. At no time have the Reformers advocated separatism, and neither did the old Progressive Party for that matter. In fact, the Reform Party's slogan is "The West Wants In".

The article also said that eight of the thirteen candidates who were at the Edmonton rally on September 26 were running in Alberta. Actually, I believe that all the candidates present were running in Alberta ridings. This is old news now; the Reformers have since nominated about sixty candidates in the four Western provinces.

Bob Van Wegen
 Reform Party Students' Society
 University of Calgary