

EDITORIAL

Clean the screen

When Playboy Enterprises appears on the First Choice Pay-TV channel in February, Janet Maher won't be forced to watch.

Maher is President of the Alberta Status of Women Action Committee (ASWAC). The "you can always switch the channel" argument is a weak one, says Maher.

"Yes, you can turn it off. But this argument also assumes that people can exercise that discretion to do so. Because TV is so prevalent in our culture, we don't pay attention. You shouldn't have to worry about your five-year-old niece watching it," explained Maher.

Some feel that if Playboy is given the go-ahead, then the hard-core magazines won't be too far behind.

Granted, Playboy has achieved a certain amount of respect in journalistic circles. However, it's apparent that the drawing card of the Pay-TV version won't be that of investigative excellence.

"I think this whole adult entertainment business is peculiar. If it's good, wholesome, non-sexist material with love and mutual equality, then great, show it," she said.

Somehow, you get the feeling that the Playboy programs won't fulfill those requirements. The very fact that there are different pin-ups every month suggests that women are disposable.

"Pornography implies some imbalance of power," says Maher.

Playboy is relatively tame by "community standards" but does that justify its presence on the nation's airwaves?

"We're also talking about kids. There are a whole range of influences. People become desensitized. The material becomes more explicit and more violent," she noted.

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) would be considered Big Brother if it were to intervene now. But shouldn't there be some kind of obligation on the CRTC to at least show what the "community standard" will be?

A pro-Playboy argument is that Pay-TV is a discretionary service. If people want to pay for Playboy, then it's their right to do so. And it's First Choice's right to provide the service.

"People have the notion that by paying for something, it makes it more acceptable. But this has harmful effects," she said.

Maher adds that the Pay-TV channels get very defensive when asked to explain why they're going to carry certain shows.

"They're testing the bounds of acceptability by starting small. The most important issue here is the extent to which this stuff becomes available. It's inflicting harm on our society as a whole."

There are many general areas that one can discuss when looking into the Playboy and Pay-TV issue. There are matters like censorship, sexism, freedom of choice, distinguishing between pornography and eroticism, cultural acceptance, and whether a person's behaviour is affected by pornography.

Although these "tangents" make the Pay-TV issue more complex, they serve the purpose of making people aware.

There's a societal responsibility here. There's the need to recognize the dangers of letting Playboy and others on the air.

Brent Jang

Prostitution

...a message to English left-wing journalists and intellectuals generally: "Do remember that dishonesty and cowardice always have to be paid for. Don't imagine that for years on end you can make yourself the boot-licking propagandist of the Soviet regime, or any other regime, and then suddenly return to mental decency. Once a whore, always a whore."

George Orwell, 1944
As I Please

(Orwell was writing about British response to the Russian failure to assist the Warsaw uprising against the Nazis.)

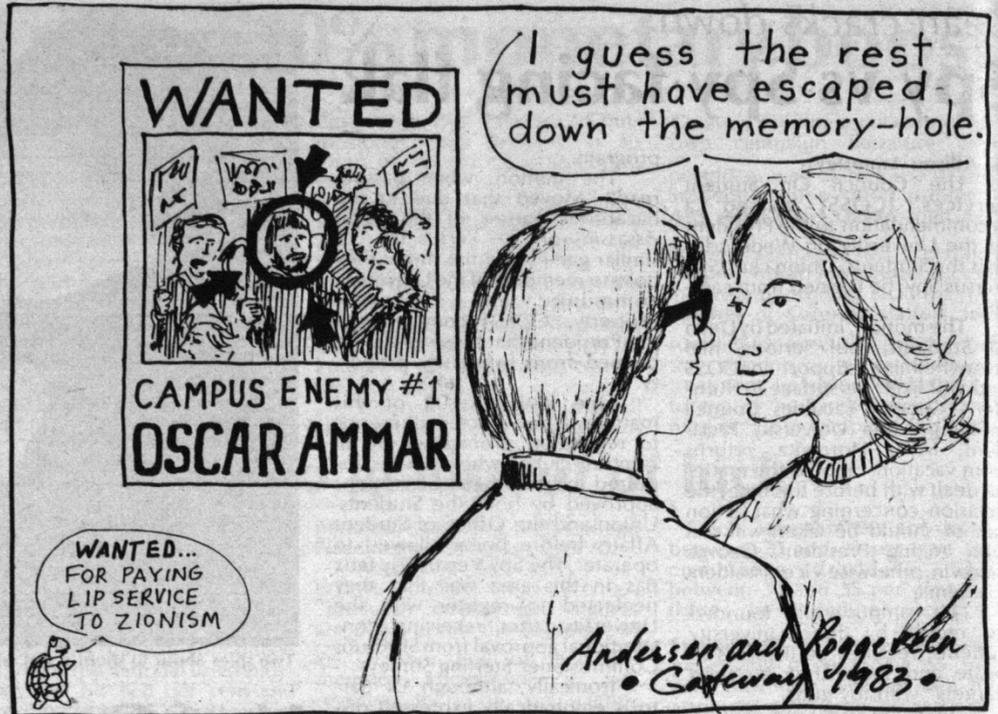
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Staff this issue:

Fog surges about our resident smack freaks Bill Inglee and Martin Beales, while stalwarts John Algard, Gilbert Bouchard, and Ken Lenz jibe across the room. Cathy McLaughlin, Margaret Baer, Mark Roppel, and Zane Harker slip out for a schooner. Adam Wessel and Cathy Hrynchysyn try to get Michael Skeet and Mary Anne Nielsen to come about. Karen Redford and Jack Verme, both three sheets to the wind, make a broad reach for Mark McCrady and Martin Coutts. Tanya Morrison, above in the main, watches the gallant Margo Schmitt and the royal Heather-Ann Laird prove that their barques are worse than their bights. And John Roggeveen sails on by...

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« LETTERS TO THE EDITOR »

Guilty, guilty, guilty!

The A.B.C. nightline report of January 7, 1983 on the Sabra and Shatilla massacres in Lebanon showed Col. Yehuda Levy to be in charge of the Israeli offensive into West Beirut. The Israeli soldiers advanced into the city under the pretext of "maintaining the peace and protecting the citizens." The evidence reveals that the Israeli soldiers, including Col. Levy, were aware that the massacres were taking place. By his very acquiescence to the murder of defenseless men, women, and children Col. Levy has elevated himself to the elite circle which includes the likes of Hitler, Goering, Goebbels, Idi Amin, Bokassa, Rauca, and their counterparts.

Even though we all support freedom of speech, no matter how offensive the speaker or the speech, one cannot help but sympathize with Oscar Ammar's outrage that a man who has deprived so many of their rights (not only of speech-but life!) remains with all of his rights intact. Certainly the drastic legal measures taken by Hillel (under the guise of "freedom of speech") would not be evidenced if the same outrage was demonstrated at a Nazi forum.

What the Hillel Organization is doing to Oscar Ammar by attempting to expel him from university is tantamount to a witch-hunt. We only hope that Hillel's efforts to persecute a dissenting voice on campus are unsuccessful.

Mahmouda Ali, Grad Studies
Carol Shaben, Arts III

Middleton tickles engineer

I wish to complement (sic) "John A. Middleton" on his hilarious (sic) portrayal of a stereotyped arts student.

Of course, I am referring to Middleton's letter to the editor, "Shame on the Engineers" in the January 13 edition of the Gateway. That letter was one of the funniest pieces of literature that I have ever read.

The pretentious style, the delicately slicing vocabulary, and the overwhelming irony all added to the letter's absurdity; Middleton is a true comic. The line, "...engineers...are contemptible boers..." was especially ludicrous. Such cliché! On the other hand, the qualification, "As a Canadian, an Albertan, and a Liberal..." was too ridiculous (sic). Middleton's parody loses credibility here; the character presented is too exaggerated, too far out of touch with reality to be believed. However, Middleton's overriding irony, especially the bit about engineers "parting with their rattles and ascending to an academic level near, if not equivalent to, the author," was very amusing. At this point in Middleton's letter, I could barely control my laughter.

Mr. Middleton, I congratulate you for authoring such an amusing article
Steve P.F. Fedyna, Engineering I

Chile shall overcome

Chile is an open wound in the flesh of the world.

"In Chile, democracy and civil liberties have been drowned in blood, in defiance of world opinion."

President of the Finnish Republic,
Dr. Urho Kekkonen

On September 11 nine years ago Chile was thrown from the road of democracy into the abyss of military dictatorship. It is still difficult to believe that such cruelty is possible in our time. The democratically-elected president was killed with thousands of other victims. Regardless of world opinion, democracy and civil rights were crushed under the heels of military boots.

This Sunday, Jan. 30, at 2:30 p.m. at Victoria high school (10210-108 Ave.) you will be able to meet with Joyce Horman, wife of Charles Horman, who was killed by the military in Chile one week after the coup. His story was also seen in the movie *Missing*. You will hear a true story from a person who went to

Chile in search of her missing husband. Today 2500 have disappeared. What happened to them? Where are they?

Yes, my friends, Chile is an open wound in the flesh of the world. But we have not lost faith.

Today, face to face with fascism, a broader and more deep-seated unity than ever before will be created. No force will be excluded. In the resistance struggle which is growing and multiplying, the light of the unity in Chile is growing brighter day by day.

In support of Chile, the people are creating a massive bulwark of unity which, despite the diversity of political viewpoints and structures, will be an insurmountable barrier to the rebirth of fascism.

As president Allende put it in his last address: "They may have the weapons, but the social process cannot be held back by crime nor by force of arms. History belongs to us. It is the people who make history."

Christina Fernandez, Ag. III

Hillel is blameless, Walker is off base

With the forthcoming disciplinary hearing of Oscar Ammar scheduled to occur on February 3, it seems that a number of letter writers are using the Gateway to conduct a "trial-by-press." Had the Gateway exercised discretion, it would have chosen not to publish opinions on the matter until the hearing is over. As it stands, the matter has already been most unfairly and most damagingly pre-judged. There are, however, certain allegations which must not go unanswered.

In his letter of January 25, Mike Walker imputes to Hillel certain political characteristics and opinions which that club simply does not possess.

The insinuation that the U. of A. Hillel group supports or in any way condones

1. the repression of West Bank Palestinians
2. massacres of innocent people (such as those which occurred at Sabra and Chatilla)
3. the "muzzling" of Arabs and Palestinians
4. the persecution and/or expulsion of Oscar Ammar

is insulting, slanderous, and manifestly untrue.

Hillel (and I speak only as a loosely affiliated member, by no means a spokesperson) is primarily a social club for Jewish university students. Of course most of us support the existence of the State of Israel. We also favour the protection of our legitimate rights here on campus. But do not accuse us of any "underhanded maneuvers," Mr. Walker. I assure you, we are not organized enough to have any!

As to the closing down of the A.S.A. information booth last term, I need only refer Mr. Walker to Edward Shihadeh's letter in the Gateway of January 11. A.S.A. president, Shihadeh does not blame Hillel for the shut-down; he knows that the closure was solely the result of an administrative decision on the part of Ray Conway. Remember, also, that the students who originally complained to Conway were individuals, acting neither with the knowledge nor the authority of Hillel.

Mr. Walker flatters us by saying that "Hillel members pressured the Students' Union into shutting down the A.S.A. information table." Alas, we wouldn't even dream of ever having such influence over the S.U.

Regarding the December 3 forum. You were correct, Mr. Walker, in saying that "(after the heckling) the Colonel apparently gave up and left." But why delete the fact that Levy first endured 1½ hours of verbal abuse and threats of physical violence?

I, unlike Mr. Walker, did attend the forum on Dec. 3 I witnessed my friends being called "filthy Zionist whores" and "fucking Zionist bitches." I heard the insults flung at Col. Levy, ranging from pig, to swine, to Nazi. I saw Oscar Ammar repeatedly goad members of the audience by inviting them to hit him.

This was no incident of "ordinary heckling."
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