

Editorial

Wake me up when it's over

Well, it's T(ory) minus nine days and counting — but does anyone care?

Probably the most amazing aspect of the provincial Tory leadership "race" ("amble" is more like it) is how Alberta PCs could turn a once-in-a-lifetime event into a cure for insomnia.

After Bill Davis abdicated as PC boss in Ontario, his would-be pretenders put on a group Punch and Judy show. In Quebec, a number of serious contenders hit the trail, even though Pierre-Marc Johnson was the undisputed favorite.

But politics in Alberta are different. Albertans don't like or believe in complicated, sweaty issue-oriented politicking.

Ron Ghitter has virtually proclaimed himself the conscience of the Alberta Tories, just like the NDP believes it is the conscience of the federal government. Notice they are both in third place.

Even more frustrating is the lack of choice. Leaving aside the maverick-like Ghitter, provincial Tories can choose from an ex-football player (Don Getty) who regurgitates the gospel according to Lougheed and the minister of the exciting municipalities portfolio (Julian Koziak) who regurgitates the gospel according to Lougheed.

Tories themselves are so bored they are running around raising the possibility of the impossible. "But you know, Koziak is not mathematically eliminated." Yeah, we know.

To be fair, no one ever promised this would be an interesting interlude. In fact, by announcing he would have nothing to do with it, John Zaozirny confirmed it would be a great time to do those chores you've always said you would. Like re-sodding the back yard.

Oh well, all is not lost. Boredom does not beget boredom. It begets over-active imagination. Maybe the Tories will fall victim to the generational Alberta election flip-flop tradition. Maybe they will complete the cycle. One fateful day in 1971, they went from being the official opposition with a measly six seats to the landslide majority. Maybe, just maybe, we'll all wake up and find that the premier of Alberta is Ray Martin, esq.

Yeah, we know.

Suzette C. Chan

Purple Thursday

Today in the Gateway office, that haven of liberalism and open-mindedness, some men got really uptight.

Another woman and I were hanging around discussing Dale Spender and next Thursday's purple day. On Oct. 10, in honor of Spender, women are asking other women to wear purple to announce their support of each other.

Dale Spender wears purple in solidarity with women in the past. She also does it to protest, to be different, to make dressing a snap.

What was particularly fun today was the way men act toward the idea of a purple Thursday. They were acting in a totally predictable manner. To be perfectly fair, their comments agreed with many other comments about Spender I have heard all week from men. Most men, whether defending themselves or not, ridiculed Spender. Men were dismissing women — just as Spender contends.

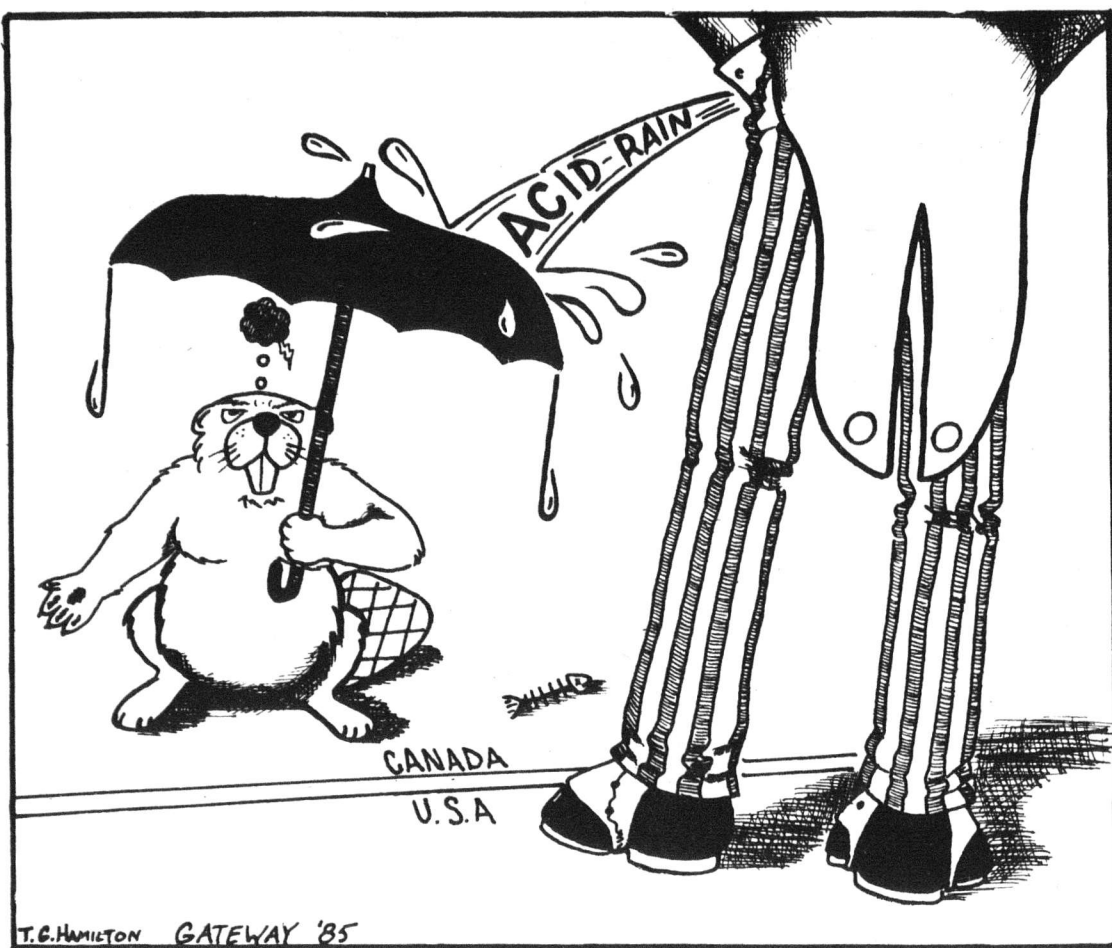
They also proved to have no sense of humor when I told them what Spender had said about men — how silly and egotistical they can be. She laughs at men, teases them — as they have done to women for all of history.

In the office as these men were laughing about the uppity women's day, the other woman and I were chuckling too. Things were pretty laid back. But when I brought up some of the wonderfully radical things Spender has said about men, these men in the office (and other men I've told about Spender) weren't too crazy about being the butt of the jokes. Again, Spender was right. She says that men don't like being laughed at.

Well, all this verification of what Spender has been saying all week just thrilled me to bits. Men prove everyday the truth in what Spender says. "So what does his woman have against men?" ask the guys. Wrong question. What have men had against women throughout history? Spender answers that (see pages 8 and 9).

Regardless of the answer, women who wear purple next Thursday will be doing some laughing of their own.

Ann Grever



Letters to the Editor

Uh, Dave?

Re: infraction reaction reaction

Dear Dave,

Those who can't laugh, teach or join the E.S.A. get their parents to enroll them in the Faculty of Arts.

Good luck in your chosen profession, Dave.

Michael Miller
Education III

Enough already!

To: Edmonton Student's Association Executive Members — 1985-86

Re: Letter to the Editor in Sept. 24, 1985 Gateway.

We can replace you with a PLATO system.

Andre Kruger
Computing Science

Women's rights abroad

Re: Sex: Not Today Baby

It is quite obvious (except to the most docile) that John Savard has been passionately misinformed and cannot bear to accept the all too real and cryptic truth: women do not have a sex drive as men understand it.

In trying to discredit Dr. Christensen's theories you forgot to explain the consequences of intercourse for women in the last 100 years, i.e. since the advent of birth control technology and its products which are readily available in the western world. Reliable and sophisticated contraception methods have completely freed women of their fear of pregnancy, but conversely unmasked them to a great degree by removing a standard excuse for abstinence. The choice of abstinence may make some sense in the Third World (as you have suggested) because they lack contraceptives. But where is that great female sex drive that was expected to suddenly appear in the west? It has obviously failed to make an appearance (except in Hollywood male sex-fantasy type movies) and women, unfortunately, are still "unsympathetic to male sexuality." This is not to say a woman does not enjoy sex; she does, but this mythical female sex drive can be quickly gauged by reflecting on the low number of sexual offenses committed by women, or the infinitesimal number of male prostitutes in society. Neither statistic could be considered to point to uncontrolled sexual drive in women.

Mr. Savard your theories on the history of women's oppression are most childish. You seem to suggest that men have been actively and systematically repressing women like it was some kind of government program or executive directive. I'm sure you'll agree

that some credit can be given to the more simple, innate, evolutionary, and biological forces in nature. As Darwin said, "We are animals before we are beings of thought."

And your textbook description of the property rights of Islamic women is outright laughable. Having lived in Saudi Arabia and travelled throughout the Middle East I can tell you first hand that the property rights of Islamic women can be equated with the privilege of allowing our kids to sell lemonade on a street corner. I defy you to name one female corporate executive or business giant that has come out of the Islam world. It is a well known fact that a Western corporation would be committing economic suicide if it allowed a woman to represent their company in business negotiations with Arabs. So please, don't commit the unforgivable error of equating women's rights in the West with what the Third World perceives as women's rights.

In fact, the whole subject of women's rights, equality of opportunity, sexism, and the role of women in society is almost exclusively a Western phenomenon. The debates about women's rights that rage in the West are unknown in the Third World and even in some developed non-Western nations. The oppression of women in the Third World (as we see it) is considered the natural order of things. Purely and simply women are considered second-class citizens and in some countries they are chattel for barter. young rural girls are sold (bonded) by the tens of thousands into the Bangkok sex industry. Child restrictions in the People's Republic have induced Chinese couples to kill their infant daughters in the hope the next child will be a son. A white female backpacker will routinely attract a crowd of Indian males just because she is white, female and travelling alone unaccompanied by a male. Phillipino women are kept "bare foot and pregnant" in one of Asia's fastest growing population pools (after Africa, of course). And it is extremely rare to see Japanese women reveling in the Tokyo nightlife. The nightlife in Japan is a male preserve.

So, Mr. Savard, please don't theorize about women from an arm-chair and a sociology text that has been "sanitized for your protection." Anglo-Saxons are not "squeamish" about women's rights, in fact (relative to the rest of the world), we are the opposite. We are attempting to eradicate the worst excesses of sexism and oppression, through education and informed debates; in the same manner the West has tamed nature, by working with it. Part of that education is knowing the facts and to put them into a proper perspective, free from misleading propaganda and feminist hype. Like democracy, "true" women's rights in the West is a new and precious experiment. Nurture it and encourage it, but don't bury it under loads of manure.

R. Connors

Oh, that lemming effect! Tim Kihn crawled into Marilyn Sieben's beer bottle to rescue a lost necklace and was followed by Paul Simao, Roberta Franchuk, Lutfulkibir Khan, Graeme Whamond, Edna Landreville, Greg Hamilton, Janine McDade, John Watson, Gord Stech, Nate LaRoi, Scott Fralick, Gilbert Bouchard, Margot Ross, Ashram Mustapha, Tim Hellum, Greg McHarg, Alex Miller, Tom Huh, Leif Stout, Ron Damant and Rob Schmidt. "They never do that for me," said Hans Beckers dolefully.

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