

# Forum

## Women aren't responsible!?!

Women are not always accountable for their actions.

Or so the legal system has said by a ruling passed in a Canadian court which makes the use of Pre-Menstrual Syndrome as a legal defense valid.

Tuesday night's CBC Journal documented a Canadian single mother who went to trial for the near-fatal stabbing of her ex-husband. The attack was pre-meditated and the woman was convicted. But she was put on probation because in the judge's eyes, she was not completely responsible for her actions.

In her defense she claimed to have been suffering from PMS at the time of the attack. The woman said she could not even recall the actual stabbing incident. The defense worked.

The single mother was put on probation and is now home with her children. The fact that she was found not to be accountable for an extremely violent act should call into question her emotional stability. An unstable person with proven violent tendencies should not be raising children. Yet the courts returned her immediately to her own.

It is also very frightening that the legal system will accept such a poorly understood phenomenon as a legal defense. The medical community has not yet determined any definite causes, symptoms, treatments or cures for the syndrome.

Accepting the consequence of a woman's biology as a defense in the courts is setting a very dangerous precedent. That is basically making a woman unaccountable for her actions on the basis of just being a woman. What is this going to mean for the progress of women's rights in the country?

I sincerely hope that what appears to be an act of pity on the part of the justice system doesn't turn out to be the "two steps back" for the feminist movement.

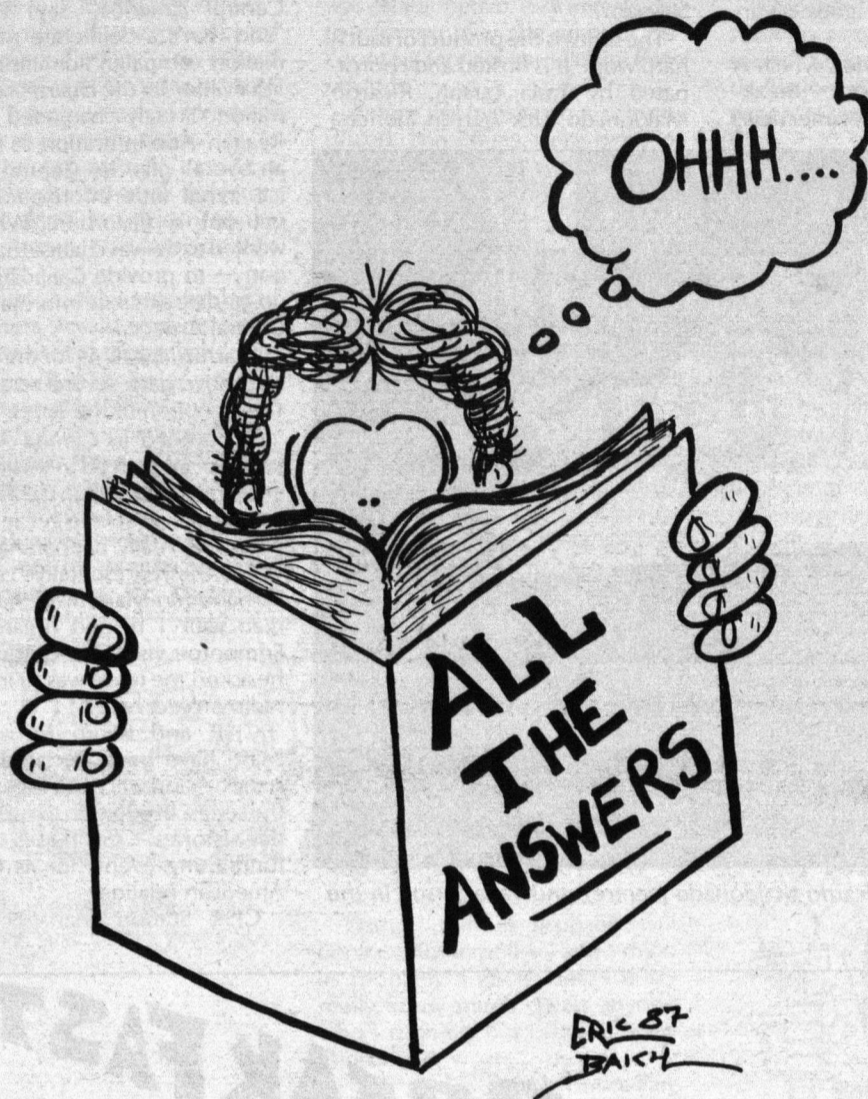
Sherri Ritchie

## The Gateway

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**Editor-in-Chief:** Dean Bennett  
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A long time ago, in a cave far away, our hero Jeff Cowley is whittling a new club. Meanwhile, down by the tar pits, Matt Hays and Randal Smathers are throwing in dinosaur bones to confuse future archaeologists, almost drowning Brad Johnson who was doing the Australopithecus crawl. Roberta Franchuk is being trod upon by Tina Cristini's pet Brontosaurus as Blair Ratsoy looks on in amusement. Dragos Ruiu discovered a black monolith and is trying to explain its significance to Paul Morigeau. Bill Man and Carolyn Aney look at each other and say, "What the Hal is it?" Alan Small passes by on the way to the bowling alley with Fred and Barney. Pat Stansfield is busy discovering fire, Glenn St-Germain is perfecting the wheel, while Eric Baich admires how nicely square it is. Randy McCoy chisels snakes into the cave wall and marvels as Marc Simao names fire: "Aargh!!!" Melissa Sreaton and Samson are trying to put him out, but Dan Skinner is using him to toast marshmallows. Jerome Ryckborst explains Lisa Hall's woolly-mammoth lingerie in sociological terms to a puzzled Jeff Cartwright. All of this as tribe presidential candidate Ken Bosman promises Ruth Anderson a pterodactyl in every pot.



## Letters...

### Sesek matter clarified

To the Editor:

Peter Sesek, Kevin Brosseau, and the other five members of the Students Working For Students slate — runner-ups in last year's Students' Union elections — have no outstanding accounts with Central Web Offset Ltd. Peter Sesek, Kevin Brosseau, and the other five members of the Students Working For Students slate are not under any litigation proceedings directed by Central Web Offset Ltd.

The misunderstanding between Peter Sesek and Central Web Offset Ltd. would have been resolved long ago if any of the letters our office was sending monthly to Box 80 in SUB building had ever reached him. When Peter Sesek was finally made aware that there was a problem, he acted quickly and resolved the matter.

In my dealings with Peter Sesek, I have found him to be an honest and hard-working young man, who would be an asset to any company, or in this case, Students' Union.

Tom Caston  
 President  
 Central Web Offset Ltd.

### Draper still in the race

To the Editor:

I intend to be a candidate for the position of Vice-President Finance and Administration in the Students' Union elections next week. Although *The Gateway* reported in last Thursday's edition that I was disqualified at that time, it was a factual error. I hope this clarifies the state of confusion surrounding the handling of my status as a qualified candidate in the Students' Union election.

Grant Draper

### Amerika goes on and on...

To the Editor:

With the publication of its Feb. 24 issue *The Gateway* has finally and completely slunk across the line that separates a real newspaper from a rag. The "news story" *Communists protest Amerika* was so riddled with half-truths, innuendoes, convenient omissions and guilt by association that it could have been printed in *Pravda*.

From the headline onward the implication was that only

communists opposed the mini-series. Nothing could be further from the truth. The list of groups in the U.S. and Canada (including Edmonton) who objected to the series included many churches and other social organizations that have no leftist connections whatsoever.

Aside from one fleeting (deliberately?) well-hidden reference to the fact that members of the Unitarian Church were outside CFRN, the article concentrated strictly on the involvement by the Young Communist League.

Also, by identifying Gilbert Bouchard simply as the "demonstration organizer" Jeff Cowley gave the definite impression that he was there as a representative of the Y.C.L. In fact, Bouchard was present as a concerned citizen and member of the Unitarian Church. Nobody could seriously call the Unitarian Church of the 1980s radical, although a number of its members believe that programs like *Amerika* only serve to slow down the building of international bridges.

The reader of *Communists protest Amerika* is also given the impression that because the Young Communist League favoured the censorship of the television show and because Gilbert Bouchard was "the demonstration organizer", it followed that he shared this opinion. Why didn't Cowley ask him about this and print his reply? Bouchard has stated publicly on several occasions that he is opposed to such censorship and asks only for equal air time to discuss the series. He has been quoted in *The Edmonton Journal* as saying that he was very disturbed by the request from organized Marxist-Leninist groups that the show be banned altogether.

I don't read *The National Enquirer*, I don't read *The Edmonton Sun* and, as of now, I don't read *The Gateway*. All for the same reason. I just have too much respect for serious journalism.

Laura Winopol

### ...and on ...and on... and on...

To the Editor:

RE: Letter by Dragos Ruiu, Feb. 26/87

I wish to dispute some of the statements in the letter by Dragos Ruiu (Feb. 26) regarding the film *Amerika*, and the condemnation of this film by the Campus Young Communist League. According to Mr. Ruiu, the Young Communists are calling for censorship based on ideology; however, in the article in the Feb. 24 issue of the *Gateway*, entitled 'Communists Protest Amerika', one of the Young Communist League members is quoted as saying that the organization is calling for the "establishment of a regulatory body to

Letters to the Editor should not be more than 250 words in length. They must include your signature, faculty, year of program, I.D. number, and phone number. We reserve the right to edit for libel and length. Letters do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Gateway*.