

Editorial
Mary Rogal-Black

Violence in hockey signals lack of morality

Coming in the shadow of the Graham James case, a recent violent hockey brawl has bruised the image of hockey even more. In a Maritime Junior A Hockey League game last week, a player continued to beat another player after he was unconscious. It's no longer possible to believe that unacceptable levels of violence in the sport closest to the hearts of Canadians are simply isolated incidents or the actions of aberrant players. Instead, it is becoming more clear that these are part of the system of hockey, a system that includes bad as well as good.

A recent investigative report on CBC's *The Fifth Estate* provided the missing link between the James sexual assault case, this latest incident, and the beating of referee Brian Carragher last winter by several players on the Université de Moncton Blue Eagles' hockey team. In the *Fifth Estate* report, a young man described first joining junior hockey at fourteen. The harrowing initiation process took place in the company of adult coaches and managers as well as other team members. It qualified as both sexual and violent: the young man described becoming intoxicated and then being forced to strip and take part in demeaning 'games' in front of others at the 'welcome to the team' party. Other interviews confirmed that his was not an unusual initiation into the world of hockey. Ken Dryden, respected goalie and writer, said he lived in fear of initiations during his first two seasons in the NHL. The process, as Dryden and others pointed out, is demoralizing. If these kinds of initiations are indeed common, it's not at all difficult to draw the connection from apparently accepted traditions to, in one direction, Graham James and, in the other, a violent attack on a fellow player or a referee. All of these phenomena share a lack of morality, dignity and honour.

Fundamental to hockey's popularity—indeed that of any sport—is the concept of heroism. When two teams skate onto the ice, at the most basic level they are re-enacting the familiar battle between good and evil. Most fans have chosen sides based on longstanding loyalties, statistics or successful team marketing, and every face-off becomes an important battle. But with the unwilling of the seedier side of hockey comes the knowledge that too many people in the system have lost sight of the game's heroism. There is no dignity in the kind of initiation rituals described by players, no masculine heroics in the molesting of young boys and no way that attacking the referee can be defended in honourable terms. A player who can lose control enough to begin bashing a referee's head in has no sense of honour. Instead, he is guided only by a lust for victory—one that can mean little if it doesn't come with respect for the laws of the game.

Unfortunately, fights have become part of the game and are fodder for offshoot entertainment like Don Cherry's *Rock 'em Sock 'em* videos. Some fans say they go to games to see blood on the ice and although bare-knuckle fighting has been outlawed in boxing because it's too damaging, hockey players routinely remove gloves and helmets early on in fights. Certainly fighting raises the energy level of the game, making it easier to sell the multimillion dollar show that is Hockey. In this context, the laws of the game seem to become more flexible. Meanwhile, younger fans learn that it's not enough to be a good player, they also have to be good fighters. And that's where hockey is losing. Players who rely on their fists as much as their stickhandling compromise the really heroic element of hockey: the skill and complexity of a well-played game. Heroic hockey is epitomized by the Great One, winner of the Lady Byng trophy for Most Sportsmanlike Player year after year. Fans watched Gretzky to appreciate his strategy, his skill and his willingness to provide opportunities for others on the team. His ability to demonstrate what made the game of hockey special did more for hockey than players who give in to a lust for blood, resulting in brawls spectators could witness outside any bar on any night in any city.

Gary Worrall teaches a course called "Aggression and Violence: Perspective in Sport" at UNB-SJ. Worrall distinguishes between players who play well and the ones who fight hard: "People like Wayne Gretzky in hockey or Michael Jordan in basketball, these are quality athletes who are also class athletes. They have transcended sport. In sport psychology literature we call people who transcend sport 'highly internalized athletes.' These are people who don't blame others when they have a problem. They look deep inside themselves for both the problem and the solution. They don't take out their frustrations on the referee or anyone else" (*The Telegraph Journal*). The sense of control, discipline and morality required to be quality, class athletes and true heroes needs to be regained by everyone in hockey before we will see a return to what team sports and honour really mean.

Mudwump

Joseph W.J. FitzPatrick
Confessions of a cynic

One of the literary figures I admire most is Sen Johnson. I'm not a particularly good student of his, or a particular fan of all of his writings, but one thing which has always struck me about him is his intellectual honesty.

This was brought to the fore in an 18th Century English class I had with Professor Emeritus Don Rowan. We were studying one of his writings on Christianity, the name of which escapes me now. At the end, Dr. Rowan asked why Johnson had not expounded upon the salvation possible through Christianity, as many of works of the day typically did. One of the possibilities, in my mind, was intellectual honesty. Not a secular or atheist honesty, but an intellectual one. I asked myself, could Johnson honestly have reassured the readers that following Christ would lead them to a better life? He couldn't, and therefore he didn't.

Intellectual honesty surprises many people. In its purest form, it alienates everybody. It's much like political neutrality. In addition, being able to see both sides of an argument inevitably weakens your own. Being able to understand both positions necessarily gives the impression that neither are the ideal. Plus, lacking the belief that your argument is not the only argument, you lose much of the zeal that such belief would allow you to convey. At least, that's what I have been told.

For example, why could I possibly be interested in anything by William Shakespeare? I can understand why one might want to study it, but why should I have to be interested in it in order to effectively take the course? The solution has been to remove myself from the study of Shakespeare and look at it from an outsider's point of view. This intellectual detachment has seemed to me to run counter the popular wisdom of having to be interested in any particular topic which you are studying. And yet, it has always seemed to me to be essential to the academic exercise.

My compromise has been to put my faith in the process and the method, rather than the topic. This has served me well but it has an incredible downside. Because while I am able to discuss topics as disparate as Sailor Moon and theories of economic dependency in post-colonial empires. In the same breath and with the same tenacity, I must guard myself against seeming silly. I have to admit that I can be silly. Which apparently surprises a lot of people. Heck, I watch Sailor Moon and *Headline News*. To admit that I do is, in itself, silly. Being silly and not telling other people is a burden that I compare to the balancing act between eschewing academia and recognizing its value. To me, the orderly exchange of information should be paramount. Clearly above any petty dispute over any one aspect of it, let alone a dispute over how it should be transmitted or who should do the transmitting.

But there's my idealism creeping in. Oscar Wilde said that people with a keen sense of observation are often called cynics by those who do not have it. And I am certainly guilty of both keen observation and calling others cynics. (The irony is that only a cynic would see cynicism in being called a cynic, and that only a cynic would call another a cynic.) I am a "cynic" but, like most cynics, I'm really an idealist. The cynicism stems from a despair that the world fails to live up to the ideal. The important thing is to keep this cynicism in check. To express it carefully, and with consideration. Cynicism for cynicism's sake is pointless. And no one should pollute another in such a manner. Intellectualism and honesty should be symbiotic but, cynically, I long ago recognized that they are not.

BLOOD & THUNDER
Letters to the Editor

Frustrated with rising tuition

To the Editor:

I fell down the stairs last week in Toole Hall because I'm down to about 10% tread left on the heels of my winter boots; therefore, I can no longer get traction on most of the floors (even the little gripper things on the stairs). I've had these boots for about 3 years now and if tuition goes up again I'll probably have them for at least the next two years. Couldn't find a summer job last summer. Two years of university and no one will even give me a job that only requires a few inane phrases: "have a nice day," "thank you for shopping at..." "want your oil checked," etc. My parents help me out as much as they can afford to and then some. But they've got bills of their own and my little sister to support. The government would only give me a loan of about \$2300 this year (my tuition and fees alone were about \$3000). It's not fair, you know: I'm 20 and trying to get a decent education and I have to fill out 6 dozen different forms in triplicate and beg and plead with a multitude of "authorities" in government offices/lending institutions just to get a few grand (which I have to pay back with interest), but if I were 16 and had a baby I could get about \$1000 a month from welfare and not have to pay any of it back. And the "government" continues to wonder why the level of education in this country is so low.

Anyways, here is what \$800 (the approximate tuition increase in my degree program—science

means to me:

- 2 months rent and groceries (new boots?);
- 2 months rent, new winter boots and a coat;
- textbooks and supplies for a year (and maybe some new boots);
- 2 months rent and a couple of textbooks (new boots?);
- groceries for the academic year (new boots?);
- 2 months rent and a pizza or something once in awhile, as a treat or so I don't have to cook at exam time, and new boots;
- nice boots that are warm and comfortable and have a good tread so I can walk back up the hill to where I live, even when the sidewalks are icy;
- I could get a phone and cable and pay my printing fees for a year and get some new boots;
- I could buy some food that doesn't end in "-etti" and get some new winter boots
- I wouldn't have to annoy a whole bunch of "authorities" and get stressed out filling out forms (save the trees for printing money) so I could borrow another \$800 (and get new boots)
- if I don't have to borrow another \$800 then I don't have to pay back another \$800 and its interest (maybe I could get new boots)
- I'll be here for about two more years and 2x \$800 is a hell of a lot more (good-bye dream of having new winter boots any time this millennium—did I mention they're cold and uncomfortable and the laces are fraying? well they are)
- I could take some non-credit courses from

the department of extension and enrich myself or whatever (and get new boots to walk to the classes in)

• I could take a computer course so this damn machine would stop eating/mangling/losing/deleting most of what I type (and I could get new boots to give it a good swift kick in the monitor if it does continue to eat/mangle/lose/delete my lab reports and stuff).

If I were just starting university in 1997, tuition for 4 years at \$3200 would cost me \$15,200, which is about \$3200 more than it would cost at present (approximately). That's an entire extra year's tuition. That would probably be \$3200 more in student loans which would add a significant amount of interest as well. I went to the session on student loans that was given in the SUB on Thursday. One of the speakers said the average total student loan for a degree program is about \$26000. It apparently takes about 9 1/2 years to pay this amount back, by which time the borrower has had to pay about \$17000 in interest! That's more than 5 years of tuition at the present rate. Realistically I can hardly afford to be here as it is, and I'm scared to even contemplate a tuition hike. I mean, it was bad enough that I might get charged an extra \$10 for a football program that I have no interest in.

Holly Saunders, BSc.3
(with about 2 more years left to go)

Worker has a different view of cleaning company

To the Editor:

I'm writing in response to the article in *The Brunswickan* on January 17, 1997 regarding the new cleaning company ["New cleaning company on track," page 1]. I'm only one out of 120, but in my opinion everything said in this article is half-truth.

A.B.C. has taken this contract at a much lower rate of pay for these employees. They get paid less for more work. My question is: how do you get extra hours when there are fewer employees? Answer: everyone is overworked and stressed. We not only have to maintain our own work, but cover other people's work when they're out sick. Everyone suffers since we can't do all the cleaning we want to do.

There has been a large turnover of employees: I'd guess over 150 people over a nine-month period. Due to the impossible work routines, a lot of good workers have left. Another problem is with shortages of supplies and the need to have equipment since the budget is too tight.

As far as the "major clean-up" goes, it is misleading since it wouldn't matter what company had the contract since there is a major

clean-up every May. Has there been a survey of the office staff in each building to determine if their issues and concerns with Modern are now addressed?

If UNB has such high standards and equal opportunities for all their workers, why is it that the A.B.C. staff who clean the buildings (offices, classrooms, etc) don't have equal or fair wages compared to other UNB workers? Half the wages just doesn't seem fair to me. For example,

Physical Plant does a wonderful job shovelling, but let's not forget that A.B.C. employees also shovel along with doing all their regular work. The last big storm saw employees shovelling for approximately three hours that day, in addition to their regular duties.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to set the record straight.

Name withheld by request.

Bar makes mini cash grab

To the Editor:

It has been many years since I have been asked for identification in order to be served liquor; however, a grossly unfair practice in the City of Fredericton has recently come to my attention.

Three young people were frequenting the downtown bars recently. Upon entering one facility, they each paid a \$3.50 cover charge. Then they were asked for ID. Although they were all of legal drinking age, none had the all-important NBLCC identification card, and they

were refused admittance. This, of course, is the bar's prerogative, but the kicker is: they could not get their money back.

This is a pure and simple money grab. Do many local facilities have this unethical policy? If so, it should be abolished. The simplest solution, of course, would be to have staff check IDs before collecting the cover charge. At the very least these people should have been refunded their money.

P. Ronayne
cc: Sweetwaters.

Concerned about forestry 'propaganda'

To the Editor:

In the last month, there have been several articles written in *The Brunswickan* concerning various forestry topics. It is these articles and other events within the faculty that have drawn me to write this article. Myself and other foresters/forest engineers are beginning to develop adverse or perhaps even uneasy feelings concerning students in our faculties. We are all aware that our professional duty upon entering the workforce is to make those decisions that will sustain our environment and maintain favourable conditions for future generations. It is also our duty to challenge those choices currently being made in an attempt to develop more productive and environmentally friendly methods in managing our forests.

However, I also believe that, to an extent, it is our duty to support the actions of fellow foresters. We must educate the public with factual information which supports our practices, rather than writing articles that suggest outrageous facts, such as trees feeling pain. This reminds me of a fax I once read while working in the Miramichi. This was a fax sent around by a certain "friend" suggesting that reindeer were actually living in the Christmas Mountains. It is people of this kind who prey upon the sympathetic minds of the uneducated.

The important fact which some of these students are forgetting is that they are in Forestry. Forestry is, always has been, and forever will be a business of using timber for our everyday lives. It would be nice if we could live in a perfect world where all the forests could be set aside for parks and study areas. However, it does not take a high degree of realistic thought to come to the conclusion that this is not only

economically impossible but ridiculous. The world needs timber products, and it is through education gained that we as foresters and forest engineers will provide this to the public, using the most economically and environmentally feasible methods possible.

To all those students who believe that the courses they are taking are too timber oriented, I have a few questions. What do you intend to do with your Forestry degree? Do you intend to stop the actions of fellow foresters in the

workplace? Or perhaps you intend to use your education as justification for filling the public full of propaganda. Whatever the case, I suggest that you think about the consequences of your actions. Think about all of those conveniences that you take for granted that come from 'causing pain' to trees and severely altering ecosystems before you criticize the very field in which you are studying at university.

Conway John Elkins

Taiwan information 'dated'

Dear Editor:

I read the article depicting life and culture in Taiwan by Chris Barnes with interest. While his description, which presumably is based on his own life experience, is true about the weather and certain aspects of life, there was information not presently accurate.

First of all, since the lifting of the "Martial Law" in 1987, government censorship has rapidly disappeared. Cable television is not only legal but is very popular with ordinary families in all large cities in Taiwan. Their cablevision has a lot more channels than we have in NB. The print media is experiencing a similar liberal trend in Taiwan. Many international magazines and journals print "Asian editions" simply to better attract readers with more accounts on Asian affairs in their special edition. And the Asian edition is sold all over Asia, not just in Taiwan.

The lack of "mall" in shopping is due largely to the scarcity of land area in highly congested

Asian cities. However, some large department stores often have supermarkets in the basement and they really constitute "mini-malls." There is also an increasing trend for people to shop more in the supermarket with cleaned and prepared food packages rather than live chicken to be butchered right there, although the latter has not completely gone. Buddhism is the most popular religion in Taiwan, but there is significant presence of Christianity (both Catholic and Protestant) and Taoism. The claim that "98% of Taiwan is Buddhist" is grossly exaggerated. These statistics can be verified by census information released by the Taiwan government from time to time.

I do not know how long ago Chris left Taiwan, but his description contains very dated information. I feel obliged to respond with the hope that the UNB community will be better informed.

Sincerely,
Larry N. Shyu, Professor, Dept. of History.

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