

Slick new magazine on campus fails to impress

by Neal Watson

Despite a slick look, celebrities on the cover, and the admirable intention of providing students with their own magazine, the creators of *Campus Digest* have given us a formula product that is instantly recognizable and instantly boring.

Campus Digest is mostly fluff - to employ technical jargon. The text features largely inane and superficial subject matter.

The publishers have created a grave error for anyone attempting to crash a competitive market: they have introduced a product that merely copies what already is available.

There is nothing original or even fresh in the pages of *Campus Digest*.

The new *Campus Digest* is the new students' answer to *People* magazine. Like *People*, *Campus Digest* warrants scrutiny only in the doctor's office while awaiting an appointment.

The major features in the first two issues of *Campus Digest* represent the publisher's commitment to issues which concern the Canadian student in the 1980's. Certainly an admirable ambition.

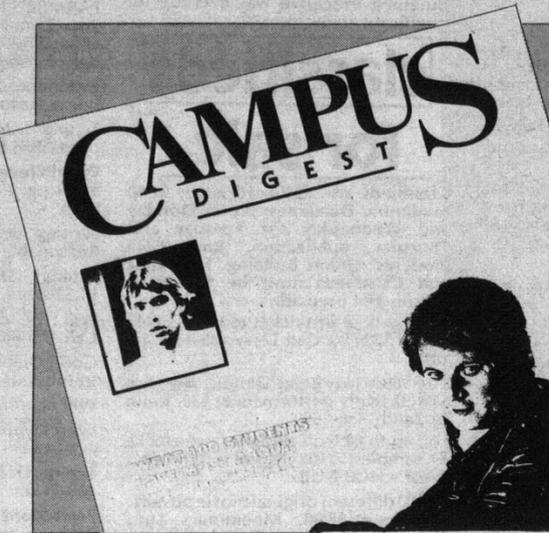
In keeping with this commitment, *Campus Digest* reports on "Party Pizazz," "Fashion Now," and a concern uppermost in the minds of all students (I'm deadly serious): "What students love most about the other sex."

To complement this hard-hitting story, *Campus Digest* provides interesting and certainly useful updates on - in the first issue - contraception and herpes. In issue two, in case you missed it, our campus informer presents a comprehensive "history of contraception."

Finally, just to drive the point home, situated cleverly on the same page as the contraceptive updates are ads for contraceptives. Talk about subliminal.

The story that seems to capture the essence of *Campus Digest's* commitment to hard investigative reporting of student issues is the "what we like about the opposite sex" feature.

This article contains impressive research (100 students polled) statistics on just exactly what it is guys and girls like and don't like about each other.



OK, every body paying attention? It is important to note, "the attraction is," in this order: eyes, lips, ears, nose. Critical to this story is the fact that breasts are important to 25 per cent of males and 0 per cent of females.

And for all you guys burning holes in women with your Richard Gere "blatant stares" - forget it. Only 6 per cent of females find this attractive.

Keep it in mind. The stories seem to consistently accompany the ads. It is really bizarre at times. For example, ads for contraceptives besides "herpes updates," shampoo ads besides our infamous story informing us that girls don't like guys with dirty hair.

Also, there are ads for Castrol besides stories on the best motor oil and reviews sit beside full-page movie ads and on it goes.

Is there something going on here, or are they just being cute?

The remainder of *Campus Digest* is not that memorable either.

Between the bright, flashy ads, are the conventional celebrity profiles. One assumes SCTV's Dave Thomas and Dead Zone Director David Cronenberg were selected as subjects because they met *Campus Digest's* likely criteria for profile: both are Canadians, and both attended Canadian Universities (this point is prominent in both interviews).

The danger with setting such a rigid selection policy, of course, is that the publishers are likely to run out of subjects rather quickly (maybe Oscar Ammar is available).

The interviews are the standard "how are you dealing with success" type. The questions are predictable, and the interviewer goes to great length to inform the reader that the subject actually attended a Canadian university.

Perhaps the writer is trying to tell us that there is hope after all.

The reviews of current films and albums are drawn directly from the pages of *People*. They are short and snappy and say almost nothing.

The sports coverage, particularly the Vanier Cup feature, is comprehensive and interesting. Plus the upfront department on university happenings is interesting and informative.

It would have been a better idea to have turned these stories into features rather than 6 page fashion spreads.

Perhaps the main problem with *Campus Digest* is that the publishers have decided to tackle everything at once and provide something for everyone. It doesn't work, and in doing so, they have lost their focus.

The idea behind *Campus Digest* is very good. Students would probably support a national student magazine devoted to what is happening on campuses across the country. After 2 issues, however, *Campus Digest* does not show a lot of promise.

It is easy to understand why *Campus Digest* is featuring fashion spreads over stories on budget cutbacks; students would undoubtedly read about the latest from Ralph Lauren than the latest from Dick Johnston.

However, the question is, how much fluff can the average student take?

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Certainly, the two most popular members of the beer family today are lagers and ales. Lagers (sometimes called pilseners) originated in Germany and are made with a bottom-fermenting yeast that settles during fermentation.

Ale is the traditional and hearty English brew. Unlike lager, ale is made with a top-fermenting yeast and more hops. So the colour is darker and the taste heartier.

Heartier still are the porters and stouts. Brewed the same as ales, extra ingredients like roasted malt, barley or flaked oats account for their characteristically robust, full-bodied flavour and deep colouring.

The newest additions to the beer family are the light beers. Brewed with less alcohol, fewer calories and a lighter flavour, it seems that what people like about them most is not what they have, but what they don't have.

All in all, the beer family provides something for almost every taste and lifestyle. That's a lot of tastes to please.

Fortunately, it's one big happy family.

Lesson #109 from the College of Beer Knowledge.

