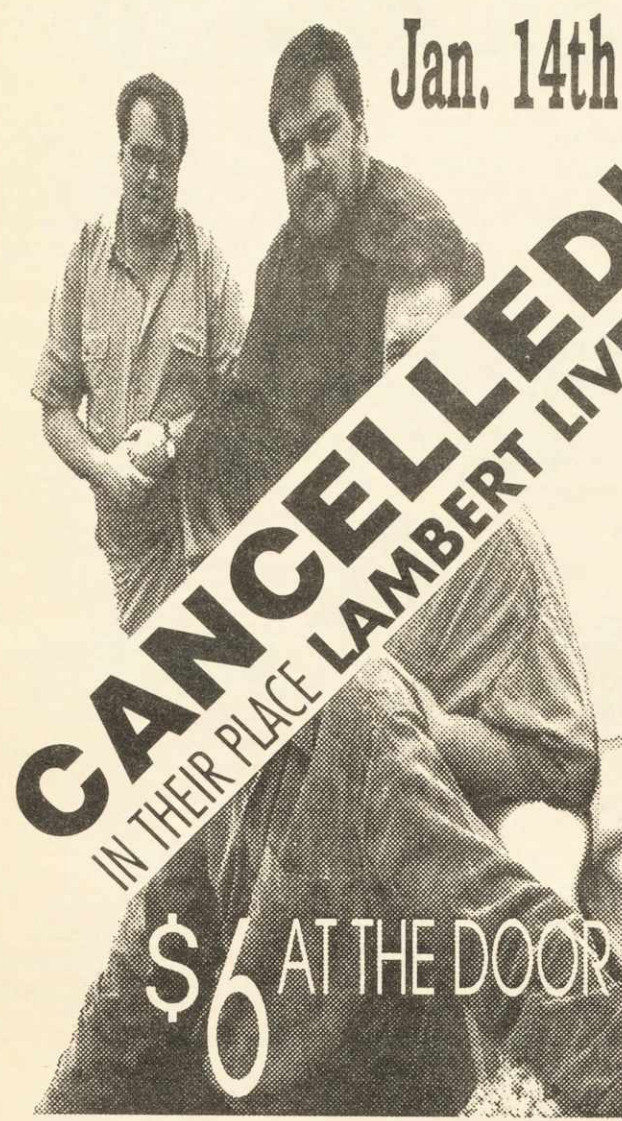


THEY'RE BAACK

Jan. 14th

Trifid's Descendants



CANCELLED!

IN THEIR PLACE LAMBERT LIVE!
\$6 AT THE DOOR

science

The trouble with progress

There are times when I have to ask myself if we are too smart for our own good. Do people always have to design, create, and market faster and better technologies, ideas or labour-saving devices? The reason for the above question all harkens back to some rotten apples.

I was attending a Christmas Eve party that has become an annual tradition in my family. While there, I was offered some very warm, very tasty apple cider and after quaffing two or three bowls, I became involved in a conversation with a neighbour who works in the computer industry as a consultant. The discussion dealt with the ever increasing speed of computer hardware. In his job, he deals with various types of computers and a plethora of software. He told me that the advancements in computers over the last few years are much greater than those made in the previous 15-20 years. The speed of a personal computer since the early '80s has increased at least 100 times. He concluded by saying that he sometimes has to wonder how fast and powerful computers will be by the turn of the century.

All this finally brings me to this point: as an appliance works faster, a computer processes information

quicker, or a product becomes 'new and improved', the lazier we humans become. This computer consultant told me that while working with various forms of software, he has come across some rather lazy programming. Instead of making a small subroutine to do various jobs, large subroutines are being written to do individual and specific jobs. This means that while software is becoming more and more detailed, programmers are taking advantage of the faster computers and making their programs larger and more convoluted. In the late

The speed of a computer since the early '80s has increased at least 100 times

1960s, 90 per cent of computer processing power was used whereas today only 10 per cent is used. This means that even though a computer now is a much faster machine, it is not being used to anything close to its full capacity. In order to combat these larger programs, faster computers are built, which encourage larger programs, which encourage faster computers, and so on...

Every time we go to a supermarket there is something 'Now better than ever!' available to us. Well exactly how much better is it? How much better do we need it to be? Weren't the pictures of the white socks cleaned with regular Tide the same as the pictures of white socks cleaned in Ultra Tide? How many new ways do we need to burn off calories? How soon will we see the new Super Thigh Master 2000 as seen on TV, or seen possibly on a tape of a show that was recorded with our thought-activated VCR?

Some might argue that a faster computer or speedier blender or easier-to-program VCR allows us to have more leisure time. More leisure time to do what? Write larger programs, make more chocolate milkshakes and watch more movies on our VCR? Whoopee! I for one would like technology to slow down a bit. There are some things that don't need to be improved, like hot apple cider for one, because it will just make us more lazy and unimaginative (technology that is, not hot apple cider) or it will put us on a never-ending loop of attempting to improve on an already suitable technology.

Colin MacDonald

GRAWOOD '94

BETTER THAN EVER

Malaysian Indonesian Singaporean Students' Association

MISSA Cultural Night 1994



The Pride of the Orient

January 29, 1994

McInnes Room, SUB Dalhousie University

Every year, all our members would gather together and organize an event known as MISSA Cultural Night. On the evening itself, we provide various kinds of traditional food and entertainment. In doing so, we hope that you will come to know more about our association, and hopefully gain some insight into our cultures.

Tickets are available now at SUB Dalhousie University...

Before January 29:
*Adults \$15
Kids under 12 \$8

*on the 29:
Adults \$17

You might win 2 tickets to Montreal and many more prizes!!!

Ticket Sales: Kim 496-0678



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POINTLESS PONDERABLES

Answer:

Once the wrapping papers have been cleaned up (and don't think the maids-a-milkin' enjoyed being wrapped either) and the gifts returned, the number of days that have elapsed is 364. Therefore since you started on Boxing Day, you will finish up Christmas Eve the following year. Let's hope you don't get those same gifts all over again.

P.S. Factoring the postage and shipping costs, plus the cost of feeding all these 'gifts' for a year or so, it will probably turn out that you spent more than the gifts are worth. Of course can you ever really put a price on nine pipers piping?

We did receive a correct answer to the Christmas question, but unfortunately it came via e-mail. Normally this is just fine for entries or any general correspondence with *The Gazette* (our e-mail address is gazette@ac.dal.ca), but over the Christmas break we accidentally lost all our e-mail (doh!). We apologize to whoever sent the correct answer in, and we hope they continue to send in answers to the puzzles.

Question:

You're down at the Grawood one night with three of your closest friends, and you begin to suspect that the bartenders are cheating you on the draft beer by pouring it with more head on it. You quickly whip out your portable digital scale, (that you got for \$10.00 at Ron's Army Navy because it only gives imperial weights) and carefully weigh the draft against a regular beer. You discover that regular beer weighs in at exactly 10 ounces, and draught is coming it at a paltry 9 ounces. The crooks! You confront the bartender and to get you to keep your mouth shut, the manager gives you 7 trays of 24 beers each! While the bartender dishes out the trays, you notice 3 of the trays are all draught beer while the remaining 4 are all completely regular beer. Unfortunately by the time you reach your table with all this beer you've lost track of which trays contain which beer, but being benevolent you want to give at least 1 tray away to each of your 3 friends. Of course not being stupid, you'd like to give them the lighter draught beer trays. Checking your scale, you see you only have enough juice left in the batteries for one more weighing (must've got the batteries at Ron's too). With this single remaining weighing how can you determine which trays contain the draught beer in order that you can correctly shaft your friends?

Please send your answers to this week's Pointless Ponderables c/o *The Gazette*, and if you're the first correct answer we'll print your name in the next issue. This time we'll try not to lose your name too, so don't hesitate to write. E-mail or paper entries are fine, but they must be in by Monday at 4:00 pm, and must include your full name.



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