

# Abortion debate continues to rage

found Ms. Le Rougetel's approach is typical of many women of today who see their basic human rights under the banner of "abortion." Fortunately for the race, not all women hold this viewpoint.

Ms. Le Rougetel pointed out that a woman having control of her own body. What has been overlooked is that an embryo or foetus is *not* part of her body, it is a totally new organism. Any woman who has had a child past the fourth month of pregnancy has clear evidence of that. By the eighth month of development a foetus has demonstrated its uniqueness by its own sleeping and breathing periods which often are different from those of its parent. She also is not sure that a foetus conceived by two human beings is a human being. A quick look at a zoology text on genetics would clear things up for her in this area. At conception the genetic code is established and determines what the fertilized ovum will develop into. Before two human beings are joined to produce another being as two dogs will produce more dogs, et cetera. I am yet to run across a veterinarian who is uncertain as to whether or not an unborn foetus is a dog. It isn't a problem of philosophy, as Ms. Le Rou-

getel suggests, just basic genetics.

Ms. Le Rougetel believes that because a foetus at 3 months is unable to survive outside a woman's body, the case against it being human is strong. May I suggest that she visit a nursing home or intensive care ward in a hospital. The humans there are also totally dependent on other humans, and in some cases machines, for survival. Does this dependence make them less human in her eyes? Or perhaps she advocates destruction of persons who do not qualify under her definition of "humanity," be it an unborn child or a 90 year old man who suffers from lack of bodily control and senility.

I agree with her that reliable contraception is a far better method of avoiding unwanted pregnancies than abortion. However, women should realize that they are responsible for their actions and be willing to accept that responsibility. If her actions result in an unwanted pregnancy, a woman who can destroy a life which she has been willfully instrumental in creating through her consent to intercourse, should have the strength to allow that child to be born and give it to parents who will love and appreciate it.

Part of our problem as women seeking equality in a man's world is that too many of us shout "sexist" when things don't

go as easily for us as we would like. It is much easier to blame the medical profession or men in general for restrictions of our rights if, through exercising

those "rights," we get ourselves into a difficult situation, than to assume responsibility for our behavior. We will gain much more credibility as persons when

we begin to accept responsibility for our actions rather than avoid it or attempt to sound victimized by men. It's our choice.

Joan Strom

I was interested in a letter by Kim Taylor and Drew Sommerfeldt (Med II) in Tuesday, Feb. 8 *Gateway*. It was a study on the "incidence of various complications arising from abortion itself" as they put it. I do not argue with the statistics reported. However, to be completely fair I believe two things should be done.

The first should be to point out that an abortion should not be done in a doctor's office, unless (as pointed out by Ms. Le Rougetel) it is *properly equipped*. I would venture to say that few doctors' offices would come in this category since it would mean a mini-operating room with all the sterile conditions and equipment inherent in such a facility.

The second point I would like to make is that to make such a study fair to those of opposing views, a parallel study should be done with the same statistical base, but with women who intend to take their pregnancies through to a live child. You would have to use the same number of women in the survey, and report all those complications already cited in the text, and also add a few. You would have premature births, spontaneous abortions, and dead fetuses and birth defects to report.

I would venture to predict that the statistics on such things as fever, blood loss and transfusions, retained fetal tissue, lacerated cervix, embolus

somewhat less, and perhaps his would be because all or nearly all deliveries are in a properly equipped hospital where any fever and blood loss, embolus and thrombophlebitis can be quickly treated. A lacerated cervix can and does happen with a regular delivery.

Occasionally in the past there have been ruptured uteri, but caesarian sections done at the proper time for difficult pregnancies avert this sort of and thrombophlebitis would be

thing. A ruptured uterus due to abortion in a doctor's office is inexcusable and the offending doctor should be struck off and disciplined - he's a back street butcher. It is certain that if babies were delivered in doctor's offices rather than in properly equipped hospitals the complications and, indeed, the death rate of mothers and children would be much higher than our already disgustingly high rate.

D.B.

I'm a grandmother

hazards, both physical and psychological.

The confused arguments of Messrs. Thompson and Miller speak for themselves: those who oppose abortion demands are indeed, confused individuals. Thompson wishes for freedom within certain restrictions. So did I. I think we should restrict people from foisting their own views on abortion onto others. In this way, we will all have freedom to choose. In totalitarian regimes access to abortion is, in fact, severely restricted: Spain, fascist Germany, for example.

Interestingly enough, all the letters were written by men, none of whom are ever going to be faced with an unwanted pregnancy of their own. I am still convinced that it is the right of every woman to control her own body. Access to abortion would be an important step towards that goal.

Katy Le Rougetel

## Don't ignore the issue

Some time ago an MLA in the Alberta Legislature made a joke about "Frogs" and created some controversy. Now we have the engineering students sculpting frogs on lily pads, and one is supposed to be named. I am not, though, and there are other French-Canadian students on this cam-

Whether or not something is considered "racist" or "amusing" depends, apparently, on what

am indignant that the consulting personnel of the *Edmonton Journal* can get away with this is tantamount to censorship, as they have done in the case of the Engineer's ice statues (see *Gateway*, Feb. 8). Mr. Snaddon acted in a manner that was unprofessional, and morally incompatible with his position as a newspaper editor; hushing-up an incident to avoid potential political embarrassment is not the duty of a public organ.

What is 'unfortunate' about the publication of this photograph? If Mr. Snaddon

you choose to ignore. In regards to this incident, French-Canadians in Alberta may sit on their hands and say nothing for fear of rocking the boat, but don't expect the same reaction from Quebeckers.

Elaine Lefebvre  
Arts III

P.S. I have lived in Alberta all my life so don't hold your breath waiting for me to get used to "frogs" in reference to French-Canadians.

does not think that this reflects the sentiments many of us hold, he is a fool. The *Journal's* distorted and misleading reporting of the statue exhibit, as if it was apolitical, is another example of how they take advantage of their monopoly status.

If *Journal* publisher, J.P. O'Callaghan regards the statue as nothing but 'amusing,' somebody should tell him what they think of his newspaper. Why shouldn't we make clear to the French exactly what we think of their behaviour?

Alan Fenna  
Arts I

## No apathy in Ed. Fac.

Re: *Gateway* article of Feb. 3/77: "Ed Students Apathetic."

We are some of those so-called apathetic students. Unlike Mr. Dennis Mayhew, we have found that most Ed students do know about the cut-backs and are very concerned about them. Others who aren't informed become concerned when they find out about the situation. However, as far as we know, the ESA has not tried to inform the majority of Ed students of their political efforts or of any information they have gathered on the situation.

In regards to the social function of the ESA that Mr. Mayhew mentions, it seems to be the only function that they are performing. Advertising of social and sports functions is all we have seen or heard about until the *Gateway* article. We have not

been made aware of any forums, etc. of a professional nature sponsored by the ESA except for the up-coming one in Education Week.

We suggest to Mr. Mayhew that if he wants more interest and professionalism in such a large faculty, the ESA should emphasize its various functions

more and should take the first step in getting students informed. If that occurred Mr. Mayhew might find he has more support than he thinks.

Signed by 27 Education students. Signatures available in *Gateway* office, Room 282, SUB.

## Res. is good for the community

As someone who lives right in the shadow of the Lister Hall complex, I should like to express my appreciation for the hard work and creativity which goes into the ice-sculptures each year during "King Louie Week." I know the long hours it takes to produce these masterpieces, and the pleasure they bring to children and families in the neighbourhood.

People often think that, living right on the corner as I do, I must receive a great deal of annoyance from the Lister Hall complex. On the contrary, I find Lister residents to be good neighbours; the occasional rowdiness is the exception, not the rule. Thanks!

Fletcher Stewart, Chaplain  
11703-87 Ave.

# JOE MUTTON SPEAKS OUT

Our Man in Leduc

You may have noticed that the downtown area was less congested last Wednesday..less noise, less people, less traffic. It seems that Bill Yurko and his department of housing came up with a not-so-brilliant scheme to rectify the desperate housing shortage here in Edmonton. As the government is Edmonton's largest employer, and its employees make up a substantial part of the city's home dwellers, why not remove them from the housing market by keeping them in government buildings overnight? Realizing that civil servants are family-oriented animals and unlikely to take to this scheme, Yurko's office decided to force it on them. Unbeknownst to the 10,000-odd provincial government employees, Yurko ordered 15,000 camp cots, camp stoves, and rations. A veritable battalion of locksmiths was dispatched to see

that civil servants would stay in the office buildings at night. But unfortunately, an overly-enthusiastic bureaucrat allowed the locksmith's zeal to go unchecked in their quest for doors to seal.

The first sign that all was not well came when Yurko received a call from the Premier's executive washroom asking "what the hell he had to do with his spending the last two hours trapped here...?" Yurko confessed that the plan was his but couldn't understand what had gone wrong. Mr. Lougheed replied that he didn't care what had gone wrong, he was sick of reading the same old graffiti and ended with some remark in which he threatened various parts of Mr. Yurko's anatomy.

However, Mr. Lougheed was relatively lucky as other civil servants trapped outside various washrooms will attest to. As one

deputy minister told me, "It was a very anxious night."

Thanks to the telephone, Yurko was able to straighten things out, though this meant recruiting an additional 150 locksmiths from across the country as those employed by the government managed somehow to lock themselves in Grant Notley's office. They are all reported as in satisfactory condition, though it was getting rather warm with 125 people in a 12 X 15 room. One report listed them singing Polish labour songs and uttering nonsensical slogans.

Mr. Yurko is reported to be vacationing "somewhere in the high arctic," an aide told me, and is not available for comment. It seems that the only person not upset by the whole thing was Cyrus Neilchuck who spent an entire 24 hours locked up with 12 stenographers...