

Mills on Media...

'or when we all go naked'

Perhaps one of the more interesting news items carried by the local radio stations in the past few weeks was the assurance to the general public that the maxi-skirt was only a passing fad and that the mini-skirt would be 'in' for another few years, at least. The story (which I suspect would be classed 'human interest') brought a sigh of relief from the mature males who heard it, a sigh of relief from mini-skirt wearers, and a cry of indignation from maxi-skirt owners but not much else. It's too bad because this is one human interest story everyone should take a deep in-

terest in because it's an "iceberg."

Icebergs, as you probably know, are enormous chunks of ice which float around in the cooler regions of the world's oceans and represent a continuous danger to ships. The danger lies in the fact that only a tiny portion of the iceberg is visible above water. The vast majority lies concealed beneath the surface.

The same is true of the mini-skirt item. The real significance of the story is hidden. That is, the reason it rated a place on the news was because behind it lurks

one of the biggest businesses in the world; a business that relies almost entirely on media for its existence (which is why I'm dealing with it). I am speaking, of course of the world of fashion.

Let's get right to the core of the matter. Physiologically speaking, you don't need clothes most of the time. In fact, in a majority of cases, you could probably function better without them. But it's a moralistic issue; an issue that big business is able to exploit by taking the general notion that you have to be clothed one step further by using media to convince you that you also to be clothed in a certain way. So common is the feeling these days that, if a person isn't in style, he feels inadequate. Mutual security is obtained through uniformity. (Believe it or not, there is even a uniform way of being different. Witness the growing number of boutiques in the Halifax area where you and thousands of others can obtain fashions that make you different from everyone else. Figure that one out!)

Anyway, my main concern is media. Fashion is a reflection of the attitudes of the age. Media creates, popularizes, and perpetuates fashion and consequently creates and perpetuates the attitudes of the age. Perhaps now

is the time to examine some specific fashion trends, show what attitudes they reflect and how media has "made" them. (Naturally, it would be impossible for me to cover all fashions. As society grows, more sub-cultures are created, each having its own dress to identify and unify it. Therefore, I'll deal with several fashion items familiar to my "sub-culture", the university community.)

Several years ago, John Lennon starred in an anti-war movie

by Steve Mills

called "How I Won the War." For his role, Lennon got his hair cut and wore a pair of round, rimless glasses. When the picture was completed, John grew his hair back to its original length but kept the glasses, wearing them on "Sgt. Pepper" and ever since. As mentioned several weeks ago in this column, the Beatles hold a mighty influence through media. John's glasses caught on and soon everyone was sporting rimmed glasses, and silver rimmed spectacles. But make no mistake; John wasn't the only reason the glasses caught on. Certainly, his wealth and success were identified with the specs but this was not all. Rebellion and protest

against 'the Establishment' (love that term, it's so media!) became attached to them also.

Naturally, the same thing can be said for many fashions. The poncho, which was always 'in' in South America, only became the vogue here when Clint Eastwood, in his 'Dollars' spectaculars, attached to it the aura of independence and complete lack of emotion (sometimes called 'cool').

I could go on listing items all day (mini-skirts mean freedom, maxi-skirts are security, beards a renon-conformity, leather is Rousseau's "back to nature" or the superiority of homo sapians) but I don't want to write a book on the subject not at the present time, anyway.)

Let me conclude, as I usually do, with a word of warning; don't become too fashion conscious because, media being the force behind fashion, there is the ever present threat of losing your individuality and your imagination. Don't let your clothes become you. The old adage which states "Clothes make the man" is, like most old adages, wrong.

Perhaps we will only appreciate each other when we all dress the same way (or we all go naked) and we can only demonstrate superiority by the sacrifices we make for each other.

To the Editor...

I do not know Bruce Gillis. I doubt that many people do. However, those that read your weekly screeds against him in this paper can conclude only that he leaves much to be desired.

You infer that Mr. Gillis has indirectly tampered with the machinery of campus democracy through his actions during the CUS Referendum. You imply, although not in so many words, that Gillis engineered the defeat of CUS on campus. You are losing your credibility, at least in my quarter, because you do not prove that Gillis did so; you do not prove it because you cannot do so! I am certain that Mr. Gillis did not influence me, and I seriously doubt whether he structured the opinions of even a quarter of those who opposed the motion.

I infer, imply, but cannot prove that you, the opinion-shaping organ of the student body, are partially responsible for the CUS collapse. You had an opportunity to inform us, and you failed! You defaulted in the October 16 issue by carrying a limp defense of your "Tiger of the Week" column, a pictorial item we can see any day ("Seven Sensuous Sexy Broads"), an American story irrelevant to the issue ("Good Year for Button Salesmen") and the perpetually indiscriminate "Devastating Digit of Disaster". You could have carried a graphic comparison of the CUS-anti-CUS debate, but you fumbled!!!

What was an even greater waste was the full-page article by Herr Gillis defending, disclaiming and de-

bunking the Council meeting of the previous week. You could have had Gillis defend, disclaim and debunk CUS, which, you argue, is his favorite topic.

But you defaulted badly and carried your usual rah-rah trivialities.

And so I conclude with these observations: You might be right that Bruce Gillis is not the man we need to govern our interests. If you truly believe this, then you MUST begin a campaign to impeach him through a campus-wide referendum. You must let your readers decide whether Gillis is the leader he so believes himself to be. But you would be better advised to take a poll of university students to determine whether you are, in fact, on the right track.

And when you call that referendum, you'd better put on a second question concerning the running of your newspaper. For you, as much as Gillis, are responsible to your public, and your public is having its doubts about you.

Ambrose Bierce has summed you up quite nicely: "a severely virtuous censor, but so charitable withal that he tolerates the virtues of others and the vices of himself; who flings about him the splintering lightning and sturdy thunders of admonition till he resembles a bunch of firecrackers petulantly uttering its mind at the tail of a dog; then straightway murmurs a mid, melodious lay, soft as the cooing of a donkey intoning its prayer to the evening star."

Your serve!
J. Van Dyke

Petition Drafted to Reject

George Report

On Monday, October 20, the Senate of Dalhousie University accepted a concept of decision-making which can only be considered authoritarian. It was passed almost unanimously, with only a few faculty members and one

of the three student members casting their votes in opposition. To the frustration of the many onlookers, the repression of democracy in the department and the university was galvanized with little opposition.

In outlining the functions of Deans and Department chairmen, the 'George Report' couched examination in terms which view the university as a military outpost. Its continual reference to corporate and military models shows its complete disregard for the notion that the university is a place of learning and as such requires a freedom that ensures the fulfillment of individual and collective needs. By vesting 'ultimate' authority in the Senate, Deans, and Department Chairmen - positions which historically have been filled by the most conservative elements of the university, wish little or no participation by students or faculty - the Senate has reinforced an educational system in which students (and many faculty) become progressively more alienated from their educational work.

Ten days after the Senate spectacular the DNDY sponsored a public forum on the 'George Report' which generally agreed that 1) there would be little possibility for badly needed reform at both the department and university levels, 2) it was important that action in opposition to the report be taken soon and 3) initially it would be necessary to take action which would both state opposition and provide education about the report to the rest of the university community. A committee was elected to draw up a petition which would incorporate both our opposition to the report and alternative proposals. It was decided that the draft petition would be presented as a focal point for discussion and approval to a meeting to be held this week.

The draft petition has been drawn up and copies are available at the SUB information desk. The meeting will be held in the Student Council chambers this Friday, Nov. 7, at 12.30. If any semblance of learning is to take place at Dalhousie the report has to be rejected. And this means people and lots of them for our only strength lies in our numbers.

Support the resistance - Now!

Ric Masten Nov. 14

Free Folk Concert

On November 14 in King's Gymnasium an aging protest sing-

er, Ric Masten will give a free concert. Masten works under salary for the Unitarian Universalist Billings Fund.

Every year this fund provides speakers and singers to churches and campuses across North America. Masten is a bit of both. Last year he made 102 appearances.

Ric Masten is not a missionary, he's not even in possession of a good voice. His talk-style songs range in topics from the draft to the role of the parent. All have a certain bite and a great deal of the truth. He tells people what he sees, feels and wants out of the only life he has.

Everyone should go to the concert and listen to the things that he says. It would be useless though if you only went to hear a good voice whisper lovely things in your ear. Masten doesn't do anything of the kind. Hitting hard, he questions the role of everyone in a highly questionable society.

Masten explains his role the best;

"I'm not really a folksinger or a very good guitar picker... I'm just the best Ric Masten you will meet today. I collect myself and if you don't like my songs you won't like me."

CAREERS IN SCIENCE

VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS
GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

BACHELOR GRADUATES
(MAJORS AND HONOURS)
ALL SCIENCES

INTERVIEWS ON CAMPUS
DATE NOVEMBER 20, 1969

DETAILS AND ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION AVAILABLE
AT YOUR PLACEMENT OFFICE



Public
Service
of
Canada

GREAT CLOTHES

AT THE

CHECKMATE
Boutique

Corner Spring Garden and Dresden Row

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