

Editorial

Mary Rogal-Black

Waiting to see how the home team plays the game

Soon campus will be divided into three parts: the pro-football people, the anti-football people, and the people who don't care one way or the other. I wonder which team I'll join?

While history suggests that the Don't Cares will have the greatest number, and it's always a relief to be part of the majority, I'm really not comfortable with the concept of apathy. Besides, it seems like maybe I'm supposed to choose sides, hold forth on the various aspects of the issue, examine the motivations of the people involved, reflect on the value of a game in which well-padded individuals run around and crash into each other a lot, balance that against the dividends in school spirit we can expect to receive for our ten bucks a year and, finally, deliver a verdict on whether it's all worth it. Then people who agree with me can go away smug and satisfied and people who don't can write outraged letters to Blood and Thunder or, worse yet, decide I'm an idiot and never read my sad excuses for opinions again!

What's a girl to do? Even if I choose sides in the football debate, it won't end there. Next I'll have to come up with an opinion on the Student Union, pass judgement on abortion, expound on religion in our schools, and explain my beliefs about the things people do in the privacy of their own homes, particularly if those people happen to be of the same sex. While football is the topic of the week, winning or losing is a way of life. Anyone who holds a strong opinion on an issue believes there is a right and a wrong side. The opposing teams will run around and crash into each other, and when the game or debate or referendum - such a resonant word for Canadians these days - is over, one side can claim victory, the other can nurse its angry wounds and the Don't Cares can congratulate their apathetic selves for staying out of the dirty game. On that level, it is just a game, and regardless of the outcome, there'll be another match next week.

It's what happens in the periphery of the debate that really tells us who we are. Take the simple question of how the football referendum came to be in the first place. As SU VP (Finance) Monique Scholten said in this week's council meeting, "A nice man with nice hair and a nice suit came to talk to us about football." And thus, a referendum was born. That is more interesting than the football issue itself. Many students and groups on campus have issues they would like to see addressed or causes that they believe deserve the kind of funding a varsity football team could receive if the referendum question passes. We'll be hearing a lot from them in the next few weeks; but, when it comes time to mark that ballot, the only thing on there will be football. It just so happens that the guy in the nice suit knew how to get the job done.

The origins and value of school spirit will also be debated in the upcoming weeks. What is spirit? Do we need it? Will football give it to us? If so, how much are we willing to pay for it? And I sure hope someone raises the question of why football might be the thing to unite this institution of higher learning because I'd like to know the answer to that one.

But when it comes right down to it, I don't care about football that much. I'd like it if it were here. I won't miss it if it isn't. In the meantime, I expect that the way the three teams running on to the field right now play the referendum game will tell me more about my school than any football match ever will.

Mudwump

Joseph W.J. FitzPatrick₃

You will never be as sexually active as you wish and Hell is other people

It all started in elementary school. I know part of the reason had to do with the reaction my peers had to my "teacher's pet" behaviour. That behaviour was before I learned to reflect not only on what I was doing, but also on the way others perceived those actions.

I can point now to one incident which is with me to this day - in grade 2, I punched a boy in a fist fight, knocked him right to the ground. My parents were livid, not exactly because I had been fighting, but because "I could have blinded him."

In reflecting back, I can see how this incident has affected me - I still pull punches. This also has something to do with girls, because I quickly learned that I was not "right" to treat girls exactly the way I treated boys. I point to a soccer game, when my house team played the girls' select team. I collided with a female opponent and she was thrown clear. More than the embarrassment of having struck her was the shame that I had injured her when she expected to merely play a game.

All of this brings me to a point, I think. It's not just a point about the relationship between men and women, but of a philosophy that I'll call considerate gentleness. I recognise that I have a responsibility not only for my actions, but for the way my actions are perceived by others. And I take it upon myself to determine that, like my Arts 1000 tutorial leader once said, that my actions or words may discourage others from acting or speaking. Therefore, on occasion, I choose to remain quiet, even when I feel I could offer something to a conversation or action.

Then we come to the ire that is raised whenever a sexual assault case comes to trial. Now that everybody else has had a chance to voice their opinions for or against, I'm ready to voice an opinion of my own.

I know that the enormous burden of proof the Crown needs to deprive any citizen of their freedom is such that, in most cases of sexual assault, there can be no conviction without corroboration of another witness besides the complainant and the defendant. I further believe, unless there is a serious miscarriage of justice, that this must be true, for at the very foundation of our legal system is the concept of innocence until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. I believe, therefore, that the law will not find a solution to sexual assault.

By the same token, however, I feel I must point out that I am always disgusted at the individual who behaves in a way which is not criminal, but it is anti-social. It disturbs me greatly that individuals and society are concerned primarily with the legal aspects of behaviour. We are told to act until we get caught. Evidence of that attitude is a study by University of Manitoba professor John Briere which showed that six out of ten of University-aged males would rape a woman if he was assured of not getting caught. How am I supposed to react to this finding, or refute it? I cannot. But to argue against it is to miss the past premise, which transcends the numbers: a significant number of men accept violence against women. Not all men, but too many for men to ignore it. The solution is a change in attitude.

As human beings engaging in sexual intercourse, each of us has to establish a higher level of respect for our partners than the modicum of consent which is so typical of our juvenile populations.

Yes, I said juvenile populations. And I really mean it. We, as a segment of society, are so eager to experience all the aspects of life, that we miss the essence of life. Time, however, seems such a luxury in our hectic schedules, but the fact remains that we are so hell-bent on experiencing life, that we forget to live. We must face it: most days in our life are going to be boring; most of the time, we are going to be unhappy; you will never be as sexually active as you wish and Hell is other people. But don't think I am totally disregarding the experiences of our youth. In fact, I think that we must value them. Our lives will, for the most part, never be as free as they are now. We all need our own opiates, some choose alcohol, some choose drugs, others choose caffeine, and some choose sex, but others, perhaps the wisest, chose to be sober, clean, tired and horny, at least until they hit middle age (thirty).

But I Digress... Kelly Lamrock



Having been a denizen of Ludlow Hall for the past two years, I can honestly say law school isn't too bad. The library is uncrowded, the classes are interesting, and you learn lots of strange and wonderful things.

This week I'm learning about implied warranties - basically, that people who hold themselves out to have a certain knowledge about a given area, they had better live up to that standard.

This, of course, would be a most useful standard in many real life situations, such as recalling politicians who tell you that they can cut taxes without cutting health and education (hello, Mike Harris). I would love to see it applied to the entire computer industry for telling me that they know how to make my life easier when, in fact, their products have converted my registration process from a three hour ordeal in a crowded room to a five-hour crying session alone at my computer terminal. But I digress.

Now, however, I've learned that it could be properly applied to law professors as well. To paraphrase the Artist Who Formerly Had His Marbles, dig, if you will, the course syllabus from a certain law course.

"Students caught plagiarizing will have their name and the nature of their offence posted at the law school. Plagiarism is not a private matter between the student and the professor, it is an offence against the entire university community."

Never mind that the university Senate committee in charge of academic regulations rejected this idea last year. Never mind that the idea violates the privacy of a student's academic file. Never mind that the professor has no process set out to determine the offence

and the punishment except his/her own unfettered discretion.

No sir, I can almost see the movie ads now. "LUDLOW HALL WAS A TOWN OVERRUN BY PLAGIARISTS. BUT THEY DIDN'T COUNT ON ONE PROF, WHO WAS MAD AS HELL AND NOT GONNA TAKE IT ANYMORE. CONAN THE LIBRARIAN. HE IS THE LAW."

Before Professor Judgedredd gets too carried away, let me ask a question. What does it say when a law professor doesn't care about the principles of law?

Now, none of this is intended to be soft on plagiarism - serious or repeated incidents can be cause for expulsion, and that's how it should be. However, publicly parading perpetrators (but I alliterate...) throughout the law school to shame them is a throwback to an outdated mode of thinking.

Welcome to UNB Law School. We encourage our students to strive for academic attainment. However, please remember that your academic record is a matter of public concern. Therefore, please observe the following rules:

1. Students will be expected to wear the letter corresponding to their GPA in red on their

forehead. Ironically, we take a sense of pride in wearing a scarlet 'A' on our faces.

2. Those caught peeking at their neighbour's test will be publicly flogged every Thursday as a warm-up act to Speakers' Hour.

3. Do not ask about the stockades in front of the library. Just ask Timothy Jones (LLB 3) how hard he's working on his grammar skills this year. Better yet, check out his Christmas exams on our new web site.

But I digress. This is, it must be said, one incident in a generally superlative faculty for the quality of its teaching and the wisdom of its teachers. However, the faculty must ensure that students are treated justly in all its courses.

Certainly there is a public concern within our community if people are cheating. It is also a public concern if (and it happens) professors are not following the academic calendar. Or if students are breaking the Student Disciplinary Code.

However, the university has a choice. If we want to make these issues public, then the process must be public, just like our court system. You can't publicize the results of these hearings without letting people see how the decision was arrived at.

In the end, the right to privacy within a small university community where one must live and work was deemed, after open and scholarly debate, to be tantamount to enforcing our community interest in the rules. Now it falls upon the dean of the law faculty to make it clear that, even at a law school, no one professor is above the rules.

I'm so confident that will happen, that I'm not going to print the professor's name. After all, everyone has rights.

Metanoia John Valk



The word tolerance is very important in our society. Canada seeks to be a society that is open, that accepts people of diverse backgrounds. Indeed, Canada is seen worldwide as a tolerant nation.

I find the word tolerance less than satisfactory, however. It stems from the word tolerate, which means to endure, to allow or to permit. It is like saying, we (the majority or those in power) will endure those who are not like us. We will permit, or allow space for, a minority who are different, but ask no more of ourselves. There is a reluctant sense of acceptance here.

Mind you, permitting space for those who are different is already a great advance from times past. But is that all we can muster - to tolerate or endure others? Perhaps it results from the secular values we hold.

Secular values focus on "the here and the now" on what is expedient for the moment, for the time being. They tend to be individualistic, self-serving. They also change like the desert sands.

My sense is that the force in Canada behind creating space for others who are different is not secular at all, but Christian. It was Jesus who encouraged us to go beyond merely tolerating others. He called us to love others (John 15: 12).

It will be pointed out rather quickly that religious people, and most particularly Christians, have been and continue to be some of the most unloving and intolerant people history has known. And that is true. That is also the argument used to refrain from teaching religious or Christian values in the classroom: It would only invite more of the same. Better do without.

It is best that we be honest here though. For as many acts of intolerance done and so proclaimed in the name of Jesus, there are untold more acts of love also done in his name, but never voiced or proclaimed. They go unnoticed because we prefer to be tantalized by scandal and strife. It's a pity that beliefs promoting acts of love, kindness and devotion to others never suffice as an argument for implementing religious or Christian values into education. Do I sense some intolerance here?

Yet, we cannot function well as an open, inclusive society if we are solely grounded in secular values. Our governments are making this clear, though in an unintentional way. The preservation of Canada's social safety net, under threat by misguided economic beliefs,

Tolerance or love?

of an education is measured largely in terms of its commercial viability, that is, what it will do for me. In fact, it is frequently "sold" to the public that way. The public belief, therefore, is that education is for the purposes of enhancing individual well-being, understood often as individual economic well-being. If, in the process, there are beneficial (economic) spinoffs for others, all the better. Praise the Market!

These may be secular beliefs and values, based on selfish principles. But they are not Christian. They do not correspond well with the injunction to love one another. The mandate to love others and work for their betterment would view education not as a means to enhance individual economic well-being or prosperity, but as a way to equip oneself to be of service to others. Education is for service to others first. If, in the process, there are also beneficial (economic) spinoffs for oneself, then these are blessings. Praise God!

It makes for an interesting twist on secular values. But that is the difference between tolerance and love. Which do we want to teach?

BLOOD & THUNDER Letters to the Editor

Man of the '90s tired of man-bashing

To the Editor,

As a man of the '90s, a "new age man," I have attempted to bear (with a grin) the years of lambasting, damning, man-hating dogma that has flowed from your pages. But I'm getting really sick of it.

So why haven't I written earlier? Because it seems that in this climate, it is perfectly acceptable to advance any half-baked theory about how man has oppressed woman, but it is perfectly unacceptable for any man to defend himself on any grounds. As soon as a man opens his mouth, he is branded a sexist, or even worse, a "patriarchal misogynist." Give me a break. I am not a sexist. I do not think that I nor anyone is better than anyone else. But I find it hard to sit still and grin stupidly every time someone blames the world's problems on men and men only.

The Jennifer Tilley quote which was so

prominently displayed in the middle of your editorial is a good example. She states, not as opinion but as fact, that women who talk about men's buns do so because they've seen a Coke ad that told them to, and that these ideas are "thought up" by men.

Is it really necessary to disempower men in order to empower women? Is it necessary to beat men constantly with "It's all your fault! Our way is right, yours is wrong! Men are beasts who must be caged!" in order for women to feel good about themselves? I recall a certain character from my distant past who had similar insecurities, although he hurled different slogans: the schoolyard bully.

I am ready to make efforts and help by educating myself and others. There are thousands of men who are on the right track. Please don't alienate them.

Ron Savvy



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Viewpoint Banner
Illustrated by Kent Wiczell

This issue is dedicated to:

Caffeine and the elusive chocolate glazed donut, eh.

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