

MUGWUMP JOURNAL

OPINION...

By Melanie R. Hawkes

Here I am, sitting, freezing my butt off on a Wednesday night, writing mugwump while watching 18 guys run after a little white ball and chase bases. How can anyone like baseball that much -- to play in below zero weather??

Can you believe this? Can you actually believe what is happening? This is not fair, we're supposed to have at least another 8 weeks of fall yet. And no one's prepared. One needs a few weeks to get psyched; to prepare your mind and attitude for the dreary, snowy 4 months that lie ahead. (Not to mention I need time to get my snow-tires put on!). The leaves haven't even fallen off the trees yet and that dreaded white fluffy stuff is already starting to plague us. Ski season may start yearly this year!

The Annual Media Bowl. CHSR Bunnies of Death = CHSR Bunnies Are DEAD! Saturday we, The Brunswickan Barbarians are going to skin those puny rabbits alive. And of course, we will emerge victorious once again for the 16th time. Join us up at the Social Club at noon for pre-game warm up and then cheer us on as you witness the makings of Rabbit Stew!!

What about the earthquake in San Francisco! Who hasn't heard about it? Well, you couldn't miss it. It was the only thing on every channel for about 5 hours after it happened. I have never seen soo many stupid people. I certainly wouldn't be hanging around the bridge or jumping up and down on a freshly formed crack in the pavement to see what would happen next. I knew God wanted the Red Sox in The World Series.

Speaking of California; how many grads can actually afford to go on the grad class trip?

And where were all the engineers and the Engineer Pub last Saturday? At any other university engineers stick together. Guess they're not as close knit a faculty here at UNB as they say they are.

Did you know that the Student Union(SU) gets their toilet paper from the Soviet Union (SU)? Well, I'm informed that toilet paper in the Soviet Union is supposed to be very abrasive - and so is the paper in the SUB. Hmmm, SU and SU. Think about it!

Latest Student Union proposal: a muzzle for Wayne Carson. Apparently, he never stops talking during council. He wouldn't be in the Law faculty by any chance?

And for all you geeks down the hill. What is wrong with those computers in Head Hall, anyway? Slower than molasses on a cold day. Ya end up spending more time waiting than actually doing the assignment. Ya gotta hate it.

Word of the Week: Encephalo Plaegic - paralyzed from the neck up.



REAL MEN

Macho is in! But then, I guess it was never out. Once ostentiously displayed in turned-up collar, partially rolled up sleeves, cigarette behind the ear fashion, today the tough image comes in baseball cap, construction boots or fast car form. The Marlboro Man has traded in his horse for a four wheel drive, but still needs his cigarettes. He lives for hunting season as much as for baseball and beer. "Real men" show no emotion, are independent, hate quiché, play hard and love hard. But are these "real men", really men?

The male image has undergone some tough times lately, and rightly so if the above is what being male is all about. The women's movement has seen through that nonsense more perceptively than have many men themselves. Forced to re-examine our own roles, values and characteristics, we have been cast adrift from our formerly secure and exclusive moorings.

We once boasted of greater physical strength, and pain threshold, to maintain positions of dominance. By now, of course, everyone knows that women outlive men by some seven years on average, and that child-birthing requires a pain tolerance that most men could never imagine. So much for a pretence of authority established on these bases. The add insult to injury, today women drive trucks, fly aircraft, race cars, and tend to restore a human touch to practices such as medicine, law, even business. Not only is the exclusive male domain shrinking, but the manner in which we did things in the past is also being challenged.

There are still those, however, who insist on maintaining an aggressive and domineering male image. The world of sports is full of this, producing a "win at all cost" mentality. It is also frequently the driving force behind the business world, where "business is business" is adequate rationale for cut-throat competition. But this "old boys club" view, with its aggressive "profits at all cost" and "never get angry, get even" mentality has left in its wake a devastating toll on both the human and physical environment. The call to be a successful family man has taken a much neglected backseat to the drive to be a successful businessman, and the belief that profit is the only motive is now a real threat to our physical survival. To what extent is the dominant male way of doing things responsible for the mess we find ourselves in? Perhaps the traditional male character needs desperately to be tempered.

That is certainly the case in an area where it rears its ugly head. The notion of man "the protector" becomes a sham when we consider the increasing statistics of domestic violence, sexual exploitation and child-abuse. Neglect and irresponsibility governs much male action. That is also evident in the so-called "abortion issue", a real misnomer because it is not an issue. It is a life and death struggle begging for a life-affirming resolution. Neither is it exclusively a "women's issue". Just as two decide to "tango", two are responsible for the outcome. Ought men to be excluded here, willingly or unwillingly? It is understandable that an unwed pregnant woman does not wish to pay the price of single parent welfare misery for moments of unguarded intimacy. To prevent such means that men must also wake up to the realization that perhaps it is not OK to engage in the pleasure and shirk the responsibility. The locker-room "tally sheet" of successful weekend "scores" is no longer something about which to boast. To assume that "boys will be boys" and that such activity is part of carefree youth or of enhancing the virile male image is blindly succumbing to a hedonistic philosophy that is tearing at the very fabric of the family, still regarded in most quarters as the corner stone of society. To accept the notion that sexual encounters are a pleasant and expected ending to an alcohol-enduced evening of "fun" will result in anything but positive human relationship building, something desperately needed to put an end to the sexual abuse and neglect of women and children.

Maybe it's time to take a hard look at the consequences of certain male behavior. Genuine concern, feeling and willingness to take responsibility for our actions ought perhaps to be first and foremost in our minds. That may not grease the wheels of business, nor conform to modern day consumerism and individualism. It may, however, help alleviate some of the misery we encounter in our lives.

Modeling becomes important here, but one must be careful in selecting the image one wishes to attain. The tendency is to emulate the modern day "gods" of celuloid, rock music and sports, but their susceptibility to eccentric lifestyles or drug habits--mind altering or physically enhancing--have made them bitterly disappointing.

There was once someone, however, who did come through. People didn't like what he said and did, and crucified him. They claimed he didn't fit in, which is what many still say today. But maybe, just maybe. . .

John Valk
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