

EDITORIAL

Hockey fans want blood

What's so great about hockey? What is it about men skating back and forth with sticks in their hands that can drive spectators into a frenzy?

It's understandable that some feeling of civic pride might lead to a few hours of celebration following a home team victory, but how long can that elation last? It's a sure bet that (for instance) the drunken revelers who lined Jasper Avenue three days after the Oilers' Stanley Cup victory last spring had forgotten long ago what they were drinking to.

Sure, it's a thrill to watch the gifted in action — those rare beings born with an extraordinary blend of coordination and strength that the rest of us can only comprehend in the abstract. But you don't see audiences at gymnastics events banging their seats, stomping their feet, and screaming themselves hoarse.

Obviously it has something to do with the aggression. The bodychecking, the slashing, and even the fistfights release a bit of the pent-up violence we all carry around inside us.

But if that's what's really at the root of it, why all the restraint? Why does the referee blow his whistle and stop the action every time a stick is raised or a glove is dropped? Why the pretense of civility?

If hockey fans want to see blood, then they should go ahead and admit it. Let the players take off the gloves ... and the helmets, and the pads. Fire the referee.

But no, that wouldn't be hockey, right? Well, then maybe we should leave hockey for the artsy fartsies who appreciate aesthetic motion, and find a new sport to provide a less restrained outlet for our violent tendencies. But what?

Bullfighting. No referees, no line changes, no 20-minute periods. Just a man and a bull. No one leaves the ring until one (or both) is dead.

Why isn't bullfighting legal in Canada? Because we're too civilized? The entire city of Edmonton erupts into a three-day drunken melee when their team wins a trophy, and we're too civilized?

Ask anyone who's been to Mexico how "barbaric" they are down there. (Forget the racist stereotypes and ask someone who's been there). Mexicans are the friendliest, most cheerful, outgoing people in the world. Yet every Sunday, bullrings throughout the country are filled as bulls are slaughtered by the dozens. Entire families — including women with children in their arms — leave the event smiling, strolling to the local "Zocalo," or town park, where they will chat with friends, perhaps discussing this toreador's style, or that one's lack thereof, then they will retire not long after sunset for a good night's sleep, purged of their violent tendencies.

Take off the gloves and admit it: hockey is just a thin pretense of civility. Let's see some real blood.

D.J.

The Democracy Tree

A poem I derived from some experience living in Edmonton. I wrote this poem on the night of the first day of the Fringe in 1984.

*the democracy tree blows apart at the edges:
it's like a drum beating out desire for a woman.
the democracy tree grows forming hedges:
the flowers of the democracy tree are soft.*

*i saw my friends drive by today and laugh expansively,
and call my name out loud as if discovering 'onions!'
most of the people i met tonight were good looking
and looking convincingly for someone or something.*

*i took her hands in mine, i wanted all of her;
it's like wanting bread, a lot, right now —
what name do you give to so many people?
we were all excited, like buds turn into leaves —*

*i could not understand the inner branchings
of the democracy tree, it seemed to be dying.
speedily i decided to let it be, not knowing*

*how could you possibly stop it from growing
even in those crazy directions; best look
in your own backyard: if skunks on skateboards
are surprised, deluded into thinking they're alone*

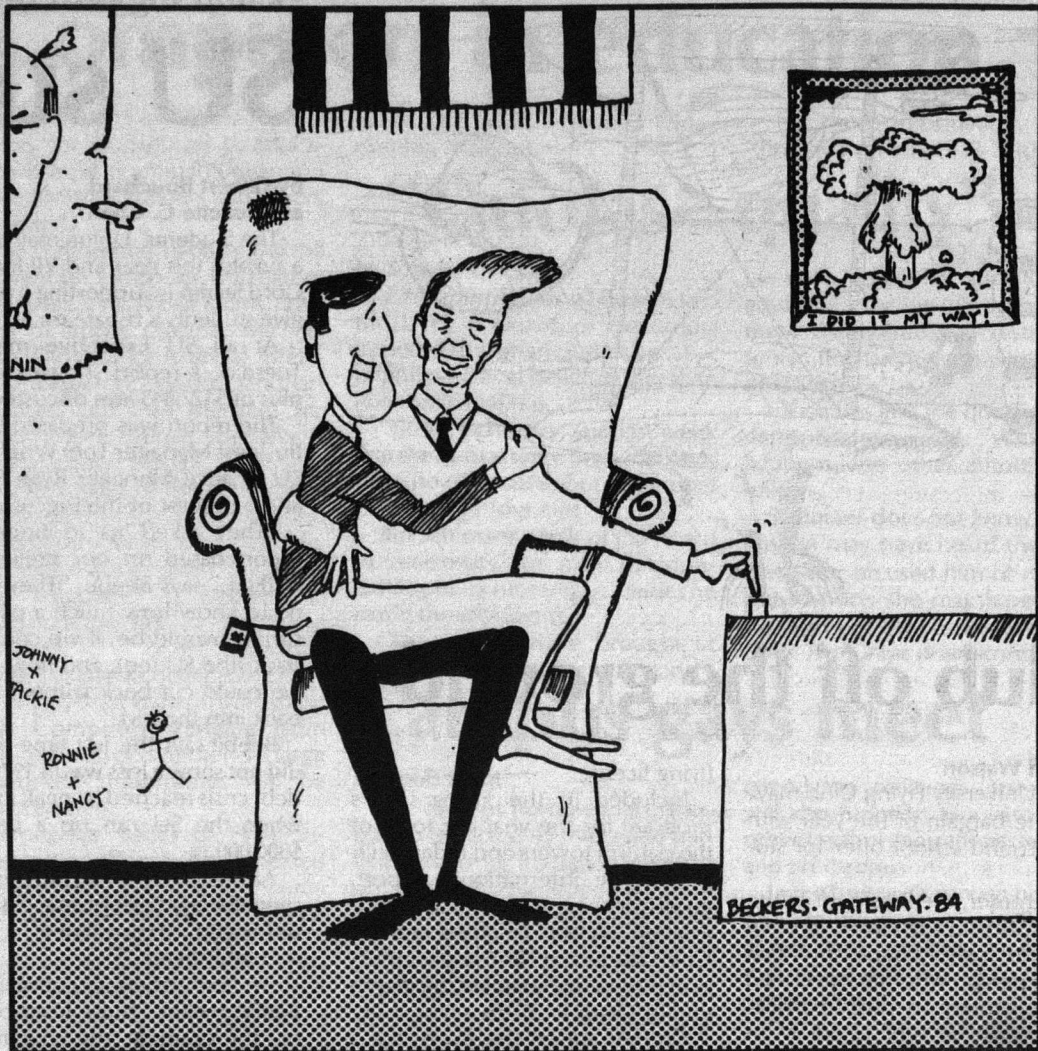
*well don't change your mind if they turn
their back while on the way home
after having picked through the lost and found,
and shouldered discontents that pile to the sky —*

*a massive seed is planted in the hairiness,
like brains hung out to dry on fishing yarns.
i had a free day in the sun today, decided not
to rain or not too much, just fountains in the glass.*

*i wove some fabric to the time today,
i saw my town exploding into life and living
in full bloom, i stood beside the girls and shook
hands with the men, i saw them, we were close*

*i looked into bill's eyes and saw
blue five-dollar skies, what change!*

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And see this lil' red button, boy? ... every good conservative has one by his side.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Gutter speak

I have just read that due to my use of "gutter language", Judith Pearce considers my comments invalid and refuses to put any stock into anything I say. Apparently my use of the vernacular for sodomy shocks her sensibilities. I guess I should beg her pardon for my lack of propriety, but you see — I really don't care.

Whether or not Miss Pearce puts any stock in what I've said is irrelevant. Norman is still dead from pneumonia — and the negligence that allowed his common cold to progress that far. Floyd still has irreparable brain damage from buying cutex from the corner store; Debbie is probably still a prostitute (if she's still alive) and the driver who ran down five year old Tommy has never had to answer to society for leaving the child to die.

If you don't believe me Judith, go to Boyle Street and see for yourself. Talk to Mary at the Bissell Center; rent a room in the Princess Elizabeth Apartments or the York Hotel, and get a real taste of the gutter. Spend seventeen years in Boyle Street and get to know real gutter language. After that, if you still feel that my use of gutter speak denotes a low intelligence level rather than anger, then I will respect your opinion.

Until then, the only thing I can offer is my disgusting use of words to describe a disgusting situation.

Doug McQueen
Arts IV

P.S. To discredit the validity of one's word simply because of the preference of Anglo-Saxon words over Latinate ones is, in my opinion, a sign of narrow-mindedness. I'd rather have a deficient intelligence quotient.

Floyd isn't useless

Kvetching, complaining, petty destructive hacks seem to be obtaining a lot of Gateway coverage. Is it because the Gateway itself is turning its nose up at student relevant concerns? Is it because some group on campus with far too much time on their hands have wrongly decided that my accomplishments to date have been less than adequate? Or is it because the Gateway itself is irrelevant?

Adding credibility to the incredible is not only showing bias but is a comment on the credibility of the Gateway itself. All through the "impeachment" campaign the Gateway coverage has ignored the accomplishments of myself, my executive, and of Students' Council to date. And while I can accept, and in fact appreciate, constructive criticism, I find destructive criticism unacceptable. With all the energies these people and yourselves have been wasting on non-constructive issues, I feel that that time and energy would be better utilized if placed in a positive context.

I refuse to take time away from student issues to counteract the seeming lies and slander of the "impeachment" campaign and its "allies". These impeders of progress, which they say has not been occurring, are not worthy of Gord Stamp's, Paul Alpern's, or my own attention.

Floyd Hodgins
SU President

The Gateway

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Deep in the forest, Markie Moose is regaling the staff with the Bovine Truth. Toonsmiths Shane Berg, Hans Beckers, and Doug Bird watch Brenda Waddle. Flashy Bosco Chang and the hatless Dan Watson nip by Mom on the way to Ross Gordon's hut. Janine McDade and Linda Derksen exchange discs, while Warren Opheim considers video forms. Dale Jackson seeks John Charles, as Karen May and David Boyd discuss David Jones's locker. Larry Hoedl and Scott Keeler find a compass and are off in search of Dr. Who.