

# EDITORIAL

## Variations

Certain things are still taboo as discussion topics in our society.

The much-proclaimed "sexual revolution" of the Sixties didn't really liberate too many people, to judge by present attitudes.

In fact, in light of the growing incidence of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) we seem to be witnessing a kind of sexual counter-revolution. *Time* magazine has thoughtfully informed us that herpes "may be a prime mover in helping to bring to a close an era of mindless promiscuity".

Nice as it is of *Time* to inform us that ours is "an era of mindless promiscuity", their Victorian moral stance strikes me as dreadfully anachronistic.

Perhaps not — perhaps the "moral majority" is beginning to brainwash America back into the Fifties and beyond — but I hope that sense will prevail.

One fine example of the growing backlash is people's attitudes toward homosexuality. If anyone had asked me in 1975, I would have said homosexuality was well on its way to becoming acceptable sexual behavior.

Now, however, it seems like more and more people are returning to calling homosexuals "fags" and seeking to repeal the civil liberties they have won in a long struggle.

As far as I'm concerned, any form of non-violent sex between consenting adults should be condoned. I don't think this poses any threat to the 'established social order' — I am convinced that no more people would feel any compulsion to be homosexual.

I think it would just free the ten per cent of the population who (as the Kinsey report of the early Fifties stated) already are to some extent homosexual to admit it publicly and deal with reactions to it openly, without being ostracized.

Universities, I believe, ought to be the foundations of open-mindedness. We (because of our exposure to the fact that truth is always complex) should above all speak out against any repression, any breach of freedom in speech or action.

It hurts us as a whole when any voice of dissent, no matter how improperly expressed, is silenced.

This should also extend to an acceptance of unorthodox forms of behavior and styles of dress.

People ought to have the unchallengeable right to wear whatever or look however they please without being judged or censured.

Does it change anyone's essential qualities of humanity if she or he wears pink and green, or has a blue streak dyed into his or her hair, or even wears her or his hair cut in a mohawk?

In my opinion, for someone to do that now would express a certain bravery, for to flaunt one's unorthodox convictions in this frontier province is to risk drawing a lot of hostility.

We often profess ourselves to be quite liberal and tolerant of others — yet we have nothing on that quintessential liberal, John Stuart Mill, whose view was that as long as the actions of one individual do not conflict with the liberty of another, the individual should be free to do whatever she or he wants.

Canadians need a firmer grounding in what is called "Civics" in the US. Canadians are on the whole rather unconcerned and hence not very well informed of how the decision-making process of government works, what the political parties really stand for and not just labels like *socialist* or *reactionary*.

If social studies curricula were expanded at early levels so that this province's children could learn what an amazingly diverse world this is, perhaps the xenophobia which causes racism, isolationism, and mistrust of gays would evaporate.

I've always defended the best modern science fiction as literature, partly for this very reason. Science fiction can be literature of social analysis by showing us how real aliens feel, or how we might feel as aliens in a given situation.

This is the kind of mental exercise we should do more often: putting ourselves in the places of others.

Absolutely, have values and mores as traditional as you please. But don't inflict them on others. With the Ayatollah Khomeini and Ronald Reagan, the world already has two theocrats too many.

Part of our cultural strength lies in that we can see a unity beyond our surface diversity, be it political, religious or sexual.

David Cox

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### Staff this issue:

Abaft, he laughed/Rebound the sound/Here we go/Round and round...Local poets John Algard and Gilbert Bouchard dropped by; John Roggeveen, Bill Inglee, Martin Beales, and Martin Coutts talked hockey; Mark Roppel, Karen Redford, Nate LaRoi, and Ken Lenz passed in review; Cathy Hrychshyn and Margaret Baer chatted; Zane Harker and Teri Lynn Paulgard went out to lunch; Heather-Ann Laird broke bread; Margo Schmitt and Jim Gerwing were good sports; and the long-lost Michael Skeet and Mary Anne Nielsen reappeared...Oops...we forgot to say thanks to Tom Wright and Margriet Tilroe-West for their invaluable help with the seventy-fifth anniversary edition. Sorry about that, chief...er, it's Bruce Pollock and Cathy McLaughlin...Hi guys.....

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## « LETTERS TO THE EDITOR »

### The balance of manure

In reply to Mike Power's letter 'From Russia With Dung' (Gateway 13th Jan.), we wish to explain CJSR's purpose in airing programs such as Radio Moscow's 'Soviet Press Review.'

The program in question is a compendium of foreign and domestic news items published in major Soviet newspapers. Typical programs contain items on culture, sports, science, agriculture and education, as well as international relations and domestic politics.

In some sense of the word, certain aspects of this program may be considered 'propaganda'. However one should also consider the nature of the Western press, which gives us little insight into any aspect of soviet society.

There is ample evidence that much of the foreign affairs 'reporting' in the Western Press is no more than a direct re-write of U.S. State Department press releases. As an example, consider the present debate on disarmament. Soviet proposals in this area are only indirectly covered in the Western media - usually in the context of a Western Leader scornfully rejecting them. The substance of Soviet proposals is seldom reported.

We believe that part of CJSR's responsibility to its listeners is to provide them with a reasonably balanced view of world events. Such a balance must include programs from a variety of sources. These include UN Radio, Radio Moscow, the BBC (when we can afford it) and more than seven hours a week of our own public affairs productions.

Of course no single program is objective in itself. Our intention is to give our listeners some of the tools with which to reach well-informed opinions about their world.

Colin Keylor, Station Manager; Bruce Commell, Steve Cumming, Gene Kosowan

### Nicer assassins before

"Licensed to kill"; supplied a "murder weapon"; "a chance to get even with professors": What sort of person promotes a game that guarantees participants these "thrills"? Even worse what sort of person plays this game? Let's get one thing straight, this game you see advertised on campus as "Assassins" or "Spies" is a total bastardization of the original game. The game of Assassins played two years ago (of which I helped organize) was an elaborate game of tag meant only for the purpose of meeting new friends and as a change from the 'study syndrome'. The promoters of this malicious deviance have no right to associate Assassins with their version, as they never bothered to find out the original rules or the original purpose.

The original game was played with a dart gun and a rubber-headed dart that was tested for safety and found to be quite inaccurate at distances greater than 8 - 10 feet. This minimized the hazard of possible eye damage. The new game now promotes "shots between the eyes". The original game also only allowed a target area of the upper torso, excluding the head. The original game did not allow shooting to occur in classes, thereby not disturbing professors and certainly not "getting even with professors". The original theme was for people to meet people, not to "kill" them. Also, we originally wanted to see, for example, an engineering student venture into the education building, seeking his target. The bottom line is; This game promotes violence, the original did not.

Wes Bader, Science III

### More violent sinfulness

Imagine my relief! Just when I thought all hope was lost for niceness and morality, I discovered that the University administration was going to protest us from the evil influence on our hearts and minds of the U of A Assassin's Club. I mean, anyone who would go around pretending to kill people in a game has got to be maladjusted, right?

As well as endangering the moral fiber of our campus community, these people are putting themselves in a great deal of danger! Our ever vigilant police department, (who never shoot unless their lives or the lives of the public are in danger - remember?) might mistake a toy gun, with a rubber tipped dart sticking out the muzzle, for a real gun, held by a real criminal, posing a serious threat and needing shooting. (I imagine the club members would be fairly safe around the bank, bookstore or box office - the police never seem to notice people with guns in these areas).

Gladdened by these signs of concern from those who watch over us, I would like to bring to their attention another group that poses an even greater threat, with the hope that they can be neutralized as well.

This group is the U of A Fencing Club. This nest of moral deterioration is populated by people who get some perverse enjoyment out of recreating a sword battle, trying to thrust and hack each other to bits. And far from being a casually organized game like assassins, this gruesome sport is recognised and respected at the international level! Their "sport" is so dangerous that, despite the protective padding

and metal face masks fencers must wear, cuts and bruises are not unheard of!

I suggest that the administration insist that fencers replace their swords with stick on labels that say "touche", similar to the "I got you" stickers suggested as replacements for the Assassin Club's toy guns, making masks and padding unnecessary. This would not only remove all danger from the sport, but would also eliminate the risk that the police, upon seeing someone carrying (or worse, wearing) a mask, might mistake a fencer for a would-be criminal, also needing shooting.

'nuff said?

Bob J. Pretash, Science II  
Member, U of A Fencing Club

### Gears grind Middleton

To our dear friend in Arts, John A. Middleton, who is "touted" by himself as being at a high "academic level"; here is your reply.

Do you contend that our works of art, in particular the excellent depiction of our beloved Prime Minister seated displaying the one symbol he will most likely be remembered for, are less than "art" done by one of your own colleagues? Surely as a "liberal" this form of criticism should not be found too repulsive, but understood for what it is: an entertaining and enlightening political cartoon. Are engineers excluded from this form of expression because of their chosen vocation? Or does it upset your delicate mind that the engineers are the ones who get out there and do it?

If these piles of snow, constructed by a group of lowly engineers, have "the remarkable ability...to belittle their country" then we must be powerful indeed. Perhaps we must be powerful indeed. Perhaps someday we too will ascend to the dizzying heights of Arts II. And perhaps we will be capable of foolish spelling mistakes, as in "contemptable boers", and the boring repetition of overused cliches. We think that you, John A. Middleton, are a conceited, pompous ass.

Dary Detlor ENI, Charlotte Hill ENI  
David Richards ENII, James Coles ENI

Mr. Middleton, please walk to your window and look outside. Look at the structures around you. The bridges, buildings, airplanes, and cars were all designed by engineers. If engineers are unoriginal, we would all be driving the same car. We would still be living in shacks. We would not have stepped on the moon, Mr. Middleton, if engineers were unoriginal.

The (ice) statue did indeed show that the bottom has fallen out of our economy. It has, Mr. Middleton. Anyone not acknowledging this is behaving irresponsibly. Engineers are very concerned about the economy at the moment because it has caused a lot of engineers to lose their jobs. Many of the engineering students graduating this term don't have any hope of obtaining a job, and this scares them. I am in my first year of engineering, and am a little scared that I may not get a job this summer, and not be able to return next term due to insufficient funds. We have a right to be upset about the economic throes this country is in, and Mr. Trudeau's flagrant disregard for the life of the average Canadian just raises our ire.

Ever since I was young, it has seemed to me that engineers have been held with a considerable amount of esteem. As yet, I have noticed only several individuals in disagreement. Contemptible boers we are not, Mr. Middleton. Every year the students of the Faculty of Engineering donate a considerable amount of money to charities through such activities as our yearly Santa Stamp. Is this the act of a group of insensitive people?

Please take the time to think about your statements, Mr. Middleton, and possibly reconsider them.

M. Whittall, Engineering I

### Cheers for the engineers

Please note me as one of the many, non-engineers, who applauds the Engineering Week ice-sculptures. While other activities, past and present, cause controversy, the sculptures never cease to be a surprise and clever. This year's display is properly an exemplar of fair satirical comment that rivals that of cartoonists, comedians and politicians.

If anyone is to take insult from this year's offerings, perhaps it is due to a lack of perspective. Some events which were caricatured indeed took place and, in some cases, may certainly be regarded by some as equally insulting and obscene. I certainly wouldn't be as offended by an inanimate object's form of expression as I would be from that of an intelligent, responsible person.

Tempest in a teapot; mountain out of a mole hill; perhaps the engineers can institute a second phase to their sculpture program and give form to these annual reactions. If it is a hand they want, I say let's give it to them as they lighten the frigid, January journeys across Quad as we search for enlightenment, tolerance and truth. A hearty round of applause.

Greg, Schmidt, Grad. Studies