

**Editorial**  
Mary Rogal-Black

**Pepsi's paradise is a living hell**

Two young men hanging out on campus observe that all of the other students are women. Better yet, they all look like Cindy Crawford. Cindy flipping her hair over her shoulder, Cindy riding a bicycle, Cindy swigging cola, and Cindy after Cindy wearing Pepsi sweatshirts. "I love this place," concludes one of the men happily. The other nods enthusiastically. The University of Pepsi is a boy's paradise. Viewers laugh and, hopefully, buy more Pepsi. But this is no utopia.

Of course, the Pepsi commercial is not uniquely offensive; it's only particularly blatant in its symbolism. A Twix commercial running earlier this year had a teenaged boy whose daytime break consisted of biting into a Twix and having his annoying shoe-shopping girlfriend disappear in a puff of smoke. The message: girls love shoe sales and life is good when you can get them to shut up about it. Like the candy, hate the commercial: I stopped buying Twix bars.

What these two commercials and countless others have in common, besides their subtle misogyny, is that they are supposed to be funny. Humor serves as a shield for all kinds of offenses, and anyone who claims otherwise is raining on the parade. But it may be time for a little rain: when an advertiser presents their product-of-the-week as one of the accessories we need to be "normal," a good part of their job is done. The two guys in the Pepsi commercial are average, normal guys. They like Cindy Crawford. Therefore it is normal for guys to like Cindy Crawford and, by the way, it's normal to like Pepsi, too. Because most people want to fit in, ads that present a model of normalcy have a particular power. Advertisers know how pervasive their messages are and it would be silly of the rest of us to suppose that the stereotypes presented by commercials don't effect our belief systems.

A male friend of mine asks whether the stereotypes of women are perpetuated (read: "justified") by women. After all, some women do seem to get excited by shoe sales. Which came first, the chicken or the egg? The girl who internalizes the messages in these commercials believes that she will never be beautiful enough because she can't possibly look like Cindy Crawford, at least not if she wants to, say, drink a Pepsi or eat a Twix. So to make up for her shortcomings, to be "normal" and make herself desirable, she will be interested in things like wearing the right shoes, or having nice hair. But she shouldn't expect her male friends to share those interests. In fact, she should accept her boyfriend's bad attitude. How could she blame him? What real man wants to be in the mall? What if she asks him to hold her purse?

And the messages in advertising are not only hurtful to women: they effect men as well. Boys who believe that female beauty means looking like Cindy Crawford are being distracted from the many other kinds of beauty represented in women. Men who would prefer to dismiss their shopaholic girlfriends are hurting themselves and their relationships. It isn't a clearcut case in which men are sexist pigs and women are their unfortunate victims. How many of us, man or woman, raised on a steady diet of Supermodels, really believe that intellectual beauty can transcend physical beauty? What price are we paying for the gross imbalance created by the prioritization of good looks?

We are all victims in Pepsi's paradise. The world sucks but hey, have a cola. It'll make you feel better.

*"Women do not, in my experience, talk about vibrators. Or men's buns. The women who do talk about men's buns think they should because they've seen Diet Coke ads. I think that women believe it's the way hip, liberated women talk. They don't realize that these kinds of attitudes are thought up by men."*

- Jennifer Tilly,  
Details, August 1996

**Mudwump**

Joseph W.J. FitzPatrick,  
Oh, wump is me

It's amazing, the amount of work that went into the organization of the Orientation Week activities. I haven't seen that many red shirts running around since the Storm Troopers took on the Star Trek security team on World Wide Web Fights. Good thing we had not one, not two, but three vans (including a cargo van) plastered with logos from sponsors. Good thing also that our sponsors were a bunch of chumps (after all, the Chair of Orientation doesn't think that a Moosehead logo will encourage students to drink, so why would a Pizza Hut logo make them hungry?).

What's more amazing is that the busy bodies of the Administration and of the Orientation committee were too busy to respond to my criticism of Orientation. Maybe they hoped it would just blow over - Frosh week is only 1 of 26 weeks of the school term.

Too bad, I had thought that claiming 50% of Residence frosh failed would at least merit a response. Or stating that the University's ASQ+ survey, which is almost as expensive as it is secret, pointed out that 57% of students applying for admission to UNB thought it was a party school (members of the Academic senate have also pointed out that it showed that UNB's scholarship program has NO effect on whether students decide to attend UNB). Of course, since the ASQ+ survey is secret, and it is only occasionally mentioned by members of the Senate (oops, did somebody mention it again?), nobody can even tell you that it exists, but it does.

Even my comments about how Nursing and Engineering were hostile to certain genders missed the mark. Too bad we don't have a Chair of Men in Nursing telling us that men should choose "good wives" rather than an education.

I was sure that comparing the Commencement ceremonies to a KKK lynching would raise somebody's eyebrows. It's bad enough we make International Students pay a differential fee, and then screw them over daily by an administration that likes money, but not responsibility - but a forced march? What country is this, anyway?

It was really unfortunate that nobody said anything, but forgetfulness was rampant during Frosh week, because our residence system forgot to tell you that residence Frosh are almost twice as likely to flunk out as non-residence Frosh. They probably also forgot to tell you that female students have a 1 in 4 change of being sexually victimized at UNB. Too bad for them, because I won't forget it.

**SPECTRUM**

**But I Digress...  
Kelly Lamrock**



My fellow students, we have been issued a challenge.

Paul Martin, Canada's Minister of Why We Can't Afford Things, has told us that he intends to keep the sales tax on books. For those of us who still cling to the naive notion that more people reading more books is a good thing, the minister has a challenge.

Taking taxes off books would cost \$140 million per year. If we want tax-free reading, we have to tell the minions at the Department of Fiscal Prudence where they can find the money.

Actually, I went to the library and checked the House of Commons records, where Mr. Martin and the other Liberal MP's supported four different amendments to take the GST tax off of books.

According to the harsard ("harsard" being ancient Greek for "Did I say that?"), the Liberal MP's thought that taxing books was backward, short-term thinking, irresponsible, unfair, and probably responsible for most societal ills in Canada (except for the stormy winters, which were the result of Brian Mulroney's foreign policy). They, the Liberals, would never tax reading.

You know what? They never said where they would find the money either.

You may be thinking that it is somewhat unfair that an 80-member opposition caucus, with its many resources, can move amendments in the Commons without saying where they would find the money, while we poor students have to balance the budget before we can protest the tax.

This, however, ignores an essential difference between students wanting to scrap the tax and Liberals wanting to scrap the tax: students would do it if they were in power. But I digress.

In any event, I hate to leave Mr. Martin's gauntlet unanswered. So, humbly, I would suggest that if the federal government must get money by taxing communication, there are means of communicating that are just screaming out to be taxed before we drive up the price of little Susie's copy of "Good Night Moon." To wit:

1. THE SPEECH TAX: A levy of 3 cents per word will be levied on speeches given by

politicians, not only cutting down greatly on verbosity, but also giving some civic value to the utterances of Preston Manning. As an additional perk for students, a prohibitive 5 dollar per word tax will apply to guest speakers at graduation ceremonies.

The Liberal government would also benefit from an additional Gratuitous Word Tax (GWT). This would make politicians think twice before adding extra words such as, "or I will resign" to promises they don't intend to keep.

2. PHONE SALES TAX: Any company selling me something over the phone should be charged 20% of the sale price every time they call.

The rate would double for truly assinine offers. That way, when NBTEL tries to sell me call display for \$5 per month, and then tries to sell me call block (the purpose of which is to screw up everyone's call display) for \$5 per month, they'll pay through the nose.

3. THE IDIOT SURCHARGE: Using the longer word "surcharge" so its targets will not

detect it, a fee should apply to any idiot attempting to communicate. This tax would have a broader revenue base than you would imagine. It could apply to anyone who pays the 35 cents for directory assistance to dial the number for them, to National Enquirer subscriptions, and to any letters to the editor by COR Party members.

4. THE REPETITIVE COMMERCIAL LEVY: A brainchild of Olympics TV viewing, the RCL would allow us to stop companies from cramming more than ten of the same TV ad into one hour of broadcasting. If Visa wants me to look at that skinny kid chasing his Dad's train, or if McDonald's is hellbent on telling me one more time the story of the Canadian yachter who gave up a medal to save another boater, let them pay for it.

5. THE COMMON SENSE TAX: Add up what illiteracy costs this country every year in social assistance, retraining, lost productivity and crime. If it's more than \$140 million, then get rid of the stupid tax.

Anyway, these are my fundraising ideas, and I'm not even one of the brighter souls around this campus. I do feel bad for poor Mr. Martin, being opposed to a book tax all those years in opposition and now not having one single idea of how to pay for it.

By the way, Paul Martin's fax number is (613) 992-4291. Send your ideas about how to raise \$140 million to him. Or drop them off to me care of *The Brunswickan* and we'll publish the best ideas in this column.

If doing so isn't taxed by then.

Kelly Lamrock is Vice President (Policy) of the New Brunswick Student Alliance.

**Forest Breeze**

**"Exactly what will you do with your, uh, degree?"**

Yogi Bear. Tree cutting. Dousing forest fires. These are more often than not the usual images aroused by the term "forestry." You know... those relaxed, stoic custodians of the woods

grounded in good experimental science. We have certainly lost sight of this at times and still do today to some extent. This is largely due to the fact that forestry is a social science; we are

probably most importantly, about change. Yes... the big "C" word. As a rule, people do not embrace change. Change, for the public, may mean learning to live with a new practice or environmental law that was never considered important before. For companies and government it may mean a lot of work in terms of research, public awareness, collaboration, conciliation and compromise. In a profession like forestry, affected by so many varying opinions, change is unavoidable.

*Foresters owe it to themselves and to their professions to increase awareness about the many aspects of their work.*

who make sure you put out your fire, ensuring that all is well with nature. I'm not absolutely sure, mind you, that this is still how most people regard the forestry profession. However, I have my suspicions. I've had more than one person ask me, with a somewhat perplexed expression, "exactly what will you do with your...ah...degree once you've finished? There can't be that many jobs cutting wood, can there?" It is true that suppressing forest fires and cutting wood are among the activities carried out in the forestry field, but these antiquated statements do no justice to our profession and it is evident that we have not really been doing our job as spokespersons. I mean no disrespect to those hard-working men and women at the frontlines. On the contrary, their jobs are very important. My point is that Foresters owe it to themselves and to their professions to increase awareness about the many other aspects of their work.

invariably influenced by the public and the pressures that come with this territory. We have the unfortunate but most important responsibility of dealing with tough social, economic and environmental issues - someone

We find ourselves, in 1996, at a time of much change. We have done a good job up until now but we are beginning to realize as professionals that environmental and economic concerns that were once not even deemed important now need our attention. We are realizing that we have been lacking in areas such as ensuring true sustainability for our forested ecosystems and monitoring changes that have taken place as a result of past practices or environmental abuse.

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has to do it! As a result, our actions and policies have, in times past, been at times developed from something other than rigorous science. These paradigms have followed us through the years and have become a dogma accepted by forest managers and the public alike.

We are also realizing that we now have the technology available to measure these changes and to improve upon our research and management. It is an exciting time and we still have a lot of challenges to meet.

So, forestry is about science, social values and sound management. Forestry is also, and

Brad Case is currently completing his Masters in Forestry.



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**Viewpoint Banner**

Illustrated by Kent Weizel

This issue is dedicated to:

The tattooed, the pierced, the painted and the proud.

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