



It was twenty years ago today that the Beatles first appeared on the Ed Sullivan show.

In November 1963, Sullivan had been driving through London when he was caught in a traffic jam caused by hysterical Beatle fans.

He thought it would be a good idea to have the Fab Four on his show in the new year.

Beatles' manager Brian Epstein was equally anxious to have his boys appear in America. So, despite the fact the Beatles were still playing at clubs in London for 50 pounds a night, a contract for the group to headline on three consecutive Ed Sullivan shows was signed.

The Beatles received \$2400 per show - less than half of Sullivan's going rate.

In honour of this historic occasion, last night I dusted off my copy of Abbey Road and put it on the stereo.

As usual, I listened to the second side first.

Here Comes the Sun is a nice song, Because is pretty schlocky, and You Never Give Me Your Money is typical McCartney self-indulgence.

I was beginning to wonder what all the fuss was about when Polythene Pam came on.

It was like a breath of fresh air - a minute and a half of vitality before slipping into the drudgery of She Came In Through the Bathroom Window.

It wasn't the Beatles who were so great; it was John Lennon who was the genius.

George is a dedicated guitarist who used to practice until his fingers bled, but there are hundreds of good guitarists and I don't think anyone has ever lost much sleep contemplating the intricacies of Ringo's drumming.

Paul certainly had a talent for selling records, matched only by his incredible capacity for being irrelevant.

After the Beatles broke up, when John was scream-

ing "you're still fucking peasants as far as I can see," Paul contented himself with Silly Love Songs.

John wrote Strawberry Fields Forever; Paul wrote Penny Lane. John wrote Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds and most of A Day in the Life; Paul wrote She's Leaving Home and When I'm Sixty-Four.

Yesterday, the song that has been covered by more artists than any other was Paul's, but John wrote Help.

Aside from being a great songwriter, Lennon was the best singer Rock and Roll has ever seen. He was always able to go just a little bit higher and a little bit farther: he never missed a note.

Paul's voice is good enough for doing duets with Michael Jackson, but he is easily overpowered by Lennon.

Lennon's raw scream puts Johnny Rotten to shame.

No one else can sing a Lennon song, and once Lennon has done a song, no one else should even attempt it.

Everybody from the Who to David Lindley has sung the Russell and Medley classic Twist and Shout, but it is the Beatles' version - with Lennon's rasping vocals - that people remember.

Lennon was also the most controversial member of the Beatles. He was the one who said that the Beatles were more popular than Jesus Christ, leading to record burnings across the South.

Lennon also had the most biting wit: "Are you a Mod or a Rocker? Neither, I'm a mocker."

Not only was Lennon a great artist, he took a lot of drugs.

Whether it was popping bennies to keep up enough energy to play six hour sets at the Kaiserkeller club in Hamburg, or going through 1967 in an LSD induced haze, this man knew how to abuse his body.

The Cavern Club in Liverpool is now a parking lot. But when the Beatles played there, so many people packed the small cellar that sweat condensed on the roof and ran down the walls-sometimes shorting out the amps. The group would just continue singing, a capella. Who says there aren't any heroes any more?

CHOPPING BLOCK

by Jens Andersen

It doesn't pay to have a sense of humor, as I found out when the Students' Union pushed through its retroactive pay raise. One of the excuses given for this blatant bit of self-indulgence is that our exalted SU executive travels in loftier circles than the average student, and hence needs more money to primp and strut in the proper clothes.

Those of you who were here for last year's election, and who have neurons which register events beyond the end of your nose (perhaps 5-10 per cent of the student body) will recall that a \$2000 clothing allowance for the Board of Governors rep was one of the planks in my platform as candidate for that position. My rationale was that B of G reps tended to be overawed by the smartly-tailored duds of the stock-brokers, carpet wholesalers, and other heroes of western civilization who sit on the Board. In short, exactly the same reason as is being used at present, albeit I was speaking tongue-in-cheek as a member of the Utopian Pragmatist joke slate.

But now the humorless and grasping SU has enacted my little joke. God help us all!

As I write this, rumors are emanating from the SU office that the raise may be reconsidered. Well, good for them, if they actually pull it off (I'll believe it when I see it). Considering what they do, the executive deserves only slightly more than the wages of a good-paying part-time job. \$800 a month would be quite adequate; \$1200 is simply plunder.

SU money could be better spent on the SU capital reserve fund (Gateway, for instance, will soon have to replace its Gutenberg-era typesetting equipment), paying off the SU debt to the University, or giving a fee reduction to students. As for clothes, even the fashion-conscious bigwigs who run the University probably aren't all that impressed by them. It is brains and spine that make them sit up and take notice. If you haven't got that, even gabardine won't cover up the fact.

Another issue raised by the salary increase is the question of how students can repeal the felonies and misdemeanors committed by Students' Council. For instance, if salaries aren't lowered by Council itself, how would students get the decision revoked?

At present, under Bylaw 600 a petition by 500 students must be presented to hold a general meeting, at which a decision can be revoked, if a quorum of one-twentieth of all students is reached. The cumbersome logistics of this must be obvious: the endless mind-numbing oratory, handing out ballots and punching the student cards of over a thousand students, and so on. By the time anything got done, the SU executive could be enjoying themselves in Las Vegas.

A simpler method would be to have a system whereby a petition of a certain size, say 1000 signatures, could suspend any Student's Union decision (except those entering into outside contracts), until a referendum could be held. A few wrinkles would have to be ironed out, such as a time limit for rounding up signatures, but it would be much more workable than the present system.

As to the specific problem of student politicians fattening their own wallets, perhaps we should have a bylaw limiting any increase to 2 per cent above the current inflation rate, or at least a bylaw requiring student ratification of increases before implementation.



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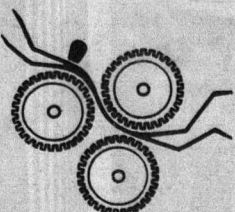
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NOTE: These events are open only to U of A students, staff, and guests.

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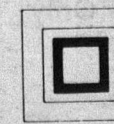
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