

McGill Daily, March 16, 1933.

March 14, 1933.

The Editor  
McGill Daily.

Dear Sir:

May I, through your columns, plead for a little reason in the attitude adopted towards the "Black Sheep," and kindred publications, which are produced by members of the student body?

The hysterical remarks of the downtown press, fostered to a large extent by the attitude of prominent members of the Faculty, and the general desire to have such periodicals utterly suppressed, all savour to me of an attack on the ideals of free speech, which once played so prominent a part in the British Empire, but which are now being abandoned, little by little, in favour of a muzzling of all liberal minded speech and press, which opposes, in any degree, present day social, economic, or ethic ideals.

Every one deplores the ill-mannered attacks, on the private lives of individuals, which have been featured recently. But attacks of that type carry their own defence, in that all decent people will show nothing but contempt for their authors; but to ride the high horse, and to wish to suppress them by force, is only a method of alienating the sympathies of this people, in whom a love of liberty is greater than their dislike for libellous remarks about people with whom they are unacquainted.

Again, to uphold their suppression on the grounds that they pervert the general student morals, is utterly to disregard the facts. Even in mixed parties of students, conversation is no whit purer than the contents of the "Black Sheep." This does not mean that present day adolescents are degenerate, or lewd, but simply that a new code of morals has arisen, which differed from the code, extant when our professors were young.

To the great mass of the students, the recent number of the "Black Sheep" was rather distasteful, because of its euphemistic, and circumlocutionary manner of saying bawdy things, which lacked any sense of humour, and contained no original ideas. But the actual lewdness revolted no one. They were uninterested in it.

The literary taste of the average student is not wholly uncultivated, and undesirable publications would speedily die a natural death, if they were left alone. Shaving people's heads, and rescinding their degrees, will certainly not have the desired effect; and so I would like to close with an appeal to all members of the University to realise that we live in 1933, that the work of Lawrence, Joyce, Dreiser and others should have convinced the world that sex is not necessarily filthy, and that liberty of the subject to do, or say what he likes, is one of the cardinal points of the British constitution. Furthermore, I would like to remind embryo authors, that there is a moral obligation not to abuse that liberty.

Thanking you for the space.

Yours truly

John F. Close.