

EDITORIAL

Brain invaders

In Wednesday's Edmonton Sun, there was a story on a young boy who had to resort to stealing to support his video habit. To me, that implies he was addicted.

Most people have played some sort of video game at one point. Even though they have not been around for very long, hearing of someone who has not played Pac Man or Space Invaders is like hearing of someone who has never heard of Wayne Gretzky.

A lot of people will tell you that video games are useful in that they help develop hand-eye coordination. This is a lot of bunk!

The benefits from video games in this respect, if they exist at all, would be negligible when compared to tennis or even pool.

The only conceivable benefit I can think of from video games would be that usually some tension or aggression is released, so you don't punch someone out. This is also debatable. I'm sure it is possible that if a person did so poorly on one of these games that he or she might get angrier and vent this anger in an unhealthy way.

There are a lot of people who take video games seriously. Someone must be getting those high scores. Unless you are extremely lucky, you will spend large amounts of money to get to the stage at which you have the honour of putting your initials into the machine beside your score. Many people would be surprised at the amount of money some individuals spend on these games.

If young children are doing break and enters to get money, hundreds of dollars, to spend on video games and candy, there is certainly something wrong with this form of entertainment.

I'm sure, in years to come, these children of the video era will contract all sorts of new and exciting conditions from this harmless fun.

In fact, in a study done recently in the States, some disorders are already cropping up among video game and pinball machine players. These include bone and ligament problems, assumedly from the stress and shock of slamming buttons and levers.

Some will probably end up with ulcers from worrying about a game you can rarely win. One would assume winning to be when one puts one's initials on the screen or when one accumulates so many points that the machine cannot compute it.

Something that is addictive and so potentially harmful as video games could very well have been made illegal.

The only thing that prevents this is that huge corporations are making astronomical amounts of money from these video junkies. Not only that, but it is in the best interests of the governments to have them legal because they make a tidy bundle in taxes. It wouldn't really matter how many studies were done, because most of the effects won't show up for years, and it's the ones in power who get the benefits. They certainly aren't about to think about your health when they can think about their profits.

Not only do people waste money on these machines but they waste their time too.

It would be foolish to assume these video experts have read all Shakespeare's works, and polished off a library of Joseph Conrad's and D.H. Lawrence's books. It would probably even be foolish to assume that, for those to whom it applies, they have finished their homework.

Just because there is so much a human could possibly learn, have these people given up without trying? I would much prefer to read an interesting book or see a good movie, to learn something rather than put money straight into some con artist's pocket.

The time loss is your own, you'll never get it back. You're that much closer to your last day, and you still can't explain Einstein's theory of relativity in twenty-five words or less.

Anne Stephen

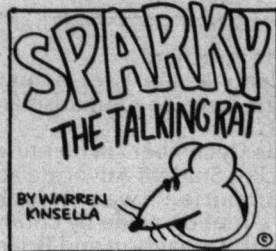
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Staff this issue:

Reporters Nate LaRoi and Dale Lakevold related their stories of Soviet submarines in the area of Whitemud creek. Gilbert Bouchard and Jack Vermeec discussed strategy with Zane Harker and Kent Blinston. Bill Inglee and Martin Beales chose cannons as weapons and set off; Heather-Ann Laird and Teri Lyn Paulgard followed them. Margo Schmitt and Martin Coutts went to search for hydroids. Mark Roppell chased Margaret Baer into the creek below the bridge - and there was the sub, mired in the mud! Reporters Kathy Hrynchysyn, Shauna Peets and anchor person Brett Kullman knocked politely and asked for an interview. John Algard stepped from the shadows, opened the hatch and....

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« LETTERS TO THE EDITOR »

Thanks go to Samaritans

Since it is mostly University people who buy CANSAVE Xmas Cards from the English Dept., and who buy books from our CANSAVE book box, I would be grateful for the use of your letter page to report our 1982 revenue for Canadian Save the Children Fund.

From the book box and other donations — \$999.20 (including Miss Kam's bottle drives, and GSEA gift). From the sale of CANSAVE Xmas cards — \$1,378.00 for a total of \$2,377.20.

With many thanks, on behalf of CANSAVE, to the generous people of the university community.

N. Parker-Jervis, English Dept.

Shame on the engineers!

You know it is truly amazing how a group that is touted as being relatively intelligent and generally, as a rule "original", could, through one act completely dispel this notion and fabricate a characterization apparently more akin to their unoriginality and their outright stupidity. Of course, I realize that attacking the engineers and their ridiculous ice sculptures in Quad, during engineering week no less, is obviously inconsistent with the pervasive spirit they would like to perpetuate at least for the duration of the week. Consider the remarkable ability of engineers to belittle their country and themselves by constructing a sculpture of our prime minister giving the royal salute and beneath him a curious attempt to show students and the world that the bottom has fallen out of our economy. This marvel of ingenuity and despicable display of contempt for Canada is precisely the sort of thing that perpetuates the firmly held and widely maintained beliefs that engineers lack ingenuity, are contemptible boers (sic) and are persistent in engaging in foolish acts that propagate these assertions.

As a Canadian, an Albertan and a Liberal I would be embarrassed to expose someone unfamiliar with the U of A to these fickle, idiotic and nonsensical works of engineering ingenuity.

If this is the best you can do God help us all. I welcome any attempts by engineers to rebut my contention — that is, if they are capable of parting with their rattles and ascending to an academic level near, if not equivalent to, the author.

John A. Middleton, Arts II

Elitism shafts masses

More crap from the student press on the 1960's. The voyeuristic nostalgia on Abbie Hoffman (the Gateway, Jan. 5) which chose to reprint from the *Ulysses* was characteristic of an elitist interpretation of history, which the 1960's so completely belied. One of the most enduring traits of commercial journalism (which you emulate) is its personalization of history, at the cost of its real content. Social events are presented as the creation of outstanding individuals. While the article didn't actually come out and state that the Abbie Hoffmans, Jane Fondas and Jerry Rubius caused the upheavals of the 1960's, it certainly gave that impression.

The important point about that decade in North America is that it was a mass phenomenon, drawing from every class and ethnic group. Indeed, if one had to single out a few people as its "initiators" on this continent, the prime candidates would be the Mississippi sharecroppers, whose skins were black, and the student civil rights workers who together challenged and said "no" to American racism.

Later these few were joined by hundreds of thousands of others, mainly young people, who knew from their own lives that the American dream was a lie. White, middle class culture went down like ninepins before the radical critique of the "New Left". I believe the main reason that critique is no longer as predominant as it was, is that a deep cynicism prevails among the youth, and a knowing acquiescence replaces the social commitment expressed in the ferment of the civil rights and the anti-war movements.

Abbie Hoffman and the media radicals were in essence the creations of this movement, rather than the reverse, as your article preposterously and falsely suggests when it states that Hoffman "invented guerilla theater" which the New Left used long before we ever heard of Abbie. We got it from previous generations of American radicalism, such as the Wobblies and the CIO organizing drives with some outside help from the likes of Bertholt Brecht.

If you like, the Abbie Hoffmans and Jerry Rubius were our entertainers, they spoke to the entire radicalization, amused us and amused even those outside the movement. They fed off the collective

culture that we all created. But they were only on occasion political organizers or leaders.

You may rationalize your personification of deep-flowing social movements as some sort of "individualism". But by focussing on the few who received the blessing of the establishment media, you perpetuate a great blind spot of our culture: the inability to perceive the creativity of the many individuals in the mass, whose intellectual ferment, optimism and refusal to accept the status quo willed to them by their superiors made the sixties something that continues to inspire curiosity and wonder in so many journalists.

Robin Hunter, Grad Student

Jens should apologize

Mr. Jens Andersen has on many occasions tried my patience with his inability to criticize constructively the content of letters to the Gateway and/or issues; instead, he chooses to be personally vindictive, demonstrating his obvious lack of sound knowledge regarding subject matter.

This time Mr. A. you have gone too far for your readers to sit by and not tell you to mend your ways. I would like to inform you that the screamingly illiterate and incoherent (sic) letter, which you referred to Wed., Dec. 8, carried more significant and worthwhile comment than ten issues of *Chopping Block*.

We are all losers if your vitriolic criticism can intimidate writers to the Gateway like Roddy Campbell.

You have learned little with your two-bit education if it does not encompass respect for your fellow man. Surely the true meaning of *ignoramus* is one who is puffed-up on their own self importance and is shown to be a nincompoop.

An apology is in order.

Doreen M. Caldwell

Explanation of HUBbub

In reference to the letter of Mr. Dawkins in Gateway on the 11th of January 1983, I would like to explain the following:

The HTA(82) executives have been actively working on the rent rates in HUB since November 1st, 1982. We have sent many letters and had several meetings with H&F S in order to get explanations of serious discrepancies in the operating budget of HUB residential unit.

Unfortunately the preceding HTA executives did not oppose the rent increase or anything in the budget last year. All these matters will be discussed in our general meeting on the 25th January 1983.

The \$500 operating grant from the H&F S was accepted by the HTA executives after H&F S had indicated that collecting the 1.5% interest on the security deposit would cost them (and therefore us!) over \$2000. On the matter of conflict of interest in receiving the operating grant, a proposal of higher operating grant increase also means higher rent increase for tenants; mind you, Mr. Dawkins, the executives are tenants too! Furthermore, this grant represents only 0.0003% of the operating budget of the HUB residential unit.

There was a lengthy discussion on the HTA(82) budget during the general meeting of October 18th, 1982. And it was outlined to COSS during their meeting of October 25th, 1982 too.

We are going to oppose any unreasonable rent increase in HUB in the forthcoming budget of H F S (from Students' Union sources we have learnt that rent increase might be 15%).

We are currently pressing on H&F S to operate an adequate storage space in HUB because two small rooms are not sufficient for 870 people. For further information please contact our office on Mondays between 6:30-8:30 p.m. The office hours has been such for the last two months. We will be happy to discuss all the issues relating to HUB tenants.

We are preparing a newsletter that will be distributed in the third week of January. We hope all HUB tenants will be concerned enough to make an effort to attend the coming general meeting.

Vidar Gudmundsson
 Chairman of HTA(82)

Biases distort issue

I wish to comment on the controversy surrounding the Hillel-sponsored speech by Israeli military spokesman, Col. Y. Levy:

As Don Davies pointed out in his letter to the Gateway (Dec. 8/82), Zionists do indeed exercise a double-standard with regard to Israeli-Palestinian issues. The defacement of Pro-Palestinian posters and closing of Arab Students' information booths