

EDITORIAL

Of Micheal Jackson...

The Gateway, following the lead of the *Wall Street Journal*, must ask itself the question, "who is Michael Jackson?"

Now, surely you must have read that Michael is not gay and that he is not given hormone shots to keep his voice high.

You must have heard about Michael winning all those Grammy awards and selling millions of records with a song called "Beat It."

But this being a university and you being a student, it's likely that you are wondering what all the fuss is about. Why is Michael Jackson getting full-page coverage on the front-page of the *Edmonton Journal*? Why is he in this editorial? Why is he making more money than me?

Perhaps you have been studying hard since the beginning of the year and don't ever get a chance to listen to the radio. Perhaps you are feeling a little square because you can't jump into conversations about "who is Michael Jackson?" Perhaps you are very fortunate.

In which case, you need to be enlightened, whether you like it or not. Let me tell you about this Michael Jackson fellow.

He has a lot of brothers.

He sang a lullaby about a rat called "Ben" when you were in Junior High.

His mother says she could feel that he was something special, that he could really dance, even before she gave birth to the future superstar.

His fans on Yonge Street in Toronto are so devoted to him, they went out and burnt their hair after finding out Michael did the same.

His song, "Billie Jean", sends shock waves through his legs.

He made a million dollar video called "Thriller" where he turned into a werewolf.

He does not believe in the occult.

He got a nose job to look white, but then again how white can someone look when he is black?

He's seen frequently with that paragon of talent, Brooke Shields.

That's right. Michael Jackson is a social phenomenon - in the same class as the hula hoop, the Pet Rock, and the Cabbage Patch Doll. You studied it in Sociology.

And Michael doesn't even wear a hockey sweater with the number 99 on it.

Michael Jackson is a name that a lot of American teenagers grew up with. But for the older generation who are more familiar with Glen Miller and Frank Sinatra, it is very difficult to see his appeal.

Ask your professor about Michael Jackson.

And your prof will likely shrug and wonder why he should give you a passing grade.

So, in the name of helping you get through university, the Gateway has done you a big favour by answering the question "who is Michael Jackson" for you.

BJ

...and Prince Chuck

Last June Prince Charles received an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the University of Alberta.

If the cops ever pick me up, I think I will get Chuck to handle my defence.

This year the U of A wants to give Lech Walesa an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree.

Walesa is certainly a worthwhile human being - much more so than a middle-aged, balding representative of an outdated institution such as the monarchy - but in what possible alternative universe has he ever done anything to earn a Law degree?

If this university had a Faculty of Trade Union Organizing, maybe Walesa should get a degree but why Law?

Giving out honorary degrees sure fools all those people who actually studied for their degrees.

The U of A has given out 362 honorary degrees since its founding in 1908. All but eight of these have been Doctor of Laws degrees.

Basically, if the recipient doesn't have any academic expertise give him a Doctor of Laws.

I suppose it wouldn't do to have a bunch of honorary neurosurgeon running around, and it wouldn't be enough of a draw to offer someone an Honorary B.A. (General) in Sociology.

But the question remains, why does the Senate give out honorary degrees?

Don't they have anything else to do? After all, we pay them a lot of money.

The U of A doesn't even follow the American custom of giving honorary degrees to people who donate a lot of money to the university. At least the American system has some practical value.

So why does the U of A insist on giving Law degrees to Mother Teresa, Prince Charlie and Lech Walesa?

It just doesn't make any sense.

Does the Senate want to bring prestige down upon the university because of distinguished alumni?

If so, I don't think it is working.

In the meantime, I am sure that Lech Walesa is so excited about the possibility of receiving an honorary degree from the U of A that he can't sleep at nights.

For the Senate's next project, I propose that Wayne Gretzky be given an honorary 3 years of accreditation towards a Bachelor of Physical Education degree.

Then, with only one year of study, the Great Gretzky could have a degree.

MR

Screwloose
Nobody was on his side!



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Intellectual suicide

Mr. Harrison, it is nice to see that you have so completely missed the point of the anti-cruise argument. Your slippery-slope alarmist letter of March 8 that smacks so strongly of reaganism is indicative of intellectual suicide. Hopefully even you would recognise that "the Russians are coming" as an intellectual position is utterly irresponsible (remember Al Haig?). That we need to be armed to the teeth to ward off the Russian horde is equally preposterous, regressive and indefensible. But this is to ignore the crux of the specific anti-cruise debate. What has happened in Canada is unprecedented: just as we were beginning to develop some sort of autonomy for Canada, we have sold ourselves out lock stock and missile to the Yanks. In 1963, the Diefenbaker government fell because The Chief refused to let Canada become a base for American missiles. The defeat of Diefenbaker, according to one noted scholar, was the twilight of Canada. It seems clear that the testing of cruise missiles in Alberta is now the sunset of Canadian sovereignty. And to what cause? So that the Reagan Administration can quicken the pace of a wasteful and ultimately destructive arms race. Why not attend to the vital defence of NATO in a more constructive

way — by talking? In sum Mr. Harrison, perhaps you could use your anti-intellectual alarmism in a more constructive cause — Canada — instead of insisting on selling our country down the Potomac.

Neil Fenna
Arts II

Duck and cover

Upon reading "Nuke the Bums I" (*Gateway*, March 8), I was challenged by Mr. Harrison's naivete and ignorance, to enlighten him on my views of the global peace movement. I am forced to question who is more "cliche-ridden" in reference to the classic, recycled rhetoric presented by Mr. Harrison.

His attitudes of being "safe" from the Soviets and "protected" by NATO displays his false sense of security. I would challenge Mr. Harrison on what I regard to be his mental laziness, when he assumes a positive correlation between the number of nuclear warheads and his personal safety. Do you think Mr. Harrison, that elite government and military officials take personal responsibility for your safety? When, in the history of war, have civilians ever been considered anything more than expendable or "caught in the crossfire" in the overall pursuit of victory and power? Tell me Mr. Harrison, how would you duck and cover from nuclear radiation?



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As the dust cleared, fifteen lonely Gilbertologists gazed dismally at the aftermath of editors past. Brenda Mallaly and Ann Grever murmured soothing platitudes to placate the morbid thoughts we all were privy to. Patrice Struyk and Wendy Hawkins sang songs of dying and urban decay. But then from the ashes rose Warren Opheim's ghost proclaiming a season of renewal for Bernie Poitras (our Quebec correspondent) and Bill St. John. The theme was taken up by Brenda Waddle, Jim Moore, and Jordan Peterson, and soon the strains of "We Shall Overcome" were heard in the smoke-filled CUPE negotiation rooms. Shane Berg, Barry Seeves, and David R. Merner were awestruck by the implications of grandeur, but Ninette Gironella and Gunnar Blodgett realized it was all in a day's slavery. As usual, Lord Algard remained fatalistic about the whole ball of election goop.

Staff this issue