

**Frats don't discriminate**

Re: Before our time (Nov. 15)  
 The dredging up of old garbage from *The Gateway's* past to slam fraternities is not going unnoticed. I do not know if it is a specific policy of *The Gateway* to discredit the fraternity system as a whole, or if the staff are using fraternities to provoke discussion, but we as fraternity members are not amused. Fraternities already have a problem with public image, and the rehashing of a problem that we feel has been dealt with only serves to increase the popular negative image.

I am a member of Lambda Chi Alpha and we as a fraternity do not discriminate against new members. We have past or present members of Jewish, Negro, Japanese, Chinese, Asian, White or any other separation of people you wish to designate. Our constitution was most recently amended in the early 1970's and no longer allows for such discrimination and our international headquarters actively campaigns against it. To my knowledge as a member of the Interfraternity Council there is no fraternity that participates in racial or religious discrimination. Contrary to the article, the purpose of fraternities is to provide a social organization for a group of men and women; not to establish a segregated body.

Dan Barclay  
 Chemistry IV

*Editor's note: Articles which appear in "Before our time" are selected primarily for their humorous content.*

*Martin  
 Levenson*



**Life devalued**

Hang 'em high and hang 'em often!

That seems to be the attitude of those who advocate the re-instatement of capital punishment in Canada.

The recent court decision that determined that Charles Ng is "extraditable" was greeted with relief by those who feared that Canada would become a haven for criminals escaping the possibility of the death sentence in the U.S.

However, some other groups seem to be indulging their bloodlust. They're happy that Charles Ng, after exhausting all court appeals in Canada, may face the death penalty if found guilty of a series of murders.

It seems contradictory to label oneself a "victim of violence" and yet advocate violence for someone else. However, in Canada we have no death penalty for murder, and our Extradition Treaty with the U.S. does not permit us to extradite someone who may face the death penalty.

We don't condone eye-for-an-eye retribution, recognizing that

killing someone is wrong, under any circumstances, and that state-sanctioned killing makes a mockery of our laws against murder.

The problem with groups calling for capital punishment is that they are perceived, rightly or wrongly, as wanting revenge. But the losses that people suffer as a result of violent crime cannot be rectified by killing someone else.

Furthermore, capital punishment can make the job of the police that much more dangerous. A violent criminal facing the prospect of the death penalty is more likely to resist arrest by desperate methods.

Finally, there's the problem of making mistakes.

The Donald Marshall case in Nova Scotia illustrates too clearly the fact that sometimes justice goes awry. What if we had had the death penalty and had executed him? I doubt if such a miscarriage of justice would be something Canadians would be happy about.

I hold no brief for Ng. If he has committed the murders for which he is charged, he deserved punishment. But the question is, what is the appropriate punishment?

The Americans believe in sentiments that give rise to slogans like "Live Free or Die" and "Give me Liberty or give me Death," which suggests that liberty is more important than life.

They are inconsistent when they choose to kill someone rather than take away his liberty.

It's not that people like Charles Manson, John Gacy, or Clifford Olson deserve to live. And I

wouldn't want violent criminals to be allowed to go free. But killing these people is a cop-out. It suggests that human lives are just counters, to be added and subtracted. It devalues life more than the criminal does, because it is state-sanctioned.

In a macabre way, it released violent criminals from responsibility for their crimes.

The loss of freedom is in many ways worse than losing one's life. It is life in suspended animation.

Remorse doesn't come from the grave.

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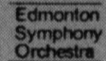
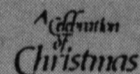
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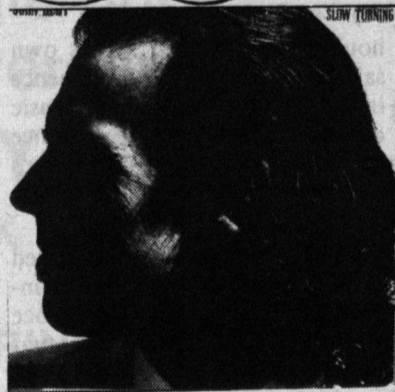
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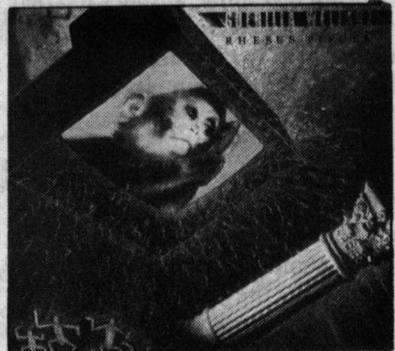
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