

SPECTRUM

The opinions found in Spectrum are not necessarily the views of The Brunswickan. People interested in writing for Spectrum must submit at least three (3) type-written articles of no more than 500 words each to the Brunswickan.

The Emperor Has No Clothes

There is no God but money, and Canada with its unparalleled natural resources is the most God-fearing country in the world.
Carleton W. Stanley, 1922

Money—in a bank account, stocks, bonds, or as a one hundred dollar bill—is not real. It is an abstraction, very useful to be sure, but only as substantial as our belief.

Money has now evolved far beyond its original purpose as a medium of exchange to replace barter, originally a smashing success because it was light, much lighter than goats, cows, or even small chickens. This evolution is now complete; one person can now carry as much money as he can afford, from one dollar to a billion, on a single piece of paper.

Some folks will even pay you money to give them money these days—five hundred for a car, a thousand for a truck, to save them the cost of reprinting the price tags I guess.

Money disappears now, your hundred dollar bill worth about a penny less than yesterday, 50 bucks less in ten or fifteen years, dissolving steadily into thin air at the rate of inflation.

Most of the time money floats electronically around the international financial markets, the biggest and most elaborate poker game of all time, where untold thousands of people make their living placing bets against each other with the balance of your savings account. Many of these bets are bets about other bets—meta-bets, if you will—gambles about the gambles being taken by hierarchies of organizations all making gambles on other organizations, statistics and rumours changing the odds by the hour.

You can even bet that money will lose money, by buying options—stocks that you agree to return later. For example, borrow 100 million worth of ACME stock from Solomon Brothers and agree to return it in six months, sell it, and pocket the cash. Five months later when the stock crashes, as you hoped, buy it back for 40 million and return it. Net to you—60 million for two phone calls, patience, and a bit of luck. To do well at this sort of work must give you a pretty negative outlook on life, but the pay ain't bad.

You can now buy money at almost any interest rate you want, even very high interest money that nobody expects will ever be paid back, called junk bonds, still going strong.

Money is now a commodity in

itself, a cyclical, recursive, self-referential meta-abstraction on a scale no one person can comprehend, our society absolutely dependent on it.

For the most part this Darwinian world works—internally consistent, so large and diversified that it can absorb the loss of individual members with nary a hiccup.

Unfortunately, as I've been saying, money isn't real. It's not made of gold anymore, or even silver. Your parents may have told you of a time when banks promised to give you gold for your money if asked, but no more—there's simply too much money and not enough gold.

Now, herein lies the rub. If money is based on anything, anything at all, it is based on govern-

ments, on nations, on entities that supposedly cannot fail because their debts are secured by the land itself. Unfortunately, this is the biggest canard of them all. Nobody expects Brazil to pay back their national debt anymore, or even the interest, and, in the Third World, they're pretty well off.

If therein lies the rub, then herein lies the haymaker: the West can't pay back their national debts either. In Canada, for example, give or take a few billion, our federal government now collects 60 billion dollars each year, spends 90, and is 400 in debt. And we are committed to this course for the foreseeable future, unable to reduce our expenditures or increase our revenues without catastrophic consequences.

The Black Triangle by Tristis Bhaird

Everyone around me is talking about the Red & Black Revue, so I figure I might as well put my opinion in. First off, it's not fair for me to make comment one way or another about the quality of the show, because I didn't attend it. I stopped going to performances like Red & Black in my third year of university (again, in fairness, not at UNB). My experiences had been of being subjected to sexist, homophobic, and racist performances. Never for an entire show - most performers were sincere, but there was always one or two groups who did their best to be funny, and apparently this is the only humour they know.

I did a lot about it. I stopped going. Other women (and other activists) did the protesting. I was into the apathy thing.

When this year's show was being promoted I opted out, partly because money was tight, and partly because I really didn't want to sit through the expected bigotry. I guess I didn't have to attend to get my fill of it.

By now, everyone has seen the words to the Jug Band's ditty that slams homosexuals (gay men apparently, lesbian sex being such an erotic idea and all). If you didn't get to the show, the ERTW

All They See Is The Theoretical

was only too happy to put the lyrics in print for you. If you didn't nab your copy of ERTW, the entertainment section of this newspaper made sure you eventually got exposed to it. I would like to thank all those involved for the time and effort you put into getting these lines out to the public. You at least saved me the price of attendance.

Now about that attitude. Usually, by the time someone gets up to perform bigoted comedy, they feel fairly secure about how acceptable it's going to be. Nobody expects to get booed off a stage. These folks felt safe. Why?

Okay, I know. This is the Maritimes. Nobody boos anybody off stage here. That's part of the reason. Another part is that normally fair-minded straights don't know enough about gay men and lesbians to see us as real people. The butt of the song's joke was not their neighbour, their best friend, or their child. The butt was a safe distance away: in someone else's city, in someone else's faculty, in someone else's home.

None of us can expect to be more real to these people than words on a page (or sung out off-key, as the case may be). That is all they see of us: the hypotheti-

The Wimmin's Room

We have all heard the traditional story of Adam & Eve. There is probably no other Bible story that is as well known to Christians and non-Christians alike. Have you ever stopped to ask yourself why it is

Perspectives by William Stewart

Interestingly, that 60 billion in revenue actually covers our expenses. The extra thirty billion we spend each year is the deficit, the interest on our 400 billion dollar debt. We are now actually borrowing the money each year to pay the interest on our loans. Try that at your local bank and see how far you get.

Money is not only not real, it's

now largely theoretical, borrowed from future generations yet unborn. We have maybe ten years, fifteen at the outside, before we will be forced to face this fact. Buy gold when you can get it, land when you can't, and a lot of canned food. The next few years are going to be rocky, because money isn't real, and none of us wants to admit it.

cal, the theoretical. We certainly don't volunteer who we are, at least not as a group. How can we expect more than theoretical support if we are never a physical presence?

I can almost hear the reaction to that idea, now. The gays are saying "Yeah, right you're going to see me make a target of myself!" and the straights are saying "I've seen darn well enough of you, stop flaunting it!" Well both of you sit down. I'm not talking about marching in the street bashing each other over the head and yelling nasty things to each other. I'm talking about a gay/lesbian speakers bureau.

A g/l speakers bureau is a group of people who make themselves available to teachers and profs for classroom discussion on the topic of homosexuality. They do not go into class to promote their lifestyle, nor do they expect a planned attack on it. They go to participate in a question and answer session. The questions are the kind that don't usually get asked, or answered, because people are too nervous, or think they'll be impolite. They are most often about how people feel and think. Sometimes about how they cope with one problem or another. You can't get this stuff

from text books. A lot of misunderstandings are cleared up. Not everyone changes their mind about what they believe, but at least there is more information for them to base their ideas on. And for gays there is often surprise over the number of straights who are gay positive.

I was a member of a bureau for a while. Some of the sessions I attended got quite intense, with some very good questions flying around. I never felt unsafe in any of the classes, and aside from a little discomfort at the beginning, I noticed the students always got into it, too.

A g/l speakers' bureau would be valuable for every faculty of UNB. It would benefit both straight and gay students on campus by answering their question about each other without protest and violence. It would allow straights to see live gays instead of theoretical ones, or the twisted news-makers that get people so disgusted. And it allows gays to reply to some of the stereotypes of their peers without expecting a beating at the end.

If you like the idea you should contact GALA at the SUB. Maybe we can get something moving here.

A Second Look At Eden

that Eve has taken all the blame? Why two thousand years later the female gender takes the blame for so many other things? For example, "Johnny is not doing well at school . . . but of course his mother works and doesn't spend enough time with him" - or - "It wasn't rape, she led me on, and after all, she was

wearing a short skirt and dared to go for a walk alone at 9:00 p.m." - or - more recently - "Of course I didn't sexually assault Anita Hill, she's fantasizing and besides she's crazy, and is probably in love with me". This is called victim blaming - and women live with it every Day. But let's get back to Eve, the mother of humankind. Let's