

EDITORIAL

What a stupid idea

Higher tuition is not the answer to the education crisis

It's late.

Too late on a Wednesday night to be starting the (almighty) editorial. Thankfully, I got handed an article yesterday that had been clipped out of last Friday's edition of *the Globe and Mail*. It's titled "Higher tuition could mean better access."

Yeah, I thought there was a typo in there, too.

So I read it, thought about it, and came to a conclusion. Whoever wrote it (we don't know who it was; they cleverly didn't include the name) is out of touch. Out to lunch. One brick short of a full load. Not dealing with a full deck...you get the idea.

The article was full of bad ideas and pie-in-the-sky dreams.

For example, it was pointed out that Queen's University is now charging \$20,000 tuition for its business program. Personally, I think that's a bad idea. And you're certainly not going to convince me that that is going to lead to "better access." Twenty thousand bucks? To get roped into wearing purple leather in Kingston?

Justification comes later in the (spoof?) article. Great ideas like cranking up government loans so the twenty-something generation of young professionals is so bogged down with debt as they start their "real" lives, they won't be able to breathe until they're 35. That is, of course, if they're lucky enough to step into a cushy job the week after they graduate. But that should be no problem. We all know how many openings there are for university grads right now. Actually, the proposed payback plan would be on a percentage basis of your family income. That means if you rack up 30 G's in government loans (remember, the loans available will be much more substantial) but can't find the dream job, you'll be paying for your years at university for, well, a really long time.

According to the writer, higher tuition would directly result in higher-quality education.

WHERE WILL "STUMPY" THE DALHOUSIE FLASHER STRIKE NEXT?



Maybe so, but for who? If you've only got a student body of 50 kids and a staff of hundreds, then yeah, you're right, the quality of education will go up. I just don't like the long-term outlook for a country that would support such an exclusive model of post-secondary education.

And actually, the writer of this manifesto brought this point up when s/he looked favourably upon the deregulation of the USA's universities. I look at this country and I look at America, and I wouldn't want to trade sociological problems with them. And that's exactly what we'd be doing if universities become a playground for the rich.

What was really funny was the conclusion. It stated (through some ill-begotten logical loop) that higher tuition would lead to "empowered" students, self-sufficient universities, higher-quality education, a stronger work force, and a more prosperous country.

"Empowered" students? What's so powerful about being broke and working full-time so you can afford your sky-high tuition?

This conclusion was reached with a lot of big words, most of which I didn't understand. But that's okay, because I'm pretty sure that the person writing this drivel didn't know what they were talking about either.

Sam McCaig

OPINION

Life lessons

Another week has come and gone, and I guess it's time for me to once again offend the sensibilities of the general public. Another does of bad medicine for the snivelling, whining masses.

Since my first article (Joe is back, Sept. 14/95), I have been approached by innumerable persons quietly thanking me for having the guts to say what so many are so fearful of mousing. If you don't know what I'm talking about, let me refresh your collective memory. I spoke about ridiculous levels of tolerance for victims and persons who feel that self-victimization is honourable.

What is so odd about the fact that I find this so repugnant? I simply do not understand why people in this country are so afraid to speak their minds. One idea that has occurred to me is that the ultra-left have gone to the extreme of labelling everything as racist, sexist, able-ist, and homophobic, and now everyone is now unsure of what is acceptable. As a society, we have been cowed into a stance of non-confrontation, we have allowed ourselves to be castrated. (Oh, excuse me, how phallo-centric of me.)

Well, no more, I say. I will never allow my self to be the intellectual equivalent of a eunuch, and neither should you.

Now, don't get me wrong, I'm not suggesting that you run out and join the Reform Party. Some things are just plain inappropriate. It's inappropriate to use terms that are racist, sexist, or homophobic. It is wrong to blame what you perceive as someone's shortcomings on your notions about their race, gender, sexual orientation, culture, or religion.

I would also like to say that it's inappropriate to blame your own shortcomings on others, like saying: "Oh, I just hate these people who come here and take our jobs." If you say stuff like that, you end up looking just plain ignorant.

What is OK to do, and what I would love to see everyone do, is to confront the slackers of society. Call it like it is. If someone is lazy, it doesn't matter what sets them apart; they're still lazy. And, they should be told!

It makes me sick when every time you walk into a room, you here someone making some excuse for their failure to do something or other. We've become a society that lives for the excuse. We've come to the point where success is no longer expected of people. Well, let me tell you, this is no longer acceptable. We, as a society, can no longer struggle under the burden of so much crap.

So my advice to all those struggling, but surviving people out there, is to keep going, and don't ever allow yourself to fall into the trap of excusing your life away. It's the key to nothing, and it will get you nowhere.

As for the excuse mongers of the world, listen to me. When we become adults in this society, it means that we take responsibility for ourselves. That means that despite all the hardships we face in life, we are responsible for making our own lives work. Being an adult is when we learn that even though someone may have caused us great pain, even to the point of threatening our sanity, blaming them is not going to make our lives any better. It is up to us to make our individual worlds.

Joe's Rules for Life

- #1: Everything costs something. It's the currency that changes.
- #2: There are only about 4 really great jobs in the whole world, and they're all taken.
- #3: Don't ever whine and *really* mean it. It's tacky and child-like.
- #4: Nothing is ever really a surprise. Trust me on this one.
- #5: It doesn't matter who's fault it is, *You* still have to fix it.
- #6: Stay away from people who complain. They are highly contagious.
- #7: Laugh at everything. Everything is funny if you find the right perspective.
- #8: Look for trouble. It will happen anyway, and if you look for it you can see it coming.
- #9: Never admit to fear. In fact, never admit to anything; it's much safer.
- #10: It's OK to be greedy, as long as you call it something else. Try acquisitive, it sounds better and not many people know what it means.

Most important rule for life:
Don't ever take shit from anyone!

LETTERS

Mr. R. Scott Parker; your letter is longer than our policy permits. Please phone or drop by the office to rectify the situation.

To the Gazette,

I read with interest your account of the attempted assault on a Dal student in front of the SUB on September 10th, reported on September 14th. I noted the quote, "...it is alarming that someone would do this AT THREE IN THE AFTERNOON." I find it alarming that someone would do this at all. Period.

In response, the Student Union is considering "...expanding the hours of Tiger Patrol," but while this may be "feasible," it is not a solution. Such a suggestion serves to reinforce the perception that a particular group of people (in this case women) is prey. I wonder how the student population would react if a babysitting service like Tiger Patrol was "expanded," or even introduced, for some other type of Dal student? Let us say... blacks, or Jews or members of the Reform Party, or even "white males about 30 years of age." And if one of the persons of this hypothetical protected group were to choose to walk across the campus at 3pm, and

were assaulted, wouldn't you say they were fair game?

Rape is not about sex, it is about power. The perceived powerlessness of women is reinforced by babysitting services, dragging us back to the Victorian era when respectable ladies went nowhere unescorted. Protection is no substitute for freedom. I am sure the Tiger Patrol volunteers and the Student Union are well-intentioned, and I wish I could suggest a guaranteed way to resolve the problem of violence against women. Education? Zero Tolerance? I just don't know. I do know that the rapist's principal weapon is fear, and the only way to counteract it is with courage. I hope the Dal student population will choose to face the fear in their midst with courage, refusing to relinquish their liberty, just because such a course seems "feasible." We must concentrate on the assailants, not the prey. We must work to eliminate the threat, not the opportunity.

L.H. Paris

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