

Stranger things have happened. After all (according to Shipka), Robin Hunter is now a professor, yet only last week he was a graduate student!

David Marples
Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies

"They Need Your Designer Jeans"

RE: In response to the "Cartoon" - p. 12 Sept. 27. Please, is there nothing that people won't try to laugh at?

To make a sad, sad attempt to joke about hunger and starvation sickens me. What is the point? I mean - honestly. The "cartoon" reads:

A slim, trim waist that won't cut or bind when they bend to pick up a scrap, crawl for cover, or curl up in convulsions.

Whoever put this in the paper, I want to know.

What the hell were you thinking about? Have we reached such a heartless existence that you actually find humor in that?

You might consider the spoof to be on "Designer Jeans" and not on starving children, - if so, clothe some cartoonists or news editors in them, at least someone who have a means to defend themselves, But SPARE ME your twisted attempts at humor because it makes me lose all hope in humanity (or are cartoonists and news editors not as fun to laugh at as starving "bony little limbed" children?).

And I thought University was meant to broaden horizons and reach some state of higher intellectualism.

P. Holowaychuk
Education IV

Letters to the Editor should not be more than 250 words long. They must be signed and include faculty, year of program, and phone number. No anonymous letters will be published. All letters should be typed, or very neatly written. We reserve the right to edit for libel and length. Letters do not necessarily reflect the views of the Gateway.

CHOPPING BLOCK

by Jens Andersen

There were at least five wheelbarrow loads of letters and plenty of in-person protests over the "Foster Jean Relief" ad-parody which appeared in Tuesday's Gateway.

I would bet that more than a few of these protesters fit into both of the following categories: a) those who wear designer jeans, and b) typical liberals, shedding crocodile tears over the suffering masses in the world. In short: the same vermin that the ad skewers, so nicely.

But now my super-vision detects an even more outraged reader replying, armed with affidavits certifying that he/she only wears second-hand Salvation Army jeans, and receipts for donations to Oxfam. (Hold the press - now the Sun has phoned saying certain people from the Edmonton Vietnamese Association were also offended by the ad).

So what does one do with these honest people? What I suggest - and I can't speak for the Gateway as a whole - is to simply point out that the ad was satirical. Explain that lines like "Jean the Gooks" are not the author's sentiments, but those of the people he is satirizing: the designer jean wearing, Max Factor smearing, henna-rinsing, cool, blase, booshwah degenerates who are the pinnacle of our western civilization.

"Aha!" says the offended party, "But the ad could be misunderstood. People might read it and imagine it advocates all the things you claim it satirizes."

This is all too true, I fear, but it is not an argument for abolishing satires. Rather it is an argument for printing more satire (and other ironical - i.e. good - writing), until we cure the dreadful literal-mindedness that infects our society.

An instructive example pops to mind: in 1974 master satirist Randy Newman wrote a song called "Rednecks", sung from the redneck's point of view. It contained typical phrases (e.g. "We're keeping the niggers down") as well as giveaway lines (e.g. "We don't know our ass from a hole in the ground"). Lo and behold, the song was widely misunderstood and heatedly attacked, even by respected critic Ralph Gleason of *Rolling Stone* who (irony of ironies!) had defended Lenny Bruce against similar misinterpretations a decade earlier.

When busing riots broke out in Boston in 1975, radio stations there lifted the song from airplay for a time because... it might be misunderstood by Boston's rampaging rednecks. Here we have a classic case of "clear and present danger": the rednecks just might have adopted the song for an anthem. The temporary ban was sensible, but only because it was a rare case where misunderstanding could be extremely dangerous.

With the "Foster Jeans" ad the worst that could happen would be some campus ignoramus taking the ad seriously and sending their money to the "charity" to buy designer jeans for starving children.

SECOND WIND

Because of the number of letters in reply to Ernest Braithwaite's letter of 20 September, Gateway made some inquiries regarding Mr. Braithwaite's whereabouts and discovered that he had not after all left for P.E.I., but in fact is still with us. After some prompting he agreed to write a more lengthy espousal of his views (which of course, do not reflect the opinions of Gateway's editorial board).

G.B.

by Ernest Braithwaite III

Rarely have the contents of a letter been so justified by the responses to it. Adrian Leonard, for example, has obviously spent more time listening to his stereo than perusing history books, for otherwise it would surely have pervaded his addled brain that Elizabethan morality was depraved as can be. Elaine Palmer, on the other hand, who purports to be a rehabilitated mediocrity 2, resorts to the classic argument of those who really have no argument: doubting my existence. Since I am not of your opinion, the line runs, then you probably don't exist.

I will state bluntly that I admire the finer things of life. It has been a tradition of late to decry the virtues of good-breeding in our society. When I first arrived here, I felt that this university had fallen along the wayside. In place of respectable citizens, aspiring scholars, I found myself amidst a sea of iniquitous decadents. Even the Gateway, which has been good enough to donate me space to air my views, allows ruffraff like Mike Walker free licence to insult President Reagan, who despite being Irish, has put up a fair showing since being elected. Since then, however, I have found some people of my ilk, and to cut a long story short, I decided to stay. If something appears unsatisfactory, then why not try to change it.

One of the problems of this university, aside from its moral standards which I do not propose to discuss further, is that it is overcrowded. One reason for this is the low educational qualifications required for entry. Obviously the 23,000 who crowd lecture rooms, the libraries, eating areas (and one imagines the bars) etc., are not all of the same academic ability. Alongside the future prime ministers are those fated rather to be Amway salesmen or serving staff at McDonalds. Wouldn't it be sensible then to

have a rigorous weeding out at Grade-12 level. Why should a straight-nine student have to wait impatiently while a classmate spends an hour struggling feebly with an algebraic equation that is simply beyond him. Let us make the standards higher.

A second thing I would like to see on this campus is some sort of Military Training Club. I have already gathered enough members to form this club and its formation will be brought before the next Student Council meeting. We plan to hold regular marches across campus in full uniform, carrying both the maple leaf and union jack flags. At the first group meeting (we expect Council to agree to this) we will elect our officers. Some of the "letter writers" to the Gateway wondered about my suggestion of two years' military service. Contrary to what one reader stated, I did not suggest that this should apply to women. In fact, the proposed MTC is not open to women. In the long term, we plan to bring the pride back into Canadians. Every man should be prepared to defend his country, and every woman should be prepared to support that man in some lesser role. After all, it is only because of the sacrifices of military men of the past (of whom my grandfather, Ernest Braithwaite I was one) that we are living in a free country today.

Finally, a word to Adrian Leonard about dress sense. You are right, Adrian, you wouldn't see me dressed in jeans and a tee-shirt in a lecture room. Dress denotes character, and to be seen garbed in such a fashion would automatically categorize me as "one of the crowd." I have never seen myself as such. One occasionally has to accept the derision of the lower classes (including the Adrian Leonards) in order to maintain one's standards. My feeling is that the communists are trying by all means to subvert our society: "punks" are merely one manifestation of this. The sights in the quad in the first week of term made me realize how successful the efforts of the subversives have been. It is not a question of my being intolerant. At the quad I was reminded of the last days of the Weimar republic. And I admit, my first thought was to be the helm of a flame thrower that could rid the area of such scum, who are clear evidence of how far our society has deteriorated.

What sort of society would I create? I will write on this matter in two weeks' time.

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