

Students in fetal defence

in response to the recent article by Ms. Katy Le Rougetel entitled "Some Limitations to Abortion," we wish to challenge some of her statements. Our purpose is not to debate the morality of the issue, but rather to present the facts concerning the "safety" of abortion.

Ms. Le Rougetel makes the statement that the optimum time for performing an abortion is three months. In actuality this is considered by most obstetricians to be a late time in the pregnancy to be performing an abortion. The risk of complications occurring with an abortion in-

creases with the length of the pregnancy. The optimum time for abortion is at least before the eighth week of pregnancy. This is a relatively minor point compared with the second grossly incorrect statement made by Ms. Le Rougetel.

We quote, "It (abortion) is a safe, simple, and brief operation. It can be performed efficiently in a properly equipped doctor's office." Statistics presented to us by the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the U of A hospital show that abortion is by no means a procedure to be taken lightly. These statistics

show the incidence of various complications arising from the abortion itself, and are not due to any underlying disease in the patient.

- 27% of all patients developed a high temperature
- 17% lost over 500 cc of blood
- 11% were found post-operatively to have retained some fetal tissue.
- 9.5% needed transfusions
- 4% ended up with a lacerated cervix
- 1.2% developed a ruptured uterus
- 1% developed peritonitis

(inflammation of the lining of the abdomen)

- 1% developed deep thrombophlebitis
 - .75% developed pulmonary emboli
 - .5% developed septicemia
- Not included are:
- those who had future difficulty getting pregnant (stated by one obstetrician to be between 65-75%).
 - those who developed an incompetent cervix (i.e. the cervix loses the elasticity necessary a pregnancy to term).
 - those whose future babies were born prematurely.

— those who developed infection of the fallopian tubes, resulting in sterility.

From these statistics it is obvious that abortion is by no means the safe, simple, and brief operation described by Ms. Le Rougetel. The complications are both frequent and severe. Ironically, the title (Some Limitations to Abortion) was quite appropriate.

Kim Taylor
Drew Sommerfeldt
Medicine II

Compounded. Fractured. Confounding. Abusing. All in all — impeccably illogical! That is how I found the abortion article in the Feb. 1st Gateway.

Before I go further, however, let me concede that the article does make some valid points concerning Therapeutic Abortion Committees. Committees should be formed in hospitals upon demand from both the woman in question and her doctor. Equally, structural changes of some sort should be made in rural areas in order to

establish Therapeutic Abortion Committees. Nonetheless, I can make no further concessions.

"It is a basic human right to control one's own body," the article states. I will grant that. In no reasonable way, though, did the article go on to establish that the fetus was wholly part of the woman's body. If the article meant to do such by telling me that the fetus is no more than a cancerous-like thing "a few inches long" and "jelly-like in nature," then the article leaves me miserable. Moreover, the

argument seeks further support re: fetus survival periods. Am I to ignore the full genetic potential for human life within the "less than three month" fetus?

Allow me to extend the article's logic, by way of reversal, and comment on premature babies that survive. First, nature offers the fetus nine months of protection within the mother (and not just six months after the first three "jelly-like" ones). When the premature baby emerges into the world at five months, the logic of our argument should demand that they be treated like super-babies. I mean, they are obviously stronger, aren't they, if they manage to make do with less than half the

normal period of protection in their mother's body?

And, if the logic persists, the fetus of pre-mature birth only took two months to become human. Perhaps we are wrong in treating these super-babies as sicklings who need another four months of incubation?

Do not let me become too harsh, however, as the article did retreat from its anachronistic offerings of 1869 and its pseudo-intellectual conception question jokes. The right of the individual woman is re-established ... and thus is her right to be rid of "jelly-like cancerous" growths that somehow begin — unbeknownst and unwanted — inside her body and which can, if given the

chance, be miraculously transformed into a human being after three months of bacterial/viral/fungal/whatever existence.

When there is no longer any physical reason to be moral, such as if regeneration serums are ever discovered, society will have to set to the perky task of removing all those archaic anti-murder laws, will it not? Then again, the future society may have to alter everything because of the money involved. Its general practitioners may not have beaten the costs involved in fixing a murdered person but just think of it: Piaget would not need the last five of his six moral development stages!

Enough! I have vented my spleen and forgive me for being spiteful. But wherever we stand, as a society, on the question of abortion, let us never allow ourselves to sink so low as to make decisions about the value of human life from an economic standpoint.

Keith Miller
Arts 3

Disco sucks

Hot line, hot line, don't you think this is a hot line? Music fans of the world unite; you have nothing to lose but the insanity that hounds you in every cabaret and bar in this city. I feel surrounded by the ever increasing ranks of the Disco Dazed. Am I programmed to lose my last vestige of individuality and become another sheep in Black Sheep's clothing?

My grandfather the other day asked me "What are these young whipper snappers doing?" Don't they know that if they keep this up they'll go blind and their heads will cave in! Reflecting on this I found very little of redeeming value in this crasly (sic) marketed ad. It seems sad to me that so many of us have turned to automation instead of imagination in our musical tastes. I am horrified by people that find

aesthetic value in songs such as "Fly Robin Fly" and "Disco Duck" both of which were actually written as jokes and amazed their creators by their monumental successes. I guess there really is one born every minute.

Some of the Fallout from this trend seems to be a subtle change in taste, (sic) some people seem to equate taste with sleaze, I equate sleaze with sluts. I am almost impressed by Disco Queens and their snobbish plasticity and I am comforted by the positive impression they will make on Mom.

In closing I would like to say, dear listeners, there is more to music than meets the ears.

Greg Gushway
Sc. 5
Bernie Romanycia
Comm. 4

Katy Le Rougetel's conclusion to the issue of abortion (Gateway, Tues. Feb. 1) is wrong. It is based on two popular fallacies.

The first is of the form: "as there is no cut and dried answer, every answer is right." Those issues involving our humanity most profoundly are never "cut and dried" like so many figures on a chart. This is to reduce humanity to statistics, and, if the logic is honestly pursued, to the worst kind of populism from which totalitarianism derives.

The second fallacy is of the form: "one's absolute control over one's own body is a democratic right." (corollary: restriction of such control is "flagrantly sexist.") This is a perversion of liberal dogma. It is a

fact of society that such control must be restricted: one's body is legally restricted from injection of certain drugs, from driving while drunk, copulating on the sidewalk, or killing another's "body." And it is a fact of nature that one's body decays, that some bodies are better than others, that women, not men, bear children. Freedom within such restrictions is possible; the desire for freedom without any such restrictions is a peculiarly modern form of madness, madness that threatens not only the present capitalist system which Ms. Le Rougetel's party is determined to destroy, but the possibility of human freedom anywhere.

John Thompson
Grad Studies

A
meeting of the
Publications Board
will be held
Thursday, Feb. 10
Room 282, SUB
at 3 p.m.



THE WAY
I SEE IT

FRANK MUTTON

Last week the Faculty of Engineering invited me to attend their festivities over on campus. It seems that for one week out of every year they run around guzzling beer and chasing underage girls, and they asked me to officiate at their First Annual Bottle Swallowing Competition.

The idea of the contest is to see which first year engineer can swallow the greatest number of empty beer bottles before passing out, and this year's trophy went to Bud Mugberger, who successfully downed a half-case of Molson's Canadian.

Bud attributes his win to the removal of the caps before swallowing. He is recovering nicely, although doctors say that after passing that much glass he'll never flatulate properly again.

Another popular event at the Uni last week was the 28th Annual Med Show, which I had the honour of attending with Dean and Mrs. Mortis.

The highlight of the evening was the traditional appearance of the Cretin Choir, which is composed of failed second years and overworked interns. They are released each year from Alberta Hospital for the three shows.

I was invited to join this year's group in their hit number

Hemorrhoids, but had to decline when the Preparation H did the trick.

Bob McCord and Chuck Chandler, CHED's resident answer to a herd of elephants, will be opening their new Disco Theatre in the old Citadel this week, but there are a few problems to be straightened out first. Before they open the doors to 14 year old girls and young men dressed like Carmen Miranda, they have to find a freezer large enough to hold all that Happy Pop and Palm Dairy Walnut Ripple Ice Cream.

The club will of course cater to the same mature young clientele that buy GWG Scrubies and phone Chuck every morning to hear Disco Duck.

The British Columbia Tuna Canners Association, alarmed at recent ecological concern over the slaughter of porpoises caught in tuna nets off the West coast, has announced an advertising campaign designed to reduce these fears.

Their new slogan is No Charge for the Extra Meat, the idea being that all those dolphins and porpoises accidentally chopped up and canned will add a delightful new flavour to your salads and sandwiches.

They even theorize that the animal's high intelligence may rub off on that kid with the C- in New Math, although this is pure speculation since the animals refuse to integrate functions.

So remember to pick up a can of Starkist or Chicken of the Sea next time you're fighting the crowds in Woodward's — Flipper will have died in vain if you don't.

The Quebec National Assembly has passed a bill that will set fines of up to \$5,000 for any old men who lie down in front of cars driven by Rene Levesque.

Mr. Levesque is incensed at the heavy damage his Ford Capri suffered after hitting a 62-year-old man and dragging him 130 feet. He feels that there should be additional fines levied against people who scare the hell out of him at 4:00 A.M.

The funeral for the father of Robert Bourassa will be held as soon as Mr. Bourassa can be located. He is believed to be vacationing at the bottom of the St. Lawrence.

Isn't it strange that after 25 years of rule, the Queen of England still looks so young? Art Evans tells me they shellac her twice a year, but I find that a little hard to believe — she'd stick to the throne if that were the case.