

opinions

American sting: numbing us to oblivion

"More bombs fall", ho-hummed the headline on Tuesday's *Chronicle-Herald*. I flipped the page, looking for "Yet another village massacred" and "Ten thousand more starve".

Was it only two years ago that I and my friends thought we felt tangible pain, when men who claimed to be our leaders filled our TV screens with flame and screaming?

But violence becomes boring so easily. Occasionally, large groups of people get angry enough to mobilise; most of the time it slides through our lives somewhere between our morning coffee and the funnies.

Apathy.

Last week, I listened to a grey-suited man who's been Canadian Ambassador to Everywhere, talking in the Dal SUB about Canada's partnership with Uncle Sam in "moral leadership" of "the Free World". A professor asked him about our government's policy towards Cuba, where people are going hungry and industry is crumbling under the choking strain of a three-decade-old American embargo in which Canada collaborates. The professor suggested it might be time for an imaginative second look at a policy of waiting for



"Go out there and spread the seed of democracy... and if you run into resistance use your Bank Americard."

thirty years for a government to fall.

The grey-suited man thought this was a funny joke. "But if we keep it up just a little longer..." he grinned through his glimmering teeth.

Cruel, naked apathy.

Most foreign policy gets decided by sheer inertia. So the U.S. bombs Iraq — three times, at least so far — because that was what they did last time the problem cropped up. The result on that occasion was less peace in the region, not more — for surely

hunger, disease and economic chaos are not peace. But no matter. Hammering away under the same old illusions disoblige one to reconsider the

consequences of conventional wisdom, and the effects on human beings of violence as an instrument of state policy.

Ryan Stanley

Life, liberty and sexuality

I have been thinking a lot lately about the categoricals that are often presented to us when it comes to the notion of sexuality, limiting our views into very limited and absolute terrains. Other than for the purposes of oppression through identification, I do not see any other reason for the existence of the sexual categories of homosexual, heterosexual, or bisexual.

I then began to consider and deconstruct these categoricals and ultimately I do not believe that sexuality can be compartmentalized into isolated pockets for scrutiny and observation. It does not seem conducive to the kind of ideas surrounding sexuality that provide any insight or increase awareness.

In parallel with these sorts of ideas, evolved the idea of origins. How is it that sexuality is determined? Is it biologically determined, socially constructed, or some combination of these, and what role does the political take in all of this? Something did seem incomplete. Something was not quite right.

The queer population seems to cling to Essentialist arguments: Sexual orientation is biologically

determined. Others would have you believe that it is socially constructed and the result of environment (whether a reaction for or against one's environment). Along with Social Constructionism seems to be the misinterpretation that the individual has some sort of control.

What seems to be the basis for this distinction and separation? It seems to rely on the distinction between sexual orientation and sexual preference. The queer population assumes that it has no active role or choice when it comes to orientation. Others seem to think that it is a preference not simply an orientation.

Well, let us assume that the individual does take an active role and that a choice is made. Although it seems outrageous. Why would anyone choose a life of ridicule, alienation, isolation, marginalization, etc. That aside, let us give the right wing what they want, assume it is a choice. Now, something interesting comes to mind. We are condemned if this is something we choose. Well, why is it that in a "democracy" (I use the word very lightly) that we do not

respect the choices of people when it comes to sexuality? It is, obviously, a very personal decision. In this society of "individualism" (I also use this word very lightly) are we not to uphold and respect the desires and choices of other people in the name of freedom, democracy and equality? Do we not allow people their own choice religion, of professions, of education etc.? Do we then not necessarily require a respect for choice of sexual orientation. Is it not in fact necessary if we are to believe what we have been told about democracy stands for: freedom, liberty, choice etc.

So even given that sexual orientation has a decisive character, are we to judge and condemn those who's sexuality does not follow the prescriptive lines of society and patriarchal capitalism. If those who believe so strongly in our country as a democracy wish to truly uphold what they believe they should perhaps reassess their notions of sexuality and start to nurture and environment which truly reflects the spirit of equality.

Anthony Roberts

BGLAD!

letters

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a deal, scoffing at my first estimate of \$12.95 (quoted by another salesperson) and with a hearty, "I can do better for you than that," offered me the awesome price of \$8.95 a month.

Little did I know that I did not qualify for this deal. As a student Granada has designed a special package for me which gives me a flat-rate of \$19.95/month. I (and you) have no choice in this matter and are discriminated against royally.

Curiously, I asked the nice Granada man what logic was behind their policy.

Firstly, he told me it was because students don't have an income. But of course, those without an income should pay \$19.95 while those with money pay \$8.95.

Secondly, I was told that the \$8.95 rate is for those who can sign a contract, and to sign a contract you must have an income. When I reminded the man that I once signed a Granada contract without any income, he was quick to retract his last point with a meek, "Oh yeah".

Lastly, the friendly service person explained that the \$19.95 rate allows for a four-month contract and that's

what most students want anyways. Well I am a student and I want a twelve-month rental at \$8.95. Although I don't have a job, I have an excellent credit rating and a landlord who can verify my responsibility. Yet all of this doesn't matter to them or explain why one sector of society has to pay significantly more than another for the same product.

Let Granada know that you refuse to accept their discrimination and attempts to rip you off. Stand up for your rights. Would Ed Asner really approve of this?!

Suzy Kovinsky

Riksters

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