

BLOOD AND THUNDER

Letters to the editor reflect the views of our readers and not necessarily those of the Brunswickan. Letters may be sent to Rm. 35 in the Student Union Building. Deadline: 1 pm on Tuesday. Usual maximum length: 300 words. Please include name, student number and phone number

Myth and fact

Dear Editor,

As the referendum approaches, it has become apparent that the myths concerning the Charlottetown Accord greatly outnumber the facts found in the Consensus Report agreed upon on August 28, 1992. Fortunately, rational thought and simply reading the facts can shatter these myths. Below are just a few examples:

Myth: this deal creates a decentralized nation and gives too much power to Quebec. **Fact:** The Charlottetown Accord seeks to reduce overlap between the two levels of government (which often costs the taxpayer by allowing all provinces to control the areas of forestry, mining, tourism, housing, recreation and municipal affairs. To ensure that federal presence is maintained, Regional Development will be enshrined under the Charlottetown Accord so that the federal government will remain committed to the equalization of all provinces.

Myth: NAC is against the deal. That means this deal is bad for women. **Fact:** The Canada Clause of the Charlottetown Accord (section g) states that "Canadians are committed to the equality of female and male persons."

The Facts are that if Canadians believe in this, they will elect governments who believe in this and who can ensure that this principle remains a value enjoyed by all Canadians. Enough said.

Myth: By voting for this accord, we are voting for Brian Mulroney.

Fact: This referendum is in no way a popularity contest of our political leaders. It is about the Charlottetown accord—an accord that aims to reform our national institutions, produce an equal senate and affirm the equality of all provinces (section h, The Canada Clause).

The truth is, if Homer Simpson had written this deal, it would still be a good deal for Canada. Homer Simpson, however, did not write the accord but if he were a Canadian citizen he'd have the opportunity to vote for it.

In conclusion, I encourage all Canadians to read the Consensus Report on the Constitution (the unbiased text of the Charlottetown Accord) and I hope that all of us will be able to make the rational choice when we vote on October 26th. As the people of a nation evolve, so should their constitution. It is for this reason that the BNA act formed the Dominion of Canada, it is for this reason that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms was added in 1982 and it is for this reason that the Charlottetown Accord should be passed.

Kurt Peacock

Aquinian "clean up" necessary

Dear Editor,

I can recall feeling pleased last semester and also appreciative that there seemed to be some people at the Aquinian who were making great efforts at improving that newspaper, by presenting well researched articles and the results of surveys in lucid and interesting ways and so on. This came after my initial impression that the paper was similar to juvenile publications that I had been exposed to. However, I subsequently saw the changes, which is why I am really disgusted with the issues so far this semester.

Some of the material which I found objectionable are: Sexist ads and language which is derogatory to women and idiotic pictures on the front page with equally stupid headlines (story lines really insulting the intelligence of a university community). I would not like to think that the Aquinian has reverted to "normal" but rather that this is a lapse. The present editorial board which is headed by Dale Geddes would do well to examine its policies and embark on a "clean up campaign". I'm sure I don't have to conduct a survey to prove that there are many other people with a similar view.

A concerned STU student
V. Bowlin

PS for those who might be wondering why this letter was directed to the Brunswickan rather than to the Aquinian, it's simply because I don't want it to be "edited to death" as has happened in the past.

Aquinian apology a farce

Dear Editor,

I am a fourth year St. Thomas University student. To my shame, I am writing to YOU rather than to the editor of the Aquinian because of several reasons:

1. I am a woman, and the Aquinian is ruled by a sexist clique of 3 or 4 males who hold women up to open scorn in that "newspaper". To give them my name, address and telephone number (as directed by the editor) would be stupid and dangerous. I feel threatened by the people who edit our (or no longer our) newspaper—is that shameful or what??? May I at this point express my admiration for Kelly MacGowan, Valerie Kilfoil and Alyson Vaughn for exposing the filth that contaminates the Aquinian.

2. The "apology" printed in the last issue of the Aquinian is a farce—it is an insult to all women on campus and students, because it insults our intelligence. The thing is so painfully insincere that no-one can be fooled by it. Also, it seems as if Kelly MacGowan and Alyson Vaughn are apologizing for the sexual harassment that they exposed. The apology should be made by those who placed the sexist ad. They should have the courage to own up for their crime against the women of STU and UNB. Incidentally, the English in which the apology is written is so poor as to be unintelligible. The continued sexism of Dale Geddes and Company is glaring, the apology insincere.

Since the editor of the Aquinian lacks integrity, I write to you.

3. I am a student at STU and criticism of Geddes and Co. can (at Best) be met with "editing" or verbal attacks—one step away from what is happening to many women on university campuses. I'd like to call attention to the difference between Kelly MacGowan's letter in the *Brunswickan* and her chopped letter in the *Aquinian*. If a professor can be subjected to such a vicious personal attack, what can a vulnerable student expect? Moreover, the professor who was attacked by Geddes is Dr. Daizal Samad—he taught me two courses and is well known at STU to be one of the best (if not the best) prof around. It would be hard to find anyone more dedicated to his job or more caring about students or fairer in his assessment of things and people.

I am happy that Dr. Samad has met this foul attack with grace and dignified silence. I am ashamed that the administration is quiet and that his colleagues are dumb (on both counts—although hats off to Larry Batt!). No-one at STU should allow the best among them to be attacked in this way. Geddes reference to Dr. Samad's brush with death horrifies me. No-one should be victimized in this manner!!

It is clear that Geddes and Company are without conscience, without integrity and honesty. I call on all women of STU and UNB to demand his resignation. I call on all students (male and female) to write to the *Brunswickan* objecting to the use of what should be their newspaper by a group of boys to write substandard, foul, insulting and sexist things to be thrown in our faces. If Geddes and Co. are guilty of sexual harassment they should be EXPELLED from STU!!!!

I hope the STU student union, the administration and the faculty of STU can find the courage to do something. You MUST stop this nonsense NOW!!!!

I hope the *Brunswickan* can investigate this mess. Thank you for your space and your kindness.

Distressed Female STU student

P.S. I'm sure you will understand my request to have my letter appear unsigned. The reasons are obvious.

Erroneous reporting in CHNB story

Letter to the Editor:

I feel it necessary to clarify some of the erroneous reporting done by Jonathan Stone on last week's front page story "CHNA Supports censoring students".

Firstly, in my phone conversation with Mr. Stone, never did I state that the College Hill Neighborhood Association is "... trying to persuade the administration to record this information on students' academic transcripts". I did tell him where the notion for censoring student's misbehavior originated—in a Daily Gleaner article by Steven Benteau dated September 25th, in a statement by Inspector Sheldon Geldard of the Fredericton City Police. I explained to him that we as an association were intrigued with the idea and saw it as meriting further consideration.

It is not surprising that Eric Garland, Associate Vice-President of Administration, knew little of the idea; I told Mr. Stone that our last meeting with university officials had been last Spring. The CHNA met with the university several times last year and indeed the university did not see student behavior off campus as their concern. However, not once was the idea of censoring discussed, as this is a new concept to me.

Mr. Stone neglected to mention some of the examples of "misbehavior" that I gave him—smashed windows, removing sewer covers and disturbing the peace late at night, to name a few. Perhaps he sees these as the actions of "naughty students". To those of us who are victims of these "pranks" we see them as violations of the law and worthy of retribution.

Lastly, I would like to mention that if I were a student reading Mr. Stone's article I would feel that the CHNA was just another whining group out to get students. This is certainly not our intent, we are trying to work with all members of our community to improve our neighborhood. A good neighborhood is to everyone's benefit.

Dawn DeCoursey
Secretary/Treasurer
College Hill Neighborhood Association

Navigators' results misleading

Letter to the Editor:

I'd like to comment on the survey that was done by the navigators during orientation week. First of all because the survey was done during orientation week, the bulk of those surveyed are likely to be Freshman who are for the first time escaping the influence of family and church and haven't yet critically examined the faith which they were born into. This observation is reflected in the 28% who thought God was important

but knew little about him/her. How does something that you know little about become important to you? Could it be because your parents told you it was important and you never thought it necessary to doubt them. I suspect that if the survey was done among 4th year students the results would be much different.

I was surprised to read that 1/3 of the students believe in the literal truth of the Bible. Do 1/3 really believe that a significant proportion of people when they die will face an eternity in a fiery (sic) Hell where there will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. Does this group really believe that woman was made from a rib of Adam and that she is to obey her husband at all times and bring forth children in sorrow. Do they really believe that Noah managed to get millions of species of animals into that little arc. I think the biology students would have a problem with that one.

Finally I'd like to comment on that misleading poll result that says 36% of students do not go to church. This would seem to indicate that 64% of students do go to church. The question should have asked whether or not one attends church regularly because a lot of people like myself attend church a couple of times a year for weddings or funerals, but are in no way religious and shouldn't be represented as church goers in their statistics.

Patricia Poirier

A call for Zero Tolerance

Dear Editor,

We are now into the month of October and thus far, the Brunswickan has published 4 issues. To my utter dismay, I have yet to see a response, not even a letter to the editor, to your official "Apology" to Esam Hussein, Professor of Mechanical Engineering at U.N.B. who was found guilty in Provincial Court last March of assaulting his wife. The apology appeared in your first issue, on September 18, 1992. Let me state categorically that I am appalled the Brunswickan apologized to a convicted wife abuser because he was worried that the contents of the article would ruin his reputation on campus and in the community! He should have thought of that before he assaulted his wife!

In order to refresh the memories of those who have conveniently forgotten why Prof. Hussein was brought before a Provincial Court Judge last March, and for those readers who know nothing about the case, I'd like to remind you—just in case you were wondering. The fact is that last March, Prof. Hussein was found guilty in Provincial Court of assaulting his wife. Now, that is despicable enough behavior coming from a so-called upstanding member of our community (a great role model he is for Engineering Students and UNB students in general!) but what makes the whole situation even more sickening is that Prof. Hussein had the gall to threaten to sue the Brunswickan after the *Brunswickan* reported the case.

One would think that someone like him would have kept his mouth shut, but, oh no, not him! I agree that facts must not be mixed

with fiction but a lawsuit? Don't you realize you just made the situation worse and are inviting letters like this one from people who are fed up with the likes of you?

What about the rights of a woman not to be assaulted by the man she married? What about the rights of a child not to witness wife abuse? What about the right of students to be taught by someone that they can respect, and who doesn't have the very dark stain of wife abuse upon him? What about the University of New Brunswick's so-called commitment to eradicating violence against women with its new chair on family violence?

Where are the voices of rage? Where are the women and men who claim to speak out against violence against women? What about other professors at other universities who beat their wives, go to court, are found guilty and then return to the cocoon of UNB and STU and keep teaching as though nothing had happened? And don't be fooled, there is at least one more that I know of who was convicted, fined and ordered to take counselling on family violence. I know because I went to the courtroom myself and held the hand of his weeping wife while the creep's lawyer spouted off all the degrees he possessed and named all the lofty commitments which this so-called upstanding member of our university community belonged to! I know of another whose wife ended up in Transition house only this past summer! Only the Lord knows how many other abusers are hiding in the closet with the rest of their jingly-jangly skeletons.

I'd like to see something done about these so-called upstanding members of the University Community. I'd like to see the university set an example for the rest of society and make it part of their collective agreement that they will accept nothing less than Zero Tolerance when it comes to their staff and wife assault. A person who is convicted of wife assault should not be allowed to continue teaching at the University. The details can be worked out, but the bottom line is Zero Tolerance. Drastic measures, one might say, but as the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women noted in their interim report released last month:

"There is much more violence committed against women across this country than anyone knows or is willing to admit to. Only when priorities are rearranged and the political will is found to adopt a policy of zero tolerance for violence against women—will institutions, health and justice systems provide service to women survivors that is adequate, appropriate and effective... The challenge ahead is to help them (institutions, health and justice systems) reach an understanding of the nature of the problems the violence produces and to impress upon them the urgency of addressing these problems with the most comprehensive solutions possible."

I invite suggestions on the idea of Zero Tolerance, as well as comments on the contents of this letter which I am sure will arouse some controversy in the university community. Then again, after viewing the response thus far to the "apology", maybe we won't hear a damn thing. A response, or lack thereof, will be in itself, testimony to the commitment this university community and our society has to eradicating violence against women.

Melynda Jarratt, UNB '87
Former Brunswickan News Editor

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