

Commentary

Student elections aren't enough to stir campus

by Heather Fraser

Tim Hill and Susan McIntyre were around the residences the other day, knocking on doors and asking for support. I, unlike the extremely unfair editorial in the Gazette (Feb. 10, 1983), do not support the pair, so I asked no questions. It occurred to me sometime afterward, though, that there was one question I should have asked then, and in the presidential forum the previous day: "Is this all we're going to see of you?"

Elections are a time of mixed hope in this cynical democracy we've built around ourselves, hope tempered by the knowledge that nothing will change. Each election is a "new chance" to try to

overcome all the apathy and the (dare I say) "Evil-doing" of the previous government. We can see this in politics by the tendency of an electorate to vote out the incumbent government during hard times, sometimes vacillating between two parties or candidates, hoping against hope that things will change, and they, of course, don't. Is it any wonder that so many people don't even bother to vote anymore?

Student elections, as a good friend of mine put it, are even more useless than federal elections, because the amount of importance over the amount of fuss put into it is even less. I tend to agree, and I have no illusions about the great promises that this year's candidates

are putting forth. Things will still go on the way they always have, because for things to get better, we need a better system, and I doubt there is one. In the running of government, I think, one pair is as good as the other.

I remember the candidates coming around to the residences last year, about this time, and giving all sorts of marvellous promises, about bringing the campus together, promoting safety, improving communication. That was pretty well the last I saw of any of them, including the great radical himself, Mr. Rans, who I haven't seen doing a great deal that looks very radical to me. I don't know, maybe I'm just unobservant, or uninformed, but then again, at risk

of upsetting some of my more politically minded friends, I'm just one of the "rabble" out here, the kind who are never told anything, and I haven't seen very much activity around the SUB at all this year, except for impeachments and the debate about CFS, which, frankly, I don't give a damn about, and I doubt too many people around the campus do. Future letters can correct me if I'm wrong. I've seen virtually nothing of the people that make up the Student Union, and the little blurbs in the Dal Dispatches are so boring this year they're hardly worth reading. This is to say, folks, I agree with Ken Burke, writing about the lacklustre response to Carnival Week (Feb. 10, 1983). This university is in a rut. Put even more

bluntly, it's boring around here, and when things are boring nobody really wants to participate.

To get to the point of this letter, which is really addressed to the winning participants of the 1983 version of the Student Council Elections, yes, I'm sure that you will work hard in your chosen position. But what this place really needs is a little bit of the personal touch. Do something different. Organize something outrageous. Eat in the Sherriff Hall cafeteria for a change. Write articles for the Gazette (preferably something to let us rabble know what's going on around this place). I have a little bit of hope for the coming year, tempered with a whole lot of cynicism, and I'm just waiting to be proven wrong.

Letters

More from gentlemen (sic)

To the Editor:

Unfortunately our first warning went unheeded. Of course I am referring (sic) to the insecant (sic) attacks on Pay T.V.

First, I must address one letter writer who fears an increase in violent assaults on women on campus as a result of Pay T.V. This is entirely unfounded: a) because students generally can't afford to pay for the new service; b) it probably won't be very stimulating anyway; c) ANY SICK LITTLE BOY WHO GETS HIS JOLLIES HURTING OTHER PEOPLE will undoubtedly be spending his time and money on the more trashy bent of magazine and porn available; d) there has been no statistical evidence to support a correlation between visual stimulation and sexual assault.

Secondly there is the matter of Mr. Andrew Ager. This misguided altruist has entirely missed the point... Women are funny! If we can't laugh at funny things what else is there. Sadly, from your letter I must deduce that you must have suffered a sombre, sickly, childhood, with an overbearing mother and a father with no sense of humour. I am sorry, but apparently your bleeding heart, quasi-Christian, liberal, limp wristed attitude is silly and as for your brotherly love I don't want it. Open your eyes bucko it doesn't exist. You certainly must live in your own little utopia and wear rose-coloured glasses. Tis more the pity.

Regardless however back to the issue. Because of the continued outcry of the funnier sex henceforth these things shall pass.

(1) No women (except for nice girls) shall have television privileges from 12 noon to 12 p.m.

(2) No woman (except jiggle TV stars) shall earn more than \$2.00 per hour.

Any women failing to comply shall be forced to wear ugly baggy clothes and do with deodorant.

I hope this settles the matter.

Thank you
B. Harry Dickie
Secretary of good ideas
The Keep Women in her Place
Society for Intellectual Gentlemen

Pay-TV protest a waste

To the Editor:

My writing this letter is a direct result of being bombarded every day for the past several weeks by news stories all about "sex on pay-TV" and protests against the "Playboy Channel." I hope that no woman believes that I'm betraying our sex when I say that I think those women who protest porno-

graphy on pay-TV are wasting their time. I certainly don't approve of pornography and I don't like pornography — in fact, I pity those men and women who are so desperate and lonely that they need erotic pictures and films to give them their kicks in life. Whoever coined the term "adult entertainment" must have been playing a joke on society — giggling over kinky magazines and movies is for adolescents who don't know better.

But disapproving of and disliking "erotica" and wanting to ban it are two different issues. With the former, we merely express our own personal, good taste; with the latter we try to impose our preferences on other individuals. Censorship is always a controversial question.

I'm not trying to say that those of us with discretionary tastes and mature ideas should turn a blind eye to that portion of the public which, perhaps with childlike naïveté, seems to enjoy sex vicariously. What we should try to understand is that pornography is not so much a disease as it is a symptom. And, therefore, treating the symptom is a waste of time if we ignore the underlying causes.

Fundamental to this is the lack of love and respect for our fellow human beings and ourselves that pornography exemplifies. If we respect other people, how can we exploit their weaknesses or their ignorance? If we love humanity, how can we stand by and watch it suffer pain and anguish? How can we love and respect those with whom we share a common beginning, yet enjoy the sight of their abuse and degradation? Will we disregard the value of our own existence if we submit to the same abuse and degradation? Where is the sense of human kinship, MY NEIGHBOUR? Yet, this is what happens daily in the pornographic industry.

The basic credo must be "You must love our neighbour as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18c; Matthew 22:39). Only when we live according to this axiom are we dealing with the fundamental causes of pornography, instead of just trying to eliminate the symptoms.

Vivre Sandstrom

Engineers rude hosts

To the Editor:

I would like to comment upon the hospitality shown to the engineers from UNB who were in town on the weekend of the 22nd. Or maybe I should say, lack of hospitality. I agree that it was very nice having a pub night for them, but wouldn't it have been a bit friendlier if a few Dalhousie engineers had shown up? To be fair, maybe there were ten or eleven Dal representatives in attendance. In talking with several of our NB neighbours, I found that Halifax made a terrific impression on them: the bars, the great malls, great places to eat, and the downright rudeness they were subject to from our so superior university. They were just a bunch of kids like us, in a strange place, living it up for a few days. Being called a

bunch of crazy New Brunswickers can sort of put a damper on the fun. I was almost ashamed to say I went to school here. Of course, the UNBers didn't want to complain, but I do. How can we possibly expect respect from other universities if we don't show some ourselves.

Joyce McGinnis

Radicals are't cowards

To the Editor:

On reading Glen Johnson's short tirade "On Disarmament and Geoffrey Martin" (Gazette, Feb. 3), I was compelled to explain my "cowardice" and lack of faith in "liberal democratic" institutions. Imagine, not having faith in an actor (bad one)-cum-politician, a Brylcreamed California cowboy with a projected 565 million dollar deficit and an administration composed of fanatically Machiavellian millionaires; a "democratic" institution where the "representatives" are bought by Pac-lobbyists such as the National Rifle Assoc. and Lockheed Systems Inc. I'm sure I will be labelled a typical anarcho-syndicalist heretic by Mr. Johnson, but I believe I shall recover.

What he doesn't seem to realize is that the KGB's promotion of the Disarmament movement does not necessarily mean that disarmament is contrary to Western interests. Not only is the inconceivable sum of 1 trillion dollars for defense absurdly wasteful, but nuclear arsenals provide security by holding the nation's peoples as diplomatic hostages. What right do the Americans and Soviets have to interfere in my life because they can't agree on who should control the means of production? I can't recall having done either state any harm though perhaps in my cowardice I have forgotten. Realize too Mr. Johnson that those involved in the Disarmament movement are not motivated by the promise of the International Government of the Proletariat, but by the base and selfish instinct of self-preservation.

Certainly the hysterical climax in the letter was the statement that Soviet occupation is a fate worse than death; this undoubtedly being the case we can look forward to the Eastern Bloc all joining hands and committing mass suicide in the near future. Maybe I'm simply too cowardly to prefer a noble "Iwo Jima" style of death, for I would rather be a live but oppressed serf than a dead Errol Flynn. John Wayne and the rest of Mr. Johnson's heroes would no doubt scorn this attitude.

In conclusion, I hope that Mr. Johnson soon learns that simply because people don't subscribe to the Joe McCarthy school of political philosophy, and instead have the "true grit" to question the morality of their own society, does not mean that they are "radical leftists". Perhaps if he had the guts to come out from underneath his neo-conservative umbrella he would not be so foolish as to believe all that he's told to.

Yours,

Alistair Highet

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