

the Gateway

EDITORIAL

Burn-out. It can happen to anybody. It's got me. Thus, a guest editorial from the University of Toronto Student newspaper, the Varsity.

TechnoDeath Tinkertoys

You know, people are kind of funny. Why, this very evening Bill and the boys will get together at The Morissey and go into hysterics over the calisthenics of a little coloured blip on a video game. Tap them on the shoulder and mention that if some drowsy Russian or American military personnel were to inadvertently flick the wrong switch on a missile control panel, we'd all end up looking like a package of pork rinds in mere seconds. Biff and Co. will likely tell you to take a hike. Hell, they've got a quarter at stake.

The arms race has once again become a focus of attention, largely because of an increasingly uneasy world situation. The logarithmic increase in the numbers of berserk dictators and military states overseas, and reactionary politicians on these fair shores has meant a field day for arms manufacturers. Trident submarines (chock full to burstin with nuke nyuks) and cruise missiles (toting atomic warheads and accurate enough to pick off the loose change in your pockets) are just two of the Grim Reaping gizmos being churned out at a frantic pace.

At the same time, good ol' fashioned atomic bombs and other techno-death tinkertoys are being snapped up by key countries like South Africa, Israel, and India, as well as by a host of unstable banana republics whose names no one can pronounce. While we vent our collective spleen yelling at bogeymen, the Third World stew, waiting for the chance to carve us up for breakfast since we haven't yet learned to share the goodies.

Canadians in particular should take more than just a passing interest in the arms race. After all, our country sits smack under Russian American missile lines. So if those two nations opt for an atomic slugfest, Canada's going to be blocking the punches.

Given this, it's ironic that various Canadian companies are major arms producers: Hawker-Siddeley manufactures launchers for the Lance missiles which deliver the neutron bomb; Vickers churns out housings for atomic subs; Litton Industries coughs up guidance systems for cruise missiles. Plus, Canada is a member of NATO and NORAD, two organizations whose *raison d'etre* is the assumption that the arms race can't be avoided.

Not surprisingly, there's a growing opposition to such nuclear insanity. And while you might think that the disarmament movement is led by radical crazies, the plain truth is that it includes grannies and priests, teachers and tuckdrivers, and a host of other people who have realized that being toasted up in the invisible oven of the neutron bomb is not a patriotic duty.

But hey, don't you worry about any of this when you're playing Galaxian. It's a lot more important to blast those aliens to kingdom come with your photon torpedo. Just try to remember, between intergalactic battles, that the generals of this world are playing the same game on a much larger scale, and you're on the board, Bunky.

A note on uses of the press Lewis H. Lapham

"If the writing of history resembles architecture, journalism bears comparison to a tent show. The impressarios of the press drag into their tents whatever freak and wonders might astonish a crowd; the next day they move their exhibit to another edition instead of to another town four miles further west. Their subject matter is the flux of human affairs, and they acheive their most spectacular effects by reason of their artlessness and lack of sentiment."

P.M.

You see, we go to the University Bookstore and buy all the textbooks, then we scalp them back to the students. We'll clear the debt in no time.



SECOND WIND

Second Wind is an opinion column for Gateway staff.

by M. W. Ekelund

Yes, Virginia, there is humor in the Gateway. It may not be very professional, or even very good, but it is perfectly legitimate. We have been brought to task for portraying Eddie the Asthmatic Comedian as "an object of comic interest" and portraying "reckless driving (as) socially acceptable" in Psuedohumans and Pterodactyls. So it goes.

To quote (at length) from the *New Columbia Dictionary*: "Black humor, in literature, drama, and film, grotesque or morbid humour (sic) used to express the absurdity, insensitivity, paradox and cruelty of the modern world. Ordinary characters or situations are usually exaggerated far beyond the limits of normal satire or irony. For example, Stanley Kubrick's film *Dr. Strangelove* (1963) is a terrifying comic treatment of the circumstances surrounding an accidental dropping of an atom bomb, while Jules Feiffer's comedy *Little Murders* (1965) is a delineation of the horrors of modern urban life, focusing particularly on random assassinations. The novels of such writers as Kurt Vonnegut, Thomas Pynchon, John Barth, Joseph Heller, and Philip Roth contain elements of black humor (sic)."

The writers of these two comic strips may not have the ability or deftness to illustrate with the brilliance of Vonnegut the absurdities of our society masquerading as normality, they are looking at them. I find the driving one funny, myself, and I think it is because I can see the truth that is being brought to light: that once we isolate ourselves in these steel cocoons we feel free to transfer our frustration into aggression — maybe because we can hide under the guise of some anonymous asshole. The cartoon also shows the

innocent people involved. I think the cartoon has said something similar to what our friend in psychology is concerned with, although he or she sees only the opposite. And, this cartoon has managed to make it's point without the moralistic lecturing quality that our recent full-page *propaganda disguised as cartoon* piece on torture. (I'm just mad it neglected to mention some of the most feared and best equipped - but more sophisticated - torture organizations such as the dreaded Hungarian Secret Police hi-ho).

Unfortunately, the humor in a cartoon tends to evaporate once you try to analyze it, so I will put the rest of my argument in the form of examples of some of my favorite situations.

How about a scientist for the National Research Council who has the job of developing an edible food out of shit, or a gigantic alien who saves lives by pissing on a fire, and then is upset that the people he saved aren't very grateful. Or a modest proposal that instead of sending food to the next famine-ridden African country we print up a number of brochures on recipes for Black Babies — thereby solving both the famine and the population problem. (I admit to editorial changes in the century and specifics of these examples).

So, I disagree with our friend from psychology. There is more to life, and art, than surface appearances (take that, Andersen) and humor of a view that stretches our imagination, and taste, to their limits, is possibly a help in understanding this complex world. Remember, Ted Kennedy would be President today if he had driven a Volkswagen.

At the very least it's a legitimate form of humor. Unless you're an Engineer.
Hoo Hah.

Media Productions was quiet until the deathly scream of Mike Ekelund awoke everyone from their stupor. Everyone except for the dead body lying in the hall. I and J Leventhal eyed each other suspiciously as a silence filled the room. Finally the great detective and amateur sleuth Micheal Skeet spoke up to say he would take the case. His trusty companion and sole confidant, Mary Anne Nielson, examined the body. She shuddered as she told everyone it was Jordan Peterson. Immediately Garnet DuGray and Martin Beales broke into a sweat. But this did not fool our protagonist. No, he scanned the room and made Allison Annesley, Dianna Taschuk, and her friend (whom we ave forgotten by accident) and Soledad Rosas feel uncomfortable. But the detective's unscrupulous leer fell on the evening's culprit. Not being able to face justice, Kent Blinston attempted suicide.

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