

Blood & Thunder ... continued

Yaqzan 14 cont.

of people who truly believe this tripe." But then I thought about his statements a little more.

They are hateful. They are acidic. What is worse, they reflect a turn our society has taken over the last couple of decades, vastly more destructive, in my opinion, than the distribution of condoms in public places. This trend is the erosion of our compassion towards one another. It saddens me greatly to think that there are people out there who can trivialize an experience like rape. Rape is a violation of unspeakable magnitude; it is dehumanizing and injurious to body and mind. To write a rape off as the inevitable result of being invited to someone's room is frightening. This is something that transcends value systems. In every segment of society there will be opioionq (sic) on proper conduct, but how far have we fallen when such a horrific experience can be written off as the inescapable product of the choice of a set of morals unlike ours?

For a society to thrive, it must protect and nurture itself. I hope most of you felt outrage when you read the column. This brings me to a suggestion for the readers. Do not laugh opinions like Yaqzan's off. Recognize them for what they are and realize that they are part of a sickness that we must act to protect ourselves from. Consider how you might feel if someone close to you was hurt in any way; would you not want to have prevented the injury if there was some way to do so? This is what we must strive for: an environment in which people take care of each other, regardless of differing beliefs and values. Just as everyone is entitled to their own opinion, everyone is also entitled to their own safety and well being.

Jim Peers

Yaqzan 15

To the Editor:
Upon reading Martin Yaqzan's article "Opinion: 'Rape' Past and Present" there can be no denying the fact that his views are extremely offensive.

They are insulting to the men who do practice restraint when that is the appropriate action.

They are insulting to women who, after suffering a terrifying and unwanted traumatic assault on their bodies, are told that an equally traumatic abortion will take care of any pregnancies which occur.

The ultimate insult - if you feel a little bruised after rape - ask for money. (Do you apply a sliding wage scale based on the amount of physical/emotional damage incurred?)

Rape is rape, whether the victim is a virgin or a sexually experienced woman. The courts, when trying a case of rape (a criminal offence), do not allow a woman's sexual history to be used as evidence as it has no bearing on the case.

Not only has the author of this article demonstrated a total lack of respect for and understanding of women but he has also painted a scenario of males who are sexually out of control and must be gratified at all costs - who look at women as no more than convenient repositories wherein to release their sexual energies.

Let these driven males release these monumental drives privately,

then at least their non-consenting female partners will be elsewhere meeting the decent men who do exist in the real world and enjoying relationships where there is mutual consideration.

Eva Wall

Yaqzan 16

To the Editor:
Union Statement on the Yaqzan Article

The Saint Thomas University Student Union opposes both the premises and the conclusions of Martin Yaqzan's opinion piece in the Nov. 5th edition of the Brunswickian. We have no interest in rebutting every point made by Mr. Yaqzan - to do so would imply that there are two legitimate points of view to debate. This is not the case. The denial of human rights and dignity is not of equal legitimacy with the safety of everyone. Apologists for rape cannot and will not cloak themselves in that mantle of legitimacy.

Rather than waste time with wrong-headed views, let us restate the position we share with every student union in the country and the laws of Canada - that sexual acts must be consensual on the part of both partners. Any denial of the need for consent is an affront to human dignity.

We will continue to work for acceptance of this point of view, and to work towards a campus where all students feel safe. We also call upon administrations at both UNB and St. Thomas to take all steps necessary to ensure a comfortable working and learning environment for everyone on the campus that we share.

Yaqzan 17

To the Editor:
In response to Prof. Yaqzan's article, I cannot agree with its contents. If he truly holds the views that he has espoused, then he insults both men and women.

Since he is asking so much money to share his views with the general media, I suggest that any money he makes from this (if indeed anyone will pay) be donated to shelters for victims of abuse, which are chronically underfunded. But I don't expect that to happen.

Maybe this would interest Gerald.

Denis Goguen

Yaqzan 18

To the Editor,
Martin, (sic)
It is because of attitudes like yours that women of all ages are still exploited and belittled by their partners.

At times when there is increasing demand to change the attitudes of society as a whole towards violence against women, people like you make it increasingly difficult for women to achieve equality.

You state that a raped woman should "demand some monetary compensation for her inconvenience or discomfort rather than express moral outrage." This statement equates every woman with a hooker. You have suggested that the fear of acquiring a venereal disease, vaginal lacerations or other physi-

cal damages to female genitalia (not to mention any other part of her anatomy), or even the threat of AIDS, can be placated by money.

The violation of a woman physically and mentally is not an inconvenience, it is the utmost personal violation of a woman's privacy and peace of mind.

The acceptance of a rose is not an open invitation for sex.
Shirley Head
Nepean, Ontario

Yaqzan 19

Dear Editor:
While we are not in the habit of adding our opinions to those that grace the pages of The Brunswickian, when an issue is raised that, if badly resolved, threatens the very foundation of the university, it is time for us to speak up. We refer to the issue of freedom of speech, invoked by a recent expression of opinion by Assistant Professor Martin Yaqzan and the response to it by UNB's academic vice-president, Tom Traves (see: The Brunswickian, November 5, 1993, p.7 for Yaqzan's column and The Globe and Mail, November 9, 1993, p. A4, for Traves's response).

Speaking apparently in his official capacity, Dr. Traves, reported the Globe and Mail, "was quick to denounce Mr. Yaqzan's article as abhorrent and possibly a violation of the university's policy on sexual harassment." According to Dr. Traves, the university's policy (in the Globe's words) "prohibits behavior or conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or academic environment." Concluding, apparently, that an expression of opinion constitutes behaviour or conduct, Dr. Traves, reported the Globe, "said the university will seek legal counsel to see whether Mr. Yaqzan's article has created an offensive environment."

Were Dr. Traves's position not so deeply offensive, it would be laughable. Has Dr. Traves declared himself to be the guardian of our collective morality? Or did his colleagues persuade him to be UNB's arbiter of acceptable thought? If so, what device will he use to detect the atmospheric fallout from an outburst of individual opinion? Does Dr. Traves possess an Intimidation Meter? Are we all to be monitored for the correctness of our thoughts?

Invoking UNB's ill-considered sexual harassment policy to deter the likes of Mr. Yaqzan reveals the danger to the free expression of ideas contained in this policy. Today, incorrect thoughts on the "date rape" issue invite censure and worse; tomorrow... will there be a UNB Religious Harassment Policy that restricts the public questioning of God's existence? Would quoting Bertrand Russell create for believers a climate hostile to their faith, and thus constitute a violation of such a policy?

All such policies that seek, for whatever reason, to place limits on the expression of ideas, no matter how odious or "inconvenient" someone feels them to be, are pernicious. They have no place in a university or in a democracy, and their implementation is hardly conducive to an atmosphere of free and fearless discussion, without which a university is indistinguishable, in the matter of free speech, from, say, a political party.

In the 1950's the House UnAmerican Activities Committee, led by Senator Joseph McCarthy,

pilloried those on the political left (some of whom were imprisoned) for harboring "unAmerican" thoughts, which the Committee pronounced offensively subversive. Today at UNB the mere expression of an opinion on matters sexual that others find "offensive" and "intimidating" and feel is hostile to their beliefs can get the offending individual in hot water.

If this is democracy in action at UNB, we have no need of a Senate UnCanadian Activities Committee.

Sincerely,
Ann and Noel Iverson
Fredericton, NB

P.S. If these were quieter times it would not be necessary for us to add that in defending Mr. Yaqzan's right to speak his mind we are not thereby endorsing what he has to say. Those who are, like the late Senator McCarthy, prone to accusing others of guilt by association will remain deaf to this distinction.

Yaqzan 20

To the Editor:

Mr. Yaqzan
On behalf of the male gender, we would like to extend our eternal gratitude to you for liberating us from the shackles of any moral responsibility and/or thought.

How nice to know we are now free to act without any fear of moral or legal consequences due to our severe and overpowering libido.

We do believe, however, that your thoughts should be shared with the world! How surprised the medical profession will be when they discover male thought comes not from the brain, but from the penis!

How silly lawyers have been! Why should a man serve time in jail, when surely \$25 in the right spot would suffice... Or would it cost that much? Perhaps we could set up a value chart - the higher the number

of previous partners, the lower the value!

Thank you sir!
Thank you!
Yours Sarcastically
Michael Mercer
Ben Addleman
Mike Feetham
Jamie Innes

Yaqzan 21

To the Editor:

Dear Martin (sic) Yaqzan:
I wish to take this opportunity to respond to your article in the Brunswickian entitled "Rape Past and Present". The arguments that I will enumerate in this letter should help you to empathize, at least somewhat, with women who are and who have been subjected to male violence.

Just a few myths and facts to clarify certain assumptions and misconceptions outlined explicitly in your article:

Myth #1: "No doubt, unwanted sexual intercourse did take place in the past, but it was rare enough to arouse very strong emotions and passions".

Fact #1: False. In the past women had no social or emotional recourse to effectively present their case of sexual assault. Society in general did not deem legitimate a claim of rape or assault. Besides, many women themselves did not recognize that a sexual assault had even taken place. If they did, they would be forced to internalize it because of the lack of social and economic support for women in these situations. Past and present, women have seldomly reported sexual assaults because they felt embarrassed, ashamed, or were afraid they would not be believed.

Myth #2 Women have no sexual needs or desires. She is there simply to appease "male's drive for

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