



Quixote

by David Marples

(this week's column prepared in collaboration with Suzanne Bizon)

The response to my "Quixote" column of November 27 and the subsequent reaction to Suzanne's "Reader Comment" of December 6, is clear evidence that on the university campus, abortion remains one of the more controversial questions. The differences between the pros and cons will not be resolved overnight, for ultimately, we are dealing with problems which encompass morality, society, medicine, psychology and law. However, two of the recent letters to *The Gateway*, from Mike Walker and John C. Van Damme, illustrate only too well the consequences of one-dimensional thinking.

Mike Walker focusses his attention on a single issue, namely the "old canard" that abortion amounts to murder. From this, he makes the simplistic equation that Suzanne and myself "place no value on human life," a comment that might be laughed off, but for his sinister comparison with the contempt for humanity manifested in Hitler's Germany. Moreover, he attributes my unwillingness to delve into the deeper philosophical issues to disinterest. In fact, I was limited by space. By raising the issue, I had hoped that the reader would perceive that I was aware of the concepts involved, since it was not possible to examine every aspect within the bounds of my column.

However, let us take the two points in turn. First, it might be stressed that in allegedly advocating "murder," we are, in fact, talking about a legal medical process and one which, like the abolition of the death penalty, has reached the statute books only after obstinate resistance from reactionaries like Mr. Walker. Before abortion was legalized in the United States, some 300 women died each year from the consequences of backstreet abortions and attempts to personally remove the unwanted fetus. By demanding the reinstatement of this "compulsory pregnancy" and the return of such techniques, Mr. Walker reveals his own contempt for life.

Similarly, Suzanne is castigated for leaving the question to the "individual mother" (a misnomer in itself, since a woman is arguably not a mother until she has actually borne a child). To whom should the question be left? In maintaining that a woman should be forced to produce an unwanted child, Mr. Walker concentrates on the quantity rather than the quality of life. He would do well to bear in mind that since the average woman produces some 400 mature eggs in a lifetime, she might just be given the chance to decide that one of them should not reach the stage of childbirth.

Secondly, concerning the philosophical aspect, allow me to state now for Mr. Walker's benefit, that in my opinion, a fetus is not a human being, since it is not able to sustain life. To reduce a complex question to a simple explanatory allegory: I do not eat apple cores, then when consuming apples, I have developed the practice of throwing them into the garbage. In doing so however, I am not likely to be accused of destroying an apple tree. With considerable fortune and a favorable environment, that core may develop into an apple tree. Yet, in itself, it remains essentially an apple core, nothing more nor less. In the same way, I contend that a fetus is not, and cannot be called, a child.

Mike Walker's comments at least indicate some attempts at a reasoned argument. In contrast, John C. Van Damme resorts to a completely unwarranted personal attack on Suzanne, ostensibly from a lofty perch of self-righteous moral detachment. One wonders whether his real target is the woman, abortion, or the act of sex itself. In citing an obvious aspect of University life, which was neither personal nor unique, Suzanne does not need to defend herself. Sex is not a crime. It might even be compared to a student course book; to some it is a duty, to some it is a necessity and to some it is a pleasure.

Finally, it should be emphasized that neither Suzanne nor myself expect our arguments to win over student opinion. Our aim is simply to present our viewpoint. We are not fanatics and are prepared to hear the anti-abortionists case. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of our self-appointed "opponents," Messieurs Walker and Van Damme, who have worked themselves into a neurotic frenzy over the subject. We congratulate you both on the sophistication of your arguments; I am a Nazi and Suzanne is a harlot. On that note, let the debate begin!

Disgruntled engineer shits on us!

Despite being quite good at the organizing and writing of our paper, the *Gateway* editors thru many unreasonable decisions concerning the content have made it boring and worse, biased.

Campus news is often made available but essays on the world situation fill the pages. *Time* and other magazines like it, do that job better, but they don't cover the U of A. The most recent major campus event, engineering week, received next to zero coverage, not withstanding the fact that the ESS supplied seven pages of story, none of which were printed. The best photos were censored, not because of content but because

of the ideals behind them. Quite simply, it is not the best that will be printed, just what is acceptable to the editorial staff — thereby presenting a very one-sided coverage.

This is not responsible journalism. Students here are paying for a newspaper, one that prints all the facts not just those that support some personal opinions. The censorship of articles, photos and ads have cost this paper much interest, money and respect. (And one photographer, myself).

What is worse there seems to be no way of correcting the situation. With the SU elections coming maybe some aspiring politician will make it an issue.

For if the editors will not run this paper properly we are stuck with it for an entire year.

Jim Connell
Engineering II

Editor's note: Mr. Connell has long been aware that the Gateway prefers to highlight the non-sexist aspects of Engineering Week. The photos that are being discussed here were considered to be pictures of sexist events.

Furthermore, The Gateway ran a total of four photos of Engineering Week activities, three of them on the front page, as well as two stories, one of them front page. This is hardly what could be termed "next to zero" coverage.

K-97 gets T-shirt off chest

I am writing to you in regards to the T-shirt ad which I placed with the *Gateway* on behalf of K97.

First of all, I would like to say that I, as a woman, am offended by sexist advertising. I have been involved in the advertising industry for some five years now and consequently, I am very conscience of this type of advertising, I don't like it and up until now, I have never been accused of being the "guilty party". There sometimes is a very fine line between acceptable and sexist advertising and, barring blatant sexism, this line must be determined by the parties in question.

I certainly appreciate the fact that it is ultimately your prerogative to determine what is acceptable advertising and my company must abide by your decisions. The fact that I disagree with your decision not to run the ad does not have any bearing on the final outcome but I would like to take this opportunity to explain my company's position.

The ad did, in fact, portray a female torso wearing a K97 T-shirt with the words "K97 T-Shirts. Get 'em now at Thrifty's Edmonton Centre". The final submission was a drawing.....a photograph was my original intention but the photographs I took were fuzzy and completely unsuitable for reproduction.....time was of the essence.....so I drew a picture instead. I submitted this to Tom Wright; he phoned me the next day and informed me that the editorial staff would not accept it on the basis that they felt the ad was sexist.....because the torso didn't have a head. I would have drawn a head if I could but my hands don't co-operate too well in such a detailed rendering. I disagreed with the editorial staff's opinion but since, as I stated earlier, their opinion is certainly their prerogative, Tom and I attempted to reach a solution. Tom suggested that the *Gateway* would accept an illustration featuring both a male and a female torso and had an artist draw another ad. I examined this. our second attempt to place a T-shirt ad, and found the art work unacceptable. Tom then suggested that he bring a photographer down to the station and have him take a picture of a person modelling the T-shirt. I agreed and we were all set to go when I was informed by one of our news team that the *Gateway* had taken the liberty of placing a news item on the front page of the November 20th issue condemning us as sexist. I said, in part, "The ad was a graphic illustration of a female torso wearing a K97 T-shirt" and "K97 refused to change the nature and style of the ad, opting instead to withdraw it."

I feel that the first quote is misleading because it makes it sound as though the ad was graphic in the sense of being lewd and suggestive (which it certainly wasn't) rather than how you meant it; as being an illustration. The second quote is obviously false — I did not opt to withdraw the ad until I was made aware of the editorial pertaining to this matter and this did not happen until Wednesday, November 21 — the same day as the photographer was due to come down to the station. You would have been made aware of the previous details had you bothered to call me first.

I would like to reiterate my previous statement that I agree that you are responsible for your paper's content, both editorial and paid advertising, and you therefore have the right to decide what goes in and what doesn't on

the basis of previously established criteria. My company attempts to live within those guidelines and the fact that we continue to disagree on this matter is neither here nor there. However, I think that my company was treated extremely unfairly in this matter as you condemned us as sexist before you knew the whole story.

I will continue to advertise in the *Gateway* despite this unfortunate experience and I sincerely hope that if this problem or a similar one arises in the future, with any of your advertisers, you will take the time to obtain their point of view and all the facts before you take the liberty of expressing misleading and, in our case, false information in your editorial content.

Derri Day
Station Promotion, K97

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Salary: under review

For further information, please contact:

Gordon Turtle, Editor-in-Chief, *Gateway*, at 432-5168, or in Room 282 Students' Union Building.

Deadline for Applications:

January 29, 1980, 5:00 PM, to Room 259, SUB