

EDITORIAL

Who shot J.R.?

Literally millions of people in North America and Europe have November 21 circled on their calendar. On this date, television addicts across the world will discover who shot J.R. Who cares?

This ludicrous display of hype only underscores the vise-like grip television holds on the minds of most people. But the question is: why do millions of people allow themselves to be so thoroughly governed by today's equivalent of the Thought Police?

The answer is that people do not fight television because the battle for their minds was already fought when they were young. Children today spend almost as much time watching television as they do in school, and it is impossible to overestimate the amount this poisons their minds. Television has become, not a representation of reality, but reality itself.

Television is also not just a passive entertainment medium; if that were true its worst crime would be aiding and abetting lethargy. Rather, every program on T.V., from soaps to docudramas carries a message and is designed to appeal to the basest instincts of the viewer. The stereotype of Archie Bunker may be laughable, and the one of Mary Tyler Moore believable, but the one of Suzanne Somers also fulfills a secret (or not so secret) fantasy of the viewer. And it's not funny.

Even television news is not exempt from the medium's curse. In the U.S., the three networks compete for news ratings, with ABC appointing their sports director to program the news with viewer-oriented techniques. The result is pure garbage, finely dissected and totally distorted.

The total amount of news contained in the CBC National News would fit on about three pages of the *Edmonton Journal*. And, amazingly enough, it is from this completely inadequate and distorted source that people garner their world views. The long term results of this can only be disastrous.

In short, television operates in an intellectual vacuum. It is, in Western society, the most powerful communication tool; yet the only persons to harness its potential successfully have been the advertisers. Television, with all its early promise, has thus become just another junk-food commodity to be consumed.

And there are no grounds for optimism for the future. If anything, the new programs display more vacuity and vapidness than ever. It seems the more unpalatable reality becomes, the more attractive a mindless fantasy is to most people. The people "running the show" are never slow to grasp this.

Yet there are people who argue that television does not exert a great influence on their minds; that they are as free of biases as ever. These persons are exactly like the fish who spent her entire life in water, never realizing she was wet all over.

Only when one steps into the shadows surrounding the cathode ray tube does its true light become visible.

Keith Krause

the Gateway

VOL. LXXI NO. 20
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1980
TWELVE PAGES



Editorial Staff
EDITOR - Keith Krause
MANAGING - Jim McElgunn
NEWS - Mike Walker and Nina Miller
PRODUCTION - Peter Michalyszyn
ARTS - Ken Daskewech
SPORTS - Shaune Impey
PHOTO - Kathy Kebarle
CUP - Jim McElgunn
ADVERTISING - Tom Wright
MEDIA PRODUCTIONS - Margriet
Tilroe-West
CIRCULATION - Mike McKinney

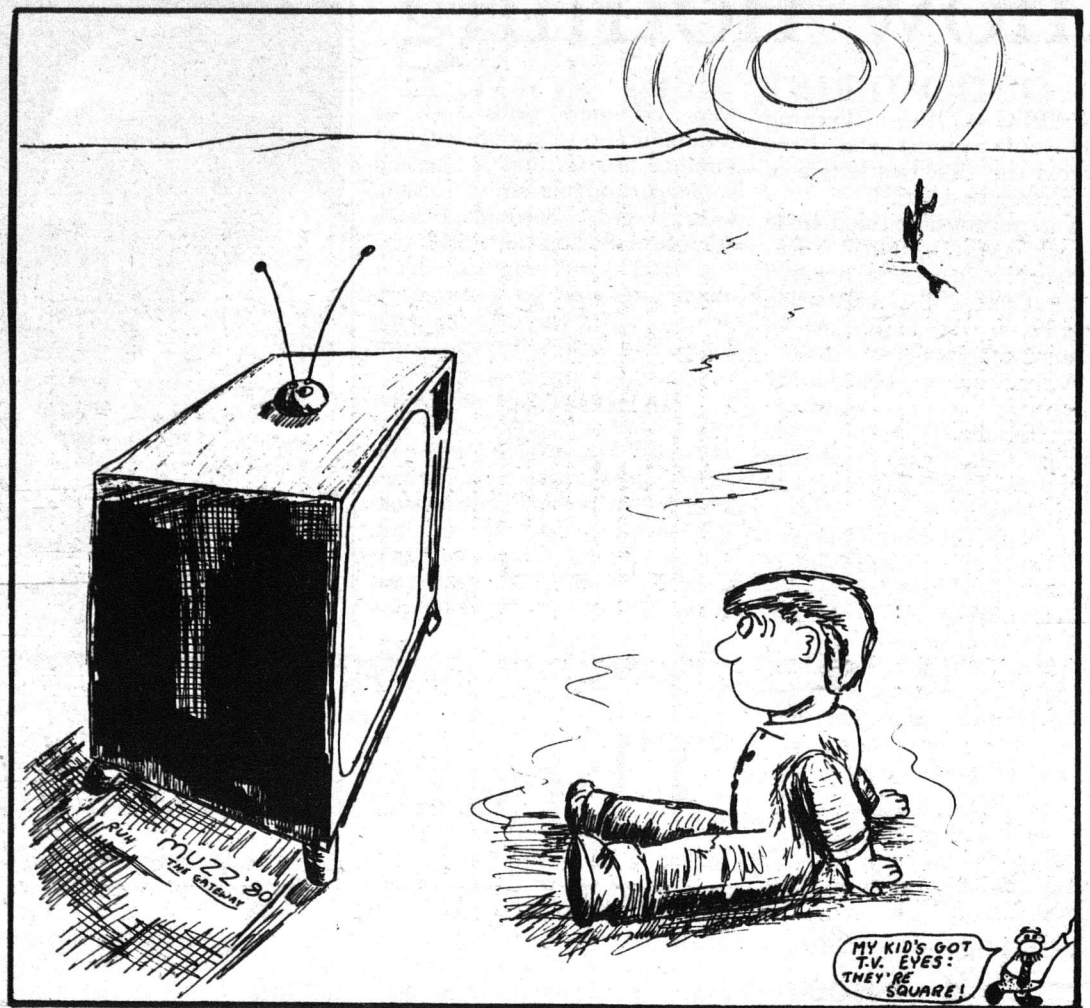
STAFF THIS ISSUE: It started with an innocent little remark. Wild Bill Ingley said he thought one of Tommy Freeland's sports photos was a bit out of focus. For a moment you could hear a pin drop; then, suddenly, the room EXPLODED! Punches flew as everyone forgot the issues in anticipation of a good fight. Chris McDonald, Bill McKeown, Maureen Laviolette, Ray Giguere and John Roggeveen flailed away at Bill, but Bob Kilgannon, Eida Hopfe, Jens Andersen, Wes Oginski, and Allan Young quickly leapt to his rescue. Murray Whitby, Geoff McMaster and Gary McGowan formed a kickline, chanting "We want blood". Beno John just smirked at the antics of the kids while Alison Thomson argued with Mike Walker over whether you spell fight with an 'f' or a 'ph'. Meanwhile, Cathy Emberle read another chapter, Brent Jeffery searched for another superlative, and Michael Skeet did some research on his theory of alcohol absorption. The dust cleared, the police arrived, the bodies were hauled away and another issue had been put to bed. The survivors heaved a heartfelt sigh and dreamed yummy thoughts of Christmas...

THE GATEWAY is the newspaper of the students of the University of Alberta. With a circulation of 18,500, the Gateway is published by its proprietor, the Students' Union, Tuesdays and Thursdays during the winter session. Contents are the responsibility of the editor; editorials are written by the editorial board or signed. All other opinions are signed by the party expressing them. Copy deadlines are 12 noon Mondays and Wednesdays. The Gateway, a member of Canadian University Press and the Youthstream Network, is located at room 282 SUB. Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2J7

Newsroom 432-5168

Advertising 432-3423

The ELECTRONIC NIPPLE



As the axe begins to fall

When is the axe going to fall on North Garneau? Is my home and neighborhood going to be turned into a maze of HUB-like structures? Or is it going to be a parkade? An athletic fieldhouse? A site for a future Law centre or Humanities Centre expansion? Who else is going to jump on the proverbial bandwagon?

Frankly, I am appalled at the way the university is handling the affair. As a North Garneau resident I find myself saddened and mystified to think that the area will be torn down in April 1981 — aren't some even saying February? I resent there being so many confusing and conflicting stories. I resent the fact that this scenario is being considered at all! I don't want to find myself homeless when I start to panic during final exams. This puts me on edge already.

In a survey taken of student housing, North Garneau turned up as the most desirable place to live. However, this fact, under the auspices of the Student Games in '83, seems to have been confused as meaning "so let's tear everything down and double the density with new housing". The attitude towards North Garneau is born from its inherent "as-Bohemian-as-you'll-get-in-the-'80s" character.

Do I start looking for alternate housing (miles away, at double the rent) because of fear of being part of the mad exodus when we do get evicted? Do I stick it out though rumors have it I may be given very short notice to vacate because my apartment building has been condemned (?) by the Fire Marshall?

When university life gets too artificial to handle, North Garneau is more than a convenient home within walking distance, it is a saving grace. It maintains privacy, individuality and reality.

However, sentimentality, so they say, is never a good argument. On the economic side, if the university wishes to improve the mere quantity of available student housing, why isn't Lister Hall

improved upon? There are empty rooms there!

Quality of housing is important, so why destroy an area that has lots of quality? Why not improve it? Pembina Hall was improved at a cost, I'm told, greater than that to tear it down and rebuild another. Certainly many buildings and houses in North Garneau deserve the same consideration.

Yes, I admit houses get old but in Alberta, change is never gradual and often erratic. Change occurs here in a brief, quick stroke. Maybe that is why most of us don't know what's happening and why we're not being informed. Perhaps change has to happen,

without concerned bodies slowing it down.

The North Garneau Tenants' Association is already admitting to defeat to a victor that hasn't shown its public face. We are sitting on the edge of our seats here waiting to be told if we're allowed to be sitting at all! However, I'm not particularly humbled by it all as my impression is that very viable alternatives have not been considered and will not be considered.

So then is the end of a vital community foreseeable in the near future? I don't know, do you?

Cathy Lane
Law I

A queer twist of logic

My Dear Alexandra,

So, you want to be invited to the next meeting of Dignity, "to meet Helland M. Nation"? You're not likely to find me there. I'm not a member.

As you only know me through my one recent letter to the *Gateway*, you must have found something in that letter to connect me with Dignity.

However, although in the letter I suggested that you were morally inconsistent, the letter

contained no reference either to Dignity or even to homosexuality.

I must therefore assume that your assumption (that I'm a member of Dignity) was arrived at through this kind of twisted logic: "Helland criticizes me; therefore he is homosexual."

If I were that inept at deduction, I would be making conclusions like "Alexandra wrote Alexander the Little"; therefore she is a poet."

Love,
Helland M. Nation

We need you!

The Gateway needs a CUP Editor

- * No experience needed but some knowledge of the English language is helpful.
- * Should have an interest in journalism and some time to burn.
- * Remuneration non-existent.
- * Job involves some layout, some selection of stories, some of everything.

For further information, talk to the current CUP editor Jim McElgunn at the Gateway. Deadline is this Friday, November 21 at 4 p.m. Apply Room 282 SUB.