

'To the Ladies of McLeod'

Dear Editor:

TO THE LADIES OF MCLEOD (or at least, those who signed last week's letter, "Ladies Object"):

First of all, before you peruse this letter any further, I ask you to please read last week's Armchair Quarterback column, if you have not already done so. Having done that, please seriously and unemotionally consider what is written here. If you still think I've shown a "lack of maturity", read on.

You have not demonstrated much originality in using the terms "offensive" and "degrading" in describing your feelings about my Feb. 3 column; those words were used in the poorly attempted censorship of one of the reasons I listed. Also, you labelled it as "disgusting", without qualifying that that statement is how YOU as a group feel, and not by itself an absolute. Of and by itself, the statement in No. 6 (or for that matter, the whole column) is not disgusting; it only becomes that when placed within the context of certain cultural and social cues, against which the column can be measured. I see little evidence that these facts were considered in the drafting of your letter. Thus, I find the letter almost totally devoid of intellectual substance, which is usually the case when dealing with reactionary stances. If further proof of this is needed, I ask this: what right do you have to "demand" an apology? Even more appalling to my senses is the phrase "on behalf of ALL females." That is extremely ostentatious of you to arbitrarily appoint yourselves as representative of females everywhere. I sincerely doubt that you've made even a passing attempt at anything resembling a scientific survey to back up your statement statistically; even if you had, it would be superfluous to the point I am attempting to make. Personally, I know at least seven women who

do not find the column offensive, degrading, or disgusting; in fact, they find it amusing. That in itself shows your demand to be a fallacy. I do not make the same mistake by assuming ALL females, or for that matter, even a majority, would find it humorous. However, the key here is the fact that I respect and tolerate others' rights to feel different without feeling negative about myself, and without attaching a negative label to them because their views differ from mine. (And I am almost positive that some females out there have already labelled those of their gender, as "weird" or "strange" or some such similar term, who have actually found the column humorous).

This lack of tolerance and subsequent negative labelling is the crux of what I am addressing. I would expect such behaviour from a population which lacks a certain degree of intellectual awareness; however, we are in an academic environment, and one of the gifts a university education is supposed to endow upon people is a broadened perspective along with an increased tolerance for views, feelings, attitudes, etc., which are different from our own. That has been shown to be sadly lacking in this situation.

I do not deny people's right to feel that my column wasn't humorous; I am not denying the fact that some women, perhaps even a majority, would find it in poor taste. But as the old adage goes, "You can't please all of the people, all of the time." I certainly acknowledge the rights of those who weren't amused by my column; neither do I criticize them for that view. Unfortunately, myself, and people who share my view of the matter have not been granted the same courtesy, without a demand of an apology for having that view. And this is what really disturbs me; it is an issue much bigger than a trivial sports column, but which is illustrated very well by this

situation. There is an obvious lack of tolerance or even an acknowledgement by those who authored the letter, that some people just might have a different perspective. They automatically assume their views are the only views, and even worse, the "right" views (at least that's what one must infer, given the language of the letter). To me, this in itself demonstrates a lack of maturity (substitute "insecurity?"), more so than the particular brand of humour exhibited in my column. It probably also demonstrates the failings of our educational system to enlighten people on matters of this nature, but that is not being dealt with, here. The point is, the letter goes beyond mere intolerance, assuming in its blind egocentricity that it is "right"; it also attaches a negative label to something, simply because it is not in agreement with the way the author views the world. In essence it says, "We find it disgusting, therefore it IS disgusting;" that forces their view on others, which is different from simply stating "We feel it is disgusting". Are you so

insecure that everything has to be the way you want it to be, and if it isn't, it is automatically stamped with a derogatory label? On another scale, albeit a much larger one, this is the same type of attitude that led to our white forefathers labelling the native peoples of this land as "inferior", because their ways were different. Worse than that, it was used to justify the cultural genocide that occurred on this continent in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. Granted, it is on a different level, but the attitude that "different" is equated with "wrong" still pervades. I wish to draw people's attention to that, in this situation.

To put it in a different perspective, I pose these questions: Have any of you who signed this letter ever heard of a book entitled "1001 Reasons Why A Pickle Is Better Than A Man?" Have you read it and found it humorous? If so, you are hypocrites of the worst kind; it makes the same type of statements about men, that my column did concerning women. Personally, I don't find the book degrading - I think it is very funny! I don't have any pro-

blem laughing at myself - it's too bad others do, because it would resolve a lot of problems if people could laugh at themselves. A further question to the undersigned: how many times, if any, have you been "falling-down drunk?" And how many residence "pranks" have you taken part in? Personally, I feel those types of behaviour show a lack of maturity. If any of you can answer "yes" to any of the above questions, I would suggest that insinuating I am immature is a matter of the pot calling the kettle black.

As a result of this incident, I am rescinding last week's apology to anyone who signed the letter, unless they've since cooled down and have the open-mindedness to understand my point without feeling the urge "take up the battle axe," as it were, again. And for the rest of the people who did not like my column, but who were tolerant enough not to react with self-righteous indignation, I still extend my apology.

Sincerely,
John Geary
a.k.a. "The Armchair
Quarterback"

Feature needed both sides of story

Dear Editor:

I was surprised to see the article titled "Trapped" appear in *The Brunswickan*. I thought the object of a newspaper was to present unbiased information. That article was far from being unbiased.

If *The Brunswickan* had wanted to do an article on trapping it should have sought out both sides of the story. It shows that only anti-trapping literature was found. What about pro-trapping information? A lot of information about trapping could have been, very easily obtained. For example a few months ago, a slide/talk show was given by Mr. Hazen Webb of the New Brunswick Trappers Association. This talk was

sponsored by the Wildlife Society and it was open to anyone who wanted to attend. Here, I must add that I didn't notice anyone claiming to be a *Brunswickan* reporter in attendance.

There are a number of inaccuracies in your article. First, you mentioned that family pets are sometimes caught, I don't deny this. But to support myself I answer that the pet could not be "running the woods". The law states that a trap or snare cannot be set within 300 meters of an occupied dwelling and a land-owner may post his land "NO TRAPPING". These two laws ensure that no one traps near your home or on your land. So if your pet is on your land he won't be caught. (I have enclosed a

summary of the Fur Harvesting Laws). Another error in the article is that one of your photos shows a conibear trap. This trap is the MOST HUMANE TRAP and it is not a leghold trap. There are errors but I don't feel that they need-be pointed out.

I will end my letter with a suggestion. If you want to report on something, try to get both sides of the story. Better still, stick to things or subjects that deal with campus events.

Sincerely,
Barry W. Hunter

Editor's Note: The feature was not an article on trapping but rather a story about why trapping attitudes should be changed.