

DIATRIBE



EDITORIAL

DIATRIBE

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*Diatribes is printed by
1000 Islands Publishers,
Gananoque, Ontario*

*Diatribes Magazine
c/o Alma Mater Society
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Kingston, Ontario
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March 2005*

DIATRIBE

Volume 4 . Issue 3

March, 2005

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AUGUSTUS

Sometimes when I'm in the line up at Common Ground I like to think that I might be standing beside the future Prime Minister, the next Stephen Lewis, or a potential CEO of a multinational corporation who might just cause the biggest scandal since Enron. It's easy to look at the Queen's Bubble and project what we see into the world at large, but I'm beginning to wonder if we have what it takes to run the world here at Queen's alone. Chances are that the future Prime Minister of Canada is currently being educated at an American Ivy League school, the next Stephen Lewis goes to York, and the future scandalous CEO...Well, who knows?

We at Queen's seem to pride ourselves on all of our political activism and the potential that we have to be world leaders. There are too many clubs to count on campus. I swear that I hear something related to OPIRG on a daily basis. Op-Eds in the *Journal* about conservatism spur controversy for weeks. Faculties look down on each other due to opposing political views. It would seem to me that much more than 33% of the campus is what I would call politically active or socially aware, and that's why it's surprising that only 33.1% voted in the recent AMS election and referendum.

Voter apathy isn't just a problem here at Queen's, and in fact it's much worse at other schools. Most Canadian universities tend to have poor voter turnout. But do most Canadian universities like to refer to themselves as Harvard North? This year Harvard set a new record with 62% voter turnout. When we get within 10% of that, let's talk about our little pet name.

This year's elections coincided with the democratic elections in Iraq. There were constant

images on television of Iraqi expatriates in Canada crying tears of joy for being able to vote freely, for many of them, for the first time in their lives. Also on television, Canadian Heritage commercials immortalize the fight for women's right to vote since our great-grandmothers, and possibly even our grandmothers, were denied the equal opportunity to vote. How soon we forget how privileged we really are and that people have literally died just to cast a ballot. 2 out of 3 of us however could not be bothered.

If the Queen's Bubble is a microcosm of the real world, Queen's voter apathy translates into something much worse on the outside. In the real world, not everyone will have a Queen's degree, let alone a university degree, and the vote will impact our entire country as opposed to just our university. People like me and you are needed not only to vote, but to also educate others responsibly since I have a hard time believing that everyone in this country can discern the real content from the political propaganda.

The most shameful example of this occurred this summer as I was watching CKWS around the federal elections. They interviewed a blue-collar worker from Brockville who was voting for Stephen Harper because "he said he was going to help out the little guy like me." If there is one thing that Stephen Harper and the conservatives are not going to do, it would be helping out the little guy.

Someone needs to help out the little guy. 77% need to vote next year. And I think we all need to realize that to those which much is given, much is expected. Don't underestimate the power of a vote.

- Catherine Shea

Letter to the Editor

I am writing in response to Chris Green's article 'In Defense of the Monarchy'. Green seems to be missing the point in regards to the debate over the Monarchy's existence. Whether or not Governor General Clarkson is 'elitist' or does in fact do a good job in her symbolic role is besides the point. The point is that supporting the Monarchy means supporting a relic of the Middle Ages - a system of social inequality that justified an individual's dominance of society based upon 'divine rights'. Of course the Monarch no longer has any real political power in Canada, but why should we continue to support an anachronism that is symbolic of the worst forms of social inequality in the

world? Is the idea of one human being better than another by right of birth appropriate to Canadian ideals? The monarchy perhaps makes us slightly unique, as Green claims, with regards to the rest of the world. But why should we blindly cling to relics from the past simply because they are a part of our history? I think that it would be more in line with our identity if we rejected such forms of social inequality, no matter how symbolic they might be. Actions such as these is what would make Canadian distinct in a manner that we could be proud of.

- George Wyzchlyk, Sci '07

OPINIONS

COKE SCREW

■■■ A mathematical approach to monopolist gouging
by Matt Aikins

Let's do some math. No, I swear it'll be fun. Know why? Because we'll get to see how badly we get screwed over every time we buy a bottle of bottled water at Queen's. They don't teach you this kind of shit in MATH-121.

The next time you walk into the Sidewalk Café, or any other food outlet at Queen's (see the articles on the Coke contract), you'll notice that the only types of that are available are Dasani and Evian (it was nice of 'em to give us a choice, eh?), both Coca-Cola brands. Since Dasani is cheaper than Evian, we'll use its price for our mathematical endeavours.

Now, at the Sidewalk Café, Dasani cost \$1.95 a bottle. At a vending machine, it costs \$1.75 a bottle. In both cases, its price is equivalent to that of a bottle of Coke, or any other soft drink.

What? Did I just write that? Are they charging us as much for a bottle of *water*

as they are for a bottle of Coke? Yes, Virginia, they sure are!

Let's consider this phenomenon for a moment. While the ingredients to Coca-Cola are, shhh, a secret, I have a faint inkling that they might be more expensive than the cost of an equivalent amount of *water*. Especially when that *water* is produced from local tap *water*, and run through a set of filters probably not much more sophisticated than those found in your Brita. For this is what Coke does, to, haha, keep costs down. Due to their extensive network of bottlers, they simply use local tap *water* to make Dasani. Cuts down on shipping costs, can you dig it?

Not only is Coke more expensive to produce than Dasani, but there's a lot more advertising costs involved with Coke. You don't really need to spend that much on advertising for *water*. It is, ya know, *water*.

What this means is that Coca-Cola's profit margin is much higher on a bottle of Dasani than it is on a bottle of Coke. We're getting fleeced here people! Fleeced! As if we were sheep or something... the kind of sheep who would sign an exclusivity contract that allowed Coca-Cola to sell us *water* for the same price as Coke.

This is plainly bogus. After all, if it's our university, and we're the ones who want bottled water, why the heck are we letting someone sell it to us for an exorbitant price?

While Coca-Cola isn't willing to tell us exactly how much they're screwing us out of with each bottle of Dasani, we can get a rough estimation of the amount by consideration how much generic water costs in bulk. At Loblaw's a 24-pack of water costs \$3.99. Divide that by 24 and we have \$0.17. Do \$1.75 minus \$0.17 = \$1.58. I

would guess this is roughly equal to the surplus profit that Coca-Cola makes off of us suckers. Lovely. I told you math was fun!

I was going to end this article here, but there's one more point that should be said. Being the self-satisfied chap that I am, I proudly showed my argument to my friend Joey.

"See Joey, said I, we're getting screwed man, screwed I tell ya! Bottled water should be much cheaper, dude!"

Joey didn't seem too impressed.

"Why, said he, do we need to drink bottled water in the first place? It's expensive, wasteful, bad for the environment, and can be easily replaced by carrying around an empty bottle and walking to a water fountain."

Err... good point!

COKEFACE?

■■■ *Diatribes* brings you the inside scoop on one the year's most anticipated parties

Now in its 11th year, Goatface is one of the most highly-anticipated (and some would say over-priced) parties at Queen's. The party takes place on March 19th, and is organized by Queen's students. In search of the elusive 'dilly', *Diatribes* sits down and shoots the shit with Goatface Committee member Pat Maloney.

***Diatribes*: Yo what the dilly, yo?**

Pat Maloney: What? Didn't people stop saying that in 1998?

Oh. Really? Shit. Umm... so what is Goatface and why should we care?

It's basically a high school prom with all the things you wanted to do but couldn't.

Such as?

Cheap drinks, a silent auction, three live bands, hot people, a makeout room, photographers running a live slideshow, top-notch Italian and Japanese food, a transportation service, and door prize give-

aways. It's a night for excess, a carte blanche. It's the Super Bowl of partying-when people have high expectations, they come out to play hard. When people are getting ready for Goatface I want them to have butterflies in their stomach. And the makeout room was a joke, you pervert.

Damn. Who goes to Goatface?

A lot of the lone wolves and the clique breakers. We want to bring all the different social groups together, like the Olympic Rings, in hopes that one day there'll only be one skin colour when they're done fucking.

But isn't there already pretty much just one skin colour at Queens?

Actually I think that's largely a myth. The diversity here at Queen's is underrated.

(Both laugh)

Goatface is gonna attract marathoners, not sprinters, because it's definitely gonna be a long night.

I assume you're referring to the after-party. Tell us more.

It's not gonna stop until dawn. The gist of it is, you're trying to hit on someone and then suddenly the night ends- but with us it doesn't. It's the European party attitude.

The tickets are 40, 50, or 60 bucks, depending on when you buy them. What do people get for that kind of cash?

I've been taking a lot of flak for the ticket price, and rightfully so. It's a lot of money for a student to pay. This puts a lot of pressure on us to deliver. And we will. We're gonna give you a whole night's experience, we're gonna feed you and show you a good time, we're not just gonna put you in a hall and get you drunk. There's even a contingency plan in case the after-party gets busted. You'll know where your money's gone by the end of the night.

What's with the name 'Goatface'?

Umm... I was told some bullshit story about some demon or legend or something... I don't really know.

Goatface has been described as a 'coke fest'. Care to respond?

It's no joke when there's a line-up for the handicap stall. I've seen it before in Kingston. But we don't deal with that at all, it's not our thing. A few years ago, well, the party was pretty small and a bunch of guys thought no one would care so they made no effort to hide their coke use. We got a bad rep from that and it hasn't really gone away. But that's in the past. Besides, coke's a shitty drug.

Alright man, any parting shots?

This is gonna be an amazing party. It's one last end of the year bash to see all your friends, so come on out.

Details can be found at www.goatface.com

REFLECTIONS ON ANOTHER UNIONIZATION DRIVE COME AND GONE

■ ■ ■ And hopefully this time it's gone for good, by **Catherine Shea**

I know 377 plus some of the 27 voters whose ballots were not counted agree with me when I say it's a good thing that the union certification drive did not go through. To my honest surprise, QUTU did not succeed in its certification attempt with 343 votes cast in support and 377 cast against. QUTU had the deck stacked in its favour and I find it refreshing to see that votes were cast with logic and a long-term perspective about the union, rather than hastily out of animosity and rage towards the university's administration.

About one year ago I sat down and wrote a similar article about the 2004 unionization drive not expecting to be writing one again only a year later. Since then, ballot boxes were destroyed and debatable funding schemes were introduced to give TAs an hourly-wage increase. These questionable tactics used by the university obviously upset TA/TFs, adding fire and momentum to the renewal of the certification drive this year.

This year, QUTU got what is fought hard to get - a democratic vote - and democracy spoke loud and clear, but not in their favour. If the majority of TA/TFs wanted a union as is still being claimed even in the face of a democratic defeat, the majority would have voted for a union. I think it's time for QUTU to read the writing on the wall and pack things up for more than the twelve month moratorium to give people time to forget the way this campaign was played out.

From a superficial level, I find it amazing that QUTU lost the vote since it was really their union to lose. They did a great job generating so much negative publicity towards the administration's wage increase and the scandals sur-

rounding the 2004 unionization attempt. However, a quick look at the QUTU website or a walk outside of the grad studies

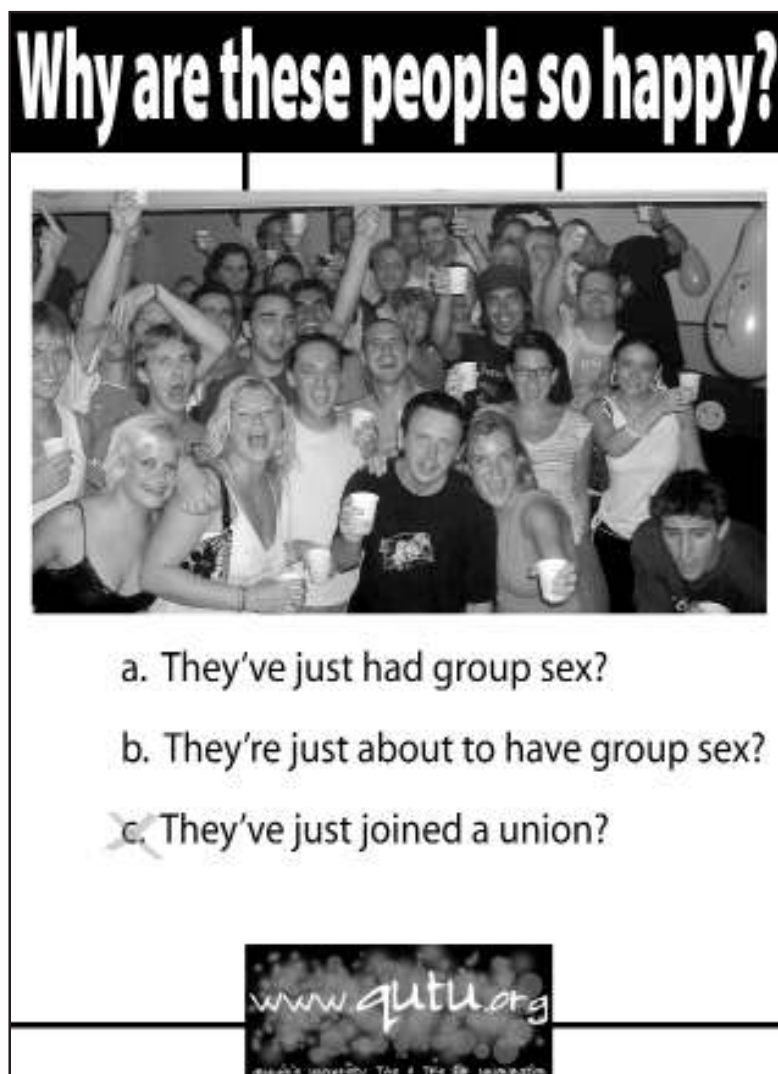
strong financial and organizational backing from the experienced unionizers at CUPE, and possibly others. Regardless of the up-to-dateness or validity of the information on QUTU's official site, a general rule of thumb is to treat your opposition with

sex on voting day to push those borderline voters over to the No-campaign. The people running the Yes-campaign would likely be the people running the union, and I wouldn't necessarily trust people who find this to be an appropriate strategy to bargain on my behalf and negotiate my livelihood.

The constant harassment and accosting in front of the grad studies building, and further visits paid to labs and offices to tout the union has given most TA/TFs a funny "how the union tried to convince me" story. Beyond that, people don't like to be constantly bothered or challenged pretentiously because their beliefs don't jive with those of QUTU. This is not only a bad way to foster union support, but it's also a bad way to make friends since at the end of the day we are all peers in the exact same boat - union or not.

I know many pro-union students and would never dream that they would act in such a manner. People who genuinely believe in unions should have stepped in and injected a little maturity into the campaign. I hope QUTU can look at what they have done in an objective manner and try to run, if I dare say, future campaigns with a little more class. Maybe the No-campaign only needed "four" "anonymous" "illegitimate" people since the Yes-campaign probably did more for the No-campaign than it did for itself.

QUTU got what it wanted - a democratic vote, no Big Brother tactics by the administration, and a good voter turnout - and now needs accept the results and assume a more gracious defeat. I hope that people can now get back to the purpose of why they came to Queen's - to get an education - and not to start their very own union. But somehow I think it's more fitting to end this article saying that I look forward to seeing the results of the certification drive in 2006.



building or a quick chat with a TA/TF who just doesn't care about the union makes you realize how QUTU blew it.

"The four individuals from the so-called 'No Campaign'", to quote the very first line on QUTU's webpage (<http://www.qutu.org/misconceptions.html>), certainly did a good job gaining their "legitimacy" considering that they won. Apparently four "anonymous" individuals can knock out the so-called 'QUTU Cult' without resorting to tactics such as harassment and group sex allusions in their advertisements. These four individuals can also do this without the

respect. Belittling the No-campaign is more of a reflection on QUTU than anything else.

QUTU's mass advertisement and poster campaign was often hit and miss, and probably wiped out a large chunk of the Rainforest. At times it was brilliant, but at most other times it seemed to be trying to convince a drunken 17 year old to join the union. Instead of trying to convince students to vote pro-union through logic and facts (which would have been highly effective considering the target audience - the academic elite at this university), QUTU resorted to a full-page advertisement about group

**Writers Photography
Articles Opinions**

We need these things!
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HOW ADVERTISING FUCKS UP OUR SOCIETY

■■■ An economically-minded analysis of the harmful effects of advertising
by **Matt Aikins**

Advertising permeates virtually every aspect of our society. We find it at the bus stop, in our magazines, on television, subtly inserted into movies ('product placement'), and even in our university buildings. Advertising is what funds the vast majority of our culture- it pays for sports, television programs, the arts, and even the news we watch. We accept advertising as a necessary and beneficial feature of our economy- it helps sell products, and thus spurs economic growth.

In this article I wish to argue that advertising is in fact incredibly harmful to our society. By 'advertising', I mean the sort of advertising that is most common on television and in magazines- the slick, well produced, visually appealing ads that convey little actual information about the product. By using the very economic logic that purports to validate advertising, I hope to show that advertising is *by necessity* intrinsically harmful. I also wish to show that this intrinsic harmfulness is not an accident, but a logical consequence of some of the most fundamental features of our capitalist economy.

We must begin with some basic economic theory. The whole point of an economy is to fulfill human needs. The degree to which an economy is able to fulfill our needs is the yardstick by which it should be measured. It is these needs that drive production and consumption within an economy. We produce things because someone needs (or wants, they're the same thing for our purposes) those things, and we purchase and consume things because we have a need for them.

Capitalist logic assumes that, if we are free to buy and sell and produce and consume as we like, any transaction that takes place in a free market must be beneficial for both parties, or in the very least, no one will be worse off. If we are rational and free, we will only sell something if what we receive in return is of equal or greater value, and we will only buy something if what we pay is of equal or lesser value. Again, we

value things because we have a need for them.

Let's discuss these needs in a little more detail. Why do we 'need' things? I think that explanations for our needs fall into two categories: material

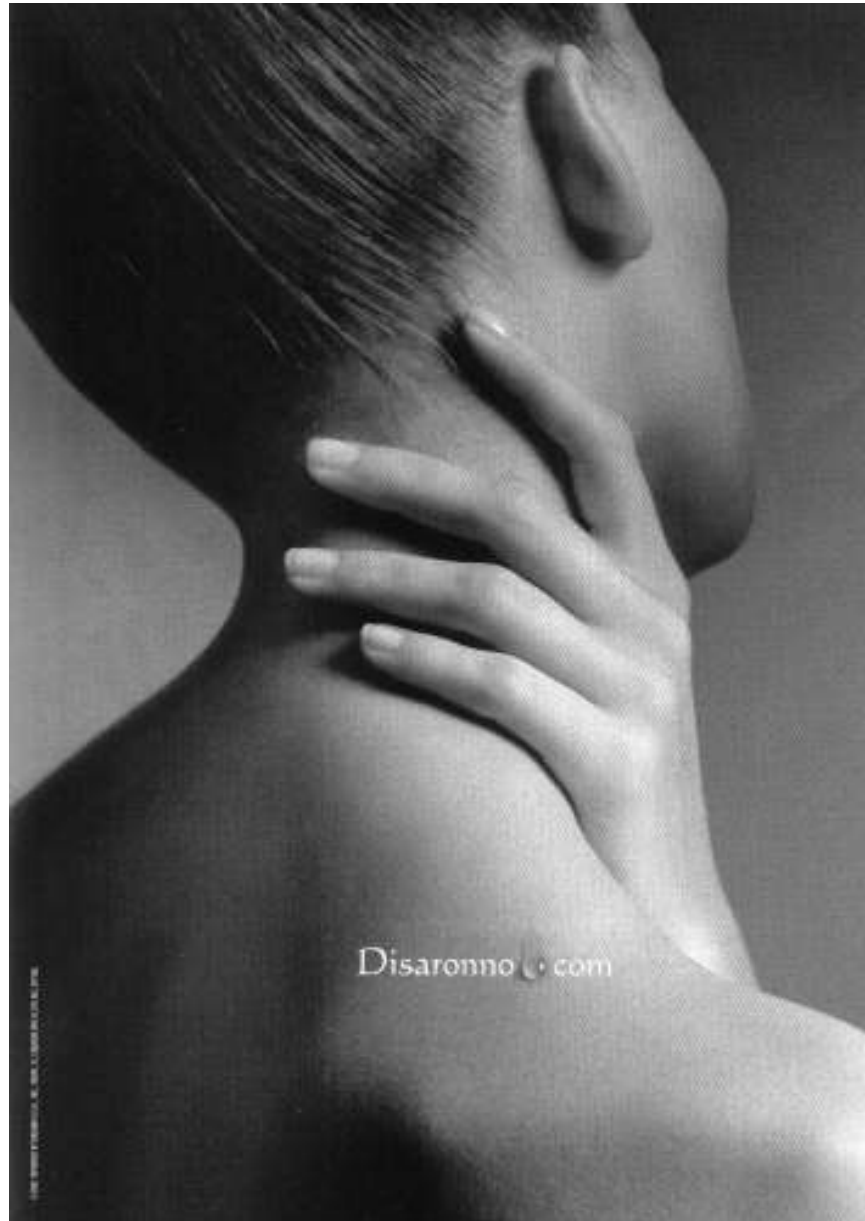
gy. This is not to say that the psychological need does not derive partly from the existence of the material need- without the material need, it is likely that the psychological need would not exist. Yet the psychological need results from

connotations attached to it. We could satisfy one need without satisfying the other. For example, if we had unhealthy-looking skin that felt fine and caused us no ill physical effects, then we would have no material need for healthy-looking skin, only a psychological need. If we had healthy-looking skin that felt extremely painful, then we would have no psychological need for healthy skin, but we would have a material need for healthy skin. Obviously the relationship is not always clear-cut: our physical health has ramifications on our social abilities, and vice-versa. However the basic principle is quite clear: humans have both psychological needs and material needs. Our material needs are fairly fixed, whereas our social needs are based upon the characteristics of our society.

Now then, given that we have a need for healthy skin, how might we satisfy this need? While there are several conceivable ways, for simplicity's sake I will only be discussing one, the most obvious: skin cream. I am also going to be making the assumption that there is only one type of skin cream (for now), and that this type fully satisfies your need for healthy skin. I think this is a rather reasonable assumption: for most people, the basic, generic brand of skin cream eliminates their dry skin. So, if you go to the store and buy a bottle of skin cream, and rub it on your skin, your previously dry skin will become both healthy and healthy-looking. Both your psychological need and your material need have been satiated- a 'good' outcome.

How much of a 'good' outcome was it? That depends on two things: the value of satisfying your needs and the cost associated with satisfying them. An economist would find out what the value of your need was by asking you what the most you would be willing to pay to satisfy it. If you are honest and rational, the price you give will be the value to you, in your opinion, of satisfying your desire for healthy skin.

Continues on Page 6



What is the informational value of this ad?

and psychological. Consider the example of our need for healthy skin. This need includes both material and psychological motivations.

The material need stems from certain biological facts. Due to its biological characteristic, our skin has a tendency to dry out. When our skin dries out, nerve endings in it cause unpleasant sensations in our brains. Thus the material need for healthy skin is based on certain facts about the physical universe, and our own biological natures. Thus we could not eliminate this material need without somehow altering our own biology.

The psychological need is not simply the result of our biolo-

other forces as well. In our society bodily health is highly valued. Our skin is perhaps the most visible part of our bodies. Thus visibly unhealthy skin carries with it a negative social stigma. If we meet an individual with cracked, flaking, and unhealthy-looking skin, we tend to negatively socially evaluate them. Because we desire to be positively socially evaluated, we then desire to have healthy-looking skin.

We do not desire healthy-looking skin for the exact same reasons we had a material need for healthy skin. In this case our desire for healthy-looking skin, our psychological need, is based upon our society's common conception of 'healthy-looking', and the positive social

ADVERTISING

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Let's say you say '\$15'. Thus satisfying your need for healthy skin is worth \$15 to you. Because skin cream will satisfy your need for healthy skin, we can also say that your need for skin cream is equal to \$15. Now let's say that the bottle cost \$8. $\$15 - \$8 = \$7$. Thus you benefited by \$7 from being able to purchase a bottle of skin cream. You are \$7 better off than you were before. This outcome is a 'good' outcome by \$7.

So far we haven't done much more than reiterate basic capitalist economic principles. In a market, people buy goods based on their needs. Because they are rational, they only buy goods if the price of those goods is less than the benefit of satisfying the needs that those goods will satisfy. As such, we can take every transaction as evidence that people are in fact becoming better off. In addition, the competitiveness inherent in a capitalist system will give producers incentives to finding cheaper and cheaper ways of producing those goods and satisfying those needs. The cheaper those needs can be satisfied, the better off that everyone will be.

An example of this might occur with skin cream. Remember that it currently sells for \$8 a bottle. Now imagine that some innovator comes along with a new production technique that enables him to sell skin cream for \$6 a bottle. Society will now be better off because the need for healthy skin can be more cheaply satisfied, and the innovator will be rewarded because his firm will gain more business over his competitors. Notice that he can only do this by charging less, and thus his reward is inextricably linked to acting in society's interest. That's one of the neat things about capitalism.

This process will continue as more innovations occur. Eventually, however, we begin to reach the limits of innovation. It becomes harder and harder to invent new ways of producing skin cream. If we imagine that some costs (such as raw materials) are less susceptible to innovation and reduction than others (such as the labour required), then those non-susceptible costs will begin to occupy a greater and greater portion of the price of skin cream. Eventually it will simply be impossible to produce skin cream any cheaper. Arguably, this is probably where skin cream production is at now. The production process is virtually unimprovable. Any drops in prices you see in the drug store probably just reflect increased efficiency in the distribution and retail processes.

So let's say the price stabilizes at \$4 a bottle. Skin cream just can't get any cheaper. At this point, the market becomes stable. No new improvements can be made, consumers won't gain new benefits, people won't be able to come

up with new ideas to capture bigger shares of the market. This isn't such a bad thing though, because, hey, our price is half of what it originally was. Everyone has become better off as a result of the capitalist process, and producers have to content themselves with producing and selling \$4 bottles.

Or do they? How might an ingenious producer find a way to increase their profits? Well, they can't do it by making cheaper skin cream, because we've already exhausted that prospect. They can't do it by raising the price of their skin cream, because in a perfectly competitive market (we're assuming we're in one) no one would buy their over-priced product.

What they could do is create a new 'need', which they could then fulfill. But they certainly can't alter human biology to create new material needs. So what they must do is create a new psychological need. Let's call this producer 'Oil of Olay', and their product 'Olay Regeneris'. Oil of Olay hires advertising for Olay Regeneris. They hire television spots with famous actresses. They hire billboards with beautiful models, who are airbrushed into perfection. They hire bogus scientists to pimp their products. They fund magazines like *Cosmo* that work to create a culture of low-self esteem and externally based validation.

If they are successful, they will create a new psychological need. If they lower people's self-esteem enough, if they convince them that to look 'beautiful' they must be more than simply healthy-looking. If they can convince them that their product really is 'better', then they will create a new psychological need for their product.

Let's take as our subject a young Ellie Mae. Ellie Mae is a sweet, if somewhat credulous, woman. Like every other human, she has a material need for healthy-skin. Like every other human in our society, she has a psychological need for healthy looking skin. She places a value of \$15 on fulfilling that need. Luckily for her, bottle of skin cream are available for \$4, leaving her \$9 better off. Not for long, however.

Ellie Mae watches a lot of television. She also reads *Cosmo*, a 'women's magazine'. Thus Ellie sees a great deal of advertisements for Olay Regeneris. These advertisements feature impossibly beautiful and desirable models gazing adoringly at the product. Because of certain psychological quirks of the human mind, which the advertisers are well aware of (advertisers hire a lot of psychologists), Ellie begins to believe that 'Olay Regeneris' is somehow better than ordinary skin cream, even though it is not. This is not based on any conscious intelligent process, but rather on subconscious advertising pressure. In fact these advertisements carry virtually zero information that would allow Ellie to intelligently determine whether Olay

Regeneris could be 'better' for her skin. They mainly consist of vague, invented buzzwords such as 'hydroximates' and of course images of beautiful models. Nevertheless, because she is not a perfectly rational being, but rather a human being susceptible to psychological and social pressures, Ellie comes to believe that Olay Regeneris is 'better' than ordinary skin cream.

But how could it be 'better' for her if her need is already satisfied by ordinary skin cream? Something is only 'good' for us if it satisfies a need. If we only need 2000 mg of vitamin C per day, we wouldn't think that an additional 2000 mg is going to be 'better' for us. So if Ellie Mae believes that Olay Regeneris is better than ordinary cream, *some new need must have been created in her*. This cannot be a new material need, because advertising is clearly incapable of altering her biology: rather a new psychological need has been created in Ellie Mae, a need for 'Olay Regeneris' that has been brought about by advertisement. Somehow Ellie Mae believes that 'Olay Regeneris' will make her look more socially desirable than ordinary skin cream. Let's say her new psychological need is worth \$30.

Ellie Mae is now willing to pay up to \$30 for Olay Regeneris skin cream. This allows Oil of Olay to sell her Olay Regeneris for, let's say, \$25. According to capitalist economic logic, Ellie Mae benefits from the transaction by $\$30 - \$25 = \$5$. So Ellie Mae is \$5 better off for buying Olay Regeneris. And of course Ellie Mae is better off! She's free right? So why would she buy it if it didn't make her better off?

Such a viewpoint is incredibly shortsighted. If we consider Ellie Mae's position *prior to advertising*, then it becomes apparent that she is in fact worse off than before, despite her 'rational' and 'free' decision to buy Olay Regeneris.

Prior to advertising, Ellie Mae's need for healthy skin was fully satisfied at a cost of \$4, leaving her \$9 better off. That \$9 represents the fulfillment of her material and social needs, minus the cost of skin cream. However, after advertising, Ellie Mae's need for healthy skin is satisfied at a cost of \$25, an increase of \$21. We might argue that she is still better off, because her need is equal to \$30. But where did that increased need come from? It does not come from the basic biological characteristics of her skin. Those biological characteristics were perfectly satisfied by the \$4 skin cream. It does not come from the basic social requirements of having non-cracked, non-unhealthy skin. Again, those psychological needs were satisfied by the skin cream. The new, increased need comes about only as a result of psychological manipulation by a producer, Oil of Olay, who simply wants to sell Ellie Mae an expensive product that she did not previously need.

In an absolute sense, Ellie Mae is \$10 worse off when she buys Olay Regeneris, because she now pays \$25 to fulfill a need that should only be worth \$15. In a relative sense, Ellie Mae is \$21 worse off than before because she now needs \$25 to fulfill the same material and psychological needs that she once fulfilled with \$4. Ellie Mae now has \$21 less than before, which means \$21 less to spend on her education, food, etc. Ellie Mae is no happier than before - the requirements of her happiness have simply been raised. The only 'person' who gains from this outcome is Oil of Olay, who gains \$25 minus the cost of producing both the product and the advertising.

Look what has happened here: we began with simple Ellie Mae, who only needed a \$4 bottle of skin cream to fulfill her skin care needs. Producers (Oil of Olay), motivated by the prospect of increased profits, bombard Ellie Mae with powerful psychological advertising until she eventually begins to desire their expensive product. Now, in order to consider herself 'satisfied' with regards to her skin care, Ellie Mae must purchase a \$25 bottle of skin cream, that fulfills her basic biological and psychological needs no better than the \$4 bottle- the \$25 bottle only serves to fulfill her newly created, advertising-implanted, need for special skin cream.

And what a terrible thing this is for poor Ellie Mae, whether she knows this or not! She has switched her satisfaction to a more costly, but equally happy, level. Or more accurately, she has become less happy, because she has less money to spend on education and food. Not only this, but the whole operation has taken place without her consent- she has been manipulated by the psychological pressures of advertising. The greatest cynic about human free will is the ad-man; the same cynic who then retorts: 'but people are *free* to buy and sell as they please!'

This process is not a mistake. It is not an accident, and it does not result from 'bad' or 'evil' producers. It arises from the very nature of our current capitalist system. In the very beginning of the first-year economics textbook at Queen's 10 fundamental 'Principles of Economics' are listed. Near the beginning is: "people respond to incentives". In our society there is an incentive for producers to create new needs in people through advertising: by doing so they will gain higher profits.

There is something essentially perverse about creating new needs. All human happiness is based on the fulfillment of our needs, and all human suffering results from our needs being unmet. Why then should we want to raise the requirements of human happiness? Do we think that anything besides human suffering will result?

This creation of new, frivolous needs is not the only negative consequence of

advertising. There are two others. Firstly, the creation of new needs can only occur through irrational motivations. Rationally, we would only desire what we need. This means, due to the very nature of what advertising is trying to accomplish, advertisers must work by manipulating the irrational elements

vanity and intellectual bankruptcy of our present age.

The second additional negative effect is the vast amounts of money wasted on advertising. It is not easy for Oil of Olay to produce that new need in Ellie Mae. Oil of Olay must pay substantial adver-

shallower, vainer, more insecure, and less rational.

The bitter irony of the whole situation is that classic capitalist economic analysis is incapable of recognising the problem due to the assumptions that it operates under. Because we are 'ratio-

We only need to look around at our own culture to see that Ellie Mae's situation is applicable to so much of our society and economy. Look around at our materialist culture and you will notice how much it is based upon created new needs in us. We buy a car, then a house, work hard, buy a bigger house, a bigger car, another house, another car. What was satisfactory yesterday is no longer satisfactory today. What made us happy yesterday no longer makes us happy today. We are not masters of our own desires- they are manipulated by those who have an incentive to do so. We are daily in dizzying pursuit of the soon-to-be-obtainable, and our advertisements whip us on faster and faster. We spend so much money on so many vain and pointless things. And how much more do we spend on the mind-warping advertisements that cause us to desire those things? How many quadrillions of dollars have gone into beaming out glistening images of golden waffles, the sleek flanks of America's daughters hawking giant glistening beer bottles, the ad-jingle, the celebrity sell, the stupid animal tricks? What was the collective information value of that transmission? What do you learn each time you watch an ad on television?

And don't think that you aren't being manipulated. No one thinks that they are being manipulated because *it is not a conscious process*. If advertisers spend millions on ads because they manipulate people's minds into desiring products, and everyone claims that they are not aware of any such manipulation, what does that tell you about the nature of the whole process? Whether you know it or not, every time you watch an ad your brain is being subconsciously manipulated. Did you know that 1/3 of the time you spend watching TV is spent watching ads?

Equally unconscious is the motivations that drive us to buy these frivolous products. We invent rational explanations of course, but these prove to be rather flimsy on closer examination. Many of you might protest my assumption that all skin creams are essentially equal, that Olay Regeneris does not convey any sort of additional benefit. I think that Ellie Mae would say the same thing. Are we familiar with the term 'cognitive dissonance'? What about 'placebo effect'?

I hope that I have shown that advertising, by its very nature, is harmful to our society. It irrationally increases our needs by manipulating us psychologically. We need to re-evaluate the currently central role that advertising plays in our society. We need to recognise the fact that we are not perfectly free and rational beings, but imperfect organisms susceptible to psychological manipulation. Only by re-examining the basic assumptions of capitalism are we able to perceive the problem, and only by perceiving the problem are we able to begin searching for a solution.

THE WORLD'S #1 PHEROMONE CONCENTRATE CAN ATTRACT YOU A DATE WITH THE INTERNET'S NEWEST PIN-UP SENSATION!

NATURE'S ONLY APHRODISIAC
Attractant 1000+ is being called the world's most powerful pheromone concentrate scientifically designed to attract the opposite sex. Created in a laboratory by a dedicated team of biochemists, Attractant 1000+ is up to one thousand times more potent than normal pheromone secretion. Best of all, Attractant 1000+'s potent formula is unscented so you can discreetly add it to your cologne, aftershave, or even wear it by itself.

BUY ONE GET ONE FREE!
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ATTRACT A DATE WITH JENZ: THE INTERNET'S NEW #1 PIN-UP GIRL
Women find the seductive lure of Attractant 1000+ irresistible and intoxicating. It's biology - it's sexual chemistry. Even the most beautiful women are compelled to respond, and that even includes a pin-up fantasy girl like JENZ.

If you've been living in a cave, JENZ is (quite simply) the hottest blonde since... well... since we all lived in caves. Sexy, sultry, pure, and farm-girl fresh, she's been called "the blonde Bettie Page" and is the closest thing we've ever had to a pin-up prodigy.

First, JENZ beat out over 20 million other super-hot women to score her very own national magazine! And now, JENZ is on a record pace to become the fastest, #1 downloaded pin-up girl of all time. JENZ is truly a goddess among goddesses and yet, you still have a chance to win an all expenses paid date with her in Los Angeles, California courtesy of Attractant 1000+ and Western Research 3000, Inc. If you want to win a date with an Internet Superstar, it only makes sense you'd have to register on-line at either:

www.jenzpinup.com
OR
www.attractant1000.com

No purchase necessary. All entries must be received by March 31, 2002.

WHAT PEOPLE SAY:
"...because as a culture we wash daily with scented soaps, these natural pheromones often are removed or overpowered... Today scientists wonder if our habitual cleanliness creates a subconscious hunger for pheromones..."
-Playboy Advisor, July 2000
"Awesome product! Awesome results!"
-M.L., California
"Here's my review for Attractant 1000+ based on the amazing results I experienced. I was skeptical at first, but when I began to receive far more attention from beautiful women I was amazed. Not just casual attraction, but the kind you want, if you know what I mean. Thank you guys so much!"
-Z.U., California

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 2 bottles of ATTRACTANT 1000+ (1oz. each) a \$99.90 value for only \$49.95
 6-PACK SPECIAL: 6 BOTTLES! (1oz. each) a \$299.70 value for only \$99.95

I enclose: Total Purchase \$ _____
\$ _____ CA Residents ADD Sales Tax \$ _____
 Cash Check Money Order Shipping Via Priority Mail \$ **6.95**
Charge to: VISA AMEX MasterCard Discover ADD \$4 for RUSH Service \$ _____
Foreign Orders ADD \$10 S&H (US funds) \$ _____
Exp. Date: ____/____/____ TOTAL ENCLOSED/CHARGED \$ _____

ACCOUNT NUMBER _____
Signature _____
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Name (print) _____
Address _____
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visit our website: www.attractant1000.com

Now why would rational, free-willed beings buy this crap?

of our psychology. These elements tend to embody the worst aspects of our natures: greed, insecurity, frivolousness, laziness- we need only to look to the nature of popular advertisements to confirm this. Not only do most carry almost zero information that would aid rational decision making, but they play to those aforementioned worst aspects. The depiction of cheaply-bought luxury to stimulate our greed. The beautiful models that make us feel insecure. The provision of the most unnecessary objects to satisfy and stimulate our most frivolous needs. The instantaneous Mc-fulfillment of our desires. Advertising makes us stupider, shallower, vainer, more insecure, and less rational. This quite quickly explains the

tising costs- they must hire people to produce the ads and they must rent the means to broadcast the ads. Advertising is a large sector of our economy. Advertising pays for virtually all of our public mediums. News, the arts, radio, television, motor sports, sports. But think about what advertising produces for a moment. Have you ever stayed up and watched late-night television? The money and talent and effort that go into those infomercials for 'hair-in-a-can', do you think that they've added to our society? Certainly they've added to the bank account of the producer of 'hair-in-a-can'. But I think those thousands spent on the ad might as well have been tossed off a bridge, except they have the added effect of making society stupider,

nal' and 'free', it is antithetical that any legal transaction could be harmful to the consumer, because why would they buy it if it were? Why would Ellie Mae buy Olay Regeneris if it wasn't in her interest to do so? This means that classic capitalist economics values every product according to the amount that people pay for it. Thus spending \$2 million on a Viagra advertisement adds \$2 million to our GDP. Didn't you know we were \$2 million better off after that ad? A \$2 million dollar Super Bowl ad for Viagra, a \$2 million dollar hospital wing, a \$2 million dollar laser-guided bomb all contribute equally to the GDP- they contribute equally to our production and thus to our well-being, under capitalist assumptions.

POINT / COUNTER-POINT

ALWAYS COCA-COLA VS. KILLER COKE

■■■ Is the Coke contract a question of funding or a question of ethics?

DRINK UP OR PAY MORE by Catherine Shea

The argument about the Coke contract here at Queen's has absolutely nothing to do with The Coca-Cola Company or its alleged misconduct in the developing world. Plain and simple, this argument is about funding, despite what anti-Coke agendas like to push. Coke is filling a huge financial void to the tune of 5.5 million and in no way deserves to be burned at the stake. Rather, in this case, Coke deserves a big pat of the back and perhaps, as some would suggest, an ice-cold Coca-Cola.

The Coca-Cola Company is in no way, shape or form the epitome of an ethically-run company. Companies who are "ethical" do not need to give away large sums of money to bolster their image as is happening in this case, thus the euphoric thought of an "ethical" white knight company coming in to replace the Coke contract is unrealistic.

Money in "unethical" companies tends to go into extensive legal counsel, executive compensation, and propaganda campaigns, as opposed to funding socially responsible activities as many would expect. This begs the question of whether money from Coke is used more effectively here at Queen's than it would be if it were trapped in the Coke bureaucracy where drastic changes in ethical behaviour will realistically not occur.

To get to the heart of this debate, The Coca-Cola Company and the "Coke contract" need to be divorced. Think of the Coke contract not just in terms of Coke, but as potentially the Microsoft contract, OPG contract, McDonald's contract, Encana contract, Gap contract or as a contract with another "unethical" company of your choice.

Queen's needs money. Coke has money to give away. Queen's takes Coke's money. Problem solved. End of story. But of course, in this world, there's no such thing as a "free Coke", or is there? In exchange for the money Coke has exclusive rights to putting Coca-Cola products on campus and at campus events, meaning Coke has about a 10 block monopoly on the sale of beverages. This does not mean that Coke products are being shoved down our throats or fed to us through intravenous in order to get us addicted for life.

No one is forcing anyone at Queen's to buy or consume Coke products - we make that choice ourselves. Remember things such as milk, tap water, Nalgens, corner stores, coffee, tea, etc.

that people used to use for drinks before we all got too lazy and simply bought the Coke product conveniently placed in front of us? That's what Coke is banking on (and profiting on) - people being lazy. And I think it's safe to conclude that we are lazy because if we weren't buying so many Coke products, Coke wouldn't be so eager to continue the contract.

Coco-Cola, the big bad corporation taking advantage of lazy students, is such an easy target to lay the blame on. It really does sound too good to be true and it is. The fundamental question to ask in this case is: whose responsibility is it to fund a university? The government? Yes. Students? Yes. Large "evil" corporations? No.

The first two options both involve people like you and me paying more money, either with higher tuition or through taxes, meaning less money to buy vintage-esque t-shirts at American Eagle, purchase Fruitopia, or fill up our SUVs with gasoline, thus completely cramping the style of the average neo-hippie Queen's student. I'm sure an "Opt-Out of the Coke Contract, Opt-Into More Tuition" arrangement can be made, but I'm also sure that there are more productive things to bitch about at this university than the Coke contract and the lack of beverage choices.

The fight for freedom of beverage choices on campus just might lead to a lack of freedom in course selections, clubs, professors, and clean buildings since - in case you have yet to figure it out - money does not grow on trees and these things do cost money. These are also things that add value to Queen's - top notch professors don't come cheap and top-notch professors are what help to develop and attract top-notch students; cutting-edge research facilities are expensive and needed to keep on producing cutting-edge research which adds to a university's prestige. Something or someone needs to pay for these things - let's let The Coca-Cola Company be that something.

And on a final note, the extermination of the Coke contract may go hand-in-hand with the introduction of another so-called evil - deregulation - since the Coke Contract contributes 5.5 million to an already financially strained Queen's. This is a case of the lesser of two evils from the point-of-view of the protestors. It's the devil you know versus the devil you don't. Either way, you're not going to be happy.

COKE COSTS US OUR GLOBAL CONSCIENCE by Sarah Ogden

For all intents and purposes, Coca-Cola has a monopoly at Queen's.

It cannot be denied that \$5.5 million is a substantial amount of money for an underfunded university. But we gain that \$5.5 million at the cost of our global conscience.

We lose this conscience if we lose sight of the ethical dilemma inherent in Coca-Cola. Coke's 'shady incidents' include human rights abuses (including murder) inflicted upon union leaders at Colombian Coke plants by rightist paramilitaries with suspected ties to the company. A report by the 'NYC Fact-Finding Delegation on Coca-Cola in Columbia' states that "circumstantial evidence of Coca-Cola's complicity in the raw repression of its union workforce abounds." Another trend revealed that Coke's peak profits have come at times of the most intense repression. In addition, the report found "that the company [Coke] has allowed if not itself orchestrated the human rights violations of its workers." What is further alarming is that in the face of this evidence, Coca-Cola "completely fails to investigate company ties to the paramilitaries" and insists that "it bears no responsibility whatsoever for the terror campaigns against its workers."

Coca-Cola has also been accused of polluting groundwater at their factory in Kerala, Southern India. In a report from the joint parliamentary committee set up by the Indian government, the Plachimada Coke plant is described as responsible for "causing pollution of water, depleting groundwater... reducing crop yields [and] causing ailments to human beings." Even though the Coke factory has now closed, water within a two-mile radius of the factory remains unusable.

According to the *Ecologist* Coca-Cola was fined \$300,000 for polluting the Matasnillo River in Panama.

Africa's Coca-Cola factories are the largest private employers in the continent. With AIDS ravaging Africa, in 2000 Coca-Cola provided relevant education and treatment for only 1.5% of its employees. Public protests forced the corporation to extend this coverage in April 2003.

In 2000 the company was forced to pay \$190 million to black workers after it was found guilty of racial discrimination in its Atlanta factories.

A study in Rio de Janeiro identified over-consumption of Coca-Cola drinks (over food) as a cause of malnutri-

tion and vitamin deficiency in children aged six to fourteen.

All of these points are distressing. One common theme is that Coke rectifies (or attempts to rectify) their offenses when *forced* to. Coke's unethical situation should *force* us to replace the nonchalant attitude most of us have towards Coke with a critical perspective. This brings to mind the February 15, 2005 edition of the *Queen's Journal*, in which Dean of Student Affairs Bob Crawford says: "It's tough in this day and age unless something is clearly unethical to say, 'No, we don't want this source of several million dollars.' We just don't have the money we need." The statement "unless something is *clearly* unethical" shows the priority that is being put on ethics in this decision.

The very fact that Queen's accepted this contract with a potentially human rights-violating company, says much about the state of post secondary funding. Are there no other options? Surely if we put our heads together, we could think of some other option for getting funding that doesn't involve supporting such a company. Granted, when Queen's signed the contract, Coke's questionable practices were not well known publicly. Now that they have been brought to light and it is increasingly "clear" that Coke is liable, isn't it time that Queen's - as an *educational* institution dedicated to creating an atmosphere of questioning, pushing boundaries, creating "global citizens" - withdraws from the Coke contract? It's not implausible. The February 15, 2005 issue of the *Queen's Journal* tells how a group formed by Crystal Yakacki, a student at New York University, recently convinced the student government there to pass a resolution in favour of barring Coca-Cola from their campus. This should be encouraging to those who oppose the Coke contract.

The 'NYC Fact-Finding Delegation on Coca-Cola in Columbia' report ends with the plea that "all of us must challenge this company [Coke], the symbol of American enterprise throughout the world, to end its complicity in the persecution of Colombian workers." By accepting the Coke contract based solely on the financial gain it affords to Queen's, we are ourselves complicit in the continued human rights abuses that Coke is undertaking, and worst of all, we are ignoring our responsibility to cultivate a global conscience.

ARTS AND LITERATURE

PEDIGREE

Rakesh Singh

Andy sat there looking straight at me, waiting for me to laugh or to smile. I sat there staring right back at him waiting for him to do the same. I sat in a large beige office chair, a relic from the seventies, reminiscent of Picard's chair on the Enterprise. A controller lay on the left arm beside me. Mario theme music played lightly in the background. Andy sat there with a keyboard in his lap. The monitor of his computer cast a blue glow on his pale malnourished face. Skinny and squalid, he sat there waiting for me to push the conversation further.

His room was a mess. It was always a mess. We called it "The Pit." On the damp grey concrete floor lay his sisters' toys: a naked and bald Barbie, a Snoopy with the limbs missing, and a crucified Tickle Me Elmo. He had crucified it before I had arrived. A lesson to his sisters. They shouldn't leave their junk lying around.

At my foot snuffed Ping. Ping was Andy's annoying pig-faced dog. It needed a haircut. It had reddish dreads and smelt like dog-food. It humped your leg if you looked away. It shot snot at you if you looked directly at it. It was an expensive breed. Andy wanted to sell it. It was worth close to a thousand dollars. A thousand could help get out of low-income housing. He complained that in the mornings before he could take a piss or scratch his balls he had to take Ping's fur out of his mouth. That was too much for Andy. Ping would be his martyr.

I cracked. I smiled. I laughed right out loud and said: "So what happened to Shelly?" "Nothing happened. I dumped her."

Andy knew I'd ask and he wanted to tell me the whole story but he wouldn't continue until I actually asked. We played this game every other month. Every time I came home from University, Andy would be waiting. Not like he went to school or worked. He sat in his *Pit* all day. We would trade stories. It was a ritual. I pushed up my glasses and counted three beats. One. Two. Three. "Why? What was wrong with Shelly?" "Ran, did you ever see Shelly?"

"Should I have?"
"Weird girl. She was from a Catholic School."

"Let me guess: blonde and blue-eyed complete with a green school uniform and sever-

He laughed aloud. He lit a smoke.

"She did this for two weeks. Until I hot-dogged her. I tried to get her to suck it. I tried to have sex." Snapping his fin-



photo by M. Aikins

al mental peculiarities - well, at least in your opinion, she had mental peculiarities."

Andy nodded. He smiled. He scratched his nose with his thumb and leaned back in his chair. He moved the keyboard to the desk. He knew what was coming. I knew what was coming. In the corner, Ping sniffed at the crucified *Tickle Me Elmo*. The story-telling duel was always the same - just different words. Strike and parry. I spoke: "You are so fucking predictable."

"What?"

"Get on with the story."

"Shelly, Shelly, Shelly."

She had the oddest habit. Two days after I met her - only two days after I met her - she would come over and get all her gear off - butt-fucking naked - and, and - well, suck my thumb."

"Your thumb?"

"My fucking thumb."

Andy raised his skinny arm and held out his right thumb.

"That's a nice thumb."

He cracked. He smiled.

gers and pointing at his crotch, he continued, "I even tried to slide her on to it. I'd grab the Captain with the same hand that she was sucking. But she wouldn't take." He acted out the motion. Ping watched intently.

"Did you ever just ask?"

"She would just smile.

Never a yes or a no."

"Hot-dogged her?"

"Well, it got to be too much with her teasing me all the time. Blue balls. So, one time while messing around, I got behind her - aimed to put it in - but she shifted and it went into another notorious body cavity."

"Slip-and-miss-anal?

That's too much."

"No, it just slid between her cheeks. Adjacent to the anus. You should try it. It wasn't bad."

"That's disgusting. I at least waited until I was comfortable and *very in love* with my *woman* to communicate my interest in that position." Andy sat sneering and stared at me to continue, "Look Andy. Same

shit, same passion, I just require certain perquisites. I get it, though, a piece of meat between buns. A fucking hot-dog. I really want to be sick Mr. Massey. But - instead I'm going to laugh at your creative terminology. Just know that I find you morally reprehensible. This story is just shock value." Laughing, I asked, "What did she do?"

"She turned her head at me and smiled and called me a crafty muthafucker."

Pause. I had nothing else to say. His story was too much. I couldn't believe it. He won before I could even tell my story. I picked up the controller and started to play. I raised one eyebrow at the screen.

In a strange way it calming. Andy and I always fell into the same patterns no matter how long we were apart. Story time was a silly piece of stability and intriguing cognitive studies in stupidity. It never mattered who won the stories. They were all dumb anyways. Just joke construction. Diction drops mixed with verbosity. It was on-the-spot-editing. It wasn't the words we enjoyed but the art of orality. Andy would say it the sentence "Like a good Satan, I mix facts and fiction."

In our world, except for each other, all the storytellers were dead. I worried if Andy stuck himself into weird situations just to have stories to tell me. I hoped not. I would say something. Try to help him find a place for his old-world skills. If there was one. He needed to get out of the basement. He relegated the position of "Captain" to the wrong body part. While I played Mario, Ping watched my subtle movements from over by Andy's feet.

"So, that's why you dumped her. She was a big tease."

Andy pointed one grey neutral eye towards me and put one hand through his dirty blonde hair. Ping circled around his legs, drooling, looking up at his master. With a flick of a remote, Andy turned on his stereo and out blared Iggy Pop's *I Wanna Be Your Dog*.

"Nope. All that shit was *fun*. I dumped her because she smelt like dog-food."

GODLESS AT THE WORKBENCH

■■■ The art of propaganda
by **Matt Aikins**

The October Revolution of 1917 was an event unprecedented in human history. The tsarist Russian government was overthrown and replaced by a popular uprising dedicated to carrying out the radical political philosophies of Karl Marx. The largest nation in the world was now united under a socialist government. In this new climate it seemed that anything could be possible, that the ideological chains of class, religion, and prejudice might be overcome by a new ideology, one grounded only in reason. Essential to this task was the creation of new methods of popular discourse and culture—a task that fell to Soviet propagandist literature.

One such propagandist journal was *Bezbozhnik u Stanka*, or *Godless at the Workbench*, a satirical, antireligious magazine put out by the Soviet state in the 1920's. A collection of original images and posters from the magazine is currently on exhibit at the Agnes Etherington Art Gallery. The exhibit also includes antireligious children's toys and photos of Soviet workers at antireligious demonstrations.

The themes contained in the magazine are primarily antireligious and atheistical, however a broad range of other social topics make appearances, including posters promoting women's rights, hygiene, technology, literacy, and science. Glancing at the boldness of these illustrations gives one a sense of the sweeping optimism that must have prevailed in the early days of the Russian Revolution—the sense that humanity's existence might be fundamentally altered and improved simply through ideology.

The illustrations are primarily visual with small subtitles, as most people in Russia were still illiterate at the time. They are rendered in classic Soviet style—dramatic, monochromatic illustrations with broad shouldered peasants, endless wheat fields, and vast industrial complexes supplying the most common subjects. While this style does seem somewhat quaint and anachronistic in our age of computer-generated wizardry, one cannot help but admire at how deftly the Soviet artists were able to convey emotion

and imagery with such simple colours and shapes.

Perhaps most shocking is the magazine's blunt disparagement of religion. In contrast to the current times of official neutrality these state-sponsored illustrations abound with captions such as "We got rid of the earthly tsars, now we'll storm the heavens" and "The bourgeoisie maintains the workers in a state of capitalist slavery with the narcotic of religion and the myth of the Resurrection of Christ". Religion is portrayed at the ally of capitalist exploitation, a false and controlling ideology that Marx once termed "the opiate of the masses".

The magazine drips with satirical humour. Capitalists and priests are caricatured as greedy, hypocritical cultures. Most of the illustrations involve the subversion of popular religious images. One item in the exhibit details the 'Godless Corner Kit', a parody of the traditional Russian Orthodox holy corner. For the modest price of two rubles and 80 kopecks (about a worker's hourly wage), comrades would receive a Godless Corner banner, 2 large posters with imagery and slogans, 7 out-sized humorous posters, 6 back issues of *Godless at the Workbench*, and an visual instruction manual.

Godless at the Workbench is no mere historical curiosity. Instead, by giving us a window into a very different time, the exhibit forces us to reflect on our own surroundings. It is an almost automatic knee-jerk reaction in the West



Jesus to the Imperialists: 'You can kill their bodies but save their souls.'

to view anything Soviet negatively. They were, after all, the 'communist enemy'. When we look at the direct and forceful commands of the illustrations we perhaps revile a government that sought to force its ideology on its citizens. And yet the subject matter gives us pause. The pages of *Godless at the Workbench* are filled with exhortations to aspire to a better world— one in which humans are free of superstition and prejudice, one in which women are treated as equals, where science and hygiene are valued and respected, and in which the greatest value is not

placed on material accumulation and consumption but on service rendered to the common good. When we glance at our own culture we see precisely the opposite. The pages of our popular magazines are filled with objectified women, foolish superstitions such as astrology, and ads for wasteful material goods. We assume that this is the normal course of things— it is after all dictated by the free market! Exhibits such as *Godless at the Workbench* offer us a window into how things might have been, or might be, different.



TAKING THE WHEEL - WOMEN AND THE COMING OF THE MOTOR AGE

■■■ Gender beneath and behind the wheel
A book review by **Catherine Shea**

Taking the Wheel - Women and the Coming of the Motor Age chronicles the relationship between women and the car from late 19th century until the 1920s. This was a time of technological innovation, economic competitiveness, and female nonconformity, and the invention of the car was considered a threat to the morals and manners of women. The hypothesis of the book was that although the car helped in women's emancipation, its technology was primarily adapted to traditional gender roles as opposed to actually challenging gender roles. Thus, as much fun and empowerment females received from the car, they did not completely abandon their domestic duties in favour of freedom, as initially feared.

The early inventors of the car, or the horseless carriage, valued brawn over brains, ruggedness over refinery, and did not consider themselves to be businessmen, as personified in car mogul Henry Ford. An important requirement to be a "real" driver was the ability to fix a car, requiring intimate knowledge of the inner workings of a car. Combining speed and power, both of which were typical masculine desires, a love affair developed between man and his car.

Women at this time, still subject to the Victorian notions of femininity, were considered biologically weak and intellectually incapacitated to not only drive cars, but to also understand the mechanical workings of cars. Lack of mechanical knowledge and being too weak to fix a car essentially excluded women from the class of 'real' drivers.

The automobile also posed a great threat to social order as it provided women with the means to stray far from home at a time when women rarely left the house unaccompanied, if at all. Needless to say, any woman driver at the turn of the century caused a spectacle and was literally on display as the first cars were wide open and left nothing up to the imagination. The car required its own standards for etiquette and fashion in order for women to maintain their feminine doctrine.

The most rigidly enforced component of a woman's life during the Victorian Era was her sexuality. The car, with its ability to take the woman into private areas of the country side, was seen as the perfect invention to tempt and exercise a woman's sexual deviance. What gained less attention was that cars were also a place to reinforce male dominance, as in the case of a back seat rape or a rape far off in the country. The warning 'never get into someone else's car' originated with the invention of the automobile and implied a women's need to control not only her own sexuality, but also to not tempt a man by getting into his car.

Early terminology about cars reinforced the fear that car would lead to a woman's sexual deviance. *Traffic*, now is associated with streets busy with cars, initially meant "a prostitute", thus women venturing out into 'traffic' implied negative perceptions. Similarly the word *chauffeur* had two meanings, one being "to stoke up, fire up, a boiler, an engine", and the other being "to make hot love to a woman". Hence, the relationship between a woman and her chauffeur was under constant scrutiny.

These notions of femininity progressed greatly during this era and the car is intertwined with women's emancipation efforts as women progressed from being socially unacceptable in cars, to being the passenger, and finally to taking the wheel as driver.

Early women set out to shatter the stereotype the women were unfit drivers by driving independently across North America, enduring rough terrain and repairing their own vehicles. The outcome of these efforts did more to reinforce stereotypes than they did to shatter them. Men felt that these women were undergoing unnecessary stress and harm, thus spurring the desire to make the car more comfortable and easier to drive for the sake of the woman as opposed to engineering progress.

The car also made the women's suffrage movement more efficient as transportation time was vastly decreased and an unprecedented number of women were reached, especially in rural areas of the United States. Rural women benefited greatly from the car since they were usually the most isolated. Many began doing domestic chores together, contradicting the cultural construct that domesticity and sociability are separate. In larger cities, the suffrage movement was brought to lower income women who did not have access to cars through the "Suffrage Taxi" which transported women around New York City.

The most notable contribution to the women's movement came during World War I, where women compensated for the scarcity of qualified mechanics and ambulance drivers. Many upper class women became ambulance drivers, living and working war-stricken areas of Europe with the same quality of life as the soldiers. Upon conclusion of the war, most returned home to their bourgeoisie lifestyle as they did not have an economic need to continue working and could drive leisurely in the United States. After the war, the car industry began to boom as Henry Ford and other car makers dreamed that every man and his family could own a car.

The electric car, an initial invention intended for all people, became primarily a women's car in order to suppress many of the sexuality worries and



to accommodate women's traditional gender roles. The electric vehicle, disliked by men due to its slow speeds, inability to climb hills, and lack of stamina, was seen as the perfect car for women since it was easy drive (and rid her of the need of a chauffeur) and it would not allow her to drive far distances, thus controlling her mobility and decreasing her opportunities to be sexually deviant in 'far off places'. Even when it was no longer economically feasible, the electric car continued to be produced and marketed for women as a means of control.

The notion that gas cars were for men and electric cars were for women carried over into numerous of the first engineering innovations on cars. All early developments were said to be made in the sake of women's comfort, not engineering innovation. These included the change from a crank start to an electric start, the enclosed car, the automatic gear shift, and child safety restraints. Cars were still produced without these developments as "real men" would still want a rugged car.

From these engineering developments it was clear to the car companies that women played a role in purchasing decisions of cars because real men were beginning to purchase cars with many of these innovations. Women

were portrayed in advertisements as the nagging housewife who wanted an attractive and easy to drive car. The led to the new department in General Motors, dubbed the "beauty parlor", where different colour paints and car interiors were developed.

This book illustrated that gender roles can do more to shape the perceptions and uses of technology than vice versa. The car has become of tool for women's domestic duties, making tasks like purchasing groceries and bringing the kids to school more efficient. However, even today when people see a woman driving a car, it is assumed that she is under-taking a leisure activity as opposed to doing something actually productive.

It also demonstrated the inherent risks of creating "His n' Hers" technology, as in the case of the car, it was simply a measure to reinforce gender roles and treated mechanical reliability and engineering innovation as a luxury to one sex. The car resulted in the unconscious and hierarchal arrangement with the man in the driver's seat, woman as the passenger, and children in the back, asserting that if women are not in the home, they belong in the passenger's seat playing second fiddle to men.

ASTONISHING TALES FROM THE GOLDEN AGE

■■■ Book review: Gerard Jones, *Men of Tomorrow: Geeks, Gangsters, and the Birth of the Comic Book* (Perseus Books, 2004)
by Timothy Drake

2004 saw the publication of several truly awful studies of the American comic book (the worst of the bunch being the partisan, mean-spirited, and mostly inaccurate *Stan Lee and The Rise and Fall of the American Comic Book*, by Tom Spurgeon and Jordan Raphael). Happily, there was an exception: Gerard Jones's *Men of Tomorrow: Geeks, Gangsters, and the Birth of the Comic Book*, the finest non-fiction work about comic books to be written so far. Jones is perhaps best known for the entertaining and informative study of American television, *Honey I'm Home: Sitcoms Selling the American Dream* (1992). With his collaborator Will Jacobs, he also wrote *The Comic Book Heroes* (1987), a rather gossipy and uneven history of post-1955 superhero comics. For *Men of Tomorrow*, Jones takes us back to the late 1930s and the origins of the comic—"The Golden Age" of the medium—and in doing so demonstrates how much he has grown as a critic and a researcher since the publication of *Heroes*.

The book mainly focuses on the four men most responsible for the creation of the company now known as DC Comics: publishers Jack Liebowitz and Harry Donenfeld and Superman creators Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster. Liebowitz, a Russian immigrant who grew up in poverty on the Lower East Side of New York City, became an accountant so he could work for his step-father, an organizer of the garment workers' union. The dedicated socialist became the cunning entrepreneur when Liebowitz formed a partnership with Donenfeld, the mob-connected publisher of "girlie magazines" (Frank Costello, the chief inspiration for Mario Puzo's Vito Corleone, was godfather to Donenfeld's son, Irwin). When, in 1936, Donenfeld decided to get into the comic book business, it was due in no small part to Liebowitz's business acumen that their company, originally called National Periodicals, became a major force in American popular culture for decades—at the height of the Golden Age in the 1940s, an astounding 90% of fourth and fifth graders were regular comic book readers. At the time of its 1967 sale to Steven J. Ross (later the owner of Warner Communications), National not only published the DC comics line but also distributed *Playboy*, *MAD Magazine*, the James Bond novels, and Signet Books. Yet Donenfeld and Liebowitz go down as the greatest villains in the history of American popular culture—they are the men who 'robbed' Siegel and Shuster of their greatest creation. Siegel was a science fiction geek from Cleveland whose father, a shop-owner, was shot to death by a robber. The Toronto-born Shuster, an aspiring cartoonist with passion for weightlifting, was Siegel's shy high school classmate. After a

few false starts, they created Superman, a musclebound costumed crime fighter who, among other things, was invulnerable to bullets. With his first appearance in *Action Comics* #1 (1938), "The Man of Tomorrow"—it was only much later that he came to be called "The Man of Steel"—inaugurated the entire superhero genre.

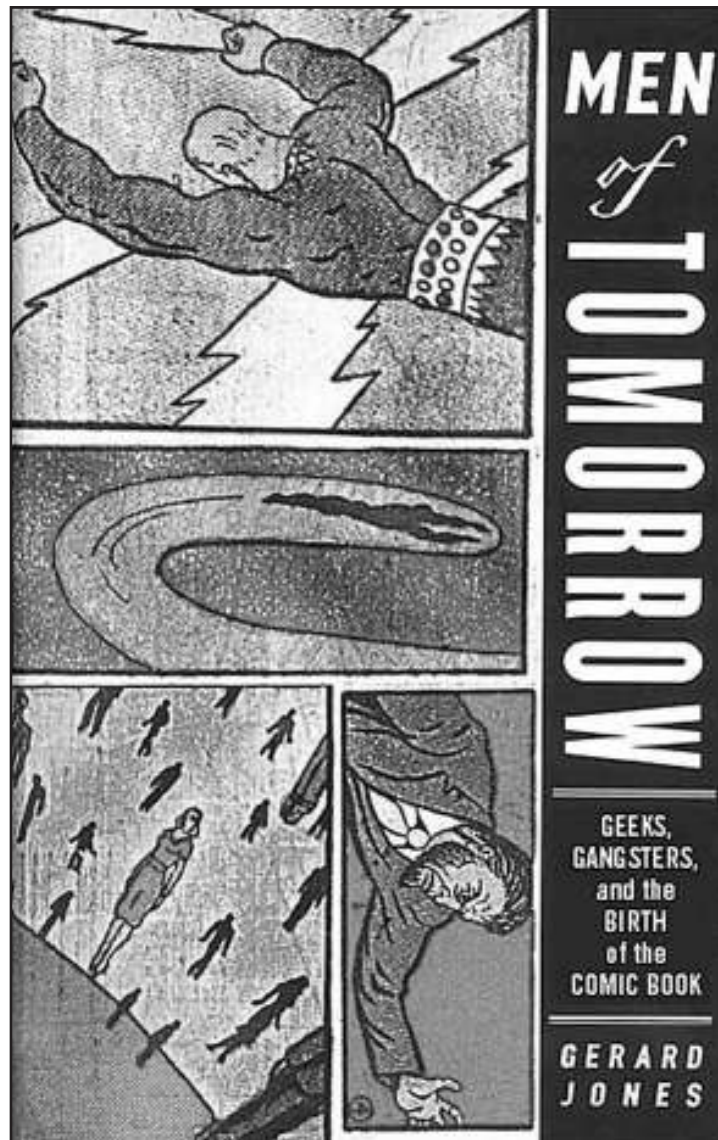
contributed significantly to his downfall. At the same time, Jones acknowledges that there is much to admire about the highly disciplined and remarkably far-sighted Liebowitz. Jones's even-handedness distinguishes *Men of Tomorrow* from all previous comic book histories: as he notes in his introduction, "the history

suffered a nervous breakdown because of over-identification with his character. Throughout his long career, Bob Kane, the illustrator credited with the creation of the Batman (DC's second most famous and profitable superhero), employed a large network of ghost-writers and ghost-artists to compose the comic books that would make him a millionaire and pop culture icon.

Both the most avid comic book fans and the uninitiated will find Jones's commentary on the cultural significance of the superhero illuminating and, at various points, profound. Forget the embarrassing clichés that mark most recent magazine articles dealing with the comic book. In an especially perceptive section of the book, Jones elucidates the storytelling formula of the Superman comics published on the eve of the United States entry into World War II:

"The genius of Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster was to combine movie slapstick with pulp adventure, make fun of their fantasies as they indulged them, retreat into childhood as they made themselves act like grownups, and laugh at the world that saw them as cowards as they held back their rage, just as America was skewered on the conflict between its wishfully innocent self-image and the most terrible necessities. The geek culture found its moment of universal relevance as all those young men with their Depression smiles were yanked from their homes and sent to war." (233)

A lifelong comic book enthusiast, Jones has clearly spent a great deal of time pondering what the superhero means, and, as the above quotation evidences, he expresses his ideas in prose that is clear and vigorous. In his interpretations of the classic DC comics, he often proves to be something of a post-structuralist; however, he eschews the jargon that makes so much of modern cultural criticism virtually unreadable. Jones is perhaps at his best when he relates the social, economic, and political contexts of the early comics. The reader of this book will learn a great deal about the mafia's often close relationship with American big business, the Jewish communities in New York City and Cleveland, the magazine printing and distribution practices of the 1930s, the communist "witch hunts" of the 1950s, and the rise of the multimedia conglomerates. Unfortunately, because his focus is the Golden Age (which ended in the late 1940s), Jones devotes approximately five of the book's nearly four hundred pages to a discussion of Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, and Steve Ditko—the creators behind DC's chief rival since the 1960s, The Marvel Comics Group. Hopefully, someone will write a history of Marvel that is as thoroughly researched and as skilfully written as *Men of Tomorrow*.



But in order to get Clark Kent and his alter ego into print, Siegel and Shuster sold the rights to their character to Donenfeld and Liebowitz for a mere 120 dollars. By the 1950s, as Superman moved to television and National continued its rule of the comic book market, Siegel and Shuster had been reduced to near-poverty. Siegel managed to scratch out a living scripting comics, but Shuster lost his sight in the late 1940s and could no longer find employment in the industry he helped create. The latter part of Jones' book details the Superman creators' heart-wrenching battle in the 1970s for recognition and compensation. To his credit, Jones is at all times careful to separate fact from hearsay, and he avoids the simple good and evil dichotomies that made the plots of the classic DC comics so popular. The controversy over Superman, he reveals, was more complicated than many assume. Jones makes clear that Siegel was hardly a saint: his arrogance, combined with his habit of making erratic decisions,

of the comic book has been told by those who got rooked and by those who sympathize with those who got rooked" (xiv).

Those readers of *Men of Tomorrow* who do not frequent comic book shops or subscribe to *The Comics Journal* will be shocked to learn just how bizarre the writers and the artists of the Golden Age really were. The lovelorn comic book artists depicted in Kevin Smith's film *Chasing Amy* seem rather prosaic when compared to Jones' cast of characters. Jones tells us about William Moulton Marston—psychology professor at Tufts University, inventor of the lie detector, bigamist obsessed with female bondage, and creator of Wonder Woman. Then there was Alvin Schwartz, who, after years of writing symbolist poetry and editing the literary magazine *Mosaic* (which published Ezra Pound and William Carlos Williams), became one of DC's most prolific superhero writers. Mort Weisinger, the tyrannical but often brilliant editor of the Superman comics,

MID-THOUGHT(S) AT MIDNIGHT

...its just always been that way
 you would tell stories.
 I believed the on one about your Aztec blood
 we agree:
 colours persuade us
 fools live under us
 there is not enough orange in the world to be fully understood
 ferris wheels and other things that occupy time and space are real life
 protests are brotherhood
 brotherhood smiles.

You're presence spreads like wildfire
 panic strikes:
 hey! there is a bee on your throat! don't move!
 you panic
 we hold hands:
 instead of just hurting you it is us if I feel it too
 the reality
 I don't
 we both notice this
 but prefer to play 'make-believe' from time to time.
 I have seen people fade and the rest of us not bother
 it comes as no surprise:
 what were you expecting?
 (we find drugs do a lot).

Bad and good are platforms with binoculars:
 we stand on them to check out the view
 like Niagara Falls
 the closer you can get the better/worse
 senses fooled.
 Ah ha!
 You call that intimacy?
 If time threatens you:
 sleep.

Situations and confrontations with no words:
 have forced me to hang onto colours and smells
 that are rejuvenated more times than I could have a penny for each.

You have to be going somewhere to stay here.
 Like a single bed:
 just use your imagination
 sleep on the right
 you can't have it all
 Defeat and fact when mixed together are different each time.

Things that hurt were never meant to
 no one would self-afflict your kind of absence on themselves
 it's taboo.
 Taboo's are done behind closed doors
 where you mind your manners and the kids.

Too many people sleep alone:
 for anyone to sleep well.

by A. A. Allen

... *sex*

THE GREAT FAMINE

■■■ The torturous wasteland of sexual deprivation
by **Lawrence Osgoode**

This is a story of deprivation. A withering away of the body and spirit from the denial of an essential need.

Did I go hungry? No. I have ample food to live off of whenever I feel like opening the fridge.

Did I need water? No. The taps in my household flow forth with the same super-abundant liquid you drink 5 litres of, on average, every day.

Oxygen? Shelter? Medicine? No, no, and no. It is not what the United Nations would say is 'essential to life' but if the body may covet bread, the soul positively languishes for this thing beyond all above commodities. I'm talking about sex. Oh yes: that sweet sweet poontang flavah. Mark Twain once said "Of the delights of this world, man cares most for sexual intercourse. He will go to any length for it-risk fortune, character, reputation, life itself."

I lost my virginity when I was 18 years old and enjoyed immensely pleasurable sex several times. When my then-girlfriend and I broke-up I had no idea what a long and tortuous road I had begun walking, for this brief taste of sex was to make its lack all the more unbearable.

1 year later I was a little sexually frustrated, mostly dwelling on my previous relationship, but on the whole, content with being single for a while.

2 years later I was getting antsy. This was not right. I was in my prime, I'm an athletic, relatively attractive, articulate, outgoing and friendly guy. What gives? Why am I consistently getting shot-down by all these women? Am I unconsciously picking my nose? Do I have bad breath?

After seriously thinking about what was wrong it was clear that I was caught in the trap. It was by degrees that this realization came to me. You see: you tend to share, or even experience vicariously, the emotions of the people you spend your time with. Even if you have a decent-looking face, even if you can engage in witty discussion, and even if you keep your body

conditioned to peak athletic form, people are simply drawn to others who feel good about themselves and their lives, and they are repelled by those who are unhappy. And guys: with the other gender, there is no negative emotion more palpable and more repulsive than desperation.

It's the most vicious of all cycles: this wretched longing was rendering me unattractive to women, and thence more desperate by the day. The downward spiral had begun. Sex is like oxygen; it's not that important unless you're not getting any.

Being conscious of this cycle didn't help. In fact it made it worse. The more aware I was of this cycle, the more I knew how much it limited my chances of ever getting to knock booty, and the less I knocked booty, the more desperate I became.

It gets worse: with an unfortunate illness I had contracted at the same time (which was not diagnosed until much later), my blood-circulation suffered severely and the lack of hormonal stimulus took a toll on my libido. On rare occasions when I was able to lure an equally desperate female home I would discover (with increasing horror each time) my inability to 'rise' to the occasion. Stress from this experience (people don't seem to think that stress actually has real negative health effects, but it does), and several other unrelated problems compounded this scenario and the problem only got worse.

It took me five years to get laid.

Five long and loathsome years. I was not the same man at the end of it. I was in a perversely, insanely desperate need of a shag. All other drives and ambitions were secondary. School, work- pointless drivel. There was only one thing on my agenda. Every minute of every day I thought about and devised schemes for one single goal. Even as I knew that it was precisely that aching yearning that was denying me precisely what I desired.

By that point it had been about 1 year and a half since any kind of contact at all

with a female, and those were not even remotely gratifying experiences. On the contrary: on those days I felt like I wasn't a man, but an inadequate impotent dick, all puns intended.

If there is only one thing that can be more degrading (especially in late adolescence) than constantly striking out and failing to pick up women it is impotence. That one hits your machismo where it hurts no matter how secure you think you are. "Why not hit up the doctor" you say? I went to the Doctors' about it, and he told me that if I was able to get an erection in the morning when I woke up (which I sometimes did) then there's no physical reason why I couldn't get one when I needed it, and that he couldn't prescribe Viagra because he thought I was a healthy young guy and that I was most likely trying to get these drugs for some sort of "extraordinary purposes." I can't say I blame him, he probably gets a lot of people like that.

Meanwhile I was becoming more and more acutely aware of the stress and strain I was feeling, and the toll it was taking on my physical and mental health. Every fibre of muscle in my body was straining, every bone creaking, every gland throbbing, and absolutely every hormone going positively ape-shit, screaming in violent furious desperation to FUCK SOMETHING!!!!!!

I thought about going gay. Hell, I thought about investing in livestock. If any of my cousins had visited from out of town I'm sure the influence of the societal taboo surrounding incest would have waned.

I recall reading that in Abu Ghraib when American Intelligence officers were torturing Iraqi prisoners they didn't beat them, whip them, or electrocute them (during the methodical torture for information that is, not to be confused with the random senseless violence of The 372nd Military Police Company), instead they humiliated them sexually. They forced them to assume humiliating positions naked on top of each other, suck fake dicks and

undergo mock-rapes. This torture technique I imagine was devised as a means of breaking down all barriers of thought and reason that the victim may use to resist, and to directly denigrate that most deeply rooted region of your psyche, the foundation upon which everything else is precariously balanced, the 'id'. Sticks and stones be damned, the Americans figured out how break the human spirit.

This was torture indeed.

I can recall convulsing on the floor in seizures of frustration, mentally screaming with every fibre of my being. I can recall going out every night, night after night, with one single minded ambition and coming home every night a failure, not sure whether to throw my fist to the sky in futile rage against the cosmic forces conspiring against me, or resign myself to continued misery with a deep self-pitying sigh. You can only sigh so many times.

I became unwilling to kiss, hug, or even touch my mother for fear that she, being the only woman in my life I touched, might become an object of sexual desire... Freud would have a fucking field day with me.

It was not just cosmic forces I was angry at though but women, the very 'object' of my desire. Every girl that had flirted with me just long enough at the bar to get me to buy her a drink and then ditched me. Every girl that had gone out on a date with me, got me to pay for dinner, 'forgetting' to mention her boyfriend. Every girl that had flaunted herself to me just long enough to get me to fawn over her with affection and attention, and then deciding that attention was all she wanted, dragged out her conquest for weeks of futile chasing instead of directly and honestly telling me she wasn't interested. These women became all women in my eyes, and I despised them.

I would look at women, and rather than lovelorn affection and attraction, all I could feel was contempt for their petty games and two-faced insincerity. I had become a misogynist.

FAMINE

Continued from Page 14

That sure didn't help the situation.

It was then that I resolved to lie, cheat, steal, and do whatever was necessary to beat the women at their own game. This plan never came about- fortunately the famine was almost at an end.

Oddly enough I began to think differently about it all: my advances for the purposes of sex seemed just as selfish and manipulative as the woman that dicked me around for money and attention. I got treated for the illness I had acquired and came to realize first-hand how connected physical and mental health are. I carried myself a little higher and happier, and just let go of the agonizing frustration I would feel if I dwelt on the thought. I met a woman that didn't

seem to want to play all the head games I was accustomed to. A genuine compassionate human being who forced me to rethink my sexist views. When things didn't work she was patient and understanding, when things did work it was a godsend. It was like in *Shawshank Redemption* when that guy breaks out of the prison. It was pure unadulterated rapturous ecstasy free flowing in a river of LSD.

It was healthy. It was how things ought to be. I'm sure there are a lot of sexually frustrated people out there, for though I think I had it pretty bad I'm sure most people can relate somewhat. All I can say to you is that a happy sexuality is like a Zen meditative state: you cannot force it to happen, and the more you try to force it, the more unattainable it becomes. You must accept and embrace your lot for until you find better fortune your only salvation lays in your own hands.

PICKIN' UP

Continued from Page 16

10. Be confident and playful

Confidence will make or break your pick-up. There is nothing sexier than confidence. Nothing. I've seen hideous uglies go home with gorgeous hotties simply because they have the confidence to win them over. So be confident- remember, there's plenty of other attractive, shallow people out there if this one turns you down. They're just a face in the crowd.

11. Get your grind on

Let's see- a socially acceptable way to rub your crotches against each other in public? What else do you need? Even if you dance like a wounded hippo, it'll still give you something to laugh about together.

12. Don't wait until last call to make your move

Don't keep postponing it. It's possible that the other person could be a red-herring, that is, someone feigning interest but not interested in getting down, and you don't want to find this out at 2:00 am when all other possibilities have fled the coop, do you? Besides, there something terribly sobering about the harsh light that comes at the end of the night- do not at any circumstance get caught under this light. You may not like what you see, and the other person probably won't either. On the other hand, any one who's sticking around that late is probably desperate to get laid, so scrape that barrel-bottom if you must.

Well, if you do manage to get 'em out of the bar alone, good luck to you! Wear protection kiddies, this ain't 1963. As for what to do next, well, that'll have to await another article (one my editors probably won't approve). Happy hunting!

Queer Issues Column

IS GAY THE NEW 18-34?

■■■ by James Boyer

One of this year's most popular Super Bowl ads was for Diet Pepsi and featured Carson Kressley of *Queer Eye* fame stopping to check out another man on the street. This commercial is symptomatic of the increasing use of gay themes and icons in mainstream advertising. The website www.commercialcloset.com is entirely devoted to tracking gay representation in all types of media. They state that 36% of Fortune 100 companies have initiated gay marketing. Most of this is limited to low budget ads in the back of gay publications, but it shows progress that is destined to gradually spill over into the mainstream.

In the world of advertising, one of the greatest thrills comes from tapping a new market for your products. At an estimated 10% of the population, the gay market is larger than many other targeted market segments. And with gay couples less likely to start families (hopefully this changes as gay marriage becomes accepted) they have more disposable income. It seems like a corporate dream come true. So why have they been so slow to embrace the gay market?

To start with, the gay market is not as large as it initially seems. Even if 10% of the population does have gay tendencies, a significant percentage of them are trying to suppress those tendencies, at least to the point where they are not visibly gay to the external world. In the gay community, a 'straight acting' persona is an asset valued almost as much as a hard body. After subtracting from this initial 10%, the market is further reduced by the extensive fragmentation in the gay population. The truth is there is no such thing

as THE gay target market. There are subcultures of bears, twinks, circuit bois, art fags, leather men - the list goes on and on. And those are just of the male variety. Obviously there are extremely few products that could be pitched to the entire

gay population with one single strategy.

A gay man's identity is equally fragmented. Speaking from my own experience, while I was growing up and making every effort to lead a straight life I found it much easier to define who I was by my age or ethnicity rather by my sexuality. Straight consumers are not singled out by their sexuality and the demographics that divide them apply to gay consumers as well. In this sense, specifically

targeting the gay population is somewhat redundant since they are already targeted by mainstream advertising.

Advertisers are slow to embrace gay advertising because of the negative connotations still associated with the gay community. Straight consumers are apprehensive to rush out and purchase products that might cause them to be associated with a gay lifestyle. Of course this type of consumer behaviour doesn't work both ways: gay men don't refrain from products targeted at straight men. To do so would leave them with very little choice. So marketers choose the safer route and target the audience that isolates the least number of people.

The one exception to this negative association seems to be the fashion industry. Brands such as Abercrombie & Fitch, Dolce & Gabbana, and even Levi's can put gay storylines in commercials or gay images in print ads and not suffer from negative controversy. Some, such as Abercrombie, insist that their ads portray male bonding and are not homoerotic. Others are more transparent in their inclusion of gay imagery. The fashion industry escapes criticism because gay men have a reputation for being better dressed than their straight counterparts, regardless of whether or not this stereotype is true. So clothing is the one arena where it is okay to be a little bit gay.

So if the targetable gay community is highly fragmented and smaller than originally thought and gay consumers are reached by mainstream advertising, why bother with ads such as Carson's appearance? Because gay people are a part of mainstream life and advertisers must represent reality in order to connect with real people. So when Verizon wireless shows a montage of couples enjoying their 'Couples Talk' plan, you better believe that one of them is gay.



SEX

TIPS FOR PICKIN' UP

■■■ A master of the arts of the heart divulges his secrets
by **Putnam Pius**

Now love is a wonderful thing. So the poets tell me. But while we await its tender, sweet arrival, there's always raw animal lust to pass the time with. Yeah, you know what I'm talking about. The kind that hangs heavy in the air at the Cocamo. The kind that tastes like pheromones. That kind.

For those of you looking to fulfill such desires, here's some tips on finding a willing and attractive partner (it's much more fun than doing it by yourself, for all you engineers out there).

1. Dress Cool

You gotta look good to pick up, plain and simple. But this doesn't necessarily mean dressing all fancy. In fact, fancy can be rather boring. Almost every guy in Stages is gonna be wearing an open-collared dress shirt with dark pants, and almost every girl is gonna be wearing a tube top and tight, tight, pants. Wear something funky, like maybe a tweed blazer and jeans, or a mini-skirt. Man I love mini-skirts.

2. Act Cool

Picking up is all about working those contradictions. The person has to know you're interested, but they don't want you to be *too* interested. It's not easy, but somehow you gotta walk the fine line in between too-cool-for-school and desperate-oh-so-horny-and-desperate. Example- don't spend all your time hanging out with the same group of friends, but don't go prowling around constantly by yourself.

3. Have fun

Enjoy yourself! People are attracted to fun. Besides, as long as you have a good time, your won't be a total waste, even if it ends with a massive slice of pizza and a bottle of hand cream.

4. Don't get too drunk

Don't, don't, *don't* get all retarded. I find girls especially tend to make this mistake. We're all anxious, yes, and liquor helps tame those inhibitions, but if you get completely wasted you will just make a complete ass out of yourself. There's nothing attractive about people who have shitty motor skills and who spit when they talk.

5. But get a little drunk

Have a couple. Just keep it to a dull buzz. If you're out primarily to pick up, you should drink substantially less than when you're just going out to have a good time with your friends.

6. Other drugs- yes and no

As for other drugs, it's really hit and miss. Marijuana is generally not so good for picking up, as you tend to get rather introverted. Mushrooms are a definite no-no. The more stimulant type drugs, such as coke or E can be good 'socialization aids', but use them with discretion. No matter how charming you are, if you're chewing like crazy on the inside of your

mouth or constantly rubbing your nose the objection of your affection might get a little freaked out. Oh, umm, and drugs are bad for you and illegal and stuff, so don't *ever* do them. Or baby Jesus will cry.

7. Chat up their friends

Win their friends over, and they will want you like they're a Christian fundamentalist and you're a constitutional amendment banning gay rights. We all know the main criteria for our *objets d'amour* is that they impress our friends.

8. Surround yourself with good-looking members of the opposite sex

Nothing makes 'em wonder what they're missing out on like a few hotties hanging off your arm. So press those hot, hot friends of yours (the ones you wanted to screw but who fell into the 'friend zone') into service.

9. Make conversation, but not too much

Talk to them. You have to friggin' talk to them if you're gonna take them home. But don't try to make elaborate conversation, especially if you're at Stages and you have to scream at each other over the spectacularly crappy muzak. The conversational odds are stacked against you, and sooner or latter you're gonna run out of things to talk about and things will get awkward. Re-circulate yourself before that happens, or invite them to dance.

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The Putnam Pius 7 day guide to finding that special someone

Monday: The Brass is a good place to get warmed up for the week. Decent conversation can be made over Smitty the guitar player's not-so-dulcet tones. The crowd here tends to be older and little more laid back.

Pick-up line: *Hey, is it just me or are these the same songs that Smitty plays every night?*

Tuesday: Let the debauchery begin! Retro Night at AJ's Hangar offers a mix of predacious cougars, drunk and costumed Queen's students, and of course those loveable townies.

Pick-up line: *Wanna grind to Stairway to Heaven?*

Wednesday: Many would say the Elixir would be the natural choice for a Wednesday night mission. But fuck it. A new star has arisen on Princess: the eXtreme Dance Club. Laugh if you will, and on any other night it's a wasteland, but Wednesdays eXtreme is home to the hippest open mike in Kingston. Folky vocals, bluesy slide guitar, and smoky jazz riffs can all be heard emanating from its bleak, bleak entrance.

Pick-up line: *I'm eXtremely horny, baby.*

Thursday: The biggest sin fest of them all. Thursday is the night to score. Two titanic meat-market rivals, Stages and the Cocamo, offer cheap booze and plentiful grindage. Try to get there before 11 and avoid paying the exorbitant covers. Pick-up line: *Feel like humping a total stranger?*

Friday: Again two contenders. Peel Pub is a vast and cavernous establishment packed to the gills with drunken students and surly bouncers. A dank, low-ceilinged cave in the basement offers excellent hook-up opportunities. My personal preference, however, has to be Smijie's. Inexplicably and hilariously popular this year, this place reeks class, as in low class. Not much gets in the way of getting down to business, and drinks are a little cheaper than Peel. Pick-up line: *Yo.*

Saturday: Everyone should experience the Grizzly Grill, or 'the Grizz' as it's popularly known. If AJ's is a wildlife park, the Grizz is fucking Banff. This is cougar territory baby. And hey, for all you ladies, there's plenty of older dudes kickin' around, I'm not sure if they have a special name or anything... oh yeah, old dirty pervs. Giggity giggity. Pick-up line: *Ever heard of the Fountain of Youth?*

Sunday: Keepeth ye not the Sabbath?? Look, if your sexual urges still haven't been satisfied by this point in the week, you either suck at picking up or you are one horny child. In any case, I would suggest... Club Stauffer. That's right, the library. Try hanging out by the stairwells, that's where there's the highest traffic flow. Pick-up line: *I'm desperate, I'll do anything, please!*



photo by M. Aikins