

Editorial

Let's clean up the airwaves

There are certain times during the day (and night) when a person tends to wax philosophical. There are other times during the day (and night) when I wax my moustache - but that's a different story.

Journalists keep odd hours - it's the nature of the beast. Since I consider myself one of the brood of ink-stained wretches, I confess to similarly keeping odd hours.

Usually it's early to bed and early to rise. Sometimes far too early which often translates into two or three o'clock in the morning.

There is little else to do at such an ungodly hour but turn on the 'boob tube' and at the same time, peruse papers and magazines which have been saved for just such occasions.

A major concern of environmentalists is air pollution. Perhaps if these types took the time to check what is being foisted on the Canadian public under the guise of television programming, they would discover the real meaning of 'air pollution'.

To digress somewhat from late-night television viewing, it should also be pointed out that what is being offered during so-called 'prime-time hours' is equally ludicrous.

Aside from the Arts and Entertainment channel and the Public Broadcasting Service channel, for the most part what is being offered television viewers must certainly be regarded as an insult to the intelligence - most of it emanating from 'United Ingrates of America' channels.

Racial stereotypes abound and even blacks have gone on record as stating the so-called black 'situation comedies' including the Cosby Show, bear no resemblance to reality in black communities.

The 'Mr. Mom' syndrome appears to have taken over the airwaves and when the male characters aren't babysitting they are being emasculated by domineering females. What's amazing about these scenarios is that women were raising quite a

Colin Gibson

Editor's Notebook



stink just a few years back when male-female roles were in fact, just the reverse.

There are very few decent news programs on television and half the time allotted to news programs seems to be taken up with the respective crews chatting amongst themselves about what they did, or are planning to do on the weekend.

The frightening aspect about the garbage polluting the airwaves is that youngsters are spending more and more time in front of the television and it can't be doing them any good.

Workplace illiteracy is a major concern for many major companies and a report from the Conference Board of Canada stated that approximately 70 per cent of 626 companies surveyed say they have a "significant problem with functional illiteracy in some part of their organization."

As a sad example, Campbell Soup Co. sent out an attitude survey to its employees and discovered that 25 per cent of the company's workers couldn't fill out the form because they did not have basic reading and writing skills.

Some will blame the education system - correct to a point.

But the education system only reflects the values of a society and it is clear that people prefer to be spoon-fed (via television) than make the effort to be properly educated.

Since such is the case, clean-up the airwaves, get the garbage off the tube and help people who don't seem to want to help themselves.

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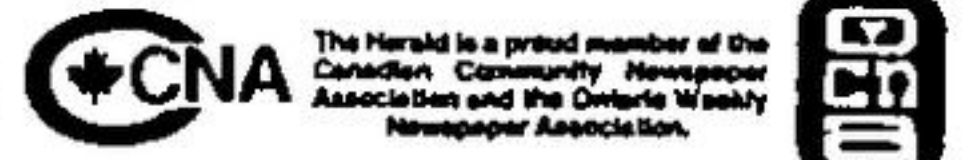
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A major world problem involves too much courage

I was flipping idly through the newspaper when one of those Gloomy Universal Truths began to dawn.

One of the big problems with this world is that here is entirely too much courage in it.

This musing was prompted by a photo of a throng of young men scrambling to avoid a bull in Zaragoza, Spain, with a caption explaining that this was part of a traditional festival in which "adventurers challenge the animal by running in front of it or pulling its tail."

Naturally, I'd heard of such festivals before. The most famous is the Running of the Bulls in Pamplona, where adventurers get out there in the streets with not just one bull, but a whole herd of 'em.

And naturally, I've always wanted to do this myself. Each spring, I gaze out of the window and sigh, "Oh, to be in Pamplona, now that the bulls are trampling people."

Tragically, I'm always somewhere else. So I have to settle for reading a book, or doing my laundry.

Until recently, this sort of behavior wasn't terribly prevalent in Canada. Being less exuberant than the Spaniards, we've never had an equivalent festival - like say, the Running of the Beavers in Medicine Hat.

And until recently this sort of activity has, also been pretty much the exclusive property of young men.

As we all know, young men feel the occasional urge to perform utterly pointless feats of daring



Ian Weir

Weir's View
Thems in News Serv.

because they are - as a species - carefree, adventurous, vibrant, energetic and thick as two planks.

But things are changing. This point was brought home forcibly by a recent news item about a young couple in Nanaimo who capped off their wedding ceremony by bungee-jumping off a bridge.

I was - it must be admitted - distressed. Just for starters, this makes a mockery of wedding tradition.

Two people should not jump off a bridge the moment they've said, "I do." In healthy marriages, the urge to jump off a bridge does not arise for months or even years.

The urge to perform utterly pointless feats of daring - to go bungee-jumping, or sky-diving, or rock-climbing - is manifesting itself in more and more Canadians. It's manifesting itself in my girlfriend.

Please turn to the Financial Pages if you're in the mood for something frivolous and silly. What follows here will be a saga of heartbreak and betrayal.

Many a many has had the

hideous experience of returning from a brief out-of-town trip to discover that the Love of His Life has done something from which the relationship might never recover. It happened to me in August. She'd gone para-sailing.

It took a few moments to assimilate the information that she - a woman I had always trusted - had actually strapped on a parachute and been towed 300 feet in the air behind a speedboat.

"How could you do this to me?" I asked weakly.

She protested that it had been terrific fun, then conceded that it was sweet of me to be so concerned about her safety.

"No," I said quietly. "No, you're missing the point. The point is this: since you've gone para-sailing, now I've got to do it."

She pretended not to know what I was talking about. But as every guy knows, it's one of those grisly, unwritten Rules of Manhood: No man shall ever place himself in the position of having to say "Gosh, you're so big and brave!" to his girlfriend.

This is why it's so important to choose wisely before falling in love.

Happy are those men who do not get involved with women who like para-sailing, white-water rafting or biting down hard on detonator-caps.

She there it stands. I have to go out now. I need to find a bull.

I may not be back for some time.

Poets' Corner

SCHOOL DAZE

I sit in this classroom, and really wonder why
I come here every day, I feel like I'll die.

It's been thirteen years of blood, sweat and pain
five days a week could make one insane.

I come back for more, day after day.

I sit and I talk, with really nothing to say.

I'll be glad when I leave, just happy to say bye.

But when you give some thought, ya know it's a lie.

If you look in your future, what can you see.

A life without school, is a life without me

The work world is scary, and a suit is where it's at.

But business ain't for me, it's not the tip of my hat.

So this poem is over, and school will be too.

Ya know when it's over, it's time for a brew.

Greg Smith, Acton.

"A HIGHLAND FLING"

I hail from the 'Land of the Heather'
My boney old hide's tough as leather

I wear an old tartan kilt
Me tam's, on a tilt!

I can stand most any kind of weather!

I live in a 'Wee Hoose' way up
in the Highlands

Overlooking the Old North Sea:
I'm sure those crashing big waves below

Are rolling and snarling; tryin' to catch me!

I love to take long walks on the top of the cliff,
Those huge pine forests, I sure love to sniff!

A big Calabash pipe I hold tight in my teeth

The smoke curls o'er head, like a mighty wreath!

I'm glad I'm a tough Highland Man,

When we fought our battles, those Lowland clan ran!

We swooped down our hill, ready to Kill,

Our Muskets and sword in our hand!

But those murderous days have gone by,

I gaze up into the pale blue sky

My mind wanders to those men who did die,

I scratch my balding old head - WHY?

Poppa Tyrer,
Milton.

CORNING COOKING

Come to me,
Cupid of Cougar,

Carry the Cat,
to the carriage,

to be cooked,
with carrots,

and cucumbers.

Dale Hoy, Acton.