

Opinion

Reversal of Rape Shield Law, is reversal of justice

It was an angry day for many women (and men) last month when the Supreme Court of Canada struck down the Rape Shield Law.

This means that in sexual assault cases, defence attorneys can question victims about their sexual past. But, and this is a big but, law still prohibits introduction of any evidence relating to the accused's sexual history.

The chief justices struck down the Rape Shield Law saying it violated the Charter of Rights and Freedoms -- that of the rapist. This logic is not only an assault on the victim's rights, it is a total assault on the meaning of justice.

Justice is defined as meaning equity, as being just or fair. There is no equity in this decision -- it upholds the rights of perpetrator over that of a victim.

How could the highest court in the land decide that the rights of the rapist was more important than the rights of the victim?

And it is not just women who are concerned about this injustice. A man wrote a Letter to the Editor in a daily news publication recently. He wrote: The logic of assuming that because someone consented on a previous occasion they consented on a subsequent occasion is particularly twisted. This logic denies women the right to say no. It assumed that once consent is given in a particular circumstance that consent is given for all subsequent occasions. This is nonsense. Because I lend my car to someone on one occasion, that does not mean that person has a right to take my car anytime he wishes. Or because I allowed one person to borrow my car, that does not mean that other people can borrow my car."

According to the Halton Rape Crisis Centre, the striking down of the law will probably mean fewer women will consider reporting an assault -- because it could mean that they, and not the rapist, would be on trial.

The Centre noted during the time the Rape Shield Law was in place, no man has been wrongly convicted for rape. And when the judge felt it was relevant, he had discretionary powers to allow past sexual history as evidence.

So why did the Supreme Court think a rapist's rights were being violated?

Concerned about this reversal in justice, the Women of Halton Action Movement, Halton Women's Place, and Halton Rape Crisis Centre will be holding a demonstration at the Milton Courthouse, 491 Steeles Ave., East, Milton this Tuesday, September 24, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

It will be a demonstration to show that the rights of a victim are as important as the rights of a rapist. -CLG

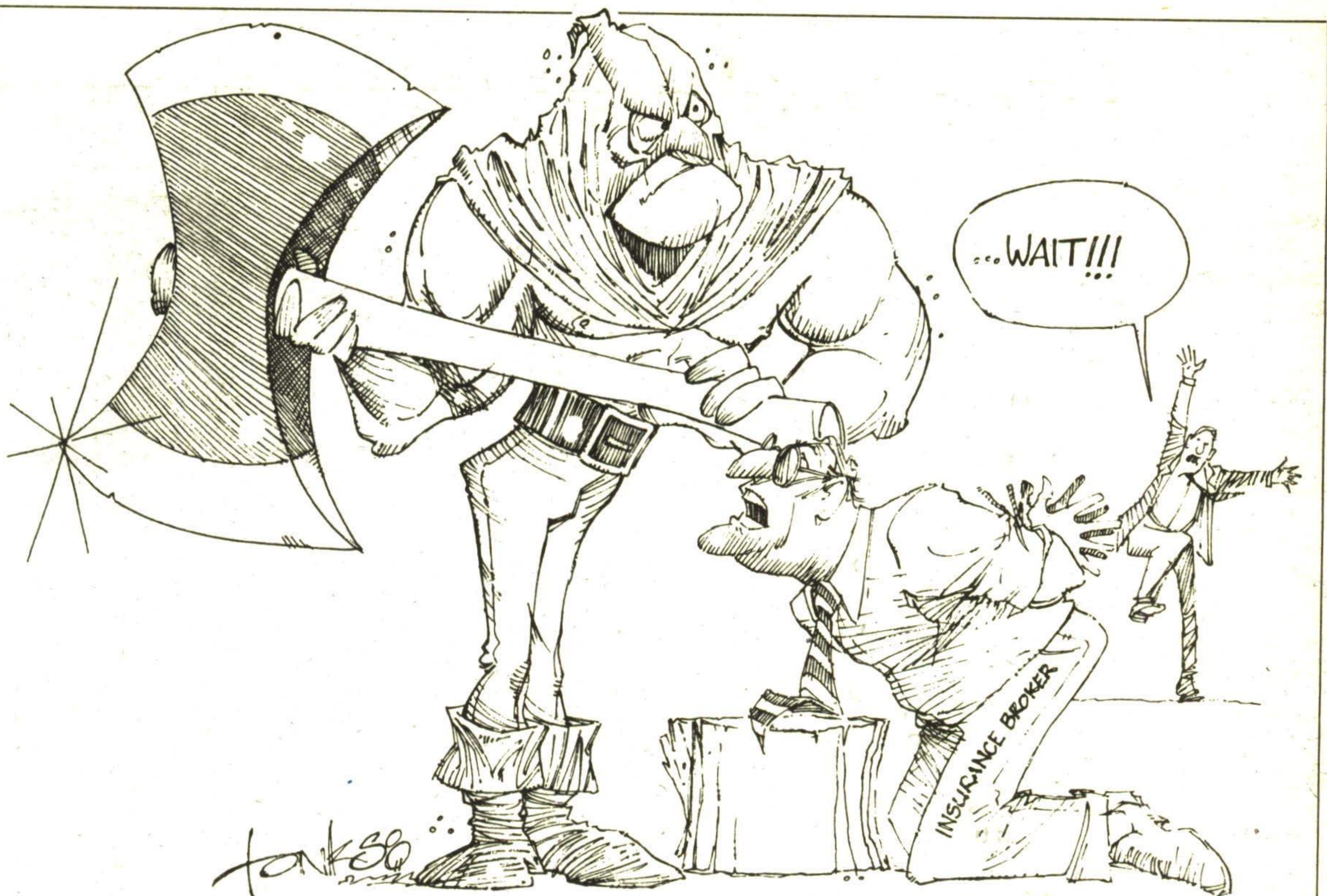
What are Canadians watching?

Believe it or not, Canadians spent an average of 23.4 hours a week watching television in 1989 according to Statistics Canada.

While that figure may seem high, 1989 was the lowest weekly viewing average since 1979. Indeed since the weekly television viewing average peaked in 1984, Canadians have gradually cut back their viewing time by almost an hour a week.

Women consistently watch more television than men do -- up to six hours more a week. And as we age, we spend more time in front of the tube. Adolescents spent an average 18 hours a week watching TV while seniors spent over 34 hours a week.

Quebeckers prefer to watch variety and game programming while central Canadians prefer comedy. Prairie Canadians are avid sport watchers and Maritimers enjoy news and public affairs programming.



ITEM-- INSURANCE AGENTS EVERYWHERE BREATHE A SIGH OF RELIEF AFTER THE N.D.P. SCRAPS PLANS TO INTRODUCE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE...

Our Readers Write

Religion columnist described as 'handmaiden of God'

To the editor;

In responding to Mr. Yorke's letter, I believe that Doreen Palmer is a handmaiden of God as in Psalm 4:3, in the service of His Majesty, Jesus Christ, the King, as every believer is, bringing the attention of the Son of God and the finished work of Calvary.

Jesus is the Truth (John 14:6), therefore the column is not the opinion of Doreen Palmer, but is out of the mouth of God. Truth cannot be compromised. If it is good enough in His service, the Editor cannot but serve his readers with the same.

Don't forget, Mr. Yorke, that God started to warn people of their sinful life 120 years before the

flood, yet only eight people made it to the Ark. Only eight people took heed. The same God is trying to reach you and all others to get on the Ark - Jesus is the Ark. Repent of your sins, turn from your wicked way, receive Jesus into your heart and accept the finished work of Calvary.

Mr. Yorke, I was in one of those "religious institutions" which you say can be found by a "quick scan" in the phone book, but it was just like 40 years in the desert. Jesus said, "straight is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth into life, and few there be that find it (Matthew 7:14). Can anyone afford to remain in the desert?"

Piroksa Gyory
Orangeville, Ontario

Allisons', Preston's donations a hit at cancer unit corn roast

Dear editor,

I'd like to express a very special thankyou to the Allison family of the Eighth Line for a very generous donation of their famous corn for the Canadian Cancer Society booth at the Georgetown Fall Fair.

The Allisons also provided the barbecues for the Halton Hills (Georgetown) cancer unit's "first annual" Corn Roast, and a very congenial gentleman

to cook the delicious corn.

The butter was provided by Gord Preston of Preston's Lucky Dollar Store in Glen Williams.

We also wish to thank members of the Georgetown Fair Board who went out of their way to accommodate us.

Marlene Kelman,
Communications Chairperson

Seniors' dignity depends on treatment

Dear editor,

I would like to comment on a quote in your Aug. 28 edition.

Councillor Rick Bonnette has difficulties with the fact that the residents of Halton Centennial Manor will have to share washrooms. "I don't think that has much dignity," he said.

I worked in places like the Manor and I would like to assure you that dignity there does not depend on

the number of bathrooms.

The way residents are addressed and treated is of far more importance than updated facilities. A staff attitude reflecting respect toward people who cannot be cared for by their own families is essential to their contentment.

Sincerely,
Joanne Faber,
RR1 Georgetown

Halton Hills

WEEKEND

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