

EDITORIAL COMMENT

With Tim Morgetroyd

Is silence always golden?

The reasons for and against the court ordered media blackout on the Karla Homolka trial are a coin toss nobody can win: heads society loses, tails society loses.

Without the closed trial it may be impossible for Paul Bernardo to get a fair trial. With the closed trial freedom of the press is jeopardized. Solomon himself probably couldn't choose between these twin evils.

Who could argue with the friends of victim Kristen French marching outside the courthouse where Bernardo's estranged wife is on trial, charged with helping Bernardo brutally murder French and Burlington teen Leslie Mahaffy. These protesters were begging the court to respect the gag order because it kept the gruesome details from becoming cocktail small talk.

These days they are also preventing their friend's sad final moments from being turned into statistics on one of the bubble gum cards celebrating serial killers, which have recently appeared in convenience stores, or a colouring book like the one that helped immortalize would-be murderer Amy Fisher. Anyone suggesting 30 years ago they saw such sick trophies for infamous criminals on the horizon would have been branded paranoid. No one can imagine how deep such souvenirs cut the family and friends of the victims.

Unfortunately no court order or protest by friends will keep the TV movie from being made. The script may already be written. The killing of cult leader David Koresh was being filmed as the bullets were flying around Koresh's head. If it wasn't for protests and the gag order actress Courtney Cox could be playing the role of Kristen French right now, during the trial, and actor Eric Roberts could be getting his hair died blonde in case the verdict is guilty.

The savage murders will eventually be dramatized, with visual images and effects news accounts can't hold a candle to in terms of shock value. Given the unexpected discovery by Canadian producers and American TV networks that Canadian-made TV movies about sensational Canadian murders go through the ratings roof when shown on the American tube, and the coverage U.S. news networks are giving this case, the gruesome details the media ban tries to censor can't be locked away for long. It is possible the silence only teases the curious and drives up the interest, but does this justify a shrug by people protecting the victims' memory?

So we return to the riddle of what to do. The gag order holds the seeds of the concentration camp, the gas oven, and human lampshades. But if the spirit forcing the friends of Kristen French doesn't demand that gag even if it is temporary, then they are as empty as her murderers and twice as dangerous. Kristen French doesn't live on in her murderers but does live on in family and friends. That is the spirit insisting on the worst moment of her life not being turned into entertainment.

Now I know what Simon and Garfunkel meant when they sang "Where have you gone Joe DiMaggio?"

P.O.W.E.R. cares

To the Editor,

Contrary to some recently published opinions, POWER's position is that development should proceed in Acton. Many of our members come from Acton and almost all of our members are from Halton Hills. We truly care about Acton and want it to be a vibrant part of Halton Hills. We are saddened to see the Hide House experiencing financial troubles and look forward to their reopening as our members shop there and are regulars at Jack Tanner's Table.

Two concerns were raised by the Ministry of the Environment and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) regarding development in Acton.

First, was that pumping the Prospect Park well would suck water out of Fairy Lake which would affect Fairy Lake fishery and Black Creek levels. If you consider that at the Third Line, Black Creek is seven-eighths sewage effluent, then you would real-

ize how stressed the fishery is at present.

Second, was the level of ammonia and chlorine residual in Black Creek. The concern seemed to be, more people creating more sewage, the higher those levels might be.

POWER has a couple of suggestions about how to let development proceed while still protecting the fishery.

Not enough water?

On the question of not enough water flowing into Prospect Park well so that the lake would be sucked lower:

Immediate: We suggest that the existing residents in Acton adopt a program of water conservation. The new homes will have water saving technology but it is the existing residents that are literally flushing away the water that is needed for those new homes. With a little public education on how to conserve water, and using water saving shower heads and toilet

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LETTERS

Love for community

To the Editor,

A couple of weeks ago, The olde Hide House closed its doors temporarily.

Remember how excited we all were when the store opened, beautiful and tastefully decorated? Acton had never had anything quite like this before. Jack Tanner's, a great meeting place, and great for Mothers' Day Brunch. We were proud to live in this small town that was getting all the publicity. Acton was on the map, everyone knew you, Acton was a somebody.

The Dawkins families and associates are to be commended for their hard work.

They gave our teenage children work, middle-aged mothers a chance to get out of the house, and our local contractors and business people work close to home.

Not many of us can't say our lives have not been touched by this family. Can you say you haven't seen or heard their names on the local soccer fields, baseball diamonds, or the local arena for hockey and figure skating?

That's generosity, good will and love for their community.

It is hoped that in the near future the olde Hide House doors will once again be open.

And when you wake up to the local news every morning, you'll hear "It's Worth the Drive to Acton" once again.

To Don Dawkins and his family, we feel for you, our thoughts are with you. You are a good friend and trust is still a handshake.

Don and Anne Perry
Lakeview Centre

What's Wrong With This Picture?

To the Editor,

We allow the town of Acton to grow by 800 new homes. In order to achieve this objective, sewage effluent will be dumped into Black Creek to the extent that it becomes inhabitable for fish. To provide services the town must also draw additional water from the Prospect Park well, lowering the water level in Fairy Lake which deteriorates this fish habitat.

The people who move into these new homes may have decided to do so because Acton has safe drinking water and Fairy Lake is a place where the kids can go fishing close to home. Prospect Park is a family

park with a variety of activities for all age ranges and at an "affordable" price. How would you feel if after moving into your new home you discovered that Fairy Lake was no longer a place for the kids to go fishing and there is no prospect of it ever being clean enough to go swimming?

After moving to town you also find out there is a big dump going into the quarry. Because the habitat was already destroyed, it was decided it would also be OK for a garbage dump to be built and to discharge the leachate into Black Creek. This garbage dump further puts into jeopardy the safety of our current drinking water.

For me sustainable development
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