

Did female teacher get a break?

In the grand scheme of life women, compared to men, unquestionably drew the short straw.

And any man who doesn't believe this just hasn't been paying attention.

Women, by far, have to put up with much more than your typical male—and I'm not just referring to the obvious drawback of being the sex which gets to experience the "joy" of childbirth. Women often are paid less for doing the same job as a man, are (usually) not as strong as your average male and must endure what, I'm told, is the world's worst horror—panty hose.

Having said that, however, society does give women a huge break when it comes to matters of sexual misconduct.

I'm referring to the case of Laura Sclater, a Barrie teacher who was suspended earlier this year for writing sexually-charged letters to a 13-year-old male student and was later reinstated by the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT). On Friday, Ms. Sclater was charged by police with sexual interference, sexual assault and invitation to sexual touching in relation to 1998 assaults on a male student.

Whether Ms. Sclater is innocent or guilty of these charges is a matter for the courts to decide. However, it is blatantly clear this woman had no business being in a classroom and, had she been a man, wouldn't have been.

To recap, Sclater wrote 64 letters to a Grade 8 student calling him a "stud" and signing them, "Love, your woman." She served a 30-month suspension for her actions but was reinstated this past July when the OCT deemed to her be a "teacher in good standing" at a closed door fitness-to-practise hearing. She was then placed in

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John McGhie

another Barrie-area school this fall, but when parents of students found out who was teaching their kids they howled in protest.

The OCT, which has done a wonderful impression of an ostrich, now says it will hold a disciplinary hearing based on the new information (read: criminal charges). This hearing will be held in open session.

Nothing like closing the bird cage door after the cuckoo has escaped, eh folks?

The big unanswered question in this whole mess is, how could the OCT justify reinstating Sclater?

Another one is, would a male teacher have been treated the same? I doubt it.

Dis 'n Data

A female caller last week wanted to know which candidates were running in her ward. Good, I thought, a concerned voter eager to make an informed decision by finding out all she could about her potential councillor. That is, until she added the proviso, "I don't vote for women, though."... So what if Pierre Trudeau's ex-wife took part in a fashion show a week after he died. Maggie hadn't been his wife for 17 years... Every election brings out the "fringe" candidates, but this year's municipal ballot reminds one of a bowl of granola—some flakes and some nuts.



Localmotion scores!

The localmotion campaign moved closer to its goal with a \$25,000 donation from the Georgetown Hockey Heritage Council. Presenting the cheque to Halton Hills Mayor Marilyn Serjeantson were (front, from left) Geraldine Hardcastle, Don Olson, Gerry Perkins, Serjeantson, Karen Harrison, Jim Ford, (back, from left) Paul Yates, Shel Lawr, Elgin Graham and Dave Kentner. The localmotion campaign is raising \$2 million to build a recreation centre and twin Alcott Arena. Photo by Herb Garbutt

Election candidates meet tonight

Hornby Association of Rate Payers hosts an all-candidates meeting for Ward 2 local, Ward 1/2 regional and mayoralty candidates tonight (Wednesday) 7:30 p.m. at the Hornby Glen Golf Course.

The evening will begin with time-limited speeches from the candidates. Then proceed with questions from the floor through the association's referee, Barbara Dixon.

For more information call: Erik Kowal, (905) 876-1582 or kowale@stn.net or Jim Snow, (905) 878-2437 or pineland@sympatico.ca.





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