

regional viewpoint

By Jim Irving

Remember that old story about the girl who spoke 12 languages and couldn't say "no" in any of them?

I don't know how many languages the members of York County board of education speak, but if their English is any indication, "no" wouldn't be on the tip of their other linguistic tongues.

"No," you see, is too simple, too direct; it means just what it says: "no."

Much more politic to say "maybe," or, as in the case of the board, "staff will prepare a study."

That way the members can put off whatever they want for a month or two and pretend they're doing something about the matter, but are hamstrung until they get the report.

Right now the board is trying to drum up the resolve to tell a group of Thornhill mothers they have no intention of heeding their plea to establish a junior kindergarten in the county—region to the rest of the area.

When the ladies first came before them, the board more or less gave them the bum's rush. But not having the courage of their evictions, they hurried to re-open the topic as soon as the first flak started to fly.

Public misled

They've been discussing it ever since. A few trustees, such as Dorothy Zajac and Margaret Coburn of King—not always that

Is it pre-junior kindergarten next?

resolute in such matters—and Norm Weller of Aurora, and Harry Bowes of Whitchurch-Stouffville, have told them several times they can neither afford the studies nor the schools. They were, in fact, in Mrs. Zajac's phrase: "misleading the public."

Still the studies go on.

So far there have been enough varied studies over the years, individual reports and letters to the editor to show no six people have the same view as to the worth of junior kindergartens.

Therefore, even the board members, with their limited perceptual powers, should be able to see they could vote junior kindergartens out, without causing the kind of demonstrations experienced last week at the seal hunt in Newfoundland.

Mother power

But if they really want any more studies, perhaps they should ask those anxious mothers to prepare them. Get them to work out the cost, availability of space, format, and teacher qualifications. They could also throw in a few testimonials from satisfied kids, telling how much easier that heady adjustment from climbing trees to kindergarten was because of their previous experience.

Something such as: "Believe me, I never could have grasped the fundamentals—let alone the crayons—in coloring class without junior kindergarten."

Or: "Before I started junior kindergarten, I couldn't make out with the girls at all. I still can't make out with them, but at least I don't let them beat me up anymore."

Of course, it's possible none of the parents remember when they were small. How being confined to home on a rainy day was regimentation enough. Starting school later on and sitting at your desk half the day like mourners at a Presbyterian wake was not—and never will be—something to set the blood racing.

Money issue

So veto all your studies, trustees, and vote out junior kindergartens, if for no other reason than you can't afford such extras.

If you keep pussyfooting around the subject long enough, you'll soon have no alternative but to vote them in.

Then a little later, you can conduct a study on pre-junior kindergartens to appease the latest generation of restless parents.

With the success of that, the next logical step will be to have courses in which the embryos in pregnant mothers are lectured to by some method of mental telepathy, still to be perfected.

Then you'd really see restlessness.

And the first words to form in the child's mind, would not likely be "Da-da," "Ma-ma, but, "Teacher, may I leave the womb?"

sharon's sunshine

By Sharon Brain

It took that great weather we had a while ago to make me realize how many pessimists there were around.

I kept saying "Nice day" to people. They kept grousing back with "Won't last."

"Who cares? It's here now."

"Yeah? It'll make the next snowstorm that much worse."

Hogwash, I say. Optimists of the world, unite. You have nothing to lose but a lot of crabby friends.

Pessimists believe if you leave the house without checking twice on the iron, the house will burn down while you're gone.

Optimists believe even if it does, the insurance will pay for a better one.

Optimists plant trees and expect them to grow five feet in the first year.

Pessimists believe Dutch Elm Disease is only the thin edge of the wedge.

Pessimist cat

My cat is a pessimist. All evidence to the contrary, she believes every meal is her last, we are never going to get up in

Weather brings out those pessimists

the morning, no one is ever going to come and open the door to let her out.

Or in.

Most dogs I know are optimists. They believe everyone who opens the door is bringing dinner, the sunshine they are sleeping in will never fade, and every car is offering them a ride straight to doggie heaven.

Optimists would answer yes to the following questions.

Will Toronto come up with a winning baseball club someday? And will they let us drink beer in the ball park?

Will your lawn mower start this spring?

When the sign says "Sale — Half Price", will they mean that dress you've been looking at for three months?

When the mail man brings an envelope marked "Free gift inside", will there be one?

It's no wonder pessimists think optimists are fuzzy thinkers.

Pessimist yes

Pessimists will answer yes to the following questions.

Do you know where the nearest fallout shelter is?

Have you begged all your friends in Quebec to come home before it's too late?

Is our long hard winter about to be followed by a cold short summer?

Are the Argo's going to finish last this year?

Will a new car rust out before the radial tires are paid for?

Optimists say pessimists crave gloom and doom.

Sometimes a situation makes it hard to tell if a person really is one or the other.

For example, if on the way to a party, you worry about whether you might fall into the punch bowl, you are not necessarily a pessimist.

You may have merely fallen into a lot of punch bowls in your time.

I'm neither

I myself am neither optimistic nor pessimistic. When I asked for a raise last month, it never occurred to me I wouldn't get one, but that wasn't optimism.

That was underestimating the pessimism of the boss about the value of my typing fingers.

And just because I'm

telling you this doesn't mean I'm hoping you will write to him and tell him what a good job I'm doing, and how much I deserve a raise so I can go on pounding out these wonderful columns.

That would be optimistic.

But then again, I don't expect you won't.

That would be pessimistic.

Instead, I'll just keep typing.

That's realistic.

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