

**Terrace Bay  
Schreiber**

# News

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**Editorial**

## Porn mourn

Much has been said already in newspaper editorials and other media opinion pieces about the recently proposed federal Justice anti-pornography bill. Most have hailed it as a breakthrough and something that is long overdue. All of this may be true, but there are still far too many problems in Justice Minister John Crosbie's proposed bill for it to be seriously considered the way it appears now.

The largest obstacle is the bill's definition of pornography, which many have praised for being specific while others have pointed out an inherent flaw, the words "or other sexual activity," which makes the regulation as vague and ineffective as any previous legislation.

The intent of the law is good and should be applauded. Few, if any, will openly disagree with its attempts to outlaw child exploitation and abuse. Even the "sexual harm and degradation involving adults" section is admirable, though some may point out what is "degradation" for one person might be an act of consent for another.

Perhaps the real difficulty is the law's blatant puritanical slant when it comes to normal, accepted sexual behaviour or activity. Its definition of pornography should be narrowed down even further before the bill becomes law.



## Close To The Edge

By Conrad Felber

OK. An announcement, of sorts, is rather overdue, so before I get on with my weekly diatribe, I should do that first.

As some of you may have noticed, this newspaper is no longer on sale on Tuesdays or early on Wednesdays for that matter. A few columns ago I mentioned that the News was switching over to a new, later deadline. Apparently some of you did not imply from that statement that we would therefore be publishing later on in the week.

So, for those few, I would like to point out (probably not for the first time either) that the News is still coming out on a weekly basis. It's just that you have to wait a little longer to get it now. Copies should be in all area

stores by Thursday at noon at the very, very latest. I should also remind our loyal readers, in case you just can't wait to buy a copy, that the paper is on sale here at the News office before it is shipped anywhere else.

Of course, every week can and usually is a different case. Sometimes we, the News staff, have but one flyer to manually insert in each copy, and other weeks there are as many as two or even three flyers, which obviously means more processing time before the papers can go on sale outside of our office. I hope all of this clears up any lingering misunderstandings.

Changing gears completely, we now come to a new development which has yours truly rather unsettled, to say the least.

I am referring to the growing anti-

media trend which seems to exist in the area. Maybe I'm just getting paranoid in my old age, but this is something I've noticed more and more, especially over the past few weeks.

If it's not an active dislike, then it's a subconscious neglect, which in many ways is even worse. Allow me to give you a few examples, and then you can judge for yourself.

A week or so ago there was a surprise dinner party held for Terrace Bay Reeve Ollie Chapman. Not only was I not invited (which is fine...if they didn't want me there for the dinner part, I can understand that), but I wasn't even told about it until just about an hour before the dinner was scheduled to end. They wanted me to come down there, with that kind of short notice, to take photos of a pres-

entation to Reeve Chapman. I grudgingly complied (the evidence should be elsewhere in this week's issue). What else could I do?

This was not an isolated incident, I should add. At the last Terrace Bay Council meeting, a list of people who were being invited to an upcoming Emergency Measures Organization meeting was read. My name (as the representative for the News) was not on there. Naturally I asked about this list, and found out I wasn't left off by accident or oversight. I was never even considered in the first place. It was only after no small degree of persistence on my part that I was given a somewhat reluctant invitation.

I am sure that some people feel uncomfortable when the media (even if it's just li'l ol' me) is present at one



of their meetings. Well...too bad. I can appreciate that some meetings *haveto* be closed to the public and the press. But when I should be and *need* to be in attendance, the comfort of those also at the session or those organizing it should be at the bottom of the list of priorities. The thing is, it appears to me that this factor is often at the top. Remember, I'm there to cover things on behalf of those who can't attend, and read about it in the paper instead. If some of you can't understand that, I think we may all be in trouble. Think about it.

## Black N' White

By Arthur Black

"Woe unto ye also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers."

Luke 11:46

"The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers."

Shakespeare

Poor lawyers. Somebody's always picking on them. They've been cussed out and dumped on since at least the days of the Old Testament, and though the planet itself may be mellowing, anti-lawyer sentiment is only increasing in virulence. It's a tough life -- and what good is a Colorado condo, a six-figure income, 20-year old Scotch in the liquor cabinet and matching Lamborghinis in the driveway if you ain't got no respect?

Like hippopotami, lawyers have evolved a thick hide with which to absorb the slings and arrows of their overcharged and outraged clientele. Better than that -- they've developed a sense of humour about their much-maligned profession. Nobody tells

better jokes about lawyers than lawyers -- and Peter V. MacDonald might very well be the best legal jokester in the business, if not the country.

Mister MacDonald is a lawyer who entered the profession by the back door. For the first years of his adult life he was a reported and feature writer for various newspapers and magazines across the country.

Then in 1962 he swapped his ink-stained sports jacket for a floor-length black robe, moving simultaneously up the income ladder and down the alphabet, from journalism to jurisprudence.

But old habits die hard. The vestigial scribbler in MacDonald noticed two things about his new profession: number one, it was positively crawling with hilarious stories. Number two, no one appeared to be writing them down. Peter MacDonald started keeping a file on his courtroom colleagues. The result is now available between hardcovers in a tome entitled *Court Jesters*. (Methuen, \$19.95)

The book is an unqualified hoot.

MacDonald doesn't limit himself to barrister broadsides and solicitor snickers; he includes judge jokes and witness witticisms too. Such as the lady testifying somewhat nervously about her involvement in a barroom brawl.

"And were you kicked in the fracas?" the judge inquired.

"No your honour" replied the woman, "I was kicked about halfway between the fracas and the belly button."

Lawyers don't always come away winners in *Court Jesters*. Sometimes they look more like Ed McMahon-style straight men:

Lawyer: And have you ever appeared as a witness in a suit before?

Witness: Yes.

Lawyer: Please tell the jury what suit that was.

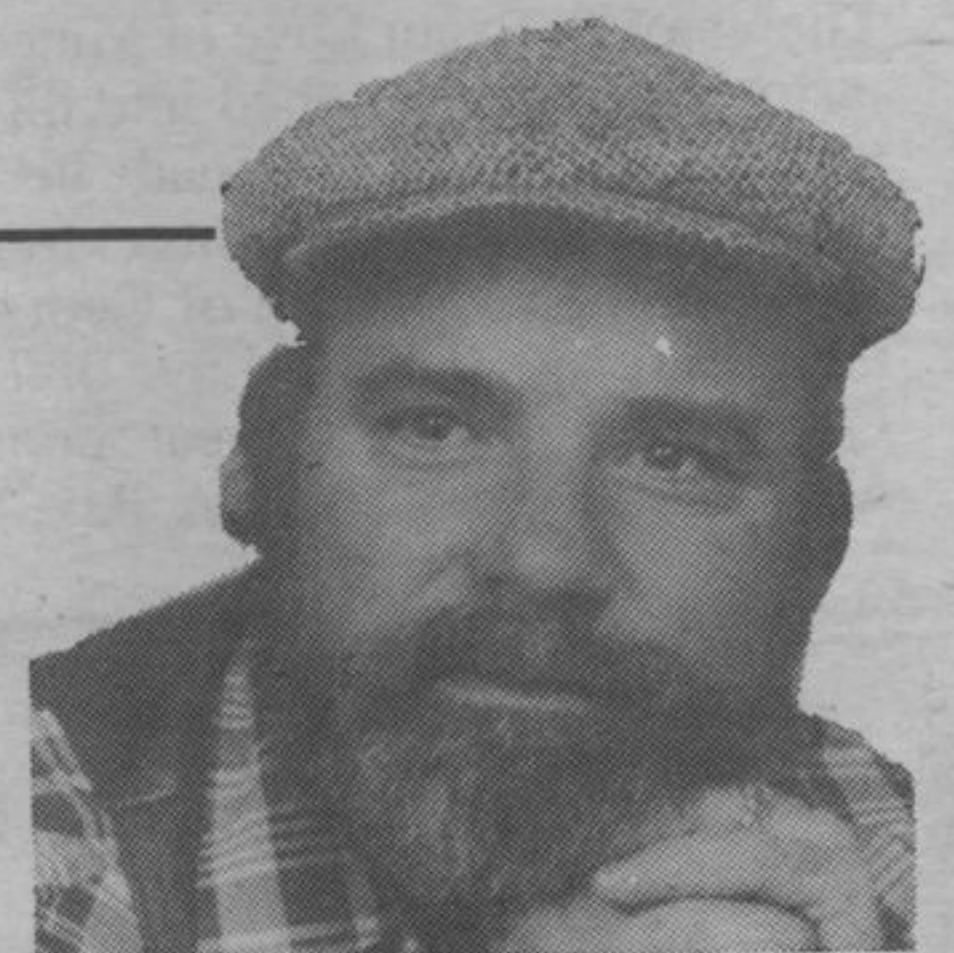
Witness: It was a blue suit with white collar and cuffs and white buttons all the way down the back.

On the other hand, MacDonald introduces the reader to some gentlemen of the bar that you'd give your eye teeth to have dinner with -- the legendary James Patrick Nolan

for instance. As a young man and a brand-new lawyer, "Paddy" Nolan emigrated from his native Dublin to Canada back in the late 1800's. He fetched up in a frontier cowtown called Calgary, nailed up his shingle and proceeded to become the very foundation of western Canadian legal mythology -- eccentric division.

Paddy was good -- he and his silver tongue almost never lost a case. This was a fact that did not escape the attention of the cattle rustlers, horse thieves, gamblers, prostitutes and rounders of Calgary and environs who soon wore a path to Paddy's door. Indeed, Nolan was so good at getting horse thieves off that the Calgary Stockmans Association hired him as Special Prosecutor -- just to get him on their side. Paddy tried it for a year, but it just didn't feel right. He decided he felt better defending underdogs -- even if they were crooks. He went back to working the other side of the fence.

Paddy didn't win all his cases, but even in defeat, his heart was as big as his tongue was fast. Once he faced the chore of writing to the British



father of a young client who, despite Paddy's best efforts, had been executed for murder. How do you tell a man that his ne'er do well son has received his just desserts at the end of a hangman's rope?

Paddy Nolan wrestled with it for a few minutes, then suddenly his eyes lit up, he whipped out a pen, and wrote with a flourish:

"I regret that I have to inform you that your son met his death last Friday morning whilst taking part as a principal in an important public ceremony. Unhappily, the platform on which he was standing gave way. I have the honor to remain, sir, your most obliging servant, Patrick Nolan."

I've got a hunch that Shakespeare would have felt a lot better about lawyers if he had had a chance to buy a drink for Paddy Nolan.