

This just in: Comedy Network the new CNN

THE TRUE EFFECTS OF LAST WEEK'S MID-TERM elections in the United States won't be apparent for a number of months, but the resignation of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld might very well be a harbinger of sweeping change to come—and not only in the political arena.

Around midnight on election day, 7 November, news began to circulate that at the next day's 1pm White House press conference George Bush would announce Rumsfeld's stepping down. Not really a surprising development, considering the solid ass-whopping the Democrats handed to the GOP—though Bush *did* pronounce his unwavering support for Rummy not a week earlier. What did turn a few heads, though, is how the story broke: not through the Associated Press, ABC, CNN or NBC, but on the Comedy Network's political blog. That's right: a network dedicated to satirizing US politics apparently scooped the biggest story of the congressional mid-terms.

This is a network whose flagship "news" show, *The Colbert Report*, spent a substantial amount of airtime this week discussing Stephen Colbert's errant pet eagle, as well as new womb-transplant technologies that, Colbert claimed, would make it possible for pro-life Republican males to give birth, saving the lives of frozen embryos destined for scientific experimentation.

Satire aside, though, the *Report*, along with Jon Stewart's *The Daily Show*, are becoming staples in the news diets of many left-leaning Americans. Stewart's election coverage brings in substantial viewing numbers, and their posted results are no less reliable or timely than that of the major networks.

Depending on one's point of view—and political stripes—this is either a welcomed development or entirely sacrilegious. That a comedy channel is relied upon for one's news speaks to the deficit of balance in US television; that such a network (and its blog) can break a major news story in US politics, while all media eyes are on the White House and Congress, is a bit unnerving.

Never mind that this doesn't bode well for media accountability, as it's not like we can (or should) hold a comedy to the same bar as the CNN broadcast it's lampooning. I'm just waiting for the day Stewart announces the Canadian invasion of the US, and American liberals everywhere respond by burning Maple Leafs and using "freedom syrup" on their hotcakes.

What should come out in the mid-term wash is a clear signal to the powers at FOX, CNN et al that something needs to change about the way they do business. It's depressingly obvious that TV news—now including the Comedy Network—acts not simply to report, but to polarize an already dangerously partisan America, entrenching people's personal biases rather than opening their minds. Stewart and Colbert can get away with wearing their views on their sleeves because of their shows' faux-news and satire formats. But for the rest of TV media, who seem to be making politics their business, partisan coverage only stokes the fire rather than checking the flames of a divided government and nation.

MATT FREHNER
Editor-in-Chief

The Juice is milking it

A CASH-STRAPPED OJ SIMPSON IS WRITING A tell-all book tentatively titled *OJ Simpson: If I Did It, Here's How It Happened*. Now, obviously the guy needs some form of income after the Goldmans and Browns took all his money in the civil suit—and are still owed a vast amount of the \$33.5 million they were awarded—but for a guy who's often referred to as getting away with murder, writing a book about how he would have committed the murders had he been the one to do so is coming dangerously close to an admission of guilt. Maybe the title of the book should be *If I Did It ... Aww Sheeit, Who Am I Kidding?*

PAUL OWEN
Sports Editor



MIKE KENDRICK

LETTERS

Anti-tuition mission won't come to fruition

I'm so sick of hearing students on campus bitch and complain about rising tuition fees and the Alberta government's refusal to do everything for them. Ideas are free, degrees are not. I believe that it is not a *right* to attend a postsecondary institution, but a *privilege*. Not a privilege that is reserved for those who can afford it, but a privilege to those who have evaluated the costs of obtaining a degree and decided that having said degree is worth the investment.

If you are currently attending the U of A and don't believe that your time and money are worth the end result, that's fine with me. But if you show up everyday and hang out in SUB whining because your life decisions aren't backed by provincial money, you are not only wasting your time, but also the breath you used to waste everyone else's.

Yes, Alberta has experienced an economic upswing, but that does not entitle any Joe Blow to attend a postsecondary institution for free. Last time I checked, the library was still cheap; if you desire further knowledge on a certain topic, sign out a book. If you desire a degree, you must acquire one at a cost. If everyone was entitled to admission at postsecondary institutions free of charge, they might as well print undergrad degrees on rolls of toilet paper because that's what it would be worth. Then the best jobs would go to Masters students, which would require more money and effort and students would probably complain about that too.

At no other time in history have people had such extensive access to higher education, and yet no other

generation has had more of a "the world owes me" attitude. Do you know what the quality of your degree would cost in the US or overseas? Next time you sign a brick or write a letter or article complaining about how everyone else should do everything for you, think about your reasons for being here in the first place.

Personally, I plan on taking advantage of the state of Alberta's economy in a different way, by getting a great job and saving thousands on taxes, not wasting my time petitioning for a couple hundred bucks on tuition.

KYLE MOLZAN
Engineering IV

Another Gateway issue, another cardinal rule of journalism broken

I realize that Kelsey Tanasiuk's article "Don't look at all the lovely people" (7 November) is suppose to be a farce, but maybe the *Gateway* should be saving this stuff for the sex issue, or better yet, the infamous joke issue (I actually did doublecheck the front page to make sure it didn't read *The Getaway*). In the meantime, this article is just taking up space in an opinion section that might be worth reading. Was there any purpose to the article other than to fill the lower half of page 6? All this shows is that the *Gateway* has run out of real opinions to print.

BRAD RICHERT
Philosophy & Religious Studies IV

Poppies aren't pro-war

In regards to your poppy article (re: "Pay Poppy its due," 9 November), I have to take issue with something: namely, alternatives to the traditional red poppies.

While I understand not everyone

is open to wars, if you look at the three wars (excluding Afghanistan) Canada has fought offensively, it's not even a question of having an alternative to war. World War I: Canada's foreign policy was under Britain's control. So when Britain chose to go to War, Canada was going whether they liked it or not. World War II: There was *no* alternative! Appeasement didn't work. The only option left was war. The Korean War: It was a United Nations-sanctioned war!

That speaks for itself, people. We place so much emphasis, today, on the UN to back any conflicts in the world (eg Iraq) yet we ignore the ones from our past. For veterans, it's a slap in the face to wear an alternative to the red poppy. Canada had 206 200 casualties (dead/wounded) in World War I, 92 000 casualties in World War II, and 1400 casualties in Korea. It's just a shame that Canadians these days have lost touch with their history and the proud Canadian military tradition that once was. As sad as it sounds, a benefit of the current situation in Afghanistan is that younger generations of Canadians aren't losing touch with our military—unlike our ungrateful generation—and the sacrifices they've made over the last hundred years so that we can be here today.

The red poppy shows respect for the soldiers, *not* support for war—past or present. Ironically enough, it's the same soldiers that fought for individual Canadians' freedom, so that one day those Canadians could turn around and be disrespectful and wear these ignorant white and black poppies. So, I ask you, University of Alberta students, to not just wear your poppy the week before Remembrance Day and forget about our soldiers, but to wear red every Friday to support them. No matter [what] your stance in politics or on the war, our soldiers are fighting so

you have the freedom to disagree, and that's something we should always remember.

ALEX HAMILTON
History II

Aladdin article rubs writer the wrong way

In Scott C Bourgeois' article about Bret Hart and *Aladdin* (re: "An unusual change of Hart," 9 November), [he] stated: "The Toronto show had been so successful that the show's writer, Ross Petty, approached Hart with the prospect of going on tour."

Mr Petty is not the show's writer. He is the Producer. The Writer is David Finley—myself, in fact.

DAVID FINLEY
Via e-mail

'Christ Jung' typo no Freudian slip

As a long time *Gateway* reader I am no stranger to the filth you regularly print in your so-called comics section. As such, I was extremely appalled when I noticed that the author of *The Blowie Show* was credited as "Christ Jung" in the contributors list on the second page of the 9 November issue of the *Gateway*.

While I realize that this unfortunate incident is more than likely the product of a simple typo (assuming Jung wasn't directly responsible for the "mistake"), it is extremely surprising that your editors were so blind as to allow the most depraved of your volunteers to be associated with our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ is the savior of mankind, and none of us would be here today if it weren't for his incredible sacrifice.

To see the person responsible for that disgusting trash credited as the son of God literally made me sick.

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