

There's no crying in US politics

NOT IF YOU'RE A WOMAN, THAT IS. THIS POINT was clearly illustrated by the media response to Hillary Clinton's rare display of emotion Monday morning at a press conference in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. When responding to a softball question about how, exactly, she "does it," Clinton choked up and became misty-eyed. The tears (or lack thereof) have been labelled variously as crocodile tears—a political ploy dreamed up by handlers and designed to gain support for the poor downtrodden female candidate—and as yet another example of why a woman has no place in the dog-eat-dog world of politics. But frankly, both of these suggestions are bullshit.

Of course, it's all very shocking to see Obama lose after being 13 points ahead in opinion polls—which, no doubt, has many people questioning whether voters were swayed in some way by pity. But the real assumption we're making here is that Hillary somehow managed to "steal" the female vote with this act. This isn't something we would expect to affect the male voting population—they're much too clever for an obvious ploy like that. Rather, it's those easily swayed women who are slaves to their emotion that were suckered in by this Venus flytrap.

Forget the fact that Hillary has polled strongly among women in the past—especially older women. When her eyes welled up, everyone's reservations were drowned, and they couldn't help but vote for the apparent underdog struggling to make it in an old boys' club. This is not only insulting to Hillary, but also to intelligent female voters.

It doesn't matter if this was scripted emotion to gain public favour. This is politics, and she's simply doing her job, which is to get the voters on her side. Forget the idealistic belief that an election is anything more than a popularity contest: we are all aware—or at least should be—that election platforms and promises are just sweet nothings designed to get us into bed.

This is why you never see politicians campaigning too hard in areas that they know they've already won—why butter up the cow that's going to milk itself for you? Assuming that Hillary won the New Hampshire primary due to sympathy is akin to thinking that Obama won Iowa because white people feared being viewed as racist if they voted otherwise.

The fact of the matter is, the only reason this minor incident is getting any airtime is because she's a woman, and therefore must play by an emotional playbook that amounts to little more than a catch-22. If she stays strong and maintains her composure—something she has demonstrated as being more than capable of doing in the past, as seen during her husband's impeachment process—she's viewed as an ice-cold, ironclad bitch, whereas if she shows even the slightest display of emotion, we view it as weakness and muse about whether or not her hysteria is a result of her menstrual cycle.

A man crying tells us that he's incredibly passionate about the subject, but when it comes to a woman, it's buck up and dry your eyes, sweetheart. No matter what way you look at it, we're all still chauvinists at heart, and Hillary won't be able to do right in voters' eyes until she grows a pair.

CONAL PIERSE
Opinion Editor

HD-DVD betamax

NERDS, GEEKS, AND EVEN NORMAL TECHNOLOGY aficionados have descended on Las Vegas this week for the annual Consumer Electronics Show—a massive tradeshow that showcases the best in new gadgetry and technology. But neckbeards be damned if there isn't some controversy coming out of Sin City.

Warner Bros announced that they'll be dropping support of HD-DVD in favour of rival Blu-ray. This means that Universal and Paramount are the only major studios publishing to HD-DVD—though there are rumblings that Universal will soon jump ship, too.

Take heed, sweet HD-DVD, as you approach your final days. But rest easy, for on-demand will rid the world of your blue counterpart in due time.

RYAN HEISE
Deputy News Editor



MIKE KENDRICK

LETTERS

Editorial right for the wrong reasons

Paul Blinov misses the point pretty badly in his opinion piece on the death penalty (re: "Painless death penalty no solution," 8 January).

With regard to people who can't function in society, the choice is between the death penalty or life imprisonment. Rehabilitation has nothing to do with it. And the reason to oppose the death penalty isn't because it fails to show these criminals something different. What do we care what they are shown? They should never have any significant interaction with society ever again.

No, the reason to oppose the death penalty is because the law exists to protect peoples' rights and should impair those rights only to the minimum degree necessary for civilized society. We don't need to kill these people to prevent them from doing harm. Killing them is the greatest possible impairment of a person's rights and is justified neither by convenience, nor expense, nor vengeance disguised as justice.

JASON MORRIS
Law I

Letters to the editor should be sent to letters@gateway.ualberta.ca

LETTERS FROM THE ARCHIVES

Activists ruin University

I, for one, am god damned sick and tired of hearing all this crap about student power, and I feel that my sentiments are typical of 80 per cent of the students on this campus. This whole entire mess is certainly not helped by all the publicity given to it by the media. That television show on CBC last year was typical. A group of long-haired, pot-smoking morons were the self-chosen spokesmen for the entire university.

Since I am, I feel, an average student, I objected to this most strenuously. Additional sensational reporting like that in recent editions of the *Edmonton Journal* also gives the radical more exposure and, of course, he revels in it.

The whole idea of student power is good to a point. I feel that students should have a greater say as to the quality of the courses and professors as well as some representation on the Board of Governors. This seems to be coming about on its own due to prior requests by our vociferous minority and our students' council. Being a typical radical minority, they aren't content to

stop here—they now want control of the whole University. Since when are students entitled to run this institution?

As professor Ted Kemp said in his recent "Angry look at the university education," the university is the property of the people of Alberta, and we are all fortunate enough to be attending it as their "protégés." The money to support this institution is obtained to the greatest extent from our own pockets. Thus, I feel that we do deserve some say in how this campus is run. But not these radicals.

They feel they shouldn't have to pay tuition fees and yet should have complete control of this public property and make it their own private little domain. Most of these are just half-assed politicians who feel they can be big wheels in the university sphere where they only have a bunch of indifferent apathetic students to answer to.

Well, I am taking enough time from my studies to write this letter, and I wish that all the apathetic bastards like myself would do the same. Maybe we could show the local press and most of our local revolutionary mongers that we are all fed up with all this student power bullshit and would appreciate it if they would quit trying to pretend they are representative of the student sentiment on this campus.

Probably the best way to put these bastards in their place would be for all the non-radical students (which I'm sure would number 8 000-10 000) to gather at a large mass meeting and let the people of this province know that the radical element isn't typical of this campus. Apathetic and busy as I am, I would dearly love to take part in such a gathering if only a few such as myself would take the initial steps to organize it.

So come on you apathetic studious types—let's put these bastards in their place once and for all!

A LUND
21 January, 1969

A long time ago, in a newspaper far, far away

The new *Star Wars* trailer warrants a front-page review in the *Gateway*?

What is going on here? A quarter page worth of "prime" front-page real estate on a movie that won't even be out until summer? What purpose does that serve? Are you going to start covering the new Mr Clean commercials? I just thought I'd put that out for you to consider. Other than that, I think the paper has been fine for the most part.

DONNA TELAAD
19 January, 1999