

On the street

Jeremy Mckay asked people at Loyalist College the following question:

What do you think of the Supreme Court’s decision to lift the ban on assisted suicide?



Owen Lightfoot, animation, “I think humans have the right, though I don’t trust the human race with this law.”



John Russell, business administration, “If they’re in too much pain, they should have the right to be able to do it.”



Derek Buchanan, business administration - “Definitely depends on the situation. Are they vegetables? Has the will already been done? Who benefits? Are they ready to go?”



Meghan Watson, Loyalist graduate, “Leave it as it is. Let people get at it if necessary, but we don’t need a law.”



Joe Ruttan, community and justice Services, “I think it’s a good idea for people (who are) terminally ill. People with terminal illness should have the option.”



Phill Scott, radio broadcasting, “I guess if you’re an adult and you’ve been in pain for awhile, you have the right.”

Editorial

A different bullying perspective

(Editor’s note: This is Sarah Robertson’s cynical perspective on bullying.) Being bullied is good for society. It toughens people up and helps prepare them for the real world. Life isn’t easy and since school is already preparing you for what’s ahead, it only makes sense to be prepared with a black eye.

In 1999, the University of British Columbia took a poll on how many students were actually being bullied in schools. The survey showed that only 64 per cent of students had been bullied and 20-50 per cent thought that bullying was a good thing.

Twenty-five to 33 per cent thought it was okay to bully losers. Losers aren’t even real people so it’s not like they have feelings anyways! The physical side of bullying helps people learn how to tolerate pain. The more they’re pushed and shoved around, the more they can handle. This benefits people immensely because if they were ever to be tortured while out in the world, they could easily withstand the discomfort.

Spreading rumours and excluding people really helps you mentally too. This teaches students how to deal with paparazzi and gossip; remember, not everything you hear is true. Not being invited out is also great because, well, think of the savings! Being a broke student sucks so in the end, it’s truly a win.

Ontario ranked third at 20 per cent for bullying reports on the Stop a Bully website.

If the math is done correctly, that means that roughly 2 million people in Ontario have reported incidents.

That’s really not a lot of people when you think about it. And with the huge up rise in social media, who says bullying has to stop at school? You can go home and get the exact same treatment, but with an improved virtual experience!

Over 52 per cent, which is more than one in three, young people have experienced cyber-threats online. Ninety-five per cent of young people witness this behaviour and choose to ignore it. Why would you ignore it? People are paying attention to you; doesn’t everyone want the spotlight on them?

Really, when you think about it, if you’re not being bullied then you’re doing something wrong. All the cool kids, scratch that – everyone is having it done to them these days!

(And I would know, because I was once bullied and a bullier.)

Sarah Robertson

Are spectators too harsh?

In a country where hockey is more than a game, we often find an emotional connection between our favourite team and ourselves, whether it be at the amateur or professional level.

There is a small number of people who take it too far, causing harm towards others at the arena. This must come to an end.

Harassment by spectators has become more and more of an issue in minor hockey and is becoming a leading issue as to why both teenage and adult referees are resigning.

The average person does not think about the verbal and physical beatings both officials and players receive at all levels of the sport.

In January 2015, the Vancouver Island Amateur Hockey Association had decided to have a spectator-free weekend at all amateur hockey arenas in the Vancouver Island District during minor hockey games. Spectators would still be able to watch from the arenas’ foyers.

Although the idea never came into effect, it was reported in a CBC article that the Vancouver Island Amateur Hockey Association banned five parents of midget level competitive hockey players between the age of 15 and 18. The spectators were ejected for allegedly verbally abusing players on the opposing team as well as the game officials.

The Vancouver Island Amateur Hockey Association’s action plan is caused by excessive harassment toward young referees, who are often only slightly older than the kids they are officiating.

The issue further takes a toll on minor hockey players, as the sport is becoming more and more intense with the expectations of players and officials.

The game of hockey is supposed to be an activity for fun and positive interaction. With spectators screaming at the top of their lungs, whether it is at their children or a young official, the joy of going to the arena for a game is quickly diminished.

There have been cases in the past where parents and other spectators have been so harsh on players and officials as to jeopardize their safety.

The aggression of spectators can further continue toward the action of a coach. In one case, an assistant coach of a bantam hockey team yelled in the ear of one of his players, threatening the lives of the player and several family members.

The violent aggression from the coach later resulted in a one-year suspension from the hockey arena, as well as the loss of his position with the team.

This is one of many cases where the aggression of spectators has affected players/officials directly or indirectly. There are more and more officials resigning from their duties. It simply is not worth all the emotional stress, which comes with the crowd. Spectators must come to realize that the joy of hockey itself is much more important than the satisfaction of one aggressive fan.

James Paddle-Grant



Opinion

What price do we place on happiness?

By Bradley Ruszkowski

“One of the things about the happiness culture is that it’s so aggressive sometimes, it is really thrust on your public spaces and collective consciousness because I think the alternative is so threatening to the whole mechanism “ - Josh Ruth

We are often confronted with the notion that we are indeed in complete control of our own emotions. If we are sad, just turn that frown upside down; don’t worry be happy; let a little light shine in. They all shy away from the acceptance of anything but a positive mental attitude (PMA).

The question was sparked by a professor at Loyalist College regarding the recent rash of positive sticky notes posted on virtually every hallway in the days leading up to February’s reading break.

The gloomiest time of the school year, February reading week was actually institutionalized to curb the suicide rates of students suffering from high stress of mid-terms.

The timeliness of these notes pushing inspirational, loving, motivational messages in everyone’s faces was in the grand scheme of things in good nature.

Although the inherent questioning, “How much is it going to cost to clean all of this up?” puts a spin on the campaign. What IS the cost of our cultures need for happiness?

According to a CP article posted by CBC last December, statistics spending on anti-depressant medications in Canada was on the rise to approximately \$1.4 billion in 2012-13.

This brought to mind a quote from a friend in Winnipeg named Josh Ruth. He along with artist Jenny Moore participated a few months ago in an international radio broadcast project exploring the need for incessant happiness.

“We were looking at happiness as observed by us from the neo-liberal construct that we are living in that ultimately feeds capitalism and the whole machine.”

Also the pursuit of happiness being an obsession in North American culture, so we asked: at what price does happiness come ?

“Completely denying the entire panorama (if you will) of human emotions can be detrimental to the overall well-being.”

Josh also mentioned “I went through this unfortunate Deepak Chopra phase but he had this brilliant illustration where he says: ‘when we are in the cold, our tendency is we resist the cold and shiver, but when that happens, our body is inhibited for inciting the internal mechanisms that help to fight the cold. If we stand and embrace the cold, thinking about how cold we actually are, realizing how cold we are, the body starts to finds the functions to fight it’

I thought it was an apt metaphor for problems or hardships. If we are constantly dosing

ourselves with affirmation and happiness like it’s okay, then what are we restricting ourselves for finding solutions to the real problems.”

Author of Smile or Die: How Positive Thinking Fooled America and the World, Barbara Ehrenreich challenges these theories based on her own survival stories dealing with cancer support groups and speaks of the downfalls of this popular ideology.

In a Ted talks speech, Barbara tells stories of cancer victims actually being disallowed from support groups if there cancers don’t subside due to the fact that it’s a real downer to have.

Other recourses to look into, challenging the culture of chipper and positive thinking ruling all factors is feministkilljoy.com, where author Sara Ahmed addresses neo-liberal persuasion toward happiness subjugating women.

As we return to the academic grind, the hallways have been swept clear of any excessive school stationery smearing smiley sentences down every hallway and locker space, on blackboard, under chalk brushes, sticking to shoes and denying the basic human emotions that may reflect negatively upon the faculty, the parents, the therapist. If a person were to, heaven’s forbid, feel less than happy-go-lucky and positively gushing with glee, during the depths of Ontario’s coldest on record, let’s all remember that we are living in Canada and it’s healthy once in a while to remember to shiver.

Rock climbing an addiction for columnist

By Daniel Luk

Beware of rock climbing!

If you are prone to being addicted to progress and/or interesting lifestyles for all ages, stay away from rock climbing.

Believe it or not, rock climbing is very much a gateway drug – from the first pump of adrenaline after completing your first climb to the vast selection of other activities intertwined with the powerful sport. This is something not to be taken lightly.

Within a week of participating in rock climbing, you will notice change. It starts with the hands morphing into rough and powerful tools. It progresses to your eyesight, as your vision maps out routes on everyday surfaces.

As well as changing your physical attributes, when you’re placed in a rock climbing setting, you’re subjected to psychological change.

Unlike the invasive dominance mentality of the majority of sports, the climbing world is

supportive and friendly. Even during competitions, competitors have been known to talk about technique together.

Rock climbing then starts to set in, allowing users to become more aware of “beta” (slang for how to complete a climb) and the physical demands required. Climbers will look elsewhere for ways of making higher-graded climbing routes more easily accessible.

Usually starting off with yoga, these climbers will try to improve core strength and control of their muscles. The climbers then venture into the newer adrenaline-infused sports such as slack lining, a combination of gymnastics and tight-rope walking to increase stability and balance.

This nature-inspired sport has changed the lives of many, causing some to go mad, climbing cliffs without a rope or in many cases when this sport seeps into the hands of the youth, may cause them to internally rewire their brains into that of a monkey.

Due to their well-suited smaller hands, in

many cases youth may surpass adult and even long-time climbers.

With the progression of the addiction, the only known cure is to continue to rock climb and adapt with it. As you gain more climbing friends and rough muscular exterior, the addiction will then attempt to lure friends and family to experience the rush.

With climbing centres and outdoor climbing spots all over, it’s an easily adaptable sport that can be done anywhere. Simply looking around locally, Kingston has an intense 60-foot climbing wall.

This sport needs to be more apparent in society. It is responsible for removing thousands of people from their television sets and their smartphones, replacing it with making friends, exercising, and finding new ways of enjoying life, naturally designed for all ages. I encourage everyone to not seek out this crazy fun induced adventurous sport, you might get addicted.

The Pioneer

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