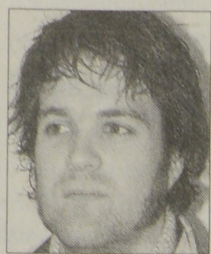


What's so wonderful about Wonder bread? Nothin'



THOUGHT FOR FOOD MATTHEW THOMPSON

As human beings, we tend to be filled with wonder at two things. We are in awe of nature (which may extend to religious beliefs) and in awe of ourselves. Often, these two elements seem conflicting and we find ourselves having to favour one over the other. Food values are central to this debate.

Canada's Food Agency (CFA) and the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have both been supportive of the enrichment and fortification of our food. The synthetic increase of nutrient levels within food is considered enrichment whereas fortification is the addition of nutrients not previously found within the food. It is remarkable that we have the means to synthetically create our essential nutrients, but why do we need to take these measures?

The nutrient level of the food we eat has a direct correlation with the quality of the soil in which it is grown.

Conventional farming practices tend to cause mineral deficiencies in the soil. This is largely caused by the lack of organic fertilizers, which provide more than just nitrogen, phosphorous, and potassium amendments, and inadequate crop rotations that do not allow for soil to rejuvenate. Subsequently, our nutritional intake is decreased unless our food is enriched.

North American diets have shifted further from natural foods and more towards processed foods. As we displace well-balanced eating habits for convenience and simulated flavour, enrichment and fortification become a necessity. We need the intervention of science to provide essential nutrients in a diet that is extremely unhealthy.

Another common argument for scientific involvement in food production involves 'third world' development. The logic runs, since world hunger is such a huge epidemic, with millions of people suffering from malnourishment, fortification would help supply proper nutrition to developing countries.

The problem with all three of these arguments is that they prove the stubbornness of western society in changing our way of life for the general good. The need for

enrichment and fortification of food would practically be nonexistent if we would only change the way we value food. Scientific intervention is merely reactive to larger social problems. A proactive address of the problem would be to change the way we farm, change what eat, and change the way we address world hunger. I would even argue that world hunger would be more easily addressed if we made those first two changes (but perhaps that's another article).

Although I have argued for the awesome quality of nature, there are examples of the incredible human ability to create positive change. For example, many of our pasta grains in Canada are enriched with folic acid (vitamin B9), which has recently been proved to prevent a form of childhood cancer as well as reduce neural tube birth defects. The synthetic folic acid has even been argued to be more effective than naturally occurring folic acid.

Nevertheless, nature possesses everything we need to survive; if it did not, we would not be alive now. So, instead of living in awe of human achievement, through enriched food like Wonder bread, we should be aware of the awesome qualities of nature. Then, perhaps, we can admire our ability to live sustainably within our environment.

Znet: calling for social change

THE ONLINE NEWS REVIEW BEN MCFARLANE

WWW.ZMAG.ORG/WELUSER.HTML

To find oneself browsing the pages of Znet is to find oneself in a dense thicket of activist authors and commentators. Znet is no ordinary alternative media site. Znet is the website of Z-magazine; a committed activist news rag that was set-up in 1987 in reaction to what its founders saw as a preponderance of media control of information in the United States. It was among the very first of alternative news media. As such, in its first days, Z-magazine was a harbinger of the array of alternative media that makes up the bulk of the content for this news review.

JOURNALISTIC BIAS

Znet does not hide behind claims of objectivity or neutrality: it is left. The webpage is a politically activist forum dedicated to the understanding of US politics and social and political change. The good thing about Znet's left-wing bias is that it is always in the forefront.

QUALITY OF ARTICLES

Znet draws original writing from a resource of over 130 contributors including Noam Chomsky, Naomi

Klein, Robert Fisk. Many alternative news sources merely filter the information that is already available to the public. Znet sets itself apart in providing fresh, alternative content which is completely original and might not have been reported at all. The journalistic freedom offered by Znet is perhaps the reason that it is able to rely on such a large number of authors.

Although Znet relies on submissions from professional authors, much of their site is filled with freelance and independent journalism. Much of it has to be edited for style and length but by and large Znet tries to give its writers as much freedom as possible. They do maintain a standard of decorum and do not allow coarse or offensive language to play a role in description. Most of Znet's articles are thoughtfully written, and most of them stick to common-sense presentation without too much fluff or rhetoric.

PAGE LAYOUT

Znet is huge. There is so much information organized within the pages of this website, and for this reason, page layout is more important here than it would be with a much smaller site. The layout is uncommonly well-done. The main page is organized into three columns.

At the top of each is a description of its contents. Within the three columns articles in each sub-section are preceded by the last name of the author who wrote them. On the left side are links to articles categorized by country, author, resource categories, as well as links to the same page in 11 languages. The page makes effective use of all the page design gizmo's including mouseover. All of this makes Znet's layout extremely effective and navigable.

REALIZATION OF OBJECTIVES

Znet's motto is "A community of people dedicated to social change." The site realizes this goal perfectly, with a live chat forum and a "pen-pal" system which consists of a listing of email addresses of the Znet readers who would like to be written to by other Znet readers. Most importantly, Znet achieves a high-level of original content that runs against the mainstream political grain and is a reliable alternative resource.

RATING

Znet scores a 10/10. There is close agreement with the page's promises and what is delivered, and its overall presentation and effectiveness clearly deserves acclaim. Kudos to Z-magazine for this powerful website.

Pillar debate gets another perspective

Reader: engineering jokes misunderstood

by Kirsty Williamson

What I have heard from both sides in the *Pillar* debate has mostly been personal attacks and name-calling.

What is absolutely shocking to me is how the general population of UNB seems to portray engineers as a group. I was deeply offended by some of the comments made over the past few weeks concerning my faculty as a whole and would like a chance to voice an opinion based on my experience as a fifth year female student in the Mechanical Engineering Department.

Engineers Rule the World is an internationally used slogan meant to

inspire the students and promote a feeling of unity and pride that is absolutely necessary to survive the intense engineering programs. Rest assured that the faculty and industry does not promote arrogance or belittling of other disciplines! Sometimes students just need to vent frustration at the workload, self-doubting and stress that accompanies the degree. Combined with the public's general lack of knowledge and appreciation of the profession... Just consider ERTW as a team cheer for uniting engineering students worldwide and nothing more.

When we speak of Artsies (which, by the way, is a shortened way of saying Arts-Science) it is not meant to belittle other disciplines. I accept that business and politics rule the

world. Scientists clean up our mistakes and engineers can appreciate the culture infused into society through the arts. I think that the Artsie jokes are said in hope of a joke-retaliation. Most Engineering schools have an open rivalry with other faculties and embrace this as faculty spirit, interaction and a way to fight student apathy. They use the Artsie term to provoke Engineer replies. Come on faculties! Play the game! Joke! Spoof! Prank! Let's show some creativity and fight apathy with comedy!

The attitude in the Mechanical Engineering department towards women is amazing, though people seem to consider engineers insensitive. My experience is that engineers take things in stride and are not easily troubled by political

correctness and stereotypes; come on, we have better things to worry about like building bridges and programming our calculators! The entire thought process of the Engineer is different than Arts-Science folk and if it weren't, the world might still be flat and gravity would never have been invented.

I hope that through the whole *Pillar* debate both sides remember that one of the most essential aspects of attending a university is to experience a plethora of different opinions, ideals and cultures. The *Pillar* needs change, but let's move beyond the finger pointing and name-calling. Let's encourage an engineering paper worthy of national acclaim for its intelligence, wit, and humour.

Reader blasts CD reviews

by Derrick Fulton

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I am writing in response to the recent Burt Muston review of the Jagged Edge album *Hard*. No stars? Did he even listen to the album? "Middle of the road R&B bullshit"? First of all, it's hip hop/soul. Seems like the kind of thing a decent music critic would get right.

And what's with making fun of one of 2003's best love songs? I fail to see how the words and ideas in the song 'Hard' can be called anything but heartfelt and moving. The guy's saying to his girl, "instead of us fighting so hard, I should've been loving you hard." By brushing it off as "laughably cloying," or referring to it as "a real milk-out-the-noser," Muston shows himself to be hateful and bitter. Just because *his* love life's shitty (or has been - I doubt a guy like that gets a lot of dates)... I mean,

it's such an obvious misdirection of animosity and there's no need for it to be in a public forum. Save it for therapy, Burt.

I guess I shouldn't be surprised, though. Has Muston ever done an objective review? Does he even know what objective means? It's like, "Oh look, there's a Burt Muston review in this week's *Brunswickan*. Hey, no stars, what a surprise. Hey, he used a couple of obscure adjectives and some four letter words - ha ha ha." Seriously, it's getting old. And on the few occasions where it's not no stars, it's five stars and he's being sarcastic. Genius. I realize it's a student publication and all the writers are volunteers and everything, but you guys can't be that desperate. Cut him loose.

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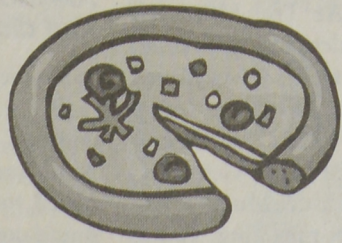
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