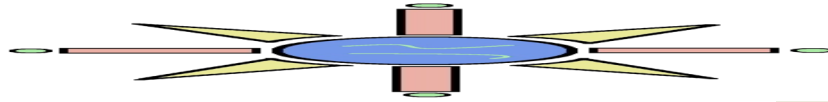


The Coquitsam Review



Edition 5, February 2017

Still Hazy After All These Years

Installing the new flat screen TV meant running wires through cupboards stuffed with board games and LPs, old photographs and school report cards. One LP caught my eye – David McWilliams. On the cover, a scruffy, curly haired guy with a guitar and when I put it on the turntable it brought tears to my eyes.

I used to fall asleep listening to him sing – my prized possession was a five-record turn-table – about a better world, one without hunger, injustice or pain. And when his record ended, there was Dylan singing about A Hard Rain or Donovan and his Universal Soldier. I believed I was part of a generation that would not tolerate injustice, that would turn hatred into love and see the end of nuclear weapons. I was going to be a war correspondent so no one could remain ignorant of what was happening in the Congo, Turkey or the USSR (as it then was). Then I was going to be a doctor to help all the malnourished babies in the Third World and finally I was going to get rich so I could build hospitals and pay for school lunches for inner city kids. I was a fairly typical 15-year-old in the late 1960s.

So what happened? Did we all just grow up and forget our childhood passions? Did we become mired with responsibilities – families, careers, putting food on the table – and leave others to protest and rail against the status quo? Young people accuse, with some justification, the baby boomers of ruining the environment, of hogging the good jobs and pushing house prices into the stratosphere, leaving them... (cont. p.3)

Reflections on Politik

Was there ever truthful politicking?

Have we not been lying to one another for centuries?

Maybe the lies are better than the truth.

I Faked it Once

Just as a person thinks the world couldn't get any stupider, along comes the fuss about "Fake News".

(Well, when I say "the world" I really mean the delicate snowflakes, mainstream media types and Big Government folks whose noses are still out of joint over the Donald whipping their favourite pet back last November.

I've got news for those guys: It's all fake news!

The idea that a third party organization can distinguish between "fake news" and "real news" is absurd. That is what your brain is for!

I suspect everyone can agree that fake news is what you get when you read the National Enquirer.

But you'd have to be a complete idiot to believe that every single word one reads in the newspapers or sees on the television news shows is 100% guaranteed fact.

And if you get your "news" from blog sites... (cont. p.2)

Brushing Your Teeth no Longer an Option

Regarding Air Travel:

On Canadian flights we are asked if we have “weapons of mass destruction or any firearms in our luggage”.

The Western allies chase dollars. They sell weapons in wars created through their meddling in foreign governments. The People are surprised that by bombing and interfering with foreign governments they chase locals out of their homes whom fleeing hope that by eventually escaping to Europe or North America they can start a new life in the safety of the West.

Young people join the armed forces for various reasons. They are not equipped to face the horrors of war. They see, and do, things which in some way damages their psyche or their spirit. They come home damaged, we call it post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It seems as if there is insufficient mental health service to cope with this. Is it possible to completely return these sufferers to normal? In the UK there were hospitals set up to house PTSD (shell shock) sufferers from WW2. They were not able to be cured.

Some people in the USA were gunned down by an ex-military shooter who had his firearm in his checked luggage, apparently this is allowed by USA airlines. He opened his checked luggage in the airport and began firing. This is an astounding revelation, as a passenger embarking from Canada I am not allowed any firearms, checked or otherwise, on flights. And that includes weapons of mass destruction.

(cont. p.1 Faked)

And if you get your "news" from blog sites or 10-word headlines on a social media feed, then *caveat emptor*.

However, the suggestion that the great unwashed should need to be told the difference between Fake News and Real News, is one very short step to being told what to think.

Have Brave New World and 1984 been taken off the high school recommended reading list??

Jeez, those books should be compulsory reading for everyone by Grade 9.

Animal Farm as well, while they are at it, in Grade 7.

There will be a test!

How to Beat the System

Forget about it. It is not possible. Every action you take will be futile. Your protests will not be heard, your protestations will not be noted. You will waste what little time you have on this wonderful world worrying about the unchangeable and find yourself old and grey without so much as a story to tell. The tarianism is total. Submission is victory. Not caring is freedom. Be a happy slave until the opportunity for a grand theft presents itself and then steal as much money as possible and make your way to a small village in Africa where one may live out the rest of their days in glorious poverty, free from the collective individuality of the modern bourgeoisie known as the hipster. There is no good fight, there is no winning side, only the establishment in all its guises and the fools foolish enough to fight. If one is not presented with a grand enough larceny one might try the venerable profession of grave robber, for what greater rebellion is there against the ills of society than to desecrate that which has no purpose but is held so sacredly. To surmise, grave robber or happy slave, your choice.

(cont. p. 1 Hazy)

...with a huge mess of unpaid bills and climate change consequences.

David McWilliams asked all those years ago why couldn't we see what was happening in front of our eyes, why everyone feels their God is the only true God, and what about the homeless?

Well, what about them? They are still with us, in ever increasing numbers, as are the non-profits who claim to be helping them. We are still sending our young men and women to war in the guise of bringing peace, we've militarised our police, and thrown away decades of environmental safeguards to appease the big oil and construction companies.

But, amid the gloom, and the polarized politics, there is a glimmer of hope – we are finding our voices again. All around the globe, banners are being painted and pink hats knitted and millions of women and men are preparing to show up and be counted – cameras be damned – as the world lurches towards nationalism, patriotism, protectionism and misogyny. This time around, though, we are marching with our children and grand-children, with our parents and our grandparents, because, this time around, there's so much more at stake.

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Relevant discussion and debate is sorely lacking in our society. We have oodles of inane nonsensical useless diatribes, we have piles of semi-sordid stagnant entertainment, we have printed so many awful books that the trees are soon to refuse to grow if that is what is to become of them. We have extensive arguments on the street about who hits a ball better and countless hours spent compiling statistical analyses of immense detail for an undertaking requiring the thought processes of a Bonobo. We have traded trusted sources for many sources, tested science for pseudo-science, logic and reasoning for emotion and intuition. We have at our fingertips the means by which to propel the world into an age of knowledge, into a second Enlightenment, yet we use these means to satiate our bases desires and foster hedonism. How useless is the caterpillar without the butterfly, how long those days of eking across tree branches, how tedious the wait is for the inevitable. Perhaps it is time we returned to the relevant, perhaps it is time we stopped admiring our inventions and begun using them. Perhaps it is time we did away with our technological narcissism and started to apply our advancements to the betterment of society and the prosperity of all.

Rainy Days in Am

Whenever I get caught in a rainstorm I travel more slowly.

I drink the water in through my scalp and wash away the teary eyed remnants of yesterday.

Laughter becomes a roar amidst the deluge of smattering droplets.

I take my glasses off and see what I was meant to.

The Coquitlam Review is published by the Commonwealth Federation of Explorers.

Contributors:

- Leapnet
- Johan Cohen
- Your Working Boy
- Mister Review
- A. Reynolds
- Nom Deplume
- Pretty Penny

If you would like to submit articles to The Review please do so by emailing the editor at simon.j.postma@gmail.com

All submissions will be considered, no limitations as to content or length except do your best not to be boring. Local or international, philosophical or satirical, poetry or prose, all are welcome, providing for quality.

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