

RIGHT OUTTA LEFT FIELD

This week: Disposable martyrs of the holidays

By J. Jones

Well, it seems that the final breath of the Christmas trees is upon us. Those poor, hardy souls who give their life for our own selfish purpose are quickly sent to the curb as trash or to the crematorium for kindling as soon as their brief useful period is over. We feel a great attachment to a tree while we are putting it up, and while it is decorated, yet it somehow loses its appeal once the needles run dry. Of course, we have the same great attachment to a new tree next Christmas, letting it replace the previous one in our thoughts, and always trying to make it prettier or more attractive than we remember it. Christmas trees make a great disposable martyr for our ever-complex society. We don't have time to worship the tree for the whole year, so we have to keep replacing it around the holidays to make sure we don't forget about the pleasant memories we

had last year.

Imagine the poor life of a Christmas tree—to be grown for the sole purpose of being covered with tacky decorations in an unnatural setting with nothing but stale force-fed water for nourishment, and to be gawked at by an entire family of strangers. Even criminals sent to the death chamber get a last meal of their choice! Is there no shame for some people? The tree is a noble living object, growing up with a fore-knowledge of its fate—either to be drawn, quartered and used for kindling or to be put on a shameful display for the public.

People with artificial trees are no better. They are simply trying to get the best of both worlds—a pretty tree without the blood guilt of having killed a living being for short-term pleasure. Many artificial trees aren't even a good likeness of the real thing anyway.

An imported knock-off of Canadiana, they are a way to preserve a sanitized version of a bloody tradition.

So, instead of placing gifts under a martyred tree next Christmas, I encourage you to boycott the use of trees as a Christmas symbol. They haven't hurt anyone, they don't speak ill of anyone, and they don't even want anything from us—only the right to exist, that's all. I suggest maybe placing your gifts under the stove or a fridge, both of which are symbols that more people are familiar with anyway. So remember, when you see trees being sold in order to raise funds for good causes (or profit, in some cases), remember that each of those trees had a family, and would no doubt rather be firmly planted in the ground than to be placed in metal cups and bleeding sap over your living room floor.

By Finley Martin

1996 proved to be an exciting and entertaining year for the Five Year Plan. FYP ended the first half of the intramural basketball season with a 3 win/ 2 loss record. The team's two losses were by a mere total of three points and clearly illustrate the teams tremendous potential to win the league championship.

Off court, things heated up with clashing personalities between players and management. The rumour mill continuously put many of the players under close scrutiny. Potential trades, disagreements with the coaching staff, and constant unwarranted media attention put added pressure on the team to succeed. All things said, the team dealt with each obstacle in stride. Acting team spokesman Dave Christian commented "All I can say is that it is a shame that our personal lives have been emphasized so much by members of the press. We are playing so well on the court. But how much attention does that get?"

On a lighter note, congratulations go out to Chris Buote who, in November, won the "Win a Day With The FYP" contest. Mr. Buote's entry was randomly selected from the thousands of entries mailed in. Mr. Buote has now been named an honorary member of the team.

Finally, over the Christmas break, Pat Perry,

Geoff Smith, Dico Reyers and Dale Tingley held the first annual FYP Christmas Basketball Camp. This two week intensive camp taught the fundamentals of FYP basketball, philosophy and fashion sense. The importance of diet in order to maintain what is now known as "FYP Athleticism" was also discussed. All profits from the camp will be donated to the Panther Lounge over the next semester in exchange for vast quantities of beer and Malibu rum.

Fanmail for the Five Year Plan can be E-mailed to fanmail@peionline.com or you can reach them at their website at: <http://www.peionline.com/fyp>

*Do something selfish.
Save a whale.*

Or plant a tree. Or recycle your newspaper. After all, whenever you do anything - big or small - to help restore and conserve our wild spaces and species, you also help yourself. We count on these living resources for everything from medical advancement to industrial growth. In other words, what we do for them, we do for ourselves. And our children. Get in touch with us at www.wwfcanada.org or 1-800-26-PANDA and we'll tell you a few more selfish ways you can help.



Their future is our future.