

## ASSUMPTIONS ARE DANGEROUS; ESPECIALLY FOR STRIPPERS

I met a male stripper this week. He finds the employment both fulfilling and challenging and has been at it for three years with the same company. One of the advantages of achieving a level of tenure has been the opportunity for advancement, resulting in a recent shift from removing car parts to storing those parts for resale. From his perspective, the salvage company he works for is thriving.

What's that? You thought I was referring to "another" kind of stripper? That's quite an assumption. Drag your mind out of the gutter. I may have been describing a janitor labouring to strip wax off floors or a carpenter refinishing furniture or a roofer specializing in the removal of aged shingles. Yes, assumptions can be both dangerous and embarrassing.

The human tendency has inspired an entire "news" media that recognize our propensity to believe the preposterous. These sleaze specialists brazenly hock their wares in supermarket displays, proclaiming Billy Graham to be the love child of aliens and that Elvis was spotted in Northern Saskatchewan having lunch with Bigfoot. No wonder society is "all shook up."

Now before wagging our finger too hard at other champions of assumption we need to look in the mirror. We are all guilty of buying into blanket statements without taking time to glance under the covers. Examples abound.

Many assume politicians are all glitter and no substance -- a massive assumption since most have never sat down and swapped perspectives with their elected one, though the ones I know are certainly willing to do so. I invited my MLA for lunch a few months ago and left enlightened and thankful for great political representation; He left with the bill. Sounds like a winning combination to me.

We make assumptions about inner quality based upon outer looks. Someone is too old to be effective or too young to understand. We assume Caucasians can't comprehend First Nation's issues -- after all, they're wrapped in the wrong skin colour.

We assume the driver perched behind the wheel of a Corvette is wealthy when in fact, for many it's simply evidence of rash decisions and back-breaking debt. Houses paint a similar picture with many Canadians voluntarily sentencing themselves to mortgage-imprisonment in the dubious pursuit of increased square-footage.

We judge a person's intents by clothing style or musical preference. Just a few decades ago an entire generation of parents condemned those upstart Beatles based upon their ragged looks and rock 'n roll beat. In a great twist of irony, many of those parents preferred the original Goth, Johnny Cash; a.k.a. "the man in black". I guess they'd rather "Walk the Line" than "Get a Ticket to Ride."

Yes, assumptions have been part of the human experience since the beginning of time. Adam assumed sin wouldn't make *that* much of a difference. Joseph assumed the Virgin Mary had been sleeping around -- until an angel set him straight. Soldiers assumed if they crucified Jesus, He would stay dead.

Perhaps my stripper friend summarizes the subject best when he states, with a twinkle in his eye, “Don’t believe everything you hear.” That covers the bare essentials quite nicely, doesn’t it?