

# The Gateway

member of the canadian university press

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**STAFF THIS ISSUE**—Snow wonder there was a lot of noise on the top floor of SUB Sunday night—staffers were busy putting out this paper. Loyal and hardworking staffers who showed up were John Thompson, Terry Donnelly, John Green, Chuck Lyall, Don Moren, Bernice Goedhart, Elaine Verbicky, Merry Marion Conebeare, Judy Lees, Ronald Yakimchuk, and yours truly Harvey Thomgirt.

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WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1966

## let's have sunday sports

Students' union president Branny Schepanovich and dean of physical education Dr. Maury Van Vliet have been working for some time to get the physical education building facilities available on Sundays.

Mr. Schepanovich has argued that there is a demand for access to the services of the building, which he says are among the best in North America, a demand for access seven days a week, and asks the university to observe this demand and open all facilities for general use on Sundays.

Dr. Van Vliet says he can see no reason, if the board of governors have no objections, why the building's facilities should not remain open all day Saturday and from one to eight o'clock Sunday afternoons. His main concern is that of supervision, which he proposes can be done with a commissionaire, at least one building supervisor and additional staff for both the men's and women's equipment rooms.

There have been two main reasons cited for the building being closed on Sundays—that it is too expensive to hire additional staff, and that the community at large is opposed to Sunday sports.

We reject both.

The cost of hiring five people for seven hours per day is negligible in a budget of several million dollars. Four of the five hired could be graduate students in physical education, and anybody knows you can hire a student for next to nothing.

The second was refuted when the citizens of Edmonton voted in favor of Sunday sports in a referendum held during the recent civic elections.

If the board of governors has been worried about the mood of the community at large in this matter, then it need no longer worry, and it can set aside the present university policy, and open the building on Sundays—now.

## criticize ideas, not ability

Although U of A students' union president Branny Schepanovich and U of A underlined the discussions of the Canadian Union of Students board meeting this weekend, no serious attempt to understand U of A's philosophy has been made.

The directors accused Edmonton's representatives of "childish behaviour," being "petulant," "not knowing how to advance their ideas" and "not trying to reform CUS." The attack was a personal one.

The CUS board of governors can be accused of the very behaviour they attribute to U of A. The board knows seven "poopers," as CUS president Doug Ward calls them, have left the national organization because they do not support CUS's policy of involvement in social and political issues.

Yet they made no attempt to define or defend this policy of non-involvement. Because the board members are so convinced their stand is correct, they are proceeding with their policy without seeing if

this will alienate still more student governments.

To be effective, CUS policy depends on the participation of all Canadian students. The meeting should have discussed methods of bringing former members back into CUS.

The board should have clarified their own philosophy and either tried to show the strength of their programs, or attempted to change these programs to meet the approval of the majority of Canadian students.

Instead they talked about ways of recovering monies lost through the withdrawal. They talked about legal means to be brought against the Maverick unions.

Surely this will only solidify the existing anti-CUS sentiments in some universities. Obviously it will not help rebuild a viable national students' organization.

The CUS national office should concentrate on rebuilding their organization, rather than finding scapegoats for its disintegration.



"quit hollering or i'll take away even your wretched doll and give you something to really cry about"

helene chomiak

## down with lectures, up with thinking

"In the Middle Ages lectures were necessary because of the shortage of books. Now that printing has been with us for some hundreds of years, is there any need to continue the lecture system?"—Glanville Williams, a leading British law professor.

Most universities still use the lecture system. Its value is in bringing course material more up to date than the current books on the topic and in stimulating student interest.

To fulfill the first function effectively, teachers must have ample time for research. There is a danger they will not have enough time in the growing university.

Already many professors use the same lectures year after year. Some even use the same examinations.

One friend told me his professor advised him to consult the exams from the previous year and learn the right answers if he wanted to pass the course. This seems the epitome of the failure of the lecture system.

The second value of lectures is that they stimulate the students.

However, many university lecturers have no concept of how to conduct a class. We consider it essential for school teachers to take courses on how to teach and to have practice in teaching before they are let loose in a classroom of children.

Surely, there are some skills involved in lecturing to university students. Shouldn't university professors be given material on how to conduct a class so they could utilize their lecture time more effectively?

Many classes at university are now so large that it seems interaction between the professor and students is impossible. If these classes cannot be

reduced in size, then perhaps they should be made even larger.

There is little difference between a class of 300 students and one of 1,000. Both are mobs preventing real class discussion.

However, if the classes were made as large as possible, then it would be possible for the department to choose their best qualified lecturer to give the course.

Other professors in the department could hold seminars with small groups to discuss lecture and course material more effectively. They would have time to meet with these small groups for they would be freed from the burden of lectures.

Another big problem with classes is that many are taught by professors who are capable in their fields, but whose English makes the classes unintelligible. To have any value, lectures must first be understood.

Men who have problems in communicating with their students, might instead devote their full time to research—both helping those who lecture and the university as a whole.

A greater emphasis should be placed by the teaching community on individual work by the students. There is little value in spoon feeding information for it is not absorbed.

Lectures are often one of the only sources of learning for many students. They do not supplement class work with outside reading. They pass courses by parroting ideas of their teachers which they neither absorb nor understand.

This is the main difficulty with the lecture system and why serious consideration should be given to scrapping it.

If it is retained, then it should be at least changed significantly.