

Thanks, Aggies

The Editor:

The Freshman Introduction Week committee would like to express its appreciation to the Agriculture Club for the excellent job they did in making the Steer 'n Stomp Friday a most successful evening.

Last spring, the Aggies informed me they would be interested in helping the FIW committee put on an evening like this. I would like to say they didn't help us—they did the whole job.

I had the privilege of sitting in on a few of their organizational meetings throughout the summer and was always amazed with their organization and their willingness to help.

It is my opinion the Steer 'n Stomp was one of the highlights of the week and to Agricultural Club must go all the credit.

If some of the other clubs and organizations on campus were as active, campus activities would be truly enjoyable.

Thanks again, Agricultural Club, for a fantastic job.

Wes Alexander
Director, FIW,

Ungracious editorials

The Editor:

Since I joined this university's faculty six years ago, I have been saddened by the ungracious editorials aimed at new students. This year two editorials manage to be rude to both the students coming in, and to the faculty and administration. Pardon me if I take it personally. But if you or anyone on the Gateway staff says those of us who are long-term members of the community are incompetent or untrustworthy, in your words or tone, I cannot help but feel some of it rubs off on me.

Therefore, let me ask whether you would care to be the object of such statements of opinion as these year after year. And let me in fairness present a few things from the side of the incompetent and untrustworthy.

First, as I have said in your pages before, some of us are bound to be less able, less fair, than we should be. Some first-year students are going to get bad teaching and some of them are going to feel they are being treated like high school students. This does not call for implications that incompetence is certain, excitement rare. Nor does it call for categorical statements that we are going to treat adults of 18 like children. We call roll to find out who's who, among other things.

Those who have not been teaching first year students for years should be pardoned for saying they ought to be treated like adults. They are—the fact is, the first year student by and large has far too much high-school awe at teachers and their wisdom; about the hardest thing to do is to convince them otherwise. Most of them cross the line between high-school boy or girl and adult sometime during the first year. We certainly don't want it otherwise. The university is not for the retarded.

As for the memorandum. What things are unacceptable behavior ought to be common knowledge of civilized adults. Presumably President Johns is doing you the honor of assuming you know what civilized adults do and do not do. Opinions and their verbal expression—fine. These are part of thinking. But slogan chanting and physical violence do not look much like thinking. Perhaps the writer of the editorial should consider what he would think were *The Gateway* offices to be occupied violently by people who disagree with him. Nobody, from the newest freshman to the president of the university, should be subjected to intimidation or interference with his lawful activities. Since that sort of interference has been loudly advocated among students of late, the president spoke against it. It interferes with meaningful liberty only as far as the rules against violent hazing by fraternities and panty raids interfere with freedom.

Perhaps you will discount this letter as coming from one of them, the over-thirty enemy. I do hope, thought, insults to the intelligence of new students and violently unfair assumptions about the university's officers will cease after this year. Can we not assume that most of us are people of good will? And lovers of learning?

Jean MacIntyre
Associate Professor of English

A Letter from Australia

The Editor:

As a student who has for some time been interested in Canada, I would like to initiate a correspondence between myself and students of the University of Alberta.

I am majoring in modern history and psychology, and am in my final year at the University of New South Wales. This institution is one of three in the Sydney metropolitan area. The oldest and largest is the University of Sydney (est. 1850) with more than 16,000 students, and the smallest and newest is Macquarie University which opened last year with an

enrolment of approximately 1,500. New South Wales is intermediate between the two: it was established in 1949 and has a student population of about 13,000.

My extra-curricular activities include—pre-classical music, choral singing, photography, all things medieval, travel, philately, and heraldry. I am 21 years of age.

Ann Shermon
77 Gerard St.
Cremorne
New South Wales 2090
Australia

Representative?

The Editor:

In a front page story in your first issue, one dealing with representation on the Board of Governors, Marilyn Pilkington was quoted as saying, "the students will be representative students rather than representative of the students."

One wonders in what sense(s) Miss Pilkington is using the word 'representative' . . . of what?

The students' union hierarchy, by all indications.

Certainly we must recognize they will not be representative in the political sense of the word, since they will not be elected.

This is indeed a great shame—the people who will be speaking for the University of Alberta at the highest level will have no clear mandate from their constituency. Miss Pilkington is directly contradicting the stands she has taken on CUS and WUS.

In the direct interest of democracy, I suggest elections be held for our own representatives to the Board of Governors as well as the General Faculty Council and the Senate.

When will our elected students' leaders cease their political obfuscations and make a conscious effort to present the issues for discussion to the student populace.

Robin Walker

ED Note: Our view is similar to that of Mr. Walker (see edit, Friday, Sept. 13). Miss Pilkington replies on this page.



Council's position

The Editor:

In the editorial in the Friday, September 13th edition of *The Gateway*, you questioned whether the students' council has the right to represent students in university government.

You suggested the decision to appoint student consultants to the Board of Governors conflicts with our policy that the World University Service Committee cannot take stands on issues on behalf of students at the University of Alberta.

I would like to point out the reason the WUS Committee cannot take stands on behalf of all students is because they are not elected to represent students. The WUS Committee is a working committee of the Students' Union composed of interested students, not elected representatives.

However, the students' council is elected to represent students: to make decisions on internal student government problems, to develop policy on issues in university government, and to represent stu-

dents with the municipal, provincial or federal government on issues such as university financing, student assistance, and other issues in which students share a common interest.

The point made in your editorial about the desirability of participatory democracy is indeed a valid one, and the students' council intends to make considerable use of referenda during the year ahead.

But to suggest that the council does not have "the right nor the authority to represent University of Alberta students on committees, boards etc. which are higher in authority than the students' council", suggests the students' council has no right to make decisions on anything other than how many streamers to put up at the next dance.

Marilyn Pilkington
President
Students' Union

Ed. Note: Which suggests we will not have true representatives on the board.

This is page FIVE

Contributions are beginning to come in. Today we have a number of letters, one from as far away as Australia. The others are from as close as the department of English.

We remind you that letters should not be more than 300 words in length. The letters and other contributions must be either personally brought to The Gateway office at 282 SUB or mailed to The Editor, The Gateway etc. Contributors must sign their name. We will not print pseudonyms.

Letters today concern our editorials, the Stomp 'n Steer dance, and representation on the Board of Governors. Another was written by a person seeking pen pals.

Page FIVE will publish student opinions twice weekly—Tuesday and Thursday. A reminder that we could use cartoons also. Artists are invited to submit their work to The Editor at The Gateway office.

They were not advantages — they were threats

The Editor:

"Everybody," says the writer of an article that appeared in last Friday's *Gateway*, seems to be voicing opinions on the tri-semester form of university education. He then proceeds to voice his own opinion, which includes what he considers to be two great advantages of this system. That the advantages he mentions are not advantages at all, but, rather, one of them a threat to the student's right to speak freely on issues political, moral, educational—all issues, in short, which touch him nearly at present, or will do so in years to come—and the other a threat to the quality of graduate (and undergraduate) education, I hope before the end to show.

A student's mind is his own mind, and to nourish it and develop it as he chooses is his privilege. To attempt to limit his enquires to "essential" matters is, I need hardly say, a vicious tyranny—an attempt, in sort, to enslave a mind. It cannot be called an advantage (or benefit) of an educational system that it fetters minds. Nor can it be called an advantage of a system that it silences (or attempts to) an ever-growing social conscience among student bodies throughout Canada, the U.S., and, in fact, throughout the world.

However, this may be, the fact (a sad one for Friday's

writer) is the trimester system will not accomplish the unworthy end of keeping students so tied down with essential matters they have little time to look into and speak (so they will be heard) on various current issues. I did four years of undergraduate and two years of graduate work at Kent State University (Kent, Ohio), which is on a ten-week quarter system. Both undergraduate and graduate students are kept busy with exam weeks which occur three times during the regular school year. Demonstrations, nevertheless, take place regularly. And many of the students who participate have grade-point averages well over 3.0 (on a four-point scale)—professors too, by the way, participate with enthusiasm. This situation, we can all agree, is by no means unique to my *alma mater*.

For one thing, then, it seems to me that the first of the two benefits of the trimester system that Friday's writer mentions is not, actually a benefit—except, perhaps, to those who wish to silence people who have a right to speak. And it may not be entirely impertinent to mention in this place a frightening implication of the statement Friday's writer makes. He wishes to find some way of ridding the college scene of annoying demonstrations. And the way to do so is, he feels (for reasons which we have

seen), to keep the student hopping along with the quick pace set by the trimester system.

The second and main advantage of the trimester system, Friday's writer feels, is it saves a year of the student's life. It enables him, in short, to sooner start laying his powers to waste "getting and spending." This is, undoubtedly, an advantage to those who relish the prospect of delving in Mammon's mine. But there are other students who are more interested in giving their powers every chance to develop and who fear being rushed through an academic program like a car along an assembly line. As far as any educational institution is concerned, the quality of its product is far more important than the speed with which it turns that product out. Precisely how early graduation benefits both student and society is a matter of question. I can only speak concerning the student himself, and I happen to know, both from personal experience and from having watched my friends, that today's mounting pressure to "get through" leaves a student, when he finally does get through, empty inside. He is, in many cases, so emotionally drained that he has no sense of what he has accomplished.

Thomas D. Wright
Dept. of English