

Opinion

Randal Smathers



Gentle George

George Bush wants a gentler and kinder America. I'm confused.

Is this the same George Bush who, to overcome his reputation as a wimp, ran an election campaign largely based on his newer, tougher personality? Is this the same George Bush who ran for vice-president with one of the high-flying hawks of our time? The same one who prides himself on his Texas tough-guy heritage?

I can understand wanting a gentler and kinder America, mind. The US of Ammunition is indeed one of the great oppressive imperialist powers in history, spreading democracy and commerce at the point of a gun barrel from San Juan Hill to Saigon. Republican George Bush just doesn't seem like the logical ambassador of international gentleness.

America doesn't seem to be the type of place to take readily to gentle: the NRA takes care of that. Since Reagan the Terrible took over from Smilin' Jimmy Carter, the entire nation took an enormous lurch to the right, turning GI Joe and Rambo into role models for every red-blooded American boy.

The down side to all the chest-thumping and gun-waving in the States is that inevitably somebody thumps somebody else's chest, and the guns get fired instead of waved, and then everybody gets to see that American boys are in fact red-blooded.

Bush has inherited an aggressively intrusive country, one which prefers to send in the military than to mediate. It would be easy for Bush to increase the American military profile in the coming months, as adversary powers will likely try to test the new American president's resolve.

Every incoming president since Kennedy has been tried by fire, from Cuba, through Vietnam, to Iran. The most common reaction has been to call out the troops, point them, and say "Git some!"

Let's just hope that Bush doesn't feel the need to prove that he's not a wimp, the way he felt obliged to talk tough during the campaign. I'd hate to be covering the US-Nicaragua war for *Time* when I graduate.



Letters

Birthday bummer

I thought university was supposed to be a place to learn and have fun at the same time. On January 23, the fun was taken out by a professor (no names mentioned). We had planned on bringing balloons and a stuffed animal for a young lady in Mr. No Name's class. Knowing we were going to disrupt his class for five minutes to sing "Happy Birthday," we mentioned to him beforehand what we were planning to do. He politely said no, and then he spoiled any attempt for a surprise later in the day by announcing our intentions to the entire class. Thus, the fun was taken away from university and we were denied any attempt to surprise a friend. So a heartless professor ruined a girl's memories of her 18th birthday.

Thanx.

Tyler E. Campbell
Arts II

"Protest" a dirty word

Re: HUB a urinal (Jan. 12)

I was relieved to finally see some organized reaction, even if it "only" a letter to *The Gateway*, regarding the defacing of HUB Mall. What was once a mall with a cosy, distinctive personality is being turned into a staid, commercial West Edmonton Mall clone i.e. one of many clones — ooohhh! What precious pastels!!!!

Yet, even though it is obvious that the supposed "improvements" to HUB are shallow attempts by a few greedy HUB proprietors to suck a larger profit from the students, it isn't this fact that bothers me the most. The REAL problem is that even though many people (I dare say "many" due to, for example, the overwhelming student support for establishments such as *Living Earth* in their struggle to stay in HUB) are opposed to the changes in HUB, nobody has actively protested against them. Even last year's petition effort was initiated by the owners of *Living Earth*. Those (including myself) who dislike the changes are partly to blame for their existence since they have done nothing to show our disapproval of them.

We should be ashamed of ourselves! What a sedentary generation we are! It appears that today's university

campuses are full of either self-absorbed, apathetic weenies or of lecherous, money-grubbing capitalist oinkers.

Where have the good ol' days of protest & revolution gone? Has anyone at the U of A even heard of the students at Columbia University who held the dean of their college hostage for 24 hours in protest back in '68? Has anyone heard of Bob Dylan? Joan Baez? Gary (no he wasn't our prime minister) Trudeau? Maybe

someone has heard of the sexual revolution (the U. of Leth. is excused, of course)?

Not only has the sexual revolution died out but also p-r-o-t-e-s-t has become a dirty 7-letter word! Well, I say that it's time for some action, some protest, and some change! Let's get off our fat asses and do something productive. If nothing else, AT LEAST get laid.

Robert Chapman
Arts IV



Stand up and be counted

Re: "Market faces HUB fate" (Jan. 24)

Thanks, Rosa, for bringing the current situation of the Strathcona Farmers' Market (and Fringe Festival venue) to light. Your comparison between the market and HUB mall brings up two issues that are extremely important for us students to consider.

The first is that the university does not exist in a vacuum. It sometimes seems convenient to toss issues aside while at university, because we realize we won't be here much longer. Let future students take care of it, if it's that big a deal.

Then the surprise comes, as we settle into the community and the same things are occurring outside the university. HUB now, then the farmers' market. What's next? The

Princess Theatre? Oh, how we wish we had spoken up earlier.

The second lesson that your commentary illustrates is that we all have a responsibility to speak up for what we believe, AND THEN FOLLOW THROUGH IN ACTION. HUB, again, is a good example. It is tempting to lay all of the blame on the "administration". True, the powers that be are not innocent by any means. However, if we don't want certain venues in the mall, then it is our responsibility to by-pass their products. A & W, et al. are in the mall for one reason only: profit. Put your conscience where your mouth is, and they will go elsewhere.

We are not being "done to". We are doing it to ourselves.

Brian Crowley
Recreation Administration IV

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