

Disabilities neglected

Here I sit in class trying to find an idea for my editorial. I thought I could write it in conjunction with my midterm tomorrow, but then I thought no one in their right mind would want to read an editorial on the geology of the Kirkland Lake mine. Instead I thought why not write on educators — there is one right in front of me.

Did you know that out of 4 years of University, education students need only take a half course in special education? To most people this would not mean much, but special education does mean a lot to learning disabled students and students with special needs.

Statistically, it is believed 1 in every 10 students is learning disabled. This would mean that in a class of 40 students, 4 of these students are learning disabled, but the teacher at the front of the class has basically no background in teaching them.

One of the most frightening statements I have heard came from a friend of mine in education. He said "Some of my students might be learning disabled, but I don't have the time and the school doesn't have the money to teach these students. So they might as well just be sent off to learn a trade." If this were the case with all students we wouldn't have the theory of relativity—Albert Einstein was learning disabled.

I don't blame my friend for his opinion; he is really a pretty good guy but he is caught in the same circle which most teachers are caught in—the problem is so large and there are so few resources to tackle them.

Even here at the U of A we have a program that can accommodate about 60 learning disabled students, when statistically there are 3000 learning disabled students on campus.

I really hope our school system opens its eyes to this problem. There is a great potential out there in all our students. Let's not just dump some along the way because they don't seem to learn the way we think they should.

by Bruce Gardave

The Gateway



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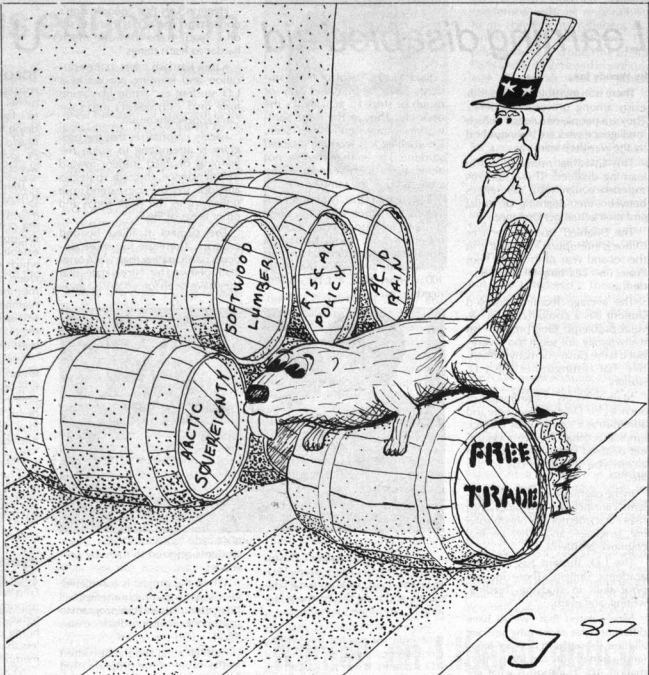
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Letters to the Editor are encouraged and always welcome.

If you have a comment which would be of interest to the students of the University, please do not hesitate to send it in. All we require is your name, address, and phone number, and student ID if you are a student. We will not print letters missing any of these.

Letters should be no longer than three hundred words. Mail or deliver your letters to Room 282 SUB, or drop them at any SU information booth.

The Gateway is the newspaper of the University of Alberta students. Contents are the responsibility of the Editor-in-Chief. All opinions are signed by the writer and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Gateway. News copy deadlines are 12 noon Mondays and Wednesdays. Newsroom: Rm 282 (ph. 432-5168). Advertising: Rm. 256D (ph. 432-4241). Students' Union Building, U of A, Edmonton, Alberta, T6C 2G7. Readership is 25,000. The Gateway is a member of Canadian University Press.



"Fly" is ignorant

Re: J. Dylan's "Fly on the Wall", Tues. Oct. 20.

The author of "Fly on the Wall" has shown the world his/her blatant ignorance of weight training while trying to make a funny. Well the joke's on you, bud.

The specific exercise to which you are referring (hyper-extension) is meant to strengthen one's lower back. You really have to screw up horribly "to put a load of hurt onto one's stomach". I was not clutching my stomach in pain, I was readjusting my shorts. I would like to clarify another comment made in your article referring to the four strenuous repetitions. You had obviously not observed the previous 20-25 repetitions that I had already completed.

The girl referred to in the article is my girlfriend and we naturally make eye contact out of attraction not competition or "a battle of the sexes" as was implied.

Taking your advice into consideration, I won't quit but I'll see what I can do about that natural yet offensive "big vein" on my forehead.

By the way, I'm 5'9", to tall to be a horse jockey.

S. Crocq and G. Jackson

Free trade fracas

RE: "Free Trade is Good" (Gateway, Oct. 14/87).

Mr. Bosman's editorial indicates an abysmal ignorance of the issues involved in free trade. Much of his editorial revolves around ideological concerns which are unrelated to free trade. The idea that free trade deals more with the role and size of government than with economics would be amusing, were it not so naive. Unfortunately, much of the editorial's economic reasoning suffers from a similar malaise.

Mr. Bosman's assertion that the U.S. Omnibus Trade Bill alone justifies free trade is simply untenable; rank speculation of what the U.S. may or may not

do is a poor substitute for sound reasoning as a basis for free trade. While he correctly recognizes that Canada-U.S. trade is crucial to our overall economic well-being, he fails to realize that only 25 per cent of Canada-U.S. trade is currently under any tariff restriction. Free trade is already a reality for much of our trade with the U.S. This situation differs slightly from Mr. Bosman's view of a "little tariff-protected pond".

Mr. Bosman also contends that free trade means jobs. He may not be quite so optimistic if he looks at the facts. Alberta is expected to experience the largest provincial gain in employment from a free trade deal. The estimated gain is 2 per cent. A whopping 2 per cent. In addition, the economic models used to generate these estimates operate within an error of plus/minus 4 per cent. This means that the projected gain of 2 per cent might well be a loss of the same magnitude. Thus, the view that free trade unambiguously means jobs may be subject to some scepticism.

The idea that free trade would liberate private industry from the fetters of government interference and enable it to be the engine of economic growth is also in error. This type of supply-side economics has been attempted by the Reagan administration via tax cuts, with the major result being a deficit of enormous proportions.

The final point raised by Mr. Bosman in his editorial involves the idea that free trade would reduce regional economic disparities. However, this contention is devoid of any economic foundation. Consider the case in Alberta. The oil and gas sector will undoubtedly gain from an expanded market; however, the other major player in the Alberta economy, the agricultural sector, will be hard hit in some areas by the increased presence of American agriculture products. If free trade will lead to such intra-provincial disparities, how can it improve those existing in the more heterogeneous inter-regional arena? The proposed free trade agreement

includes: open access to Canadian resources, potentially unlimited foreign investment, and the lack of a truly binding and fair dispute settling mechanism. Considering these along with the previous discussion, it becomes clear that free trade in its present form may not be a beneficial as Mr. Bosman would lead us to believe. There may be greater potential in reducing barriers to inter-provincial trade.

K. Schreiner

Pay equity

I find I must disagree with Roberta Franchuk over her editorial concerning equal pay for equal work. Ms. Franchuk concludes that "the only way to get women making the same amount of money as men is to have them doing the same jobs." She also suggests that women have "ghettoized themselves" into low-paying jobs. This is like suggesting that blacks enslaved themselves; no one, man or woman, voluntarily chooses low pay and poor working conditions. If Ms. Franchuk ever makes it to a boardroom or a management meeting in the working world, she will find tremendous resentment toward women carving a place for themselves, and her general conclusion that women must act like men in order to succeed in society is depressing, untrue, and not a little self-defeating.

I believe that women campaigning for equal pay do not necessarily want to abandon their jobs as elementary school teachers, nurses, and other "feminine" positions. Rather, they want these jobs to be recognized as being of equal value as equivalent males' positions. Ms. Franchuk's idea that teachers should be paid low salaries, and women who want more money should act like men, is bad news for people seeking quality education for children, quality health care for the sick, and quality work done in all "women's" jobs.

Equal pay for equal work would help all involved — women stuck in low-paying jobs and breadwinners of both sexes seeking to improve their lot in life while serving in "feminine" jobs. If we