

The Gateway

Bears advanced to CWUAA finals last weekend with wins over Huskies. Page 12



Women and illiteracy

by V. Lamont and T. Reynolds
Is illiteracy a women's issue? The effects of illiteracy on women were addressed in a forum, co-sponsored by the Women's Program, Faculty of Extension, and the Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women on February 15.

An introduction by Catherine Bray, spokesperson for the Women's Centre, was followed by a video documenting the progress of one man and one woman attempting to overcome their illiteracy. Each suffered unique hardships.

Both "Howie" and "Marie" quit school in their early teens because of learning and familial difficulties. Howie was able to make a good living as a labourer, but Marie could only find low-paying work in jobs traditionally held by women. Then, after her marriage, she withdrew from the workforce entirely in order to raise a family.

Both chose to upgrade their literacy skills, but for different reasons. Howie, because of an injury, was no longer able to perform in physically demanding work, and in order to switch to a non-labour intensive job, he had to learn to read and write. Marie's situation was different. After a divorce, she was faced with either welfare or low paying jobs. She became frustrated and chose to upgrade in order to become more independent.

The examples from the video illustrated the unique problems that illiteracy poses for women. While illiterate men are still able to participate in the workforce, women are often in more isolated, dependent positions.

The discussion that followed the video dealt with the causes, consequences, and possible solutions to the problem of illiteracy among women. Among the causes are low socio-economic backgrounds, and flaws in the educational system;

disadvantaged individuals often do not receive the special attention that they require.

In a literate society, an illiterate individual is prone to feelings of alienation, isolation, and inadequacy, leading to an overall low self-image. In the case of women, this tends to increase their dependency on males and discourage them from seeking information and resources that may help them become more independent.

As well, illiterate women are affected in their day-to-day lives. Simple tasks such as grocery shopping, paying bills, and filling out applications is at times impossible without assistance. Consequently, illiterate women are unable to compete in the job market and live fulfilling home lives. Furthermore, a child from an illiterate home is more likely to become illiterate, thus setting off a chain of illiteracy.

Several solutions were suggested for overcoming the problem. Child-care should be provided for women who need to upgrade their education. More programs should be established and volunteers should be paid. In order to complete their steps to a higher literacy rate, more government interest and funding is needed. As well, more publicity is required so that people who need help know how to get it.

Throughout the forum it was stressed that illiterate individuals should not be treated as inferiors. One literacy student said "people have the impression that if you can't read or write, you're an idiot." Instead, it was stressed, we must look upon literacy as a means by which to bring out the positive qualities that individuals already possess.



The Zoology display fascinates kids at University Orientation Days

Photo Dragos Flutu

Remission may change

by Cam McCulloch
Changes are once again afoot to the student loans program in Alberta.

VP External, Paul LaGrange, is part of a committee lobbying for a more equitable remission system on student loans in this province. The Conference of Alberta University Students (CAUS) is asking the provincial government to modify the remission system that was introduced just this year.

Before the 1987-88 term, remission percentage (the amount of the

loan the student was excused from having to pay back) varied according to the student's year of study. Under the current system, remission percentage is locked at 40 percent. However, a certain amount of the loan is exempt from remission eligibility, this amount once again being dependant upon year of study.

If CAUS gets its way, the exempt amount would be the same regardless of year of study. They're looking for a \$1000 exemption for each and any year of a loan, with the 40

percent remission being applied to the remaining total.

With about 60,000 loans awarded this year in Alberta, at an average of approximately \$2,200, remission totals can add up to an enormous sum. The current remission scheme will save the Student Finance Board

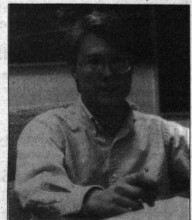


Photo Bruce Goodwin

VP External Paul LaGrange

between \$10-12 million over last year, states LaGrange.

LaGrange says he'd "like to see this money put back into the system through grants." He adds, "but we have no guarantee this is going to happen."

CAUS is comprised of the student unions of the Universities of Alberta, Calgary, and Lethbridge, as well as the Graduate Students Associations of the U of A and U of C.

CAUS meets again this month in Lethbridge to discuss their proposals.

Says LaGrange, "Anyone who needs financial aid gets it, but we want to make sure everyone gets it fairly."

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There's a fly to deep center field! Winfield is going back, back. He hits his head against the wall! It's rolling toward second base!

Jerry Coleman
Padres broadcaster

Theatre budget brighter

by Jenny Brundin

Better acts, better attendance and good luck are responsible for SUB Theatre having the "best year ever seen," according to Gerry Stoll, Programs Manager for SUB Theatre.

SUB Theatre broke even as of January 1 and is expected to lose not more than \$5,000 to \$10,000 this year. In comparison, in 1983, the

theatre's debt reached \$180,000.

The theatre will take a loss of approximately \$5000 due to the presence of \$1 week-end movies. Stoll believes "it's O.K. to lose a bit," as the theatre "is not a business, but a service."

"It's important that the theatre is well-used. I feel responsible for giving the student a discount," says

Stoll, referring to the \$1 price tag on movies.

The theatre, which generally maintains a fully-booked calendar, is responsible for renting space to various groups and booking lectures, concerts, films, and some Dinwoodie gigs. Sold out performances by the Frantics, Les Ballets Jazz, the Hoodoo Gurus and Luba helped contribute to the theatre's success this year.

Stoll feels the theatre is unique in Canada: "No other university in Canada owns its own concert hall and does the kind of programming we do," he said, noting the variety of talent the theatre attracts ranges from jazz, blues, and folk, to punk.

"We try to satisfy a wide range of tastes," said Stoll, emphasizing that the theatre attempts to appeal to the diverse nature of the U of A student population. Approximately 100,000 patrons will go to the theatre each year, 60 percent of whom are students.

Upcoming acts booked for SUB Theatre/Dinwoodies include the Northern Pikes, FM, Colin James, Spirit of the West, and Jane Siberry. Stoll expects all the concerts to be well-attended.



Successful acts like The Frantics aid in SUB Theatre's recovery

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