

Summertime blues

Once upon a time, in a land called nod, properly positive persons placed 1,224 pamphlets in the mail, inviting assorted unapathetic University of Alberta students who are attending spring or summer sessions, to participate in planning for the reorganization of the Spring and Summer Students' Association.

For many years there were two associations, one for spring, and one for summer session. The purpose of the two associations has been to provide student representation on the Special Sessions Committee of the General Faculties Council, sponsor extra-curricular activities in sports and entertainment, foster the spirit of fraternalism among members, and to promote the general welfare of the members.

Due to declining enrolments in summer, and a subsequent disparity between spring and summer session revenues, the Students' Union has decided there should be just one association, which will provide representation for students attending either or both sessions. In this way fees and association time will be more efficiently used.

Much discussion has been going on about the lack of efficiency of the Students' Union, and cries of student apathy are rampant. Here is an opportunity to bury both accusation and apathy by expressing your support for the fledgling Spring and Summer Students' Association. Get on the blower and call

Audrey Brooks, 487-9195, or Sharon Bell, 432-2286, and let them know that even if you can't pitch in and help get things rolling, you are still interested enough to give moral support. You can show the Students' Union that apathy is dead, students really *do* care what goes on around here, especially if its your Students' Union fees that are being spent.

If we cannot come up with a determined executive, and a body of student support for our association, the Students' Union has stated that it will hire a coordinator to administer the affairs of both spring and summer sessions, thus ending many years of student management over student affairs.

Committee for Spring and Summer Association
Audrey Brooks
Education
Gillian Piper
Nursing
Bonnie Meehan
Education
Maxine Wolfman
Education

LETTERS

Letters to the *Gateway* should be a maximum of 250 words on any subject. Letters **must** be signed and should include faculty, year and phone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. All letters must be typed (or very neatly written). We reserve the right to edit for libel and length.

Cult craze analyzed correctly

There is hope for the human race when we see cults lucidly evaluated by such evocative writers as David Marples. I agree that the other man's religion is too often defined as superstition and paganism. It is true that new ideas can be very threatening, and disturb our narrow perception of reality. But a university must introduce us to new ideas, as well as to the old, and force us to assess and integrate our values. Forums, such as the one on cults, enhance academic inquiry.

It is natural, therefore, for the universities of England and Europe to have Faculties of Theology because faith commitment also needs critical evaluation. In North America we tend to look upon universities as job training institutions. I would prefer to see universities teach students to think critically about the meaning of life.

Because of secularism we have lost the sense of core meaning in our lives. Religion has been departmentalized, and is brought out and dusted off only when needed. It is no longer an integrating force. I might suggest that this loss of meaning might be responsible for the extremely high divorce rate, alcoholism, suicide and abortion in Alberta. It is easy to comprehend why any system with integrated core meaning might be a desirable alternative.

Current mainstream religions have at times also been

labelled as cults. Classical ascetical practices work on the premise of a free and deliberate commitment. Formal conversion to Judaism or Catholicism involves a prolonged catechumenate, and the request to join the community is not accepted until the candidate knows clearly what is involved. The introduction to religious life, or novitiate, of priests and nuns is a screening period as well as an introduction to a particular spirituality. A recent study on priesthood applicants has shown that only 4% of those who inquire actually make it. The rest are either not accepted, or screened out before completion of the academic requirements.

Catholicism grew out of a religious expression with transcendental signs and symbols. The encrustation of two thousand years of history, for instance the ceremonial ritual, robes, and music in a formal papal ceremony, must often look like a mysterious cult to the uninitiated outsider. Underneath the acting out of a religion is the intellectual discipline which gives core meaning. It is legitimate for a university to look critically at any discipline which gives core meaning. In closing I might point out that all but three universities in Canada were founded by a religious community.

John C. Van Damme SCJ

For maximum service

The *Gateway* staff would like to note, with regret, the retirement of faithful typesetter Maxine (Max) Murphy. Maxine survived a difficult job with tact and wit **EVERYTHING IN CAPITAL LETTERS**.

Retiring to her country home, Maxi's Pad, and her Mait, she will be greatly missed by The *Gateway*.

As she said herself, though, she is "getting a bit old to stand the pace."

THANK, MAX.

HAIL and FAREWELL to SPRING GRADUANDS

The Alumni Association at the University of Alberta will shortly welcome you to automatic membership. Following Convocation, the Association's contact will be on a life-long basis, maintained through the Alumni Office on the campus, constantly reaffirming your identity with your Alma Mater, at no fee.

Alumni represent the continuity of the institution and are its single, most permanent constituency. Their collective experience is shown in the University's present undertakings, their achievements among the criteria by which the institution is judged. So, it's important that we keep in touch.

You can help greatly by keeping it posted with changes of address, etc. sent to the Alumni Office on the campus (430 Athabasca Hall) or to any of the following U of A Alumni branch executives.

Mr. F. J. Heath
110 Stratford Crescent
Toronto, Ontario
M4N 1C6

Mr. Bud McEwan
4937-45 Avenue
Vegreville, Alberta
T0B 4L0

Mr. Bob Spencer
4447 Cheviot Road
North Vancouver, B.C.
V7R 3T3

Dr. Ron Boyd
4095 Puget Drive
Vancouver, B.C.
V6L 2V3

Mrs. Emily Lee
212-1595 McKenzie Mall
Victoria, B.C.
V8N 1A4

Mrs. E. Jean Thomas
4860 Tavane Road, RR #1
Victoria, B.C.
V8X 3W9

Dr. Frank Kozar
10233-113 Avenue
Grande Prairie, Alberta
T8V 1W9

Mr. Don Duff
Box 396
Hudson Heights, P.Q.
J0P 1J0

Mrs. G. S. Wiberg
917 Fairlawn
Ottawa, Ontario
K2A 3S6

Mrs. E. Louise Estwik
68 Delong Drive
Ottawa, Ontario
K1J 7E1

Mrs. Maureen Fleming
104 Wilson Crescent
Red Deer, Alberta
T4N 5V9

Mrs. Hazel Flewelling
4126-35 Street
Red Deer, Alberta
T4N 0P8

Dr. Ted E. Thomas
657 Sheri Lane
Danville, California
USA 94526

Mr. Randall Way
57 Burnside Way
Toronto, Ontario
M6G 2M9



Teeth cause of social decay

In past letters to the *Gateway*, various issues pertaining to social and moral decay have been bantered about. However stimulating this may be, I feel it is high time that we got to the roots of the real problem that has inflicted mankind to time immemorial. I refer of course, to tooth decay. Yes, as gut-renching and controversial a topic as it is, tooth decay simply must be recognized as the singular force behind the corruption of the mouths of our youth today. It is absolutely essential that we, as a people, take aim against this oral fixation and endure the crest of the wave of apathy towards tooth decay that society currently promotes.

As a means of rectifying this decrepit situation, I hereby submit the following proposals: set up a bursary fund dedicated to all those students who have proven themselves to be cavity-free over a period of oh, say, three weeks (How else am I ever going to get money out of this crummy institution?). If that is not possible, each student sporting the absence of any dentures should be provided with some form of reimbursement for his efforts — a plaque, maybe. (Whoops, poor choice of wording there).

At any rate, I apologize if I've struck a nerve out there in reader-land. (I think that's somewhere down by Bruderheim) but let's face it, we cannot persist in giving tooth decay the brush off. If we are to reach that ultra-brite future that awaits all those people with

healthy and sound teeth, we must never desist in our struggle against cavities. Remember, there's no such thing to a dentist as "A Bridge Too Far." In the meantime, keep smiling — it'll give your face a lift.

Bill Faist
Arts III

Inconsistent executive

On March 25 Miss Sharon Bell was not sure why the Students' Union referendum was defeated, she thinks its the timing of the vote. She is partially correct. A few weeks ago the Board of Governors (B of G) announced the possibility of a 10% increase in tuition fees. The announcement made *Gateway* headlines. SU president Olmstead protested the increase in the same article. I agreed with Mr. Olmstead, and so did a lot of other students; a 10% increase is far, far too harsh a burden for us all. Olmstead encouraged all students to protest the increase. President Olmstead successfully represented the views of the students. He should be proud. But wait. Oh, no. Directly below this article there was another headline announcing a 20% increase in the SU fees. The 20% increase was to be voted on. Mr. Olmstead supported the deci-

sion, he encouraged SU members to vote for the increase.

Bad timing, Miss Bell suggested. Bad timing? How about direct contradiction. Disapproving of a 10% tuition hike yet encouraging a 20% SU fee increase. Mr. Olmstead, just where do you stand?

Being the intellectual university student that I am, I knew there was some mistake. Clearly if one increase was not inappropriate then a higher increase had to be worse. (Perhaps it was the *Gateway's* mistake for printing the two articles together.) I was not fooled for a moment by this slight contradiction; I voted consistently and so did the majority of the students.

Fred Billaway
Commerce II

P.S. Besides, being on the right wing of the political spectrum I'm opposed to any and all government fiscal spending.

Educational apologists misguided

I feel that I am obliged to respond to the absurd statements made by the president of the ESA and certain other worthies (pun optional). While I do not promote myself as a model of literacy, neither do I feel that I am an illiterate. I do feel, however, that a very large number of education students fall resoundingly into the latter category. The fact that illiteracy is epidemic (and endemic) in all other faculties is no excuse for the continuing mass production of incompetents by the faculty of

"education." On the contrary, this "excuse" is the greatest condemnation of this faculty. Where do the illiterate and semi-literate students come from, anyway? Could it be that they were "taught" by graduates of the faculty of education, graduates for whom literacy was not a pre-requisite but "an asset"?

The apologists are not willing to solve the problem.

They are more concerned with their excuses than with their

responsibility to their students. I encourage those who are concerned to continue the discussion and to organize themselves in order to combat the institutionalized incompetence for which the faculty of education is so rightly known.

Please excuse all spelling and grammar mistakes in this letter. I was one year in the faculty of education, and this took a toll.

Charles Bonhomme
Faculte St. Jean III