

# Blood and Thunder

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Rm. 35, Student Union Building, UNB Campus  
DEADLINE: 5 p.m. Tuesday

### Prof angry over lowering STU GPA

Dear Editor:

I find all acts of discrimination in our society to be equally distasteful. The recent decision by the UNB Faculty of Law to automatically reduce the cumulative GPA of St. Thomas applicants is no exception.

Discrimination is an overt expression of prejudice. Prejudice, of course, is an attitude (usually negative) toward members of a specific group, leading those who hold it to evaluate others solely on the basis of group membership. This evaluation fails to take individual behavior or characteristics into account. In other words, the victim of prejudice (in this case a student from St. Thomas) is not judged on his or her individual merit but on the basis of preconceived notions about members of an identified group. As a result, the victim in question is unfairly excluded from employment, social, and educational opportunities. I can not understand how an institution of higher learning could make discrimination a matter of ad-

ministrative policy. If such a policy was used to discriminate against persons of a particular racial group, I have no doubt that the UNB Faculty of Law would be deluged by gestures of protest.

To illustrate my position, let us assume that students of a certain racial group have more difficulty 'achieving passing status' in St. Thomas programs than students from other racial groups. Let us also assume that this difference in academic prowess is found to be 'statistically significant'. Would this lead STU administrators to automatically reduce the credentials of applicants from this racial group? Of course not! At St. Thomas University, we are committed to evaluate each applicant for any program on the individual merits of his or her application. This policy, unlike that of the UNB Faculty of Law, does not penalize a student simply because he or she belongs to an identified group.

In addition to the unfairness of the proposed action, the UNB Faculty of Law Admissions Committee is likely pointing a finger in the wrong direction. In any university, students become aware of the existence of 'bird' courses

where all one has to do is breathe from time to time in order to achieve a stellar grade. Students taking such courses will have GPA's that are inflated and misleading. It is inappropriate, therefore, to consider one's GPA as a guarantee of future academic success. In the department of psychology at St. Thomas University, we are often faced with many more applications for the honours program than there are positions available. As a result, great care is taken to evaluate a candidate from many different perspectives. Information about a candidate's GPA, letters of reference, his or her ability to engage in independent thought and study, and the result of extensive interviews with faculty are all taken into consideration. My department has found this selection procedure to be highly efficient. Careful selection procedures can and do separate a good candidate with a GPA of 3.5 from a candidate with a comparable GPA who is far less worthy. Perhaps if the UNB Faculty of Law re-examined the quality of its admission criteria, fewer mistakes would be made as to who was or was not an acceptable candidate. I submit that this solu-

tion is much more acceptable than a practice which arbitrarily penalizes students from another institution.

As a final word, I would like to say that the UNB Faculty of Law decision insults the integrity and competence of the students, faculty, and administration of St. Thomas University. Essentially, the new policy implies that my grades do not really reflect the true abilities of my students. I can assure you that such is not the case. Any student who receives a GPA of 3.5 in my courses has bloody well earned it! I resent any implication to the contrary. I feel this is also true for many of my colleagues. For this reason, I strongly urge the UNB Faculty of Law to (1) abandon this ridiculous policy of discrimination and (2) issue a public apology to the students, faculty, and administration of St. Thomas University for the damage that has been done to the reputation of our institution.

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Fish, Ph. D.  
Assistant Professor of  
Psychology  
St. Thomas University

### No cover charge for Social Club

Dear Editor:

As one of the many students who enjoys a quick nip at the Social Club, I feel it outrageous, and ludicrous that, in order to do so, I must first pay a cover charge. A pound of flesh is a pound of flesh, but this is absolutely ridiculous.

Although the Social Club holds a monopoly on student bars on campus, it is still, none the less, a *student bar*. As such, the Social Club should be immediately accessible to any eligible student wanting to revel in a debaucherous environment, without having to pay that extra pound of flesh.

There is enough exploitation in the world, without this preposterous notion of charging students a cover charge in their home territory. If this letter has been written in complete ignorance of recently enacted provincial laws or Social Club policies (ie, if taking advantage of a monopoly has been legalized), would someone please inform me of this.

Sincerely  
Jeffrey Baggaley

*"There is nothing harder than the softness of indifference." — Juan Montalvo*

*Students For Mexican Relief ask that anyone interested in raising funds for the victims of the Mexican earthquake attend a meeting on Tuesday, October 22nd at 12:30 p.m. in the Brunswickan office. Fund-raising plans will be discussed.*