

Editorial



Letters to the Editor should not be more than 250 words in length. They must include your signature, faculty, year of program, I.D. number, and phone number. Requests for anonymity are at the discretion of the Managing Editor, but the above information is required regardless. We reserve the right to edit for libel and length. Letters do not necessarily reflect the views of the Gateway.

So, all you eligible voters got out and exercised your democratic right, your civic duty, and cast your ballot in yesterday's civic elections, right?

No?? Why not!?

Somehow, considering student apathy on this campus this should not be surprising.

However, apathy has no place on a university campus. By definition, it is an institution of higher learning providing facilities for teaching and research and authorized to grant academic degrees.

This implies inquiring minds. Informed minds. Heaven forbid, thinking minds, that care in which direction we may be headed.

The most common excuse seems to be "Well, I didn't know who to vote for." Obviously, these people have never heard the old adage, 'Ignorance is no excuse!'

This is where the duty part comes in. It's your duty to find out who these candidates are, what they stand for, and make a decision on which two of them would best represent your community.

However, no one had an excuse when it came to the mayoralty race, there were only two candidates to speak of and no ward had more than eight aldermanic candidates of which you elect two.

Now, I do have sympathies when it came to the School Board Trustees. This year's situation was ridiculous, almost 60 candidates vying for nine positions. Unfortunately, this alone turned people off. But this vote is important. These people are dealing with the minds of the future not to mention a \$300 million plus budget.

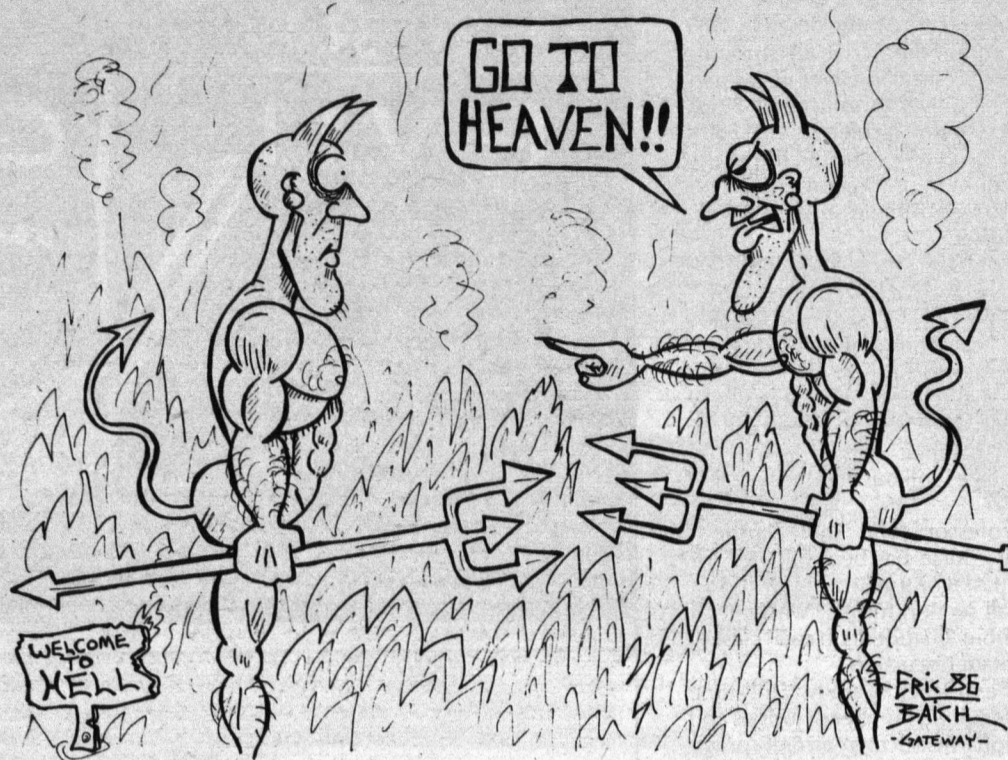
You have no kids, you say. I say 'cop-out'. Do you not have younger brothers and sisters, nieces and nephews. If not, how about concern for any youth's future.

The other common excuse seemed to lie in the fact that the wards are so large and cover such diverse communities that quite often communities elect two candidates with opposing views who, in turn, tend to cancel each other's votes.

I say, why not divide the city into 12 wards and elect one representative from each ward. One ward, one vote. This way there are no questions as to who is accountable for the ward.

I must admit, I am writing this before the ballots have been cast, and I'm going on the assumption that the voter turn-out will be dismal (according to advance polls). But, make my day, nothing would please me more than to have to eat humble pie.

Juanita Spears



ERIC BAIKH
-GATEWAY-

Letters



Apathy abounds

To the Editor:

Three times a week I bring my flabby 37 year old body to the university for a fitness program. Living and working out in the real world, it's kind of a novelty to come on the campus to see what's new and to look for fitness exercises for my brain.

Walking around the campus, I watch for signs of new thinking; always intent on finding evidence of what anyone globally and historically has come to associate with universities: political analyses and activity.

I read the notice boards, poles, walls, and Gateway. I've been doing this for a number of weeks now and on and off for years. Looking and looking. And absolutely nothing has come of it. Words like boring, childishness, irresponsible, gutless, gutless, gutless come to mind. This stands for the Students' Union, the Gateway, the notice boards, and the image presented by each.

What's wrong with you guys? I could not believe my eyes last week when I read the Gateway editorial that the Students' Union voted against getting involved in international issues, that two motions regarding apartheid were defeated. I'm still shaking my head in disgust. I think of all the university campuses in many countries I've visited where tanks and soldiers are permanent fixtures. In lots of places students are so involved and influential that they're considered a national threat. And you guys won't even question international issues.

As Jane Q. Public, I expect certain things from a university. Responsibility is one. Second is how a university is, so should accentuate, a meeting point of world thinking. How can you, for one second, believe that international issues are out there somewhere, disconnected? You and I and everybody else and every issue and political move in the world are interconnected. If anything, the university should be leading in these areas.

The reason given for not getting involved in international issues was apparently that the SU could not possibly represent all the diverse opinions of students in these matters. I can't imagine a more stupid reason. Does this mean U of A students think governments aren't possible anywhere in the world?

I really wonder about you and why you're more interested in beer planks, hair cuts, fashions at WEM, and ski packages to wherever. Are you all studying toward being silenced bureaucrats or working in business where you'll need to be cosy with governments? What a waste of the opportunities you have. Tsk. Tsk. Tsk. Tsk. Tsk. Tsk.

Jane Thomas

SDI summit not a total bomb

To the Editor:

Re: Lundrigan's Editorial on Reykjavik Summit Gateway, Oct. 15, 1986

The opinions stated by Ms. Lundrigan concerning Ronald Reagan's foreign policy are the same opinions held by many others. Nonetheless, I think that Ms. Lundrigan is mistaken and has allowed her phobia of the United States to cloud her judgement.

Ms. Lundrigan begins by summarizing the details of the proposed agreement. She documents the equal trade-off in the area of intermediate range nuclear missiles, but where does she include what is to be traded in exchange for cessation of experimentation on SDI? Mr. Gorbachev was offering no concessions in this area, but rather was relying on the force of ill-informed Western backlash to coerce Reagan into giving up SDI. Ms. Lundrigan also failed to raise the still unsolved problems of on-site inspection, so necessary to an agreement of this kind.

One must also question the validity of Ms. Lundrigan's statement that SDI is a "pipe dream" and "will never work." Surely, Ms. Lundrigan is aware that for every expert that condemns SDI, there is another supporting it. If, as Ms. Lundrigan suggests, SDI will never work, why is Mr. Gorbachev so interested in stopping its development? Perhaps Ms. Lundrigan should examine the level of Soviet technology and the strength of the Soviet economy to determine the consequences of developing a Soviet counterpart to SDI. When examining negotiations about arms control in this area, one must remember that Reagan offered the Soviets access to all the technology of SDI once it was developed. Mr. Gorbachev refused. One should also remember Reagan's proposal of the "Zero Option", also refused by the Soviets. If the Soviets were really the pillars of humanity and peace that Ms. Lundrigan suggests, they most certainly would have pounced on either of these two options.

I would not suggest that Mr. Reagan is a saint or that he may not have ulterior motives, but nor would I suggest this about Mr. Gorbachev. Ms. Lundrigan has not given a fair appraisal of the situation and, in my opinion, has failed to approach it in an informed, rational manner. To lay the blame for the failure of the summit completely with Ronald Reagan shows tunnel vision on the part of the writer. If Ms. Lundrigan were to concentrate as much on fact and rationality as she does on sarcasm, her opinions might gain some legitimacy.

Dan Love
Arts III

To the Editor:

Re: Suzanne Lundrigan's Editorial Oct. 15

Well, I'm writing from the middle of nowhere, where the cold war is cold and won't be warming up.

Although I share your disappointment regarding the outcome of the "non-summit" in Reykjavik, I feel that it may be due more to unrealistic expectations than any missed opportunity to achieve a "desirable reality".

However, your convenient omission of key perspectives on the "non-summit" makes your editorial somewhat less thoughtful.

For instance:

1. There is the very real possibility that Gorbachev knew damn well that Reagan was committed to S.D.I., and knowing this used the "non-summit" as an opportunity to make Reagan look bad and himself benign. It's easy to make a generous offer contingent to terms you know won't be accepted. For someone in the press, you seem somewhat naive about public relations exercises and "Madison Ave. Mikhail"...
2. You seem sure that S.D.I. won't work, based on statements from "the finest minds". Don't underestimate what is and what is not possible. Telling a scientist that something is not possible with present technology is like waving a red flag in front of a bull. Technology isn't static, it's dynamic. It's difficult to predict what we'll know in the future...
3. Frankly, I don't think that the main nuclear threat comes from the Soviet Union or the U.S. I'm more concerned with the possibility of nuclear weapon use by one of the world's more fanatical leaders...

You might think, from the above, that I'm in favour of S.D.I. I'm not. It makes conventional war more probable (if it works) and I'm sorry, but I'm not in a rush to march off to fight someone else's battles. You cannot argue with the success of the "nuclear deterrent". A peace (albeit uneasy) by default.

Finally, I'm concerned about your equation of "geriatric ward" with madness. Surely you do the elderly an injustice. Geriatrics is the study of the diseases of aging, old age, and the process of aging. Madness comes to the young as well.

Martin Levenson
Arts II

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The Gateway

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"Hey, where are you going?" cried Emma as Dean was trying to discreetly slip out the door. "Yah!" pipe in Brian Mahoney. "I hear Ken Hui tried to leave early one time and Roberta Franchuk and Martin Levenson chained him to Kabir Khan's chair until Eric Baikh figured out the combination to Greg Whitting's lock." "C'mon you guys," whined Daddy-O, "you know I have to go, it's my civic duty!" Just then Mathieu Welsh and Paul Menzies came running into layout carrying Lell Stout. "Quick!" ordered J. Dylan, "put him over there." "what's wrong with him?" asked Elaine Ostry. "He was practicing sky diving off CAB with Linda Atchison." "Was that a double or a triple semit?" inquired Rachel McKenzie. "Whatever are you talking about!" laughed Susan McLaughlin. "But I'm sure Sherri and Tim Enger know exactly what Karen Baier and Alan Small had in mind for Melinda Vester." "Are things always this insane around here?" dared Dragous Ruiu. "Inane? Inane you say!" cried Stephen with indignation. "What do you mean in vain?" chorused Jerome Ryckborst and Scott McKennon. "Not in vain, he said... hey where's Daddy-O?" Alex Miller and Norm Selleck slipped out to corral the runaway. However, S.L. is still on the missing posters found in any 7-11 store.