

The Gateway

member of the canadian university press

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STAFF THIS ISSUE—Only a few of the faithful put in an appearance Wednesday night as another issue somehow was put together. Why don't you come up and help Errol Borsky, George Barr, Ken Hutchinson, Doug Bell, uncle Don, Mark Priegert and the ever-faithful and ever-present Harvey Thomgirt, yours truly.

Thomgirt, with the next beauty edition.

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the students' choice

Under an imposing-looking headline entitled Attendance and Conduct in the general regulations in every faculty calendar, are listed a number of rules regarding class attendance and absences.

"Regular attendance is expected of students in all courses. At the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the concurrence of his dean, any student having an inordinate number of unexcused absences from a course may be refused permission to take the final examination."

The regulations go on to list as excused absences those due to illness or disability and those for "some valid reason other than illness."

We know the administration well enough to know that the category of "valid reasons" does not include missing classes because one feels he can get just as much out of a course by not attending lectures.

We submit the age-old theory that it is up to the student to attain academic fulfillment, if and how he chooses.

Presumably, upon reaching university, a student should no longer have to be spoon-fed. Rather, the 15,500 students on the campus should be regarded as people who have a mind of their own and a certain degree of responsibility when it comes to getting through university.

Provided a student does his assignments, passes his examinations, and benefits in some way from his time spent on campus, it should not concern the staff or administration how he chooses to do it.

Similarly, it should not be of concern if he does not pass.

There should be no need for a regular attendance clause in the regulations governing university students who are, presumably, at least semi-intelligent adults.

a modest proposal

Although at the time of his statement on birth control, students' union treasurer Phil Ponting appeared to be speaking in a light vein, there may be something to his suggestion that the students' council sponsor a teach-in on birth control.

It is impossible to make any evaluations as to whether the U of A students of 1967 are more immoral than, less immoral than, or equally

as immoral as they were 20 years ago.

But, it is generally assumed that today's students will discuss sex, birth control, and morality more openly than any of their parents would have dreamed about.

A well-planned teach-in with informed guest speakers and strongly-opinionated students could be one of the most successful programs ever planned by the students' union.

a matter of taste

Campus gourmets take note.

The food in the new students' union building has not gone down in quality from that served in the old building.

Perhaps it was expecting too much to hope it might have improved.

In all fairness, SUB food must be classified as good institutional food, just as Lister Hall food is good institutional food. The meals are

balanced, well-planned, and reasonably priced.

They remain, however, lacking in flavor and variety, and completely uninspired. A SUB meal is as much fun to eat as a bowl of cold, soggy cereal—and it looks about as appetizing.

All in all, SUB food services look like SUB food services in year's past—only on a larger scale.

Even the coffee is the same. It's still terrible.

an open letter to frosh

By GABOR MATE

Reprinted from The Ubysey

Open letter to first year students:

At your high school graduation ceremony you were doubtless told, as have been generations of students before you, that you are now "ready to leave behind the carefree path of youth and embark upon the perilous journey of real life." If you were told that, Ladies and Gentlemen, then you were told a lie. For actually you entered real life only once—the moment you were conceived in your mother's womb, and you have been really living ever since. The problems you face here are no greater, in relation to yourselves, than the problems you have faced at any time in your existence. You will not, for example, find the task of passing your English course any harsher than you found the task of keeping your underwear clean at the age of three and a half. Nevertheless, Ladies and Gentlemen, you are in a new environment and perhaps a few words of introduction to this temple of learning are not out of order.

Many of you will encounter hitherto unseen situations and problems, and very likely the most significant of your university experiences will take place outside the classroom. The associations you will form with other students will have greater impact than the learned words of your professors, although there will be some of you who will not have made a single new friend even after several years at UBC. For this educational metropolis of 18,000 people can be a very lonely place sometimes.

During your stay here you may acquire new insights, new ideas and even new ideologies, and new ways of dealing with problems. Or, perhaps, all you will acquire is sixty units and a piece of paper at the end of four years. Or, depending upon which fraternity you join, you may perchance acquire venereal disease.

Perhaps you will lose a few hang-ups, perhaps your mind, or perhaps your virginity. You may experience the forbidden delights of marijuana or of late-night drinking in the residences, or you may decide that such decadence is not your path to salvation.

You may put on a red jacket and learn how to build bridges or turbo-engines and how to throw people in the library pond. On the other hand, you may discover Allen Ginsberg to be the greatest thing since the invention of the nylon zipper, and become a beat poet. Before you leave here, ladies, some of you will become wives or mothers or both.

Some of you will leave us soon because you will find university incapable of providing meaningful answers to the questions you seek resolved. Others, approximately 45 per cent of you, will depart after Christmas because your professors will have found you incapable of providing answers to the questions they wish you to resolve.

Some of you, even without going to class, may have already decided that all your professors are asses. This is perhaps unjust, for many of them are not. But neither are any of them sacred cows, and the better of them will be the first ones to tell you so. For only the more insecure among your teachers demand slavish acceptance of their ideas. If it helps, try to think of your professors as but older students who have simply taken more courses than you have..

And finally, Ladies and Gentlemen, the best advice one could give you is that you should resist all attempts on the part of others to define your role for you. If it is true, as Shakespeare says, that all the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players, then at least you should insist on writing your own script.

Last year, for example, we had a university president who told us that our university should not be used as a vehicle for social reform, that to protest too loudly the injustices of our society is to harm "academic freedom." But this is precisely the kind of decision that is to be made by us, and nobody else. And now that you are part of us, Ladies and Gentlemen, the burden of decision rests on your shoulders as well.

But before you make decisions, be sure you have taken the effort to seek out the facts and have kept an open mind to all the arguments, no matter where and from whom they originate. There is nothing you should accept on faith, Ladies and Gentlemen—not God, not your textbooks, not Moms' apple pie, and no—not even this article.

