

EDITORIAL

"Geers" 'n Peers

The last issue of the Gateway (Tuesday, January 22) contained a letter from first year engineering student, Andrew Bizon. In it, he suggested that "anyone who tries to dampen this spirit (that displayed by engineers during Engineering Week) with malicious slanders or wanton destruction ... is himself despicable." Mr. Bizon's letter was written in response to the Bear Country cartoon of Thursday, January 17, which depicted the strip's heroes (and I use the term loosely) hoodwinking an engineer and destroying an ice sculpture. Realizing, of course, that Mr. Bizon's suggestion that Gateway staff supported, or possibly participated in, the real destruction of Engineering Week ice sculptures was simply rhetoric, he cannot be held responsible for suggesting irresponsibility on that scale is characteristic of this paper. To support, or worse, to participate in vandalism is reprehensible and should be condemned as such.

No one denies the academic ability demanded of applicants to the Faculty of Engineering. With the exception of the faculties of Medicine, Law, and Rehabilitative Medicine, the Faculty of Engineering has possibly the most stringent requirements of any faculty on campus.

However the reputation which engineers enjoy on this campus, that of being one evolutionary step above orangoutangs is somewhat justified.

Whether the reputation or the reality preceded the other, or developed concurrently, is irrelevant. The fact is that the Faculty of Engineering is burdened with a minority that not only embraces, but cultivates that reputation.

That it does so proudly, in the same breath pronouncing its engineer status, only justifies the perception of other U of A students that engineers have hairy forearms and scrape their knuckles on the pavement.

I call to mind a recent incident in which a female engineering student made a complaint to the faculty administration regarding being subjected to centerfolds posted for the benefit of male students in her class (posted by other students, not the instructor). Though an attempt was made to deal with the complaint quietly, news of it reached her fellow students and for weeks afterward, clearly identified, she was taunted with stunning remarks like: Whatsamatter baby, don't get laid enough?

The language and comments were frequently cruder.

This is adult behaviour?

Though this particular incident was isolated, it is hardly unique. If engineers are truly disturbed by public perceptions of them, then they should accept the responsibility of affecting positive change. That is not the responsibility of the Gateway.

Incidentally, other faculties "suffer" too. Education is the last refuge for the failing; Arts students (like myself) lack ability and ambition; Aggies, ... well, we can't print that. See?

As regards Engineering Week - more power to engineers. In the dreary doldrums of mid-winter, many of Engineering Week's activities are precisely the diversion the doctor ordered. I particularly enjoy the skit competition and am consistently surprised by the level of musicianship displayed. These people, in the public limelight, are surely not the primitives previously mentioned.

Those primitives must populate the shadows until the most inopportune moments. If their ridiculous behaviour denigrates other engineers and the Engineering Faculty in the eye of the insignificant (read non-engineers) masses, then perhaps responsible, rational engineers should take suitable action.

Until then, engineers and non-engineers alike are going to be blessed with the spectacle of banana-mashing and armpit scratching for years to come.

Mike Evans

GATEWAY

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTS

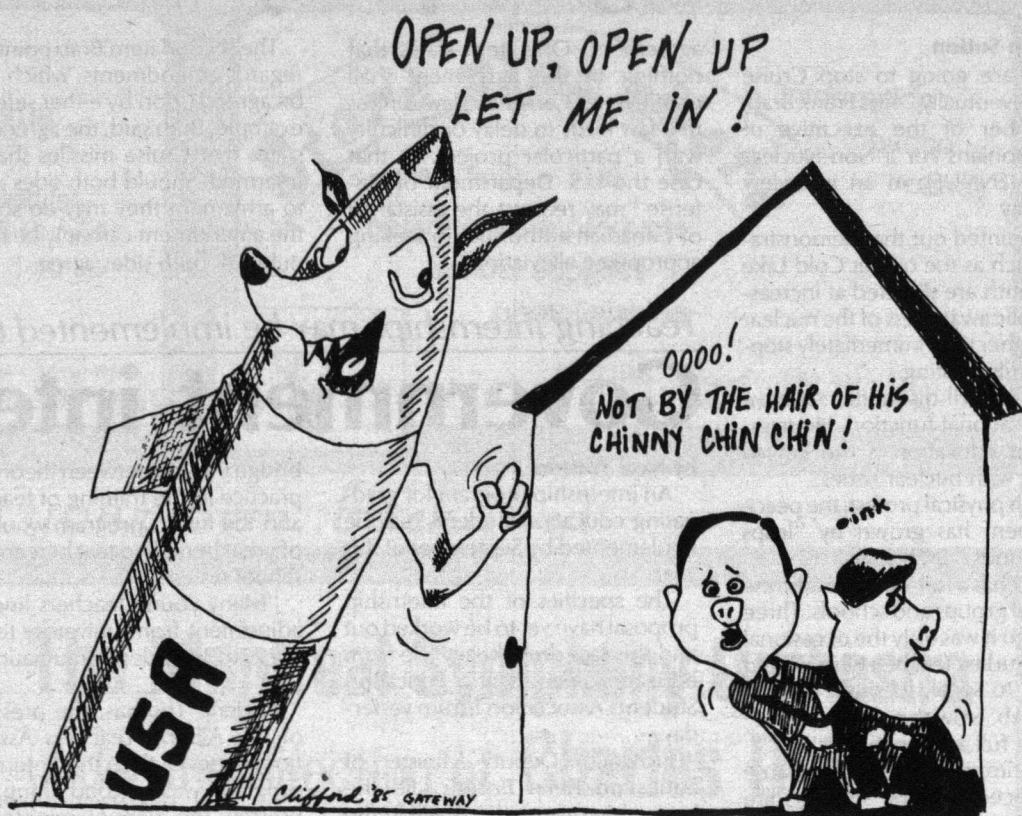
Pink Triangle

- deadline for submissions: Feb. 7
- publishing date: Feb. 14

International Women's Awareness Week

- deadline for submissions: Feb. 28
- publishing date: Mar. 7

Submissions may be sent through the mail or delivered by hand. Please mark submissions Pink Triangle or Women's Awareness.



LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Engineers grovel

It has come to our attention that certain people were offended by the "stunt" which our Engineering Club organized for Engineering Week.

It was not our intent to offend the native Indian band that so generously donated the Universiade dove to the U of A.

Rather, we meant our stunt to be a symbolic representation of how violence (symbolized by a shark) continues to eat away at the presence of peace (the dove) in the world today.

We apologize to those individuals who were offended by this action.

Helen Anderson
President, Civil Engineering Club

Engineers Unite

It is evident to me, Andrew Bizon, that in your letter of January 22 you are riding fairly high on your horse of glory. That's unfortunate, for you are the ones who make people believe that Engineers are arrogant snobs. You made some fairly boasting but otherwise accurate remarks about the scholastic efforts and achievements of engineers, but judging from your signature of Engineering I, you have quite a few things to learn in your years to come.

It is true that Engineers use Queen Week, otherwise known as 'Geer' Week, as a time to show the rest of the University that we have spirit, but it is done in moderation in present day as compared to past years. You had no basis to call the Engineering students, exclusive of Med students "the only faculty that takes pride in itself and tries to get into some University spirit"; Engineering Week, as well as the Med Show,

are traditional occurrences that have been set in stone over many decades as compared to other faculties.

As for the ridicules received by the engineers in the Gateway, they were only in jest just as we would not hesitate to slander Arts, Science, or even Aggie students in our Engineering Paper. Personally, I was extremely pleased and proud of our faculty this year for the way that we conducted ourselves — evidenced by the very little slander that we did receive this year as compared to previous ones. I do hope your letter does not create any undue criticism that may have been avoided if you had not written it in the first place.

As a first year student, you do not represent the opinion of the Engineering faculty as a whole. Bizon, I suggest you stop grazing and start swilling.

Brian Harrison &
Craig Wilson
Engineering III

Egregiously appalled

I am more than appalled by Ben Hett's offensively pejorative letter on the subject of Alfred Fisher's Gateway interview. Mr. Hett apparently can write English. It is equally apparent that he cannot read it. The Gateway interview should have been dismissed, by any critical reader, as being, rather obviously, a poorly edited series of distortions and misrepresentations. Even so, Mr. Hett has perversely misinterpreted Dr. Fisher's comments as they were reported.

What Dr. Fisher actually expressed, in plain English, was an enormous respect for the jazz musician. His view, that jazz is essentially popular music, is arguable. His opinion is not, however, based on "crass ignorance," but on a real understanding of both jazz, and what Mr. Hett mistakenly calls "European classi-

The Gateway

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We all got feeling so silly, we decided to go to McDonald's. Susan Sutton and Kent Cochrane ordered twenty Chicken McNuggets with Sweet and Sour Sauce, while Bill Doskoch, Ross Crockford and Bruce Horner helped themselves to 30 per cent more fries too, while Paul Phillips snatched the ketchup. Alex Miller and Tim Helum shook hands with Ronald McDonald, Doug Olsen and Bill Overend applied for jobs, and Lisa Trofymour played on the kiddie slide. Over in the corner, Dave Boyd spilt his coke on Brad Clark, who in turn squeezed his Big Mac on John Charles. Chris Menard ordered three blueberry pies while Hans Beckers and Shane Berg got stuck on their straws slurping milkshakes. Peter Smyth and Don Teplyskye refused to eat.