

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.

I am an insufferable bigot...

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I sometimes can't believe that I have the audacity to laugh at the Jewish jokes that my father is apt to tell at the dinner table.

In fact, and I admit this with considerable shame, some of my favourite two-liners begin with 'How many ---- does it take to...?' Unforgivable.

Oh, and did I mention that I am also a decided Male Chauvinist Pig? It's true. I once had the gall to admit that I enjoy watching the Golden Bears basketball team over the Pandas. Can you believe it?

Just because the men are faster and stronger — and can slam-dunk.

I guess that this terrible problem stems from my upbringing. The offspring of a Latvian and a Jew, we were never a very heritage conscious family. I guess the problem is that I was never honed in the practice of being defensive regarding my sex or nationality. A downtrodden lad, I never felt a need to strike back at a volley of humour aimed directly at my strange mix of racial blood. I say to you now sadly, that I often laughed as hard as the author of this maliceless humour.

I never tried to join the girls' softball team or took Home Ec. in junior high. I was always content that my mother do the cooking at home. Regrettably, never once did I urge my father on, in tones of enfranchisement, to break his bonds of servitude (he works as an optometrist by day) and grab that recipe book and...

Take back the Kitchen!

And now, in my fourth year at the U of A, I feel like I am somewhat of a social outcast. In these times when everybody is under constant pressure not to slander or otherwise slight any identifiable group of people, they have gone full circle, leaving me in their

dust. Nowadays, one can't admit that they feel a particular race has acquired better skills in one area than most others. Or that one sex performs this task more easily and effectively than the other.

I admit it. I think that there are certain jobs that better suit men than women, with very few exceptions. Like a jackhammer operator. Or a baritone in the opera. And I much prefer women's gymnastics because they are so much more nimble than their male counterparts. As well, most of the really organized people that I know are women. I don't know why this is, but it's true. I think that if I were ever to hire a personal secretary she would definitely be a woman; which is not to say that that same woman would not be capable of doing a much more difficult job, like running a company, or owning it for that matter.

In case I haven't made my point clear yet, I think that the members of these "identifiable groups" are cutting their own throats by being so defensive about their causes. They beat everyone over the heads with their "rights", and the opposite effect occurs. They lose, instead of gain, support.

"Personholes" is stupid. Wage parity is not.

I sat across from a stranger while having a coffee at HUB on Tuesday. He told a joke to his friend that made sport of the speed at which northern Alberta natives speak. "It's so cold where they live, that they talk that fast just to keep warm," he jested.

He, I decided, is my kind of guy.

He was an Indian.

Mark Spector

Letters



Give a fig!

To the Editor:

I have followed with interest the stories in *The Gateway* about the S.U. Council's unwillingness to significantly engage international issues. I know that "unwillingness" well — from my own university student days and from working within the Church.

Michael Hunter, S.U. VP External, is to be commended for his vision and desire to bridge local campus issues with international issues that affect all of us. Statements, but more significantly actions, taken by the U of A Students' Union, far from being a "tempest in a teapot" can have a significant effect on students and university communities in other contexts.

The University of Alberta Chaplains' Association has been most grateful for cooperation with the office of VP External for co-sponsoring presentations on significant issues. The Chaplains will continue to provide that larger context with which to relate faith and life issues on this campus.

We are presently attempting to provide such a perspective through our film series on "Is Christianity Racist?" which has thus far explored the Aryan Nations, Native Canadians, and the Holocaust.

We will have, on campus, Monday and Tuesday, October 27 and 28, Rev. Brian Burchfield, a white North American Lutheran pastor who was working in South Africa this year until his deportation in July — his version of events is much different from the official version.

Some members of the SU Council may not give a fig for these presentations. But others within the university community may want to take advantage of hearing this person speak.

Stephen M. Larson
Lutheran Chaplain (432-4513)

Prayer denied?

To the Editor:

Re: Muslim club denied office space. Oct. 15

While we are thankful for the publicity given to our Association, the story contains slanderous allegations and false accusations.

We will deal with the charges made against us so that your readers may judge the matter and may see the utter hollowness of Mr. Rick Stedman's ostensible reasons for his wrongful denial of office space to a legitimate student association such as ours.

Charge no. 1: The M.S.A., in previous years, was using the office space for purposes not put down in the application. The purpose allegedly concealed was prayer and "regularly moving around office furniture to facilitate this."

Our response: The place was very definitely used for the noon day prayer and we make no secret of it. The keeping up of prayer at the appointed times is a part of our religion, Islam, and we are not ashamed of it.

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But the charge of concealment is false: the application for office space asks for an explanation. In response we listed its official aims are hobby, recreational, public service, religious, sports, and welfare.

Charge no. 2: We are accused of a) monopolizing office space by depriving other clubs access to the common space; b) stacking other clubs' stuff, making it impossible for the other clubs to use the office; c) being incapable of sharing common space.

Our response: Were any complaints from the aggrieved clubs received by the S.U.? If not, that is the end of the matter. If complaints were indeed received, was our association notified of such complaints? No. Was our association given a chance to answer or to mend its erring ways? Never, not once.

This being the case, Mr. Stedman cannot bring up these false accusations now and deprive the association of a rightful benefit.

Charge no. 3: We booked rooms improperly and became abusive to S.U. staff on several occasions.

Our response: If true, this is a serious matter reflecting adversely on our association. What was the impropriety in the booking of the rooms? Were we told of it or put on notice? Were we given a chance to explain or mend our ways? No.

The truth of the matter is that every day at lunch time a few members (6-10) gathered to pray for about 1/2 an hour. Furniture was moved to facilitate the prayer, but it was replaced immediately after. The noon time prayer was performed only during a very specific period (lunch time) and at no other time. No members of the other clubs ever expressed any desire or need to use the office for their purposes during this time. The office was free to the other clubs at all other times, and if they chose not to use it, is it fair to blame us?

We approached Mr. Stedman assuring him that we would cease the practice of prayer there if it was felt to cause inconvenience to others, but he was not prepared to give us a fair hearing.

Abdelilah Bennani
MSA President

P.S. I was not accurately quoted. I did not use the phrase "likening prayer to taking off your coat at the door". The wrong impression that some may get from these words is that Muslims consider prayer a casual and trivial activity. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

We goofed

To the Editor:

In your report on the Students' Council meeting of 14 October (*The Gateway*, 21 October 1986), you erroneously reported that a motion urging the Executive to lobby for the restoration of "happy hour" at RATT and Dewey's was passed "with great support." In fact, support for the motion was somewhat less than overwhelming: it scraped by on a vote of 14 to 12.

Stephen Phillips
S.U. Law Rep

Humour

Now and then, my mind tends to wander into the realm of the unknown, asking questions like...

— What if the Hawaiian Islands were still called the Sandwich Islands? Would Oahu now be named Peanut-butter-and-jelly? Would Maui be referred to as Ham-and-Swiss-on-rye? Someone ought to look into this. There's money to be made in t-shirts here.

— Why are sequels almost never as good as the original movies? And why are there so many of them? Hollywood has even started making sequels to classics like *The Wizard of Oz*, and *Psycho*. What's next — a sequel to *Gone With the Wind*? I can just see the ads: **Rhett returns in Back With the Breeze**. Nah, they wouldn't be that creative. It'd be *Gone With the Wind, Part II*. Not part 2, you understand — *Part II*.

— Why are Roman numerals so popular? How much would it cost to produce a calculator that would operate in Roman numerals? Are we overlooking a major market?

— Where did Scotland Yard get its name? I mean, it's not in Scotland and it's not in somebody's back yard, either... is it? They shouldn't change it after this amount of time, but wouldn't "London Public Detective Office" have been better to start with? Sure, it would have been less creative — but do we really want police departments to have creative names? What if every police department in the world had been named with the same amount of thought? Visitors to Los Angeles might realize that they would have to call "Sacramento Lawn" to get the police, but would tourists in, say Hartford, know that the law was in the phone book under "Boston Gardens?"

— Why do some tennis shoes cost seventy dollars a pair? Are they taxed heavily? Are we importing them from Tasmania? Oh. You say that that kind of price tag is only found on precision-engineered, electronically-enhanced, Japanese ultrasneakers? Well, are they worth it? Would expensive shoes really make a difference in a tennis match between you and Bjorn Borg?

— Do Brian Mulroney and John Turner ever buy lottery tickets? How big a fuss would be made if one of them won Lotto 6/49?

— What happened to Michael Jackson? Remember when it was impossible to turn on the television without seeing a story about Michael Jackson? Even on *Hockey Night in Canada*? Where is he now? Did the aliens get him? Why haven't we heard about any U.F.O. landings lately (except, of course, in the supermarket tabloids)? Why do supermarket tabloids exist? Did aliens start them in order to cover up their activities? Are those very aliens **watching us right now** (and forcing Michael Jackson to write disco songs), secure in the knowledge that anyone who reports seeing one of their ships will be completely ignored by the credible media?

— Why are piano keys always black and white? I mean, wouldn't you think that some interior designer could have come up with some different colours? Other items that are traditionally black and white are seen in different colours occasionally. Look at chess pieces. They always used to be black and white. Now you see them in silver and gold, white and green, white and red (like peppermint), chocolate and butterscotch...to heck with this. I'm going to go eat. See you next week.

Greg Whiting

The Gateway

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"How come my name wasn't mentioned?" whined Kathleen. "Because there just wasn't room for the two of you," snickered Cam McCulloch. "Exactly!" chimed in Shauna MacDonald. "Besides," added Roberta, "Sherri Ritchie and Alexia Wilkinson were busy trying to dissuade Jerome from slicing the copy into tiny spaghetti strips." "But that doesn't explain why Greg Whiting is handcuffed to Emma Sadgrove," said Teo Zanetic, with a lascivious grin on his face. "Yeah, how come?" pouted Glenn. Just then Marc Simao threw Melinda over his shoulder and instructed Andrew Rahn, Alex Callinois, and Mike Simons that it was time for the barbecue. "Oh goodie!" drooled Randy McCoy. "I've brought the sauce." "Enough of this," commanded Daddy-O, "I want to know what the half-time show is going to be." "I hear John and Greg are going to mud-wrestle in the back of Juanita's car," chuckled Mark. Thor swung his mighty axe, "Bambi, Bambi," chanted Andrew and Alex. Alan Small just grinned and said, "Hey, Pernel and Tim, I think there's a ball game on T.V." Dragos looked up from his magazine and yawned.