

Vacuous and silly

In reading the interview with Brit Griffin, we noticed that Ms. Griffin singled out a particular phrase in the *Godiva* which had caught her attention. Well, in skimming through the *Godiva*, we also detected a word which struck us as quite revealing. The word was 'provided.' It was used in this context: "One of several princesses and kicklines provided by the Delta Gamma Women's Fraternity."

Just what are these fraternities? Are they a farm system for silly vacuous women who enjoy exhibiting themselves? Are the members who participate in Engineering Week the cream of the crop, and do the rest glumly wish that they were up there? We're interested to know just where these women's fraternities stand on the issues of sexism and human rights.

If you talk to a fraternity member, they'll most likely tell you that friendship and good times is what it's all about. We think friendship and good times are great (although we question if it's necessary to buy one's friends) but where does it stop? Maybe it isn't all right to abandon all social responsibility and do anything for a good time.

The Chemical Engineer's Princess, Mary Kushnarik, was quoted as saying "it's just the advantages some females can get." Does this carry over to your fraternity parties, Mary? Maybe those of you who can get these advantages by virtue of physical appearance do so while those who are not so good looking keep themselves occupied by getting pissed? But at least the next morning you can all talk about what a good time you had last night.

We are pleased to hear that a women's group is forming on campus. We think you should take a good look at what these University-recognized women's fraternities are doing to promote (demote?) women's rights. It's hard to legislate open-

mindfulness, but it is also hard to condone the presence of a group which stands for what these fraternities have shown they stand for by the actions of their members.

John Koch
Engineering III
Stu White
Engineering III
Bill Brucite
Engineering II

The horror, the horror

It was with horror that I discovered the acclamation of Mr. Ken Lawson-Williams as student rep to the Board of Governors.

Students have, albeit through our own apathy and unwillingness to serve, been done a great disservice; Lawson-Williams will destroy any credibility students might have with the other members of the Board within ten minutes of opening his mouth.

Mr. Lawson-Williams' greatest contribution to society seems to have been a series of long-winded, unintelligent and unintelligible questions about the Garneau housing plans at the last council meeting.

He clearly has little or no understanding of the issues facing students. There is, however, something far worse than ignorance on his record; he is one of the engineers responsible for the inclusion of that disgusting and abusive article in the engineering newspaper.

Students now have, as their representative to the highest governing body of the university, a man who found that article acceptable.

We're stuck with it now. The least we can do is vote against Mr. Bob Kirk and his slate, for having the appalling judgment and opportunism to foist this person upon us as a member of their slate.

Nigel Fotheringham-Thomas
Arts III

Hell, it ain't that bad!

It is an admirable thing to be against sexism, to be aware of women's concerns. But isn't it better to be against injustice and concerned about people?

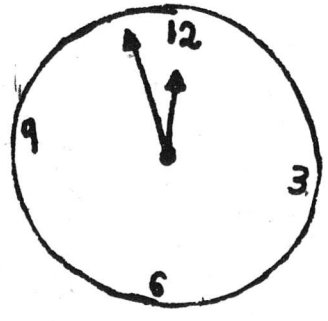
There are many groups on campus more disadvantaged than women. First year students have had fewer learning opportunities, lack the confidence of senior students, and know none of the secret passages in this ivory tower. Out-of-province students have trouble getting bursaries, loans and jobs, but often have greater expenses.

Left-handed students suffer

with right-hand lecture desks and awkward right-hand lab set-ups. Why are women the only group considered not capable of facing problems on their own? Why not create a "people's center" to help everyone?

But then, that's what Student Help is supposed to be. Our Students' Union would serve us better by making its existing programs work than by designating women with implications of group incompetence.

Pamela Jane McLean
Electrical Eng. III



Still lots of time!

Yes, folks, it's never too late to try out writing news, features, arts, or sports, doing layout, or taking pictures.

So grab the opportunity now: come up and join us some time, in room 282 SUB.

Tick tick tick tick tick tick

SECOND WIND

by Peter West

Second Wind is an occasional column of opinion open to all Gateway staff members.

On Friday, 30th January, about five hundred people gathered in the Jubilee Auditorium to hear the arguments for a separate Western Canadian Federation. Early in the evening a young dark skinned man appeared reading, "Canada is Greater than the Sum of Its Parts." He had scarcely sat down before he was escorted from the auditorium by an usherette; soon afterwards he returned without the placard.

The proceedings began with skits in which snide references were made to Quebec, the maple leaf symbol which was said to have originated there, and to beavers: on the whole the skits were not very clever and not very funny.

When the skits were over, Elmer Knutson, West-Fed's Edmonton organizer, made a long and convoluted speech. He listed grievances of the West, which he said had been treated as a colony by Ontario and Quebec, and dwelt on the suffering imposed on western farmers by eastern financiers in the Depression years. Knutson rambled on at length about the Statute of Westminster, which he claimed rendered the British North America Act null and void.

But the audience was unresponsive and he returned to his attack on Ontario and Quebec. He ridiculed Trudeau's French background, his overseas trips and his attempt to change Canada by patriating the Constitution. These gibes were more successful with the audience.

Occasionally two groups, apparently from the university, interjected, only to be howled down. One memorable response was "Put that Liberal head up again and I'll stick it up your ass."

The East Indian, now minus his placard, called out only to be yelled at even more fiercely.

When Knutson at length finished his tirade, there was an intermission. A crowd descended on the East Indian, calling out friendly greetings like "Go home, Paki," "Yucki-Paki" and "Go back to Iran." A smiling gentleman in a blue suit broke up these proceedings and the audience moved out into the foyer.

During intermission a gentle-looking middle-aged man started talking to me about Marc Lalonde: "I'm not too old to get him between my sights and pull the trigger."

In the second half of the program there were two more speakers, neither of whom had Mr. Knutson's delightful disregard for logic. Even so, an economics professor from Calgary tried to explain how we would all be better off if the price of oil rose. I would have thought that this would lead to a higher cost of living for all of us, including the many farmers in the audience. Finally, Peter Hemingway of Edmonton gave by far the best speech of the night, using the language of the American Revolution to insist that the West was being denied its basic rights.

A question and answer session followed after the chairwoman explained that questions could be asked, but statements could not be made. One man began with the comment to Mr. Knutson "Trudeau's more of a Canadian than you'll ever be": his microphone was then switched off. The East Indian then asked a question amid more shouts of "Shut up, Paki" and "Go home, Paki."

A woman in a white suit then made a rambling statement about how awful it was for Mr. Trudeau

to want to take her land away from her. This set the pattern for the session: West-Fed supporters were allowed to say what they liked, while opponents were shouted down or had their microphone switched off. After all the rhetoric about tyranny and freedom, I found this ironic in the extreme. As we left the auditorium two policemen had taken the East Indian aside and were questioning him.

Who supports West-Fed and what do they want? Overwhelmingly the audience was white, Anglo-Saxon, and middle-aged. Two of the three speakers came from the United Kingdom, and there was a strong anti-French flavor to the evening. Farmers and businessmen seemed well represented in the fairly well-to-do audience of fairly ordinary Albertans. West-Fed could be the beginning of a new right wing movement in a province which has seen other supposedly non-political movements emerge into political parties - most recently, the Social Credit Movement.

But if West-Fed cannot fill the Jubilee Auditorium on a mild Friday night one wonders what sort of future it has. If it wants to improve its attractiveness it should first of all get Knutson off the platform: he is too often intoxicated with the sound of his own verbosity.

Second, it should stop its more redneck supporters from trying to shout down and beat up those who raise their voices against it. And finally, it should give some thought to the question of who would benefit from higher prices for oil and gas. It seems that those providing finance for West-Fed are the oil companies, and they were conspicuously absent from Friday night's meeting.

Why does FAS need more money?

On Feb. 6, we will be asked to vote on a referendum which asks us to give \$2.00 a year more to the Federation of Alberta Students (FAS). This request prompts three questions - who is FAS, why do they need more money, and why should we give them it?

I'll answer the questions in order. First, FAS is you and I. It is a province-wide union of students dedicated to organizing a voice for all of Alberta's post-secondary students. We have members on FAS executive and we employ three people who are responsible for gathering information on student problems: such as tuition, quality of education and the state of the student loan program, and for relaying this information to the members of FAS and to the government.

Second, FAS needs restructuring. The organization has grown since it first started in 1975 but its form has not kept pace. In a full meeting of member institutions last fall, a restructuring proposal was passed which would see the establishment of a larger executive which would include elected members from each campus, two new staff positions and to facilitate better communications a greatly improved "Student Voice" - FAS's newspaper. These changes would help make FAS more representative and more effective in coordinating province-wide activities. We currently pay \$1.50 in FAS fees. This has not changed since 1977. An increase to \$3.50 is relatively little when the increased services are considered.

Finally, why should we vote

yes? We only need to look at what FAS has done and is capable of doing to find the answer. In the past, FAS has lobbied, successfully, for student representation on the Students' Finance Board and against student tuition fee increases to name just two accomplishments.

They are currently involved in lobbying for further changes in the student loan program such as establishing 18 as the age of independence, and are working on improving the quality and accessibility of post-secondary education. We need a group like

FAS to coordinate the actions of students across Alberta. We need a strong voice for students. Restructuring, which depends on our voting yes on Feb. 6, is vital to strengthening FAS and making it a more effective organization.

Find out more about the function of FAS and the restructuring proposal by reading FAS pamphlets or come to the election forum on Wed., Feb. 4. On Fri., Feb. 6, get out and vote yes for a strong student voice. Vote yes in the FAS fee referendum.

Mary Ann Gillies
Arts IV

Not an easy way out

Dear S.N. Wilkes:

It appears to me that you have the makings of an excellent Ed. Admin: your reaction of speaking with authority and self-righteousness is, as far as I have observed, characteristic of such occupations. You see, none of the accusations and whole-hearted denunciations in your letter have basis in fact. Furthermore, your reasoning, like that of several notable Americans, is decidedly post hoc.

It should be brought to your, and all my critics', attention that my decision was not first made known when faced by registration. In fact, the televised CBC interview with me was recorded in July of 1980 - before I had reached the age of registration!

Moreover, I was not taking this action to avoid serving in the military; rather it was done to avoid serving in the American military in particular and to avoid possible extradition. I have no



compunction about serving in the military; I was in Cadet units before going into the Canadian militia in Edmonton at the age of 17. The decision between active service in Canadian exercises and participation in an American armageddon is easy.

Finally, S.N., I owe nothing to the Americans anymore than I owe to the French for pre-birth residence in their country. I left the States and all American "privileges" behind at the age of three; too soon to protest or assent.

Therefore, S.N., I refer you to "ears" of the Tuesday January 27 edition of the *Gateway* in the hope that you will understand.

Gunnar Blodgett
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