

The Gateway

The job we are doing is a direct result of the hard-working individuals who sometimes spend all night thinking of new ideas which will improve the society as a whole, or they just spend 15-20 hours in the office helping out other education students. These services are very demanding, and yet the ESA executive still plans events like the "1964" bash on Nov. 7 and Happy-Hour Pubs which occur many times a month, and even further the ESA executive still provides the job search information that will help their members grow professionally.

That is why when Don Davies asks questions like "What right do these people have to decide who can fill these positions?", I laugh a little and then I get real serious. The right is stated in the fact that Mr. Hackel (President), Mr. Nelson (VP Academic), and the other elected officials including myself had "advertised all summer and nobody had shown interest," therefore because our desire to promote ourselves professionally was so high, we the ESA executive, while maintaining the integrity of our constitution, approved the appointment of those individuals so that they may represent us, and our points of view accurately on the SU Council.

Therefore in conclusion, I appeal to the other Faculties and Councilors to stand up against people like Mr. Davies so that they will not have to endure the humiliation that results from an inquiry into their Faculty's nomination and election proceedings.

Keith A. Denoncourt
VP Finance, ESA

Why the ESA fuss?

Re: the Ed. rep squabble

As an education student I feel I must reply to the comments of Don Davies and Martin Levenson. I can't understand what all the fuss is about, but I'm not a law student or a political person at all. The present education reps aren't appointees or Senators (no political patronage is apparent to me). These people are part of an endangered group on this campus: VOLUNTEERS. They took it upon themselves to represent my faculty, no one forced or bribed them.

And why is it only the Law and Arts reps are making the fuss? If the education students felt this state of affairs was wrong, they

(including me) would do something about it. Democracy isn't just having elections — look at the USSR. Everybody gets a free vote; if they vote yes, A situation is undemocratic only if the people concerned have no say in the matter: the education students have the E.S.A., and every time I pass by the Association's office, the door is wide open, and someone is inside. I have spoken with some fellow education students on this matter, and the general agreement is that it's ok with them if the reps are doing a good job FOR THEM.

This issue is a typical Student Council flap. Mr. Levenson is concerned about the high level of apathy concerning the SU. No bloody wonder! All they do is sit around hurling insults and innuendos at each other; at least that is what it seems like to the students at large. The real concerns of every student aren't if a rep is legitimately holding his/her seat but the cost of textbooks, reduced library hours, cutbacks, and overcrowding.

Allen Linville

University expectations

Is there a universal standard of education or is education a case-specific concept? How should one go about changing any given educational system? Should superior educational standards be imposed on a given society by an outside source? These are questions which are very pertinent when considered in light of a conflict that concerns many university students in Canada. This conflict is between the education that Canadian students get in high school and the expectations they are often faced with in university.

My premise is that any given educational system in a democratic society reflects the needs of that society. It is absolutely true that when compared to many West European countries, Alberta's high schools often offer inferior standards, which, to the dismay of many a brilliant professor, become the legacy of universities. However, if the parents of Alberta, who are voters incidentally, were truly dissatisfied with the educational standards that their children are exposed to, they would change them. This would simply amount to not re-electing the government that had promised to improve these stand-

ards and failed to do so during its term of office. After all, isn't this what democracy is all about? In its turn, a government elected subsequently would make sure that a more stringent weeding out process is implemented at education faculties in universities. It would do the same in high schools, but only later, in order to allow its initial purging to take effect at the highschool level.

This would be a painful process and very un-North American. This is simply because in the US, and in Canada, by virtue of the egalitarian quality of these two countries, the educational system aims at mediocrity. Education in our society is no longer the realm of the privileged but that of Joe Blo. Many would argue that this is a very good idea and a much more democratic one. Indeed the cultural and scientific success of the US would be the best advocate for this egalitarian approach to education. However, I do not intend to favor either the North American or the European approach, because arguments can be easily found to support and attack both.

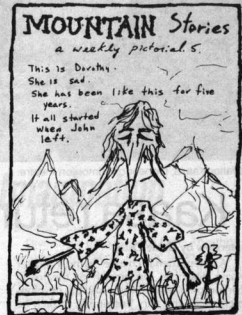
Instead I would like to come back to my main point, namely, that any educational system in a democratic society reflects the needs of that society. Therefore, when university professors who received their education elsewhere, and who are high above the average of Alberta's standards, decide to impose their own standards on the students of Alberta artificially, no one is benefitted. It is a bit like war. War is illogical because instead of shooting at the generals who are behind it all, we shoot at the soldiers who are simply pawns. Similarly, university students are these soldiers. They are the product of their highschool education, i.e., change the education system at the highschool level instead of making its soldiers suffer unjustly.

However, if Alberta has not raised its educational standards in the highschool, that is the decision of Albertans who are satisfied with the schooling that their children receive. That too should be respected and university standards should be adapted to the real (as opposed to utopian) students. Of course this is not to say that students should not be prodded towards raising their standards, but this should be done in moderation, within realistic boundaries. Unfortunately or fortunately mediocrity is not really a derogatory

term in our society; however, if one day Albertans decide that they want more out of their educational system they will get it, since it would be ludicrous to assume that they have less potential brain power than anyone else.

As a final note I would like to mention that the above statements concern only some fields and do not at all imply that Alberta's highschools offer inferior standards in all areas of education. The areas referred to in this letter are primarily related to the study of languages (English and French in particular).

Joe Blo



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Election for these positions will take place Thursday, October 29 at the 4:00 pm staff meeting.

Gateway Staff Meeting
Thursday
October 29
4:00 pm

Election of Production and Circulation Editors will be taking place —

volunteers please attend.

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