

Responsibility must transcend "theft"

by Ron Kuipers

Editors edit. *The Bridge* has no editors. They take anything they read and slap it down for print. I don't think that the contents of *the Bridge*, the Engineering Students' Society newspaper, reflects the opinions of the entire engineering student body. At least, I hope not.

What I wish to discuss in this space has nothing to do with any grudge. A journalistic issue is at stake here. The Engineering Students' Society, by perpetually running libelous copy, continues to repeat an unfortunate mistake, exercising freedom of speech without assuming any responsibility for what they say.

Recently, I received a copy of *The Bridge*. The staff of this paper runs a disclaimer on their editorial page that reads: "[The Bridge] is intended solely for the use of Engineering Students. Possession by anyone else constitutes theft, and will result in swift and sure prosecution and punishment by law." Now, not only am I offended, I am also a thief.

This disclaimer is nothing but a cheap attempt for the E.S.S., the publisher of *The Bridge*, to obtain a legal leg on which to stand. Maybe this loophole is legitimate. Perhaps the E.S.S. does have some legal framework upon which they may protect themselves from libel suits.

But there is a bigger issue at stake here. No one cares if anyone is offended. That's not the point. This is the point: Freedom of the press implies that the people who use the press exercise much care and responsibility when doing so. *The Bridge*, by running grotesque, and potentially libelous copy, have grossly abused this freedom and the responsibility that comes with it.

But apparently myself and everyone else who is offended, targeted, or worse—injured—by the sexism, perversion, and defamation of character that runs rampant in *The Bridge*, are the criminals—not the editors who abused their journalistic prerogative by letting the smut run in the first place.

If I were in engineering, I would be plenty upset to be associated, by implication, to *The Bridge*. The E.S.S. should find editors who edit, or just not bother. *The Bridge* is not funny, and it certainly is not the satire that it is intended to be. Find another way to rebel against the pressure of the unbearable engineering course load. People shouldn't be hurt so engineers can "blow off steam."

That's all I'm going to say. I read *The Bridge*. I am a thief. Take me to court.



LETTERS

Please keep letters brief. All letters must include name, faculty, year, phone number and ID number (ID and phone will not be printed).

BOMB the Bridge

Re: *The Bridge* (E.S.S. Publication), November issue.

We find it unfortunate and disturbing that certain articles printed in *The Bridge* portray our Mayor, as well as women in general, in a sexist and negative manner. This raises the question of student and faculty responsibility (or lack thereof).

First of all, the objectives of the University of Alberta and Faculty of Engineering to encourage women to enroll in engineering are demolished by such articles. It displays immature attitudes which are an

embarrassment to the University. In addition, by printing "The University of Alberta" on the front page, it is implied that this institution condones prejudice, sexism, and displays lack of maturity and good taste. This scatological humor is out of place and inappropriate in an academic institution of this stature.

There are some aspects of human relationships which can be construed as humorous, but the humour presented in *The Bridge* merely perpetuates a derogatory point of view. While we do not accept censorship for its own sake, freedom of the press is not absolute. Responsible journalism is a necessity. Biased or racist statements concerning ethnic cultural or religious peoples are universally condemned. Why then, are the same condemna-

tions not applied to the status of women?

Constance Uzwyshyn
Arts IV

Editor's note: the letter presented to *The Gateway* by Ms. Uzwyshyn contained 39 other student signatures.

We shall REBUILD

To the University Student Body:

In the November issue of the Engineering Students' Society publication, *The Bridge*, there appeared inappropriate comments concerning the Mayor of Edmonton, Jan Reimer.

The Engineering Students' Society apologizes for any misunderstanding that may have resulted from the unauthorized possession of this information. *The Bridge* is a satirical paper intended solely for the use and enjoyment of Engineering students and is funded completely by the Engineering Students' Society. The words and ideas expressed in this column in no way represent the opinions of the University of Alberta, Faculty of Engineering, Engineering Student's Society, *The Bridge*, or the engineering student body.

Steps have been taken to rectify this unfortunate situation. Three formal letters of apology have been written to Mayor Reimer. They are from the President and Vice-President of the Engineering Students' Society, the Editor of *The Bridge*

and the President of the club in whose column these comments appeared. A full retraction will be printed in the next issue of *The Bridge* and a change of policy has been instituted to reduce the possibility of recurrence.

The Engineering Students' Society is an umbrella society which governs the smaller departmental engineering clubs and provides an aid to professional and social development of tomorrow's engineers. The Engineering Students' Society annually raises money for several charities including Santa's Anonymous and the A.C.T. Telerama and will continue in its endeavor to enhance the community.

Patricia Marianovits
Engineering Students' Society
Representative

The Gateway

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Managing Editor	PHILIP PREVILLE	492-5178
News Editors	LISA HALL	492-1483
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Circulation Manager	JIM KNUTSEN	492-5168
Advertising	TOM WRIGHT	492-4241

CONTRIBUTORS: Pat Kiernan, Greg Pommen, Teresa Pires, Doug Kerr, Karen Cho, George Sheppard, Paul Murphy, Michael Chevalier, Kevin Law, Peter McKiernan, Todd Saelhof, Alex Shetsen, Joanne Elliott, Rob Wall, Clive Oshry, Greg Dziwenko, Greg Perkins, Renee Baril, Jeff Cowley, Byron Stansfield, Michael Krauthahn, Eamonn Muldowney, Adam Thrasher, Jason Kapalla, Kelly Robson, Alex Millar, Scott Greig, Michael Snyder, Stephen Notley, Chris Griwkowsky, Brian Taylor, Ed Tymchyshyn, and Busky Berkeley.

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