

# Blood and Thunder

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Rm. 35, Student Union Building, UNB Campus

DEADLINE: 5 p.m. Tuesday

### Einstein's

#### losing sleep?

Dear Editor:

By its ad in the Brunswickan, the Canadian Federation of Students resurrected Albert Einstein to report him on a first name basis as having been losing sleep over the lack of books in underfunded libraries.

I find the ad singularly distasteful, misleading and provocative. Why should the dear 'Alvert' sleeplessly worry about the depleted Harriet Irving's Library while, Harriet's husband and Presidents Jim and Jane are regularly getting their beauty sleep?

Would anyone please reassure me in this matter. I love to stand corrected.

Sincerely,  
Lana Grimes

#### Stop complaining

Dear Editor:

I am presently in my fifth year at university and in my second here at UNB. I enjoy reading the university paper but as my time here at UNB progresses one thing has become blatantly obvious, you people love to complain. You complain about your student council, you knock down your sports teams, you insult your school pub, you complain about each other. What is wrong with everyone here?!

Is this the spirit of UNB? No, wait, you complain about the lack thereof. The student fees are too high, the student council is not doing its job, the president of the university is letting us down. Why doesn't everyone put away their biases, prejudices, jealousies, etc., and get on with their year. If the complainers would stop worrying about everyone else and concentrate on doing the job they're assigned, a large part of the problem would be solved.

I was asked the other day "why does UNB lack school spirit and what can we do to change it?" by a fellow in the phys. ed. faculty. He was starting to think about doing something to change the situation here. If more people had this attitude things could get done.

When was the last time you went to watch a UNB team and you

had trouble finding a seat or had to plan on getting there half an hour early so as to ensure a good vantage point? Why does this not happen? There are 6000 plus students at this university yet school spirit seems to be at an alltime low.

I asked a graduating fourth year student what he thought of the UNB hockey team. He replied that he had never attended a game, ever!!!!.

I'm dwelling on the athletics since they are usually synonymous (sic) with school spirit, but there are a wide variety of other aspects to take in. What about a debate? A debate about what? Well, usually any argument is fun to watch and take in if both sides are well prepared and confident in their answers.

The spirit in the residences seem relatively large compared to that of the off-campus people. The off-campus students seem to be cut off from the university in the sense that notices of special or upcoming events are few and far between. *The Bruns* does keep these activities posted yet this only comes out once a week. Is there an off-campus rep. on the student council? Forgive me for stereotyping the off-campus crowd for I know that a good number do enjoy their UNB year through special events and sport teams.

Doubling back to student fees. The fees took a hike last year and a good many were knocked for a loop. If you look at the total cost of running the student activities for the university you would not even raise an eyebrow. The amount of money the student spends throughout the academic year is quite substantial, I know, but this small hike was necessary and yet provided fuel to the complainers. The university I attended previously had a student fee of 100 dollars back in '83 so I'm sure the students at UNB have been given a fair shake in this regard.

Let's talk "The Gripes of Wrath" for a moment. I'm sure Susan Forestall is a respected contributor to *the Bruns*. But let's not go overboard by setting up a column just for complaints. I've followed Susan's letters to *the Bruns* over the last while and its clear that complaining seems to be coming a trait in her work. Can't we talk about some of the positive points of UNB?

Your school pub, the Social Club was and probably still is in financial hot water. How could this happen? A university's pub should be a cornerstone and trademark. Granted, UNB has to compete with the Fredericton establishments, so it must offer its students more. The bad layout of the Social Club is apparent but the renovations cost money, which is scarce with low

attendance. The circle has to be interrupted by an outside source.

I apologize for all the complaining, it seems ironic, yet hopefully the point I'm offering will be understood.

Yours sincerely,  
Regan Steeves

### Let the

#### Bruns answer

Dear Editor:

Seems to me Karen Braun has a complaint or two. Her desk was broken into - that's an invasion of privacy, and her sanitary napkins were made the subject of office jokes - that's sexual harassment. I'd like to hear *the Bruns* answer both complaints responsibly - that's democracy.

Yours sincerely,  
Lorna Drew

#### Stats on women

Dear Editor:

I read with dismay the responses to last week's *Viewpoint* question: "What do you think of feminism?" Although I have been a student on this campus for several years, I find the level of social ignorance among those old enough to attend university appalling.

Perhaps a more salient question might have been: "What do you know about feminism?" Why is it that those who know the least think they know most? Do the learned respondents featured know, for example, that:

- although women comprise 42% of the labour force, that women earn 60 cents for every dollar earned by men?
- that a woman with a university degree earns the same as a man who has completed junior high?
- that 62% of women who are employed fulltime work in low paying areas such as clerical, sales and service?
- that over 60% of working women are married with families and are denied access to quality childcare?
- that 83% of one parent families are headed by women who live below the poverty line?
- that 60% of elderly women live below the poverty line and those who are lucky enough to receive pensions receive 68% of that received by men?
- that one in three Canadian women can expect to be raped sometime in their lifetime?
- that one in ten Canadian women are subject to physical abuse and of

the 10% of domestic assaults that are reported, only 2 in 10,000 are ever prosecuted? That is two hundredths of one percent?

If women are considered equal in our society, why do these figures exist?

Men on this campus may or may not act as individuals in the oppression of women but they are members of a class which actively perpetuates discriminatory and illegal practices. As for the young women on this campus, if it were not for the energies of feminists, do you think you would even be allowed in these hallowed halls? If you have not yet had the misfortune of being included among the statistics, be patient; it is a long life.

I realize that this letter will bring yet another rain of criticism down upon my aching head and everything from my "attitude" to my personal life will fall to public review. So be it. It is a small price to pay for attempting to effect a social change that I firmly believe in.

I could sign this "A feminist who is concerned for other feminists" but I think I will just sign my name. I have learned that if you are going to go around poking sticks at dinosaurs, the stick might as well be sharp.

Karen Jean Braun

#### Feminism or humanism

Dear Editor:

I am stymied by students who staunchly oppose feminism on the grounds of HUMANISM. A humanist is a person who actively promotes human welfare. He/she rejects notions of rigid determinism (sic) in history, believing instead that people reflect upon (sic) the human condition and react creatively to bring about social change. Feminism, as a social and political movement that actively promotes equal rights for women, has its roots firmly entrenched in a tradition of humanism.

My suspicion is that people on this campus avoid using the word feminism because they are afraid of offending the boys at *the Bruns*, and those sensitive and gentle (not to mention ineffective) people on the student union. The recent events at *the Brunswickan*, and the student union's unwillingness to deal swiftly and decisively with an obvious case of sexism, has made it abundantly clear that to proclaim oneself a feminist on this campus is to invite slander and abuse.

Yours sincerely,  
Donna Young

### Letter from alumni

Dear Editor:

Being an Ex-UNB student, I read the *Brunswickan* every week to keep in touch with the university community. Over the past few months however, I have been reading more about sexism and civil rights violations than university news.

Judging by what I have read in the paper, Ms. Karen-Jean Braun has undermined her own cause. The vicious attack on Chris Kane for his comic strip of 30 October 1987, along with her personal glimpses on daily life at this campus effectively recalled in people's minds the feminist movement of the late 1960's and early 70's. The movement was seen as being very anti-male and promoting reverse-chauvinism. The movement today is seen as being an opportunity for men and women to work together to achieve a better, more productive society. It is unfortunate that Ms. Braun does not wish to be a part of it.

I believe in equality. I believe that there are problems yet to be resolved. Working together is the only way to realize productive solutions. Isn't it time we started? Sincerely yours  
Kenneth Tompkins

#### Apathy in elections

Dear Sir:

For the past several years candidates have competed for the position of comptroller of the student council (whether it was under the title "comptroller", "VP (Finance)" or "treasurer"). However, in the last two elections, the position has been acclaimed.

Is it a coincidence that this pattern of apathy follows the establishment of the Foundation for Students? With the Foundation, the essential duties of the Treasurer no longer include the financial administration of the council but now entail begging the university administration's permission to use the students' own finances.

It was Rousseau who pointed out that no one who was sane would agree to a contract from which he did not benefit. Apparently Larry Hansen and the other councillors who agreed to the Foundation were not Rousseauites (assuming they were sane).