

# the Gateway

## EDITORIAL

### Student rights

On September 8, 1981, we printed in these pages a feature entitled "Classroom self-defence," from which I quote:

"Fred (a professor), we've (the students) formed a Classroom Student Self-Defence Organization and we've drawn up these demands here, and we want to rap about them with you. We demand the right to determine course content, the right to tell you when we want a lecture and what we want it on, the right to determine what books will be read, the right to have class sessions without you being there, the right to assign our own final marks at the end of the year, and the right to dispense with any and all examinations ..."

Well, I wasn't sure on first reading if its author, one Ron MacDonald, a graduate student at this university in the early 1970's was serious, or if he was exaggerating for effect, or if he was satirizing some of the more outrageous ideas of students in those days.

On second reading I realized MacDonald was serious and thus that he was, to be polite, full of crap. I realized also that I had found an outlet for a wonderfully appropriate line of thought I had picked up during my travels: that among those people who take things too seriously, students tend to take especially their classroom democracy too seriously.

Of course, today we have another problem, that of having students take *anything* seriously. So they don't think about what Classroom Self-Defence would have done to university education.

Well, what would have happened? What if Aristotle had said in the grove one day: "Hey, let's rap: I am democratizing the system (such as it was) and from now on you can determine what's important. You teach yourselves the wisdom of the ages. What do you think of that?"

The students gathered around him in the grove, I suspect, would have thought Aristotle was nuts, and they would have wandered off to find another grove where reason prevailed.

But that didn't happen. Aristotle was too smart and the students humbly admitted they were too stupid, and so they were taught, and they learned.

Today we don't teach. In the Faculty of Education, it is in vogue not to teach. Teachers have become "facilitators".

Yesterday's classroom self-defenders have become today's facilitators; in pursuit of some liberal "laissez-faire" model of life students have been left to teach themselves, but we're not sure they're learning.

In university too many professors no longer teach. Many of them, like Ron MacDonald, who may well have joined their number, went on from the 70's to become academics and to not teach. But have they democratized the classroom?

Well, ask yourself after a month or one or two years of university if you've really learned anything. And then the answer will be quite clear.

Peter Michalyshyn

### A note

... on academic humor, from a conversation between W.H. Auden, Marshall McLuhan, A.N. Jeffares (the Chair), and actor Jack MacGowran.

Chairman: I wonder what the panel thinks about knowing something by heart ...

Auden: When I was taught, I always made classes learn things by heart. First of all they think you're mad, then they get the idea.

Chairman: Quite. But how do you feel about that? Do you think people *should* learn poetry by heart?

Auden: I think they *must* learn it by heart.

Chair: But does your heart want it until it's been taught to want it?

McLuhan: When you know something by heart, does it come to you in unexpected times of the day or night and suddenly reveal new meanings?

MacGowran: Frequently.

McLuhan: This is the importance of what Mr. Auden is saying. If you know it by heart, you will then encounter it in totally unexpected ways.

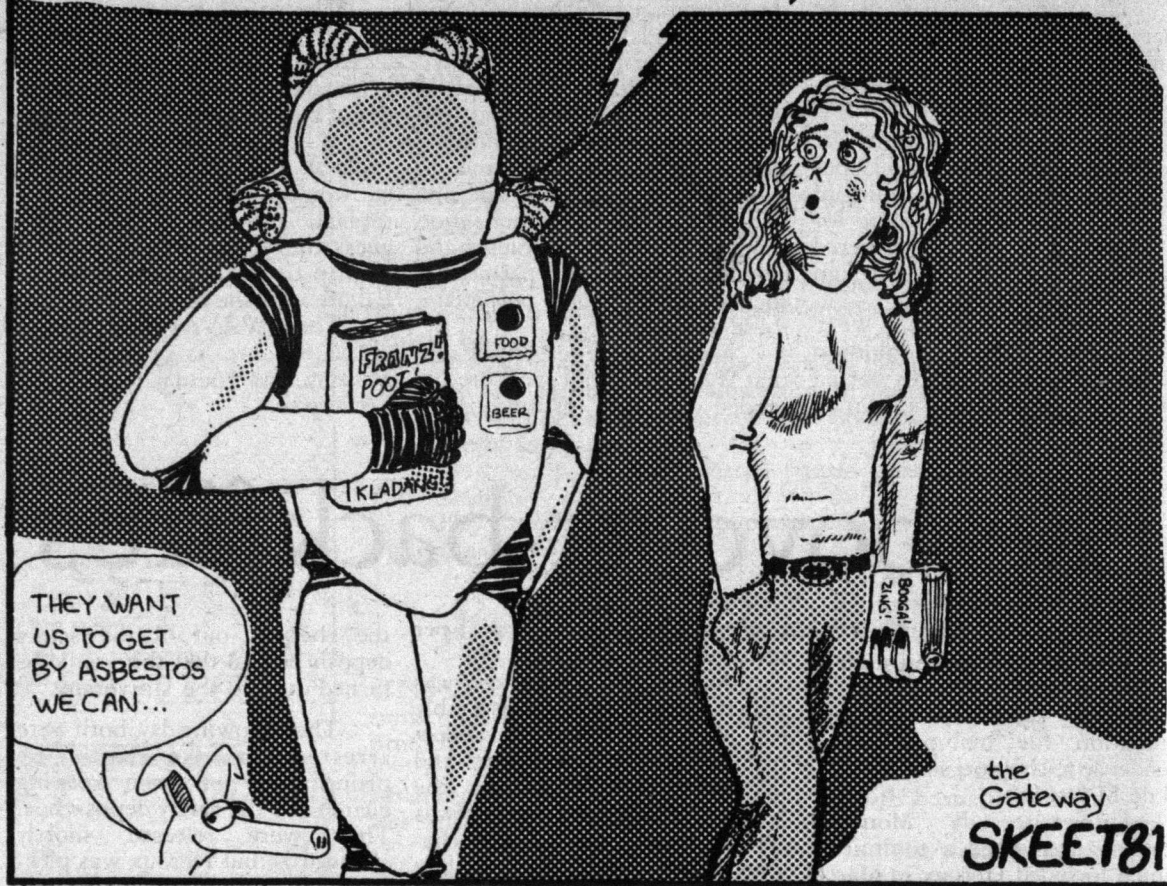
MacGowran: You will find depths that you hadn't on a first excursion.

P.M.

### NEWS ITEM:

U OF A STOPS ASBESTOS CLEANUP ON CAMPUS

I'M NOT REALLY WORRIED - BUT I'M NOT TAKING ANY CHANCES, EITHER!



### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Scriptures' war continued

The erudite Mr. Wayne R. Briscoe takes me to task (*Gateway* Sept. 17) for saying that Jesus spouted fire and brimstone against his detractors. This, Mr. Briscoe says, is "not a very accurate description of what Jesus did."

Mr. Briscoe, I have to admit, is correct. What Jesus threatened his detractors with was worse than fire and brimstone. To wit, Jesus' sermon in Luke 10:10-12,16:

*But whenever you (disciples) enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, "Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe off against you; nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near." I tell you, it shall be more tolerable on that day for Sodom than for that town.*

*He who hears you hears me, and he who rejects you rejects me, and he who rejects me rejects him who sent me.*

Just what this horrible fate is, that would make Sodom look like a wiener roast, Luke is not told; but in John 15:6 Jesus suggests fire:

*If a man does not abide in me he is cast forth as a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire and burned.*

If a person can be thrown into hell for simply saying, "You fool" (Matthew 5:22), it is not likely that less fiery punishment lies in store for unrepentant infidels like myself or Stalin or Jonas Salk (although in Matthew

18:6 Jesus hints at something in the way of a Mafia-style drowning for those who dare to criticize him).

Mr. Briscoe, of course, lives in a free land, and it is his prerogative to hallucinate that Jesus believed in religious freedom ("would Christ be against that, anyway?" Briscoe asks rhetorically.)

He should keep in mind, however, that some of us sinners are acquainted with what the Bible actually says on the matter.

Jens Andersen  
Exegetics II

PS: Briscoe also says that at the

second coming we will have to explain, "why we have not lived in accordance with God's will as so clearly laid out by Christ in his teachings 2000 years ago."

My answer will be that many of God's commandments seem downright silly, for instance the two Jesus gives in Luke 12:29 and 33. Apparently most Christians think they are silly too, for not one in 10,000 actually obeys either.

As I said in my original article, it is Jesus who will have some explaining to do at the second coming, and these commandments are just two more reasons why.

#### Beertenders need thanks

Bwaak, bwaak. That's the sound of our own horn blowing.

The past week has seen reports of the Beer Gardens '81 with no mention of the contribution made by the Common Times Club. Because of our diligent volunteers who poured and served some twenty thousand brew, few who attended the festivities went thirsty for long.

Additionally, we provided input into the musical end of the 4 day gala, working in conjunction with Alex MacDonald throughout the summer.

For this we humbly accept any words of appreciation which may find their way to us.

Barry Onishenko  
President  
Common Times Club

#### The way we were

Justice has been done. That, at least, is the opinion of five *Gateway* staff who voted Thursday to return the paper to last year's format, with editorials on page four and footnotes and classifieds on the back.

The other four of us, and no doubt countless others, have succumbed to the insidious forces of democracy. Life will go on. Sorry for any inconveniences we may have caused.

P.M.

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Staff this issue: Lethargy hit the Gateway offices. Ben Yee, Jim Stanford, Vic Marchiel, and Brent Jeffery dragged in their assignments to barely meet their deadlines. Pat Just sat around, Geoffrey Jackson, Bob Kilgannon, Dave Cox and Dave Chan stretched contentedly and went back to sleep. Pat Just lounged about. Jordan Peterson, Don Millar, Gerard Kennedy, and Diana Taschuk could hardly move to straighten headlines. Pat Just drank coffee. Peter Peter Jarvis Jarvis, Brad Dreschler and Daryl Ronsky lacked the energy to even put the damn paper to bed. Pat Just stared into space.