

The Gateway

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editorial

It's Students' Union election time and, as usual, some people are taking the election too seriously while others, by far the majority, are taking it too lightly. So, while the candidates running are taking themselves and their platforms with an unbelievably serious air (save perhaps the CRAP candidates), the students at large are shrugging their shoulders and probably most of them will not vote in the election or at least cast votes after only a little deliberation.

For those who attended the election rally Wednesday, one thing became obvious as the circus wore on — this may not be the best student election ever, but it sure the hell is going to be the most interesting in the last ten years. Here we are faced with one left-wing slate, two right-wing slates, and one slate from the middle of the insane asylum.

But no matter what people might say about the ridiculous angle of the CRAP slate's campaign, you have to admit they're saying things people have wanted to say in political campaigns for a long time.

Rene Le Larke is wearing a mask and challenging the other candidates to admit they're wearing masks for the public too. Milfred Campbell, a Canadian originally from India, is shocking people by walking around and agreeing with Bert Hohol's policies. "Raise the differentials and kick out the darkies," says Milfred in satiric jest. Yet he has as much "right" (as a Canadian) to make that statement as anyone else. The incongruity is that, in terms of a WASP's conception of a Canadian, Milfred doesn't quite fit the mold.

And on it goes. The two right-wing slates avoid political issues, altogether. They say tuition fee hikes and differential fees are justified, *if necessary*. But they give no explanation of what *necessary* means. And they make incredible generalizations about "revitalizing the Students' Union" and "making the SU more viable" — generalizations which mean nothing at all.

Meanwhile, the Young Socialists, although rightly assuming the task of bringing political issues into the campaign (something the other candidates appear unwilling to do for fear of alienating a certain segment of the student population), also are following their dogma to extremes, like demanding that all language proficiency tests be abolished (which would make it easy for non-English speakers to survive in our English-language university, wouldn't it?).

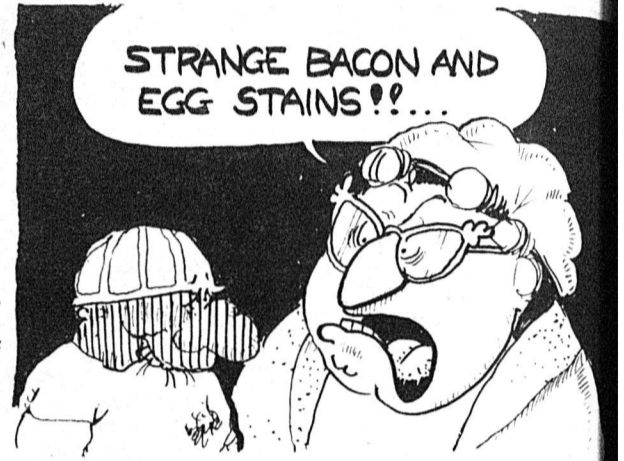
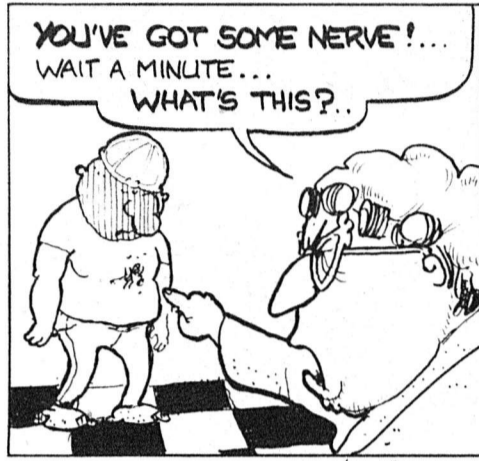
The campaign this year is being taken seriously; people are talking about it. Candidates are becoming flustered as students make points and ask them serious questions about their platforms. It's turning into a good election. And because of the unsuitability of any of the slates, it seems the best solution would be to elect one person from each and really throw a monkey wrench into the works. Let's elect a mixture of philosophies and personalities to govern the Students' Union for a year, and let's make them fight their battles in public, push their "lines" in the open.

Let's make our student government a responsible one, not a mixture of friends or people sharing the same political philosophy. Let's get out and vote against slates and against generalizations. Let's vote for a diverse mix of people who will be forced to answer to the demands of students at large.

And if you think Students' Union elections are all a pile of crap anyway, you still have a legitimate choice this year.

by Kevin Gillese

BUB SLUG by Delaney & Rasmussen



Beware - assaults do take place

I hope the recently abundant publicity regarding sexual assault on and around this campus has not battered students and public into numb acceptance of a serious problem.

As a female, and thereby a vulnerable member of this population, I am taking this opportunity to account and thereby warn women and concerned males of the reality of sexual assault in this area.

The incident herein described did not occur late at night, nor did it occur in a seamy, run-down district of the city. The weather was not conducive to scanty dress.

At approximately 6:30 p.m., Jan. 24, 1977, on 111 Street between 81 and 80 Avenues, I was the object of an indecent exposure. Early in the evening, in the dead of winter, a man dressed only in a T-shirt presented himself to me from behind the shield of a hedged alley. Even from my brief observation, the man was not of a down-trodden complexion, but appeared to have the bearing of a 'respectable' citizen, assumingly ethically above such a misdemeanour.

Granted, this incident was not 'serious' in terms of physical harm suffered, but I was alone on a dark, deserted though normally peaceful side-street; I was walking a route I have often travelled.

It was, however, not the threat of rape that terrified me; the man *could* have waited a mere ten or fifteen seconds, and crept up from behind. The trauma came with my revulsion to the gross indecency of the act, and with my ensuing feeling of helplessness. I was and remain an object incapable of effective resistance to physical aggression.

I have realized since, that in

terms of sexual assault, women are, to a great extent, passive targets. Our action occurs predominantly after-the-fact: we can report the act, we can, perhaps, take legal action, we can (and hopefully do) confide in others the shock of the experience, we can support rape crisis agencies. All after-the-fact.

And in anticipation of sexual assault? Warning has been often printed in this paper and others: solitary women en route anywhere on foot at night are potential victims. Victims. Rarely, if ever, are we victors of such an offense.

I am fortunate in that I have been able to detach myself fairly quickly from the scare and ask questions. It was to my advantage to have four room-mates and trusted friends on whom I could rely for support. I was able to talk. Within minutes of the incident, I was able to confide in a close friend and release some of the fear and tears.

I pity anyone who cannot. Yet, I can also urge victims to seek the confidence of agencies organized to help with such problems: Students' Help on campus and the Edmonton Rape Crisis Centres are perhaps inadequate against the danger, but the people there — the human contact and moral support offered — can make the difference between nervous caution, and paranoia, depression and endless, sleepless nights. It's important to talk. It adds perspective to what could be an overwhelming experience.

Report the incident. Despite the fact that there will probably be no short-term, obvious benefit for you as a victim, this is a numbers game. Sure, you'll 'just be a statistic', but the more complaints are recorded, greater

is the chance that official action will result. Perhaps the man will be bothering other women perhaps the particular area gaining a reputation for activity; perhaps your 'incident' description will add enough more to warrant increased police patrol of the area; perhaps your report will impetus to efforts to introduce such measures as a campus patrol.

This is not a matter of being 'just another statistic'. It is a matter of being counted.

Another thing: upon hearing of my experience, a male friend laughed and jokingly commented on the weather. I can accurately describe the anger and frustration I felt at that moment. I had been insulted by the indecent exposure, and insulted by that flippant attitude. I gained fleeting insight into some of these incidents go unreported: fear or rebuke, or of a callous tossing aside the entire issue as if it were inconsequential.

In deference to the sensitive male, many men can sympathize. No man can know.

My experience was traumatic, and at the same time was relatively harmless. I do dare to envisage the suffering endured by a rape victim, especially one alone and afraid to speak. All I can do at this point is hope that this letter will encourage caution and common sense among women on campus, and also encourage women to report their trials to the confidences of the women's listeners, and to support an agency geared to tackling the problem. It may be only defensive action, but it is action.

(Name withheld by request)



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