

the Gateway

EDITORIAL

Demonstrating the fallacy of imitative style, or happiness is a flushed toilet

Two women write letters questioning the sexist role played by other women in the Engineering Week Kicklines, and before you can shake a stick at John Stuart Mill it becomes nothing less than a profound threat to *Freedom of Choice*.

Yes, Virginia, you can kill yourself. Yes, Virginia, you can be a heroin addict. Yes, Virginia, you don't have to wear your seatbelt. But no, Virginia, you can't be in an Engineering Week Kickline.

There is perhaps no human experience quite as revolting as being told that you don't know what's good for you. Anyone who has ever lived with parents can testify to that. However, having personal freedoms restricted isn't quite as distasteful when it can be shown that certain actions are harmful to others - kicklines, the argument goes, are harmful not only to the participants, but to the rest of society that is subjected to them.

Thus far, most of the letters on sexism in Engineering Week have avoided this crucial issue. A sincere search for the truth has been tossed into the toilet while name-calling, generalization, trivialization, and pigheadedness masquerade as legitimate tools of debate. Last Tuesday's letter from 45 engineers is a good example of this irrelevant thinking. (I'm sorry, I just can't resist this: *How many Engineers does it take to write a letter?*) The closest they came to discussing the sexist role of women in kicklines went something like this: "We enjoy the kickline's choreography, music, and costumes (which incidentally are much what one wears to a jazz or gymnastics class)..."

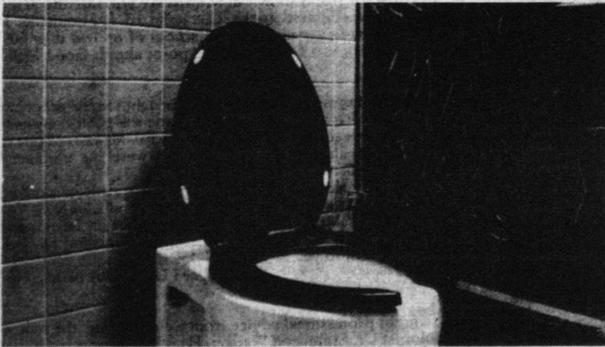
Presumably the parenthetical remark about costumes is supposed to drive home some sort of universal truth not explicitly stated elsewhere in the letter. The implication would seem to be that because one doesn't wear clothes in the shower, there would be nothing wrong with a kickline streaking around CAB in front of hundreds of spectators.

All jackasses shit; Ronald Reagan shits; therefore Ronald Reagan is a jackass. The conclusion is quite possibly true, but not because of the given argument.

And, so, in the meantime, the truth sits decomposing in the clogged up toilet of meaningful discussion. It might seem like a strange metaphor, but you have to consider that truth isn't worth shit until it moves to the foundations of society.

Why don't we discuss why Edmonton is the rape capital of Canada? What are the similarities between racism and sexism? Why is violence towards women in pornography and advertising increasing? Why aren't there normal looking women in kicklines? Why is the life of the prostitute so empty and destructive? Why was rape originally considered a property crime against men? Why do men interrupt women more often in conversation than vice-versa? Why is the clinical term for the sex act "penetration" and not "enclosure"? Why does the pornography industry flourish? Why is rape on the increase while convictions of offenders aren't? Are some women a credit to their sex? Why isn't there self-respect in slavery? What are the destructive consequences of institutionalizing lust? Why do a large number of women prefer to judge themselves as others see them and not from within? What are the implications of the statement "fulfillment is never as great as expectation?"...

Greg Harris



EDITOR - Peter Michalyszyn
MANAGING - Mary Ruth Olson
NEWS - Wes Oginski and Greg Harris
PRODUCTION - Robert Cook
ARTS - Jens Andersen
SPORTS - Andrew Watts
PHOTO - Ray Giguere
CUP - Richard Watts
ADVERTISING - Tom Wright
MEDIA PRODUCTIONS - Margriet Tilroe-West
CIRCULATION - Mike McKinney

The Gateway is the official newspaper of the students at the University of Alberta. With a readership of over 25,000 the Gateway is published Tuesdays and Thursdays during the winter session, excepting holidays. Contents are the responsibility of the editor; editorials are written by an editorial board or signed. All other opinions are signed by the party expressing them. Copy deadlines are 12 noon Mondays and Wednesdays. The Gateway, a member of the Canadian University Press and of CUP Media Services Ltd., is located in Room 282 Students' Union Building, Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2J7. Newsroom 432-5168; Advertising 432-3423.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Women call for a debate

The Women's Centre has been following with interest the debate being waged in the Letters page of *The Gateway* re: sexism in Engineering Week. For the purpose of bringing out all the relevant arguments the Women's Centre is challenging the women in Engineering to a debate. Two women from the Women's Centre will debate two women engineering students at an agreed upon place and time and with mutually acceptable debating guidelines. We look forward to a response.
Kris Farkas
Rae Ann Robertson
The Women's Centre

Info clarifies past letter

Dear Gateway,
My letter in this Tuesday's Gateway was intended as a reply to Shelagh McCoy's letter (in defense of kicklines and such) in a previous issue. Taken in this light it will make a little more sense.
L. Shalom
Rehab Med III

Delay to pay costs library

Have you ever wondered why the library is short of money? The other day I went to pay a fine for an overdue book, but they wouldn't take the money then.

Instead, they spend money on paper for bills, pay a secretary to type out a bill, then pay 30 cents to mail you this bill. Then the student has to make a second trip to pay the fine which could have been done on the first trip. Multiply this cost for 20,000 students plus staff, that amounts to a colossal waste of money (part of which is yours and mine!).

Could anyone enlighten me as to the purpose of this apparent waste of manpower, paper, AND money???

Dianne MacDonell
Post-R.N. Nursing

Rude staff at sports office

Dear Editor,
I have gone to the intramural office twice in the last year and a half. Both times the student staff have been singularly rude and insulting. Is this the policy of their office?

Considering that the whole program is funded by students and staff who pay athletic fees, I believe they should reconsider this policy.

I guess that that's what higher UAB fees will pay for in the future: more discourteous "service".

Stuart Mackay
Students' Union

Definition of a med student

Dear Editor,
In response to T. Taylor's

remarks in the January 21st issue of the *Gateway*, I would like to make a few points clear:

1. Medical students are brilliant.
2. Medical students are hard working.
3. Medical students can not help it if their vocabulary is viewed as extensive as compared to that of physics students.
4. Medical students are wild and crazy partyers. (Aggies place a distant second).

Sincerely yours,
Riyad Karmy-Jones
Med III

P.S. Sorry you flunked pre-med, Tim, I hope physics is not too boring!

LETTERS

Letters to the Editor should be a maximum of 250 words on any subject, regardless of how much you normally run off at the mouth. The fact that you are hot under the collar doesn't impress us in the slightest. Also, spastic, disjointed and semi-intelligible writing is pure migraine to read, and should be saved for your professors, who deserve it. Thirdly, the statement "I think" is just a theory, and considering the evidence - 3,877 predictable letters on every subject - a rather dubious theory. Finally, we reserve the right to hack, chop or shred any windy, illiterate or defamatory correspondence. Furthermore, if you persist in sending us such diatribes *Gateway* special assistants Vito and Ernie will take whatever extralegal measures are necessary to ensure that you bother us no more.



"Oh no!" screamed Anne Stephen as Kent Blinston flaunted her English Competency Exam before her. "Only an arts hack can pontificate as badly as that," he snickered. Jordan Peterson took exception to that remark, while Diana Taschuk and Colette Charest were thankful that their results burned in the fire. Geoffrey Jackson then decided to take control. He knocked over Garnet DuGray on his way to form a coup with Dave Chan, Martin Beales, Peter Jarvis, Angus Brown and Ken Tsai.