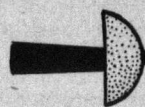


# En Garde!

by John Roggeveen



**The Death of FAS.** Many people on campus will be cheering the news that the Federation of Alberta Students is now, or soon will be, history. Many on the University of Calgary's campus will also join in celebrating FAS's demise. Unfortunately, most students on campuses across the province won't care. What's FAS anyway? they will ask.

The history of student organizations across the country has not been blissful. There is a long list of organizations that have started off optimistically, only to die after a few years and be replaced by a new-improved, restructured Phoenix which eventually suffered the same fate. The present national organization, the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), seems to be faring well of late, but it too has suffered some of the usual disaffection. It is still suffering from growing pains. Hopefully, any problems it encounters in the future can be alleviated without it being destroyed and replaced.

The Federation of Alberta Students has had a rough year. The University of Calgary's students' union executive has been cool, even hostile, to any sort of attempt to keep FAS going by restructuring it. U of C students are apparently in agreement with their executive. A referendum on whether U of C students should pay \$3.50 per student to FAS or pull out of the organization showed the Calgary students to be in favor of pulling out rather than paying the same fees, per student, that other members were paying. For a long time, Calgary was allowed to remain in FAS even though they were paying only \$1.50 per student to FAS.

The criticisms of FAS raised in Calgary were not unlike many criticisms of FAS made by anti-Fas people on our campus. Calgary saw FAS as being a front for leftists, and they were not happy with the voting procedures in the organization. They felt they should have a greater say in FAS policies than the University of Lethbridge and numerous small colleges across the province, like Lethbridge Community College and Grande Prairie Regional College, for example, because Calgary has more students. Unfortunately the dinosaurs in Calgary acted like ostriches and stuck their heads in the sand, unwilling to accept any restructuring of FAS, unwilling to cast aside their view of the organization—a view formed on the basis of past FAS executives and old structures.

representation on Council and allow me to pursue more meaningful action through organizations outside student government.

Greg Madison, Arts IV

P.S. Best of luck to the five new Arts councillors elected on Friday.

## Kill the sexual lottery

I write regarding the featuring of Mrs. Higgins from the Phyllis Schlafly-supporting-group, Alberta Federation of Women United for the Family, on March 10th as part of Women's Awareness Week on campus.

Although I believe in the importance of generating public debate about women's roles in society, my first thought about having a member of AFWUF speak during Women's Awareness Week was that it was a bit like asking the Ku Klux Klan to express that organization's views during a week devote to an exploration of cultural diversity.

My second thought, however, is that having such a pro-stereotype organization speak could also have positive consequences. It really is very difficult to assess just how far we have come in breaking down the "biology is destiny — woman as walking womb" myths without having these inflexible, rearward looking organizations to show us from whence we have come. As I listen to those who sincerely believe that from the day I give birth my potential is best developed while choosing between brands of toilet cleaner, I am reminded of just how far women have come since the Privy Council declared us to be "persons" a mere half century ago. I am, indeed, further reminded by the existence of organizations like AFWUF that men and women who care about maintaining human diversity will have to work still harder to strengthen the gains made by women or watch them as they return, with no choice in the matter, to the rigid roles of the past.

Much as I have to agree with Mrs. Higgins that "the career of wife and mother" is deserving of honour and respect in our society, I cannot agree that only a woman is capable of providing the necessary services and love to a family. Surely single parent fathers deserve more credit than that. And if only a mother is capable of nurturing a child, then are we not returning to an age where a father's importance to the family varies with his pay-check? What AFWUF promotes is a return to absolute financial dependency for women in the name of "self-sacrificing love". If we examine the current statistics concerning who is poor in old age today, it is evident that self-sacrifice lasts a long time. The long-term results of economic dependency are that aged women and poverty are practically synonymous because pensions die with husbands who die, on average, eight years before their wives. The housewife may be rich one day and poor the next — a victim of economic uncertainty.

Prince Charming may still ride a white horse for many women today but these women cannot afford to simplistically believe in the "Happily Ever After" unless they have money in their own names, equitable pension expectations, and extensive resumes. And any employer will explain that a resume with large gaps during the prime career-building years does not have much credibility. The Alberta Federation of Women United for the Family

Don Millar, this year's FAS president, has done a great deal to respond to the criticisms from anti-FAS forces at many campuses. The voting procedures were modified in order to accommodate critics, such as those in Calgary, who weren't satisfied with the previous ones. And, the organization moved away from policies of the supposed radical left-wing variety in, an effort to appease critics too. Nevertheless, FAS was dumped in Calgary.

The loss of Calgary undoubtedly cost FAS a fair amount of credibility. In fact, it was probably this more than any other factor that resulted in the U of A Students' Council endorsing a motion to dissolve FAS.

It would be very difficult to have a viable provincial student organization in Alberta at this time. Calgary would not likely be receptive to such an organization now, no matter what the structure was or the political leanings of its executive were. Still, the alternative is no student organization at all, and that is much worse than having an organization with little credibility. There will never be a student organization in this province that has credibility if we continue to kill existing organizations because someone doesn't like them.

It is because we dissolve the organizations before they become strong, before they can restructure to meet the criticisms raised against them, that we will continue to have organizations students have never heard about. No organization can work on its profile until it can straighten out its internal kinks.

As for the criticism that FAS and other organizations harbor left-or-center people: If only left-of-center people get involved and run for election, don't blame them. Blame the right-of-center idiots who are too damn lazy to get up off their fat posteriors and get involved.

The problems with voting can be alleviated too, even though they shouldn't be as big as people make them. The concerns of post-secondary students, province-wide, aren't vastly different.

Some day students at the U of C will pull their heads out of the sand and see light. Maybe. Don't bet on it happening very quickly though. In the meantime, there are probably a whole bunch of Alberta Tories rubbing their hands in glee, planning their "Death of FAS" parties.

seeks a return to an era which I believe must never come again, that of biology determining destiny. I, like AFWUF, would like to see a return to societal support for the family. Unlike them, however, I believe that the member within the family who stands the greatest chance of dying in poverty cannot and must not be determined on the day that that person is born. Who would have his or her future determined by sexual lottery?

Linda Long, Law I

## Kill one-sided atheism

I have been attending the University of Alberta for nearly two semesters, and it has been as enjoyable as can be expected save for one sore thumb of an exception — Jens Andersen, the Gateway contributor who so proudly wears the atheist label. I have read every Gateway issue so far these past two terms and all opinions by Mr. Andersen, and in every column in which he belittles a religion, that religion is invariably the one in which I believe — Christianity. None of his writings make even a reference to Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism or any other non-Christian religion. If Mr. Andersen's philosophy regarding such faiths is to live and let live (as it so appears), I respectfully ask him to view us Christians in the same light. To do otherwise is sheer discrimination.

Warren Opheim, Arts I

## Recycled fetuses?

Re: "Women for rights" (Gateway, Mar. 8/83) The Women's Liberation Movement is to be applauded for its stand against violence and pornography.

Abortion is never "free", however, nor is it "safe". Abortion is seldom medically necessary; unfortunately the world - over abortion-on-demand, is virtually a reality to more baby girls than boys. In France, aborted babies are used in making cosmetics (Jews into lampshades, anyone?). Are these the sorts of "rights" we want?

Yours for Life,  
Gerard Liston, Education A/D

## Two professionals tell all

And now....for your reading pleasure, we will now delineate the rules which should be employed when running a Students' Union election (or student election of any sort).

1) SMEAR YOUR OPPONENTS. This tactic works well when the electorate is apathetic or not too bright, or just doesn't care. They'll believe ANYTHING so don't forget to tell them about Candidate X's illegitimate child, or his/her ties to the Communist Party.

2) GET PEOPLE TO WRITE LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ABOUT YOUR OPPONENTS. If your friends are too busy....no problem, YOU write the letters, and get your friends to SIGN THEM. This works great, because most students don't make the partisan connection (even if you come right out and say that Candidate X is a real conehead) and therefore, they assume that they are reading the GOSPEL TRUTH about Mr/Miss/Ms. X's failure to

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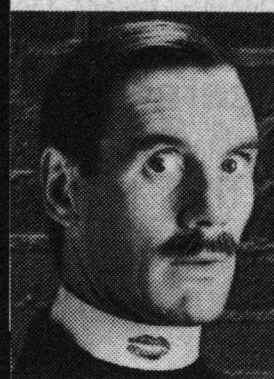
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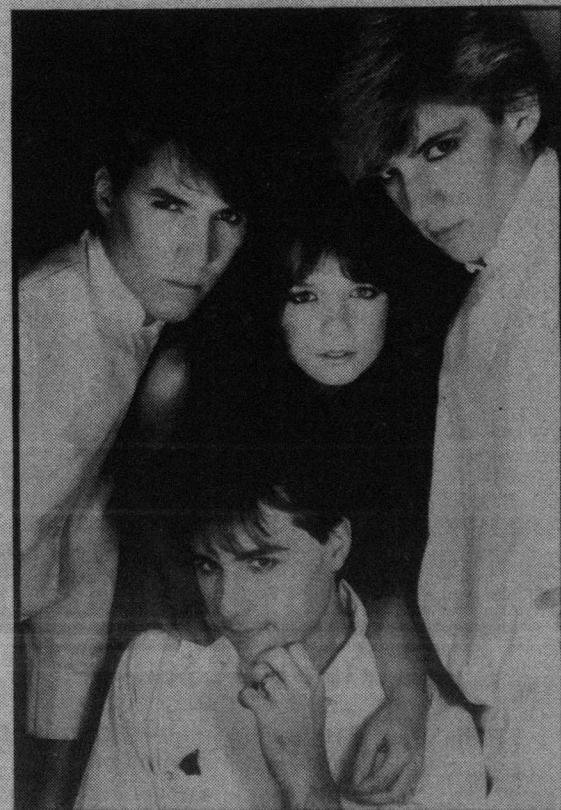
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