

Stanine dissatisfaction

It is editorial time again. Again Bruce is stuck for an idea. I am not writing this one in class this time because class was cancelled today, but I do have an exam again at the end of the week (do you think there is some correlation between exams and editorials? Nah) Since I have an exam at the end of the week, and I am desperately shooting for an 8 in this course, the university stanine system has been on my mind a lot lately.

I am sure I am not the only one to be dissatisfied with this system. In my 4 years of university and through uncountable numbers of courses, I don't believe I ever had two profs who used the stanine system in exactly the same way. Some profs used the system the way the university outlines it and that is to give x number of 8's, x number of 7's, x number of 5's, and on, depending on class size. Now at the same university and even in the same courses there are some profs who use such a complicated formula to figure out your stanine you would have to have a Ph.D in math to find out your actual percent on a given exam. But our stanine maze does not end here because there are still profs who don't even use the stanine system. That is to say if you get 76% in the course you get a 7.

The stanine problem does not end here, as we all know so well. How many of you have realized that if you had done just 5% better on the final, you would have got a 7 instead of a 6? Talk about frustrating. And what about Masters and Doctorate programs at the university? Wait, I am rambling.

We all know the system needs to be changed. I for one would like to see a universal standard for use of the stanine system that all profs must follow. Then I feel that it would be a good idea to include a percent grade on your transcript along with your stanine mark. These ideas are simple to have implemented, but it is up to us, the student body, to make the university implement these changes. We do this by making our views heard and our student executives speak out.

But before I start to sound much like a radical (to late) will say good-bye for now and hope a 79% on my exam doesn't turn out to be a 5.

Bruce Gardave

The Gateway



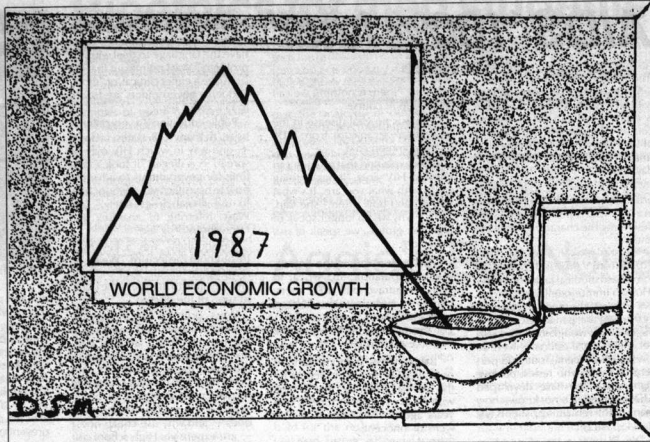
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Letters to the Editor are encouraged and always welcome. If you have a comment which would be of interest to the students of the University, please do not hesitate to send it in. All we require is your name, address, and phone number, and student ID if you are a student. We will not print letters missing any of these. Letters should be no longer than three hundred words. Mail or deliver your letters to Room 282 S.U.B., or drop them at any SU information booth.

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OPINION



A sense of ha-ha

In the November 12th issue of the Gateway I was relieved to see that some chaps had written letters that contained something missing in most letters: a sense of humour.

There was a letter at the beginning of the term that offered advice to 1st years, but was really a put-down of the "dreaded curve." I thought it was funny, the author thought it was funny, the other writers didn't.

The "Fly on the Wall" mused about some chap working out. It made me laugh because it showed up one of my foibles at times and I like to laugh at how stupid I can be. Some fellow wrote in and explained his actions yet no name had been mentioned, it could have been anyone.

Then there is the cartoon. It has been accused of promoting bestiality (it took a sick mind to think up that one), being degrading to women (this never was explained too clearly), the crucifixion, aids, Oliver North, and P.M.S. I thought it was funny, the cartoonist thought it was funny, and thank the Great Pumpkin some guys in last Thursday's Gateway thought it was funny. I was really getting worried about the people here who have so little faith in the intelligence of their fellow students to handle these bits of humour.

Look, I know its stressful studying to become a viable marketable commodity, I mean, when your only sense of self-worth is determined by a pay-cheque you ain't got much.

So maybe you should lighten up and take 20 minutes each day to work on developing a sense of humour. Try it!

John Lester

Peace movement success

Re: "Steps toward disarmament" (The Gateway, Nov. 10, 1987)

In his recent editorial, Ken Bosman echoes the official NATO line that the INF agreement between the U.S. and the Soviet Union only came about because the West "stuck to its guns" and proceeded to deploy Cruise and Pershing II missiles in Europe. This line ignores the impact of the peace movement and perpetuates the myth that disarmament can only be achieved through a military buildup.

The success of the peace movement in mobilizing popular opposition to the Euro-missiles did more than to make deployment appear "dicey." It shot NATO governments to their very foundations and upset their original timetable for deployment. More importantly, the presence of an organized, broadly based peace movement brought home to NATO governments the fact that

while the battle for deployment may have been finally "won", the battle to keep the missiles in place had only just begun. The threat of a continuing campaign against the missiles therefore made their speedy removal a political imperative.

This point is reinforced by the success of the European peace movement in causing the mainstream parties of the Left to adopt a strong anti-nuclear position. This represents a major change from the late 1970's, when the British Labour Party and the West German Social Democrats, then in government, approved deployment of the Euro-missiles. Today, the Labour Party is committed to unilateral nuclear disarmament, while the SPD has been moving in the same direction under pressure from the Green Party. What this means, of course, is that in a few years' time, after several changes in government, the Euro-missiles would have ended up being scrapped anyway. The missiles were accordingly pulled out before they could be pushed out.

None of this, of course, is acknowledged by NATO leaders and their supporting cast of strategic "experts". They understand only too well the threat that the peace movement poses to the prospects for further militarization, including the Mulrooney government's plans to deploy nuclear submarines in the Arctic. By seeing the INF agreement as a vindication of the deployment policy, they hope to tranquillize the public into accepting a continuation of the arms race.

However, now is not the time for peace activists to abandon their efforts. Already, NATO planners are considering "compensatory measures" to offset the loss of land-based missiles in Europe under the INF agreement. NATO Defence ministers at a recent meeting in Monterey are reported to be considering the quiet deployment of more air- and sea-launched nuclear missiles — deployments which could leave NATO with "more nuclear weapons than it would have possessed if no INF agreement had been signed" (The Observer, 8 November 1987).

The only way to stop this and to achieve further progress in disarmament is through more public pressure, not less.

Stephen Phillips

Continuing remembrance

Re: Remembrance Day is Vulgar

Mr. Janzen contradicts himself rather drastically, using both "worship" and "pagan" to describe Remembrance Day. The word worship usually has religious connotations; the word pagan simply means "of a non-religious nature." Mr. Janzen would have been right had he

suggested that Remembrance Day was a "pagan" holiday in that it serves to remember all Canadians of whatever religion or lack thereof. However, Mr. Janzen seems to believe he was making a great insult to Canadian society. I would suggest that his attitude simply shows what a closed minded individual he really is.

Just for the record, I did agree with his final statement. "Violence is meaningless..." I would, however, like to pass on a bit of advice to Mr. Janzen. Do not go into a war zone with a sign around your neck saying "I'm a pacifist", it won't keep you from becoming any less dead.

C. Dawn Brewster

November the eleventh signifies and pays remembrance to people (men AND women) that suffered through the horrors of war. I am sure that these people would be the first to agree that "violence is meaningless" — but that is still not the point of Remembrance Day. The point is to never forget these horrors and to learn from them so that we avoid repeating the same mistakes. The very fact that Mr. Janzen cheapens Remembrance Day to "a distasteful practice" and has "completely misinterpreted the whole idea behind it. Mr. Janzen has trivialized it by saying war is evil and we should therefore ignore war."

Mr. Janzen has done precisely what Remembrance Day is trying to prevent; Mr. Janzen has forgotten the real horror of war.

Caroline Davies

How dare it?
 Of what worth is freedom if one must kill another man to obtain it?
 Russell C. Janzen

