

# Editorial



Letters to the Editor should not be more than 250 words in length. They must include your signature, faculty, year of program, I.D. number, and phone number. Requests for anonymity are at the discretion of the Managing Editor, but the above information is required regardless. We reserve the right to edit for libel and length. Letters do not necessarily reflect the views of the Gateway.

In Vancouver, where I grew up, Halloween is usually enhanced by a creepy layer of fog which rolls in off the ocean sometime in the early evening — in time for the witching hours.

In my trick-or-treating days I only ever dressed up as one of two characters. I was Little Red Riding Hood in the early years because it was my favorite bedtime story. When I grew bigger my mother sewed a clown costume for me from an old bathrobe of hers on which she glued multi-coloured polka dots. In it I was warm, visible, unencumbered, and cute as a bug.

My parents did not accompany us on our door-to-door rounds because that was back in the days when a neighbourhood was a community of "neighbours" — people who knew and looked out for each others kids.

Today, the work 'Halloween' conjures up all sorts of images from candy and little goblins to costume rentals and hangovers.

"Yuck," said one Gateway staffer, "it's just a huge hassle. Every year you have to go out and reserve a costume weeks in advance for a night of drinking and partying. Then it's over and everything goes back to normal again. Big Deal."

Another staffer mentioned that he and his wife only take their little girl out trick-or-treating to friends' homes. This is a precaution against the inevitable freaks who would poison candy — or worse. I've noticed that quite a few local shopping malls now sponsor Halloween events where the merchants are encouraged to dispense candy to little ones who come calling, accompanied by their parents. (Safe enough providing that Mom and Dad leave all cash and credit cards at home.)

Yes, it's true, like Christmas and Easter, Halloween has lost much of its charm over the years. Aside from the fact that it's become another excuse for we "adults" to booze up, it's also a means of exploiting the children's market. But despite the disposable generic costumes, packaged treats, cheap toys, etc., we would do well to remember that it is still somewhat special in the minds of the very young... and a few of us oldies too!

Kathleen Beechinor



## Letters



### A mucky issue

To the Editor:

Please allow me to throw in a comment or two and a word of wisdom to what has been written about the word "amok" in Petersson's amusing article.

Thanks to her, as a Malaysian, I'm proud to see my country's humble contribution to the English language with such a word as amok!! (Sure, it isn't a very pretty word!) However, I nearly went amok to realise how incomplete and ambiguous her facts could be! The word "amok" is not simply "a behaviour of some natives in Malay." True, it means "in a frenzy to kill" but hitherto, let's distinguish fact from myth: Amok is a disorder and refers to a sudden "come and go" abnormal behaviour and condition of certain usually normal persons in the Malay group for some unexplainable reasons yet. (It does remind one of the tragic case of Dan White of San Francisco). The word was coined by the Malays many centuries ago. It seems it was this group which 'exclusively' suffered such an affliction, even to this day. Happily, there are very few cases nowadays. Nevertheless the word has never been taken lightly.

Rather philosophically, with regard to Petersson's light-hearted usage suggestion of amok I'll say: Fine over here, but if anyone travels to the East, be cautious in using it. It could be rather offensive. I know: When I was just a kid, armed with funny sounding "amok" in my vocabulary, I met my Malay friend. Jokingly, I said, "You're amok!" He roundly whipped me in the ass.

Luke T.V. Chang  
Arts I

### A meaty issue

To the Editor:

Re: Gainers article, Oct. 28.

I wish to clarify what I said to your reporters.

The U of A New Democrats are indeed launching a campaign to get Gainers products off campus, but not through the boycott of facilities using them as this would be impossible for virtually all residents of Lister Hall and Pembina. Instead, a petition will be circulated through the U of A New Democrat information tables in HUB.

The student body should know that they are unknowingly consuming potentially unsafe food products. We should have input into our well-being, which so far has been out of our hands and in those of Housing and Food Services.

Rita J. Kolpak  
Arts III

### Bastions of bigotry

To the Editor:

I am aghast! I cannot believe nor accept the biased, conformist attitude Mr. Ryckborst ("What-U-Wear", Gateway, Oct. 23, '86) chooses to adopt toward the pile of mindless twaddle that makes up our present "norms" of physical appearance. He agrees that abnormality is looked upon negatively, but he does not suggest that anything can be done about such superficiality, save for abject conformism.

Mr. Ryckborst has obviously not been confronted by the utter hostility that is manifested against those who are not "normal" in appearance. I have worked with handicapped individuals for many years and I have seen them derided, abused, leered at, have things thrown at them from passing cars, and be shunned in all kinds of social settings merely because they "looked funny". As a fat man I am aware of discrimination and abuse, too. I recall the time I was crossing Jasper Avenue at 100th Street during rush hour. A post-adolescent, yuppie-aspirant in a business suit confronted me in the middle of the intersection, blocked my way, and screamed in my face: "God damn it, you look fucking stupid!"

At the time it happened, I edged around the screamer and skulked away feeling awful. Now I know I would knock the snivelling winnet down and soil his suit, because I have come to understand that superficial norms of appearance are bastions of bigotry, not gauges of success.

Wm. Shiell  
Arts (after degree)



### Drugs and Yogurt

To the Editor:

If Students Council is so hot to trot on local issues how about dealing with the price of yogurt in the Ed North cafeteria? And how about dealing with the fact that Student Health is dispensing brand name drugs when far cheaper generics are available?

C. Strong  
Grad. Studies

### A letter to Marc...

To the Editor:

As I was commenting to Franz, as he changed the kitty litter in Booboo's box, Marc Simao's letters to Keri seem ridiculously directionless. Franz looked at me and agreed as he removed the last dried turd from the box. He'd been depressed lately, as his wife had just run off to Bohemia with a one-armed violin player. He had picked up Gwendolyn in his old Matador on Thursday morning, while Franz was out selling life insurance policies to Hare Krishnas in the airport lobby.

It was in the lobby of O'Hare that I first met Franz. He was in a heated argument with Gwendolyn about Ramone's delinquency, when I intervened. That hadn't been the first time they'd fought about Ramone. For a few months now Ramone had been selling Aqua Velva to the drunks on 96th Street. One of the hoods had chased him and beaten him about the face and neck with a broken pool cue. As I related all this, Franz chuckled and inadvertently dropped Booboo's deposits, sending them skidding across the linoleum. He recommended that, to air our grievance, we commit it to paper and send it in.

P. Sparrow-Clarke  
Science III  
G. Pohl  
Science IV

### More meat

To the Editor:

I found the introduction to your story on Food Services' use of Gainer's products (Oct. 28) rather interesting. "Students who want to boycott Gainer's products..." Does this indicate that the article was addressed only to those students who support the union in this dispute, or that such support is official or unofficial Gateway policy? If Food Services was to begin boycotting Gainers, would the Gateway run a story beginning, "Students who want to support Gainer's..."?

Perhaps that is rather far-fetched: surely no one intelligent enough to be a university student could be so reactionary as to support management in a labour dispute. Jerk them knees, Gateway! Maintain that mediocrity!

Michel Murray  
Arts III

"I can't give you a brain but I can give you a diploma."

The Wizard of Oz  
to the Scarecrow

## The Gateway

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Serendipity was the order of the day as Cam, Emma, Colleen, and Randal gathered for tea outside of the hallowed halls. Glenn and William grinned happily as they lit into cucumber sandwiches prepared by Melinda Vester, Dragos Ruiu, and that woman of the world Krista Solie. "But there's no chocolate," whined Kathleen to Roberta who shrugged knowingly and said, "I think Daddy-O decided it would be unprofessional." "Well," sighed Sherri Ritchie and Suzanne, "we're not getting any either." Alan and Moreen winked knowingly as Ken, Mathieu, Keith, and Stephen ran off to plan a mini-revolution. "Who's idea was tea anyway," demanded Geoff Haynes. Bruce Gardave ducked and Rob Schmidt said he needed sleep. John Watson ran off for clotted cream while Mark, Juanita, and George were left alone to clean the samovar.