

Honest delight

I was delighted to experience an example of honesty in action the other day on campus. During the cold spell, I brought gloves and toque. I left them in the admin. building early in the morning by accident — when I returned mid-afternoon they were still there.

Once again, I just wanted to express my delight.
L. Gierson

Prestone diatribe

The strikingly misleading anti-Freeze diatribe of Mr. Kenneth Bosman is a strong temptation for a rebuttal by any person capable of rational thought. While I compliment the Gateway's editorial staff for its sense of humor in printing this gross caricature of the Freeze proposal, the arms race issue is too vital to permit any dissemination of misinformation to proceed unchecked.

In support of his belief that the Freeze is a "bad idea" he states that it "would lead to an enormous destabilization of the nuclear balance" and to "staggering Soviet superiority." This raises the obvious question as to how a freeze would lead to anything since it is just that: a freeze (on the testing, production, future deployment of nuclear warheads, missiles and delivery systems). It would ban all testing of new types of nuclear weapons and prevent further destabilizing modernizations that Mr. Bosman, through his worship of high technology, seems to favor.

He would have us believe that the Freeze is dangerous because nuclear systems age and "become more prone to failure and error." Thus he imagines "a world full of aging, obsolescent, and error prone nuclear systems quickly evolving out of a nuclear freeze." What Bosman fails to realize is that under a freeze each side can replace existing weapons on a one-to-one basis. Thus there would be no gradual decline in the "quality of systems control," nor will the forces of either side become "aged" or "unserviceable." To cite as an example the nuclear submarines that he is so concerned about: each side would, under a freeze, maintain its fleets, and could replace them as they wore out with other of the same type. Neither side, however, would be allowed to expand its fleets.

By employing numerical sleight-of-hand and statistical smokescreens, Mr. Bosman has mischaracterized both the freeze proposal and the current state of the arms race. Mr. Bosman's conclusion should be amended: it is not a nuclear freeze but a continued escalation of the arms race that will "bring us many steps closer to the Armageddon we must avoid."

Richard Leach
U of A Club for Nuclear Disarmament

Volunteers, anyone?

One often hears two repeated criticisms against modern institutions: 1) that the state has not provided enough agencies for remedying social ills and inadequacies and 2) that given the failure of the state as a provider of social services, individuals, upon their own liberty, have not taken upon the duty to provide so themselves. I contend these two criticism and resort to Roberto Michels' "Iron Law of Oligarchy", in which the establishment and development of institutionalism inevitably leads to a few at the top who perpetuate and determine the goals and membership for their own. In short, often neither the state nor the citizen is to blame for inadequacies in the modern plurality; instead, those "few at the top" adhere to taking measures in protecting their autonomy from new aspirants.

This is especially true even for voluntary organizations, namely the Student Volunteer Campus Community. Recently I was told that my position in aiding students under the Immigration Portfolio was terminated. No reason was made other than the claim that the "Board met on Saturday and determined you are not for the job." I'm curious. With the exception of the loss of one office hour due to last week's storm, I

cannot determine any respectable reason for my dismissal. Prior to the surprise call, I had continually updated the immigration files and had met with immigration officials on revision in immigration policy.

In sum, I am not satisfied with the Board's decision. If the SVCC claims to be Voluntary, they should respect Volunteers. After putting my effort during their recruitment campaign to join and spend time consulting students and aiding their immigration concerns no student would be pleased with the decision.

And a word to funding agencies for what putatively appears to be nothing but another oligarchical institution: review their practices and remind the hierarchy that they exist only on a voluntary basis and that respect should be made to those seeking to help their fellow students. I, for one, wouldn't join in their guile (sic) cause.

Kevin A. Choy
Graduate Studies

Opportunity costs

In response to Aland Davidson's letter entitled "Smart and Poor" (Oct. 25th issue).

By quoting some isolated facts, Mr. Davidson seems to make quite a convincing argument against university education. I would like to point out some flaws in his reasoning.

First, and most blatantly obscene, is that his point of view is strictly short-term. He has not stopped to consider what is likely to happen 2-3 years later in the jobs mentioned. He has not considered the results of surveys showing the promotion rate of university grads versus non-university grads. He has not considered the fact that most of the biggest (i.e. most successful) companies require a university degree for most positions. Technical school and college graduates are almost always a second choice — after university graduates.

The second flaw is that the inherent point in his letter is that the value of education is in the amount of money it can bring — and that's it! Does this mean that every major advance mankind has made in the past 200 years has no value? For every invention which has been exploited for society's benefit, there has been a strong theoretical basis in its development. Somebody had to know the theory behind the dry-cell battery used today. The theory of air pressure had to be known to make passenger planes fly. It just so happens that the place to get this theory (so that it can be applied in real life) is university. As for present applications (as opposed to innovations), the theoretical knowledge provided by university makes the graduate far more adaptable and diversified than the technical school graduate. That is why university graduates get promoted more and faster.

So I say, right? Okay, assume that everything I have said so far is a big pile of horse manure and Mr. Davidson is right in saying university education is worthless. What would the world be like if everybody went through Technical School to train for jobs? The distinguishing feature of these schools is that they teach you how to use present techniques really well; you can use the given techniques really well by the time you graduate. If you go through a computer programming course, you will be taught some techniques and you will use them. You can't improve on them because you don't know how or why they work — that's university stuff and that doesn't make money. You can't make new techniques because you don't know where to start. You are taught to do some work, not to think! Oh, and if you decide you would like to get into management instead of just computer programming, that's another 2 years tech. school because in the programming course, you never learned anything but programming.

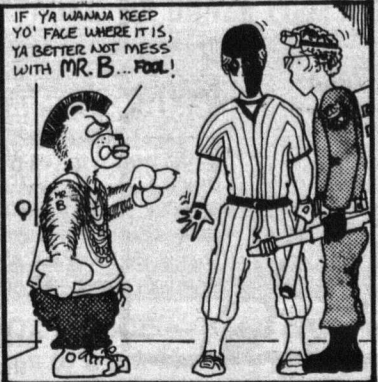
But hey, that's where the money is, right? You get to earn \$6,000 more than university saps for a few years don't you? Don't worry about 10 years down the road. Aland Davidson is right. What is the value of education?

Pawan Varmg
Science II

Look, we editors really love your letters but when we said "250 words long", we meant 250 words long Two Hundred and Fifty! Okay?

by Shane Berg

Bear Country



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