

since this is the last issue of the gateway this year, and this is the last page 5, the editors would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who took the time to write us. we leave you all with this thought, by h. i. mencken—"the volume of mail that comes into a magazine or newspaper is no index of anything except that you happen to attract a lot of idiots, because most people that write letters to newspapers are fools."

Can you envisage a university without exams? Occasionally, just to be different, I manage to muster enough gall to do just that, but I begin to shudder at such hideous speculation, so I return to my text and continue to memorize the skeletal structure of the yellow belly sap sucker—on whose anatomy I'm to be examined.

Everyone knows that exams are infallible; everyone knows that exams are lifesaving contrivances; everyone knows that exams do not give rise to anxiety, depression, insomnia, loss of weight, indigestion, ulcers, attempted suicide, suicide, and student-student and student-instructor conflict. Furthermore, no student in history has ever committed suicide because he had to face an exam! Reports of such occurrences are utter fabrication! Some people have the nerve to state that exams are the napalm of the intellectual community, while others go on to say that Dow Chemical is behind the administration of exams. Lies, all lies! The very minor pressures brought about by exams are justifiable. Moreover, exams and their results are supremely sound and absolutely vital.

There are some misled individuals who maintain that exams launch, against the student, four offensives per university year. According to these people, most students have to engage in combat only during the fall, winter and spring onslaughts. Those recruits who are physically or psychologically felled during these skirmishes are attended by medics and are then ushered to the front during summer session for a fourth confrontation. These statements, of course, are wrong!

What would happen if exams were suddenly to be discontinued? Do you really expect me to be serious in posing such a dangerous question? If exams were to be abolished, something very tragic would

occur—students would have to think for themselves. Say, that would certainly be tragic. Whatever you do, don't be obtuse and assume that people attend university in order to develop latent creative abilities. Worse than death would be the termination of memorizing what someone else has thought out, and the university student would suffer unbearable agony if he were no longer asked to disgorge on examination papers.

Why should students write term papers, do lab exercises and other hand-in assignments? Surely, methods of evaluating academic abilities do not require meticulous thought, research or organization! One never learns anything by experience! Rather than engage in an unproductive activity such as preparing a 3,000 word term paper, I would enjoy rattling off the chemical formula for Sudsy-Wudsy Soap, would be elated while listing the 963 causes of last year's coup d'etat in the Southeast Asian republic of South Ping Pong Pang, and would die of joy in stating on an exam, word for word as discussed in class, the denouement in Mac-wretch.

If exams were thrown out, then another tragedy would befall our edifices of higher learning. Those "human vacuum cleaners," students with exceptional retentive capacities, students who obtain a mark of 9 every time they write an examination, would have to take a permanent vacation along with exams. Since, with the discontinuation of exams, students would have to think, there would be no room on campuses for "human vacuum cleaners." Life, in case some of you are unaware, is full of tragedy!

In closing, I want to warn all of you that SMEE, the Student Militia for Examination Eradication, is looking for experienced mercenaries. We must stop this movement!

John Miletich
arts 1

letters

free enterprise

In the latest Gateway, it was noted that nothing had been decided with regard to the Armed Services Building. I propose that part of the building be used to house a sporting goods centre.

At present the bookstore supplies some equipment, but I am sure most athletically-minded students would admit that there is an inadequacy—in both quality and quantity. Every year university students purchase skis, skates, CCM hockey sticks and a multitude of other equipment which the bookstore could not possibly supply.

I propose, and I am not alone in my proposal, that a student-run sports centre be established or perhaps a dealer appointed to sell equipment (like the SUB bank).

At the present time, a student living on or near the campus must go to hell and back in order to get the goods they desire. Sports are an integral part of university life; thus it should be accorded the space it deserves.

Alain Rostoker
arts 1

why us?

We would like to comment on Miss Gom's article in the Feb. 23 issue of "Casserole".

First, we would be most interested in learning from where the sample was obtained, and would point out that the reliability of the survey would be increased substantially through the use of a larger number of subjects, since a "random sample of 20 students" can hardly be considered representative of a faculty with an enrolment of over three thousand.

Second, to the arts 3 student who was quoted as saying "You don't go into education, you flunk into it", may we point out that 1) the education faculty attracts many first-class high school graduates each year, and 2) it would be interesting if The Gateway were to conduct a survey to determine what percentage of each year's grads in arts, science, and phys ed enter the B.Ed. after Degree program. They would find a substantial number.

To the first-year ed student who entered education because "it's the only faculty I could get into with the marks I had", we offer the shocking news that, contrary to his belief, the Faculty of Education has no separate entrance requirements. He required standard University entrance to be accepted into education (a 60% average, with no mark less than 50%), although he did have a wider choice of courses (English 30, Social 30, and four options) than permitted by some other faculties. Surely he is not complaining because he was allowed to exercise choice in selecting his matriculation program.

Finally, although "not one of the students interviewed . . . expressed complete satisfaction with the way the faculty was set up and the ed courses required", we feel that it is safe to say that the same complaints exist in every faculty on

campus. There are few students in any faculty who are totally satisfied with the programs they are required to follow, and with their instructors. It should be pointed out to those who are unaware of the fact, that ed students, in addition to gaining university degrees, are awarded teaching certificates by the Provincial Department of Education. This practical aspect of our education necessitates a greater deal of control and direction over programs than is required in a liberal arts course. The same is true of medicine, law, etc.

Perhaps the recently proposed legislation (to require a minimum of three years training for teachers entering the profession) will result in decreased enrolment in education—but we doubt it. So long as society exists, education is going to play a major role in it. We ourselves have seen, and are part of, the tremendous increase in post-high

school education. It would be wise if some of the critics of the education faculty stopped to realize that without teachers, they would never have reached this haven of free will and self-expression. Who, other than the present education students, will help your children get here?

We make no claim to the perfection of the Faculty of Education. But we do resent having that faculty singled out as an individual reflection of problems that exist all over campus. Education is no worse and no better than arts or engineering. Then why point the finger at us, implying that education alone is faced with criticism and discontent? The clichés to which Miss Gom refers apply to every faculty on campus.

Elaine Mandseth, ed 4
Marlene Simpson, ed 4
Gail Ruddy, ed 4
Bonnie Dickie, ed 2
Doug Sheppard, ed 4

'student as nigger' — a parting blast

I have read Jerry Farber's "students live in slavrey" from your Jan. 26 issue. I am one of those Simon Legrees whom Mr. Farber castigates. I am not terribly impressed by the article but feel that the author has not seen the complete story.

Consider, first, some of his fringe criticisms. Mr. Farber finds fault with the segregation between students and faculty. But why not segregate? Professors, according to our current society, have more money than students, and are in a position to spend it on better food better served. There is also, according to my experience, a desirability among professors to discuss university problems with one's colleagues, and this can be and is done over a lunch in a private area. I saw another factor illustrated recently when a large number of high school students boarded a bus. They were well behaved, but their numbers overwhelmed the others within the bus. Similarly in a "common" dining room professors would be overwhelmed by the large number of students. It is not necessarily snobishness that makes some instructors want to gather together in a quiet corner with colleagues only. Social relations between students and instructors are desirable, but provision should be made for times when the two groups are separate.

Mr. Farber spends considerable time discussing the relationship between students and professors in their classroom association. I am not going to attempt to justify all the acts of professors that he lists. I as an individual conduct my own classes in my own manner and recognize that other instructors do differently. I do not require their approval for my practises, although I may seek advice at times. Neither do I consider that they should require mine. Each one should organize his practise and routine to

give the greatest benefit to the class as a whole. To do this there must be routine and order, a fact which an intelligent student should understand. Directions to achieve this, seating plans, methods in passing in assignments, etc., should be accepted by students as wise decisions by a competent person. I have, for example, asked students to write names on the lower right hand side of maps being passed in, an order which Mr. Farber would apparently condemn. Do I need to go into a long explanation about the ease of handling maps signed in this manner? I think not.

This article lists a number of practises of professors some of which I find hard to believe. Certainly the practises do not seem to be representative of The University of Alberta. I doubt if they give a fair picture of any university. There are unfortunately some instructors who fail sadly through incomplete preparation or poor diction or for other reasons to instruct properly. A committee of students could improve the situation, helping the instructor and the university, by making the facts known to the department head or the dean. But for the best results this should be done without publicity. The fear of the professors does not seem to be so great as the article would imply. Fear of final grades is present but I would hope not for individuals.

In more fundamental criticisms, Mr. Farber states "The faculty tells him what courses to take". I am one of these who dictates. A student comes, asking to work toward a M.Sc. degree in Meteorology, and I tell him what courses he should take. Why not? The student wishes to leave in two years with a certificate saying that he has a broad understanding of some of the fundamentals of meteorology. Such men are being sought, and the graduate

will use his certificate to get himself a job. This same is occurring in Engineering, in the Department of History, in fact in all parts of the university. Very few come to university for the sheer love of learning. Rather they come because it is a road to a more rewarding job either in financial returns or in personal satisfaction.

Having come to university with a purpose, the student takes the road that points toward his goal. At this point he learns what courses he should take. But the ultimate choice is his, not the faculty. Some discover that they have taken the wrong road, but again the choice to change is theirs, not one imposed by the faculty. They are not slaves to authority, as Mr. Farber so emphatically says, but free to choose, up to this point.

I do not deny that, having settled upon a goal, students become slaves to the course leading to that goal. This includes hours of study, term papers, assignments, examinations, and other methods of testing. It also includes attendance at classes, listening to boring lectures poorly prepared, standing outside a professor's office while another student is in conference, and many other unlovely things. Is there an alternative?

Mr. Farber says that students should force academic freedom to become "bilateral", and to arrange for study to be for their own resources. Will this do it? Maybe for some this could be done. But it would be much more expensive, and certainly would be successful for only a small minority.

Many students would be like Mr. Farber, wanting to spend his time learning to dance, or other students wishing to study the laws of physics as they apply to billiard balls. If a university were built on this basis, what value would be the piece of

paper received at the end of the stay? Would it help them in their urge for a satisfying job? I suspect that wise students would continue to go to those universities where they are "slaves".

In this matter of slavery or freedom, Mr. Farber fails to appreciate the pressures of the work-a-day world. Most people are slaves—slaves to their employer, to public opinion, to many pressures. The member of parliament is under pressures to satisfy his constituency; the factory hand, his employer; the manager of a company, his board of directors; Neil Armstrong, the public opinion as expressed through the Eskimo directors. Life is not free. There have been and are rebels who refuse to submit. Jesus was one, Socrates another, Martin Luther King another. Some of these rebels have been those whose influence has changed the course of history. But they have discovered through time that the path of a rebel is not easy. Just to rebel does not qualify one for success or for hero worship. One must be sure that the goals sought are worthy, and even then one must be willing to accept defeat and even worse.

I found Mr. Farber's article a very one sided picture, such as one might get from an emotionally immature adult. He, on several occasions, calls upon his God. Who or what is his God? He does not say. If it is Yahweh or the Father to whom Jesus prayed, Mr. Farber would have realized that one does not use His name as Mr. Farber uses it. He seems to delight in filth like a young adolescent. He failed to impress me as a man who would give competent guidance to a group of students seeking further education so that they could take their place in the world.

Richmond W. Longley
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