

# Opinion

Rob Galbraith

## SU policy unclear



Last Tuesday, Students' Council decided to put one of its retail businesses, SU Records, up for sale. Its lease was to expire, and the new location that HUB Mall Administration had set aside for it was substantially smaller, meaning the store's inventory would have had to be cut. In addition, SU Records lost almost \$7000 in the 1988 fiscal year. About 35,000 people made purchases at the store.

During the first week of classes, Students' Council sponsored the Butterdome Bash. To encourage as many people to attend as possible, they charged only two dollars per ticket — 3000 people turned out. The SU expects to lose between \$15,000 and \$20,000 on the evening.

Taken separately, these two moves by Council seem prudent. Sell SU Records, it's losing money. Encourage school spirit by throwing a beginning-of-the-year shindig. Taken together, though, these events suggest that Students' Council's fiscal policy is far more arbitrary than rational. SU Records, which serves 35,000 people annually and lost \$7000 last year is being sold, while a second Butterdome Bash, which this year served 3000 people and lost upwards of \$15,000, is expected to be held again in 1989. Council would argue there is no discrepancy here; the Butterdome Bash is a service and may lose money if necessary, but SU Records is a business, and policy is that SU businesses should not lose money.

The corollary to that, however, is whether or not the 35,000 people (effective subsidy: \$7000) who shopped at SU Records last year feel any less "served" than the 3000 people (effective subsidy: \$15,000 plus) at the Butterdome.

In fact, it could be argued that maintaining an eclectic, non-Top 40 record store is more of a service than a business, while a first-week bash with big name bands is more of a business than a service.

I'm not saying that either the decision to sell SU Records or the decision to hold the Butterdome Bash is necessarily wrong. The justification for their decisions, however, is. It suggests that, rather than having a clearly-defined policy to handle such matters, issues are dealt with ad hoc and arbitrarily. This could be carrying it too far; perhaps Council has a policy that will become clear as the year goes on.

But perhaps not.

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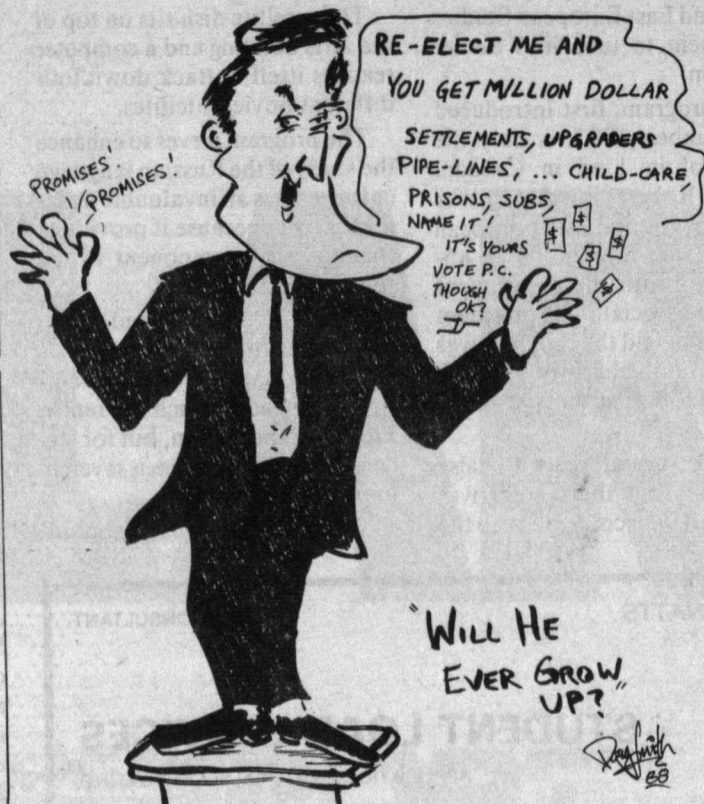
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BRIAN THEN...

IF YOU BE MY FRIEND,  
I'LL BUY YOU A MILKSHAKE!



AND NOW! (Surrey Media)



## Letters

**The Gateway welcomes letters to the editor.**

**The name, faculty and year of study of the writer must be included for publication. The writer's phone number and University of Alberta I.D. number must also be provided, but will remain confidential.**

**Letters should be double-spaced, and typed if possible. They must not exceed 300 words.**

**The Gateway reserves the right to edit for length or clarity. Material of a racist, sexist, homophobic, or libellous nature will not be published.**

**Please submit letters to Room 282, SUB.**

### Editorial confusing

I read Mr. Smathers' editorial ("Tupper Tested", *The Gateway*, Thursday, 29 September 1988) with great confusion. That may be simply because the editorial did not seem to support the rest of this particular issue of *The Gateway*, nor did it accurately reflect the facts of the situation. Let me explain.

Mr. Tupper did *not* start out using the wrong figures, as Smathers alleges. The prices that David and I were working with were given to us by HFS. The whole point of our argument was that the HFS Administrative Council, the body which approved the 4 percent increase and which included student representatives, discussed the increases with respect to *food prices*. It was only after the decision had been made that the students involved became aware that HFS had interpreted the Admin Council's decision to be a 4 percent increase in *revenue*. This lack of communication of HFS' intent to the Admin Council is exactly what we oppose.

Mr. Tupper and I *did* meet with Mr. Al Rennie (Assoc. V.P. Finance) before the article of 19 September came out, and before that I met with Kim Nash, Director of Food Services, as Dave Tupper's representative, along with LHSJ Joint Council reps.

Mr. Smathers accuses Mr. Tupper of wanting a little "easy glory", and of searching for headlines in order to make a name for himself. To this I have two things to say. First, considering the number of letters expressing concern about HFS which were printed in the 29 Sept. issue of *The Gateway*, the petition that the SU received from the Pembina Hall Students' Association, and the tremendous response to the postcard campaign, I submit to you that Mr. Tupper was *not* merely "seeking headlines", but rather was actively responding to a widespread campus concern. Perhaps if David had not responded, Mr. Smathers would have had more reason to complain. Second, I assure you that if grabbing headlines had been the predominant motivator, neither Mr. Tupper nor myself would have considered expending as much time and energy as we did on this project.

Mr. Smathers faults David Tupper for being young (he just turned 20), inexperienced (well, he has never been VP External before — I guess you can't call him a hack), and ambitious (oh my, how can I use such a *dirty* word!). It seems to me that the qualities for which Randal faults David are those same qualities for which many admire him. His youth suggests a freshness of ideas. Considering his inexperience, he has managed to write a paper on government funding cutbacks which was discussed in the Legislature this summer, he has organized a very successful CUSEC Conference, and he has made the Scroll Project a very successful reality. And his ambition has pushed him to give the very best that he can offer to all his undertakings. Looks like the sins of youth, inexperience and ambition should be added to the list of the seven deadly ones.

The most confusing part of the article, to me, was the fact that it was run in the same issue that ran a front-page article attesting to the fact that whatever David Tupper did, he certainly did right. Hot breakfasts will be back in Lister, and some food prices were lowered. Although we will not drop the issue of finding a long-term solution to the problem of University food service (yes, Mr.

Smathers, we will "hold our ground"), I do feel that we have made a large step forward in getting a better deal for students.

And finally (yes, I'm almost done), a note to Mr. Smathers: Although I am thrilled that you seem to hang on my every word, I was very much *less* than thrilled when you took my words and turned them into an insult. The situation in which I said that we "just went to the bargain basement." was very lighthearted. I did not say it in any way to diminish the hospitality of David Bruch. The fact that the comment was not made in an interview situation at all, but rather in joking conversation between Mr. Tupper and myself, makes me even more surprised that I saw it in print.

Mr. Smathers considers the student body smart enough, at least, not to elect dullards. So then, why does he insult students' intelligence by writing such a misleading and unfounded editorial?

I guess that's why I was so confused.

Aruna D'Souza  
 S.U. Housing and Transport  
 Commissioner

### Youth appropriate

Re: Randal Smathers' editorial "Tupper Tested" (September 29)

Yes, Mr. Smathers, youth implies inexperience. And, yes, David Tupper is young. So are most students, so it makes sense that Mr. Tupper represents them. And, believe it or not, this is an institute of learning, so it sort of makes sense that Mr. Tupper learns on the job. Besides, what would you prefer — limiting elected office to people who already have business experience? I suspect that they wouldn't be very representative of students. I also doubt that they would be interested in the job.

Hopefully, Mr. Tupper is able to learn from his mistakes. It occurs to me that I don't want anyone doing on-the-job training as a reporter on my time and money, unless he can cure his foot-in-mouth disease first.

Whatsa matter Randal, copy deadline looming and no time to think?

Martin Levenson  
 Arts III