

EDITORIAL

It's all in the game

The deadline is fast approaching and scattered thoughts pass through this writer's head:

Engineering Week has come and gone....Clare Drake got his 500th win....The Fieldhouse still hasn't changed colors....The Students' Union election posters go up tomorrow.

Joe Clark is scratching his head....Wayne Gretzky is leading the scoring race....The Convention Centre is still under construction....Tootsie is one of the year's best films.

Wait. Fade back to reality.

Reality?

Well, how about a game of Trivial Pursuit?

I've never been much of a board game fanatic, but with an introductory dose of Trivial Pursuit this past weekend, I can at least empathize with those patrons of Risk and Monopoly.

In Risk, you conquer the world. In Monopoly, you conquer Atlantic City.

On the other hand, with Trivial Pursuit, you get to make a pie. And eat it too.

But Trivial Pursuit is not just any game. It's the Canadian Dream for its inventors.

Two Montreal journalists, Chris Haney and Scott Abbott, invented the game, or at least thought up the idea, in 45 minutes.

Forty-five minutes. That's one game of racquetball.

However, Haney and Abbott aren't sweating. Their game, at \$29.95, has had retail sales of \$3 million in its first twelve months.

Trivial Pursuit is an easy game to learn how to play.

You roll the die, move your empty "pie" onto color-coded squares, and then answer a question from one of six categories: Sports and leisure, art and literature, history, geography, science and nature, and entertainment.

Who said, "Power is the ultimate aphrodisiac."

Was it Joe Clark?

No. It was Henry Kissinger.

If you said Kissinger, then you're on your way to completing the "pie" and winning the game.

There are 6000 questions in this game. Some are educational while others are nonsense, like "How many golf balls are on the moon?"

Answer: Three.

Such questions haven't distracted the game's inventors from expanding into the United States market.

Haney and Abbott sold the rights to Selchow & Righter Co., the makers of Scrabble. With royalties at 20 per cent, the two ex-journalists have hit the jackpot. Sales for the U.S. division are projected to be \$200 million. And that's just for starters.

Film trivia questions, a French edition with Quebecois trivia, and a sports series are in the planning stage.

The success of the game was unexpected. Canadians bought 100,000 units of Trivial Pursuit in its first year of production. Twice that amount could have been sold as drooling shoppers were put on waiting lists.

Some of those waiting for the game may be the bankers who turned down Haney's and Abbott's request for a business loan. Undaunted, the two entrepreneurs privately raised \$75,000 to finance a test-run of 1000 copies of Trivial Pursuit.

They've been trying to keep up with the demand ever since. So, how does this affect you and me?

Well, I suppose it might send tingles down your spine as you think about national pride; about Canada's entrepreneurs; about the free enterprise system.

Then again, you may think that Haney and Abbott should donate their royalties to Canadian universities.

Why should they donate money?

Give me forty-five minutes to think up an answer.

Brent Jang

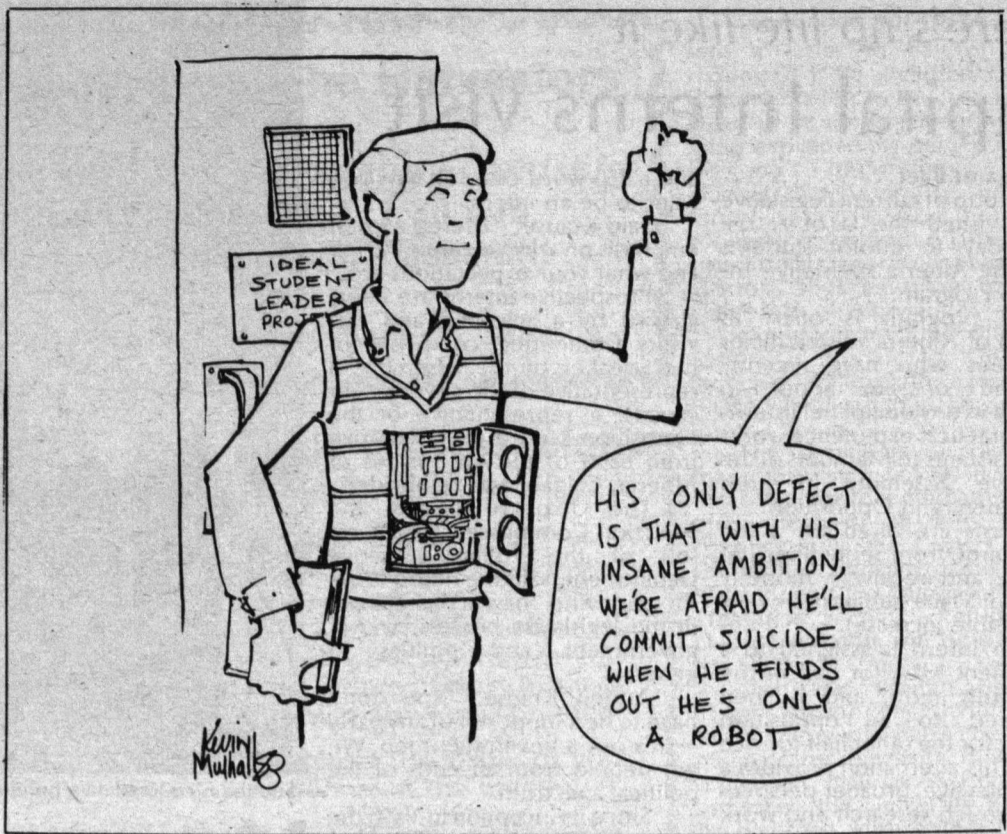
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF - Andrew Watts
 NEWS EDITORS - Allison Annesley, Richard Watts
 MANAGING EDITOR - Jens Andersen
 ARTS EDITOR - David Cox
 SPORTS EDITOR - Brent Jang
 PHOTO EDITOR - Ray Giguere
 CUP EDITOR - Wes Oginski
 PRODUCTION - Anne Stephen, Jim Miller
 ADVERTISING - Tom Wright
 MEDIA SUPERVISOR - Margriet Tilroe-West
 CIRCULATION - Gunnar Blodgett

Staff this issue:

In the silent newsroom, away from those filthy Utopian Pragmatists, Mark Roppel and Gilbert Bouchard are sipping a few ales... Margo Schmitt and Heather-Ann Laird are discussing Conrad and Blake... Lois Dayes huddles with Ken Lenz, Martin Beales and Bill Inglee... Kent Blinston and Zane Harker bemoan the price of rye... Mary Anne Nielson and Margaret Baer search for trolls... Martin Coutts is duck hunting... Michael Skeet is playing with vinyl... and John Algard plots the assassination of others....

The Gateway is the newspaper of the students of the University of Alberta, published during the Winter Session. Contents are the responsibility of the Editor-in-Chief; opinions and editorials are signed by the writer, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Gateway. Copy deadlines are 12 noon Mondays and Wednesdays. Newsroom: R. 282, Advertising Department: Rm. 256D Students' Union Building, U of A, Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2J7. Newsroom phone 432-5166, Advertising phone 432-4241 Ext. 28. The Gateway is a member of CUP (Congenitally Unitarian Populists), until we run out of money to fund their silly projects. Gateway readership is 25,000.

gateway



Graphic/Vanity

« LETTERS TO THE EDITOR »

NDP loan formula

There is something seriously wrong with the student loan system that requires students to repay their loans at rates that are higher than generally available consumer loan rates.

Under the present system, graduating students are forced to consolidate and begin paying their loans six months after leaving their fulltime program, whether they are employed or not. Many graduating students who started making loans three or four years ago when rates were around 10% will be locked into repaying those loans at 15 7/8, the rate set for 1982/83, and a rate which does not reflect the recent drop in interest rates. That is not right.

It is my belief, and that of the New Democratic Party, that the Federal Government should require the banks to allow renegotiation of student loans to reflect the lower rates which now prevail. In the future loan rates should be established on the basis of a weighted average of the loan rate in effect every year that the student makes a loan. The interest-free period of grace should extend to until the student has found a job.

Young Canadians have been encouraged to take up post-secondary education by the availability of supposedly low cost student loans. The combination of the Government's high interest rate policy and the inflexibility of the administration of the Canada Student Loan program yields a situation where students, who face a youth employment rate of 20.7% and are often unemployed themselves, are required to repay student loans at inflated rates. The only part which benefits in this situation is the banks who are collecting the interest.

Should the Government not comply with our requests to lower the Canada student loan rate, students should be aware that if they can delay the consolidation of their loan until after July 31, 1983, the new and hopefully lower 1983/84 rate would be applicable to their loan.

David Orlikow, MP Winnipeg North

person who spews the sort of crap contained in that letter could not possibly be real. So, although this fictitious character did provoke many witty and well-written replies, the authors appear to be just victims of a harmless practical joke.

Anyway, it seems as though for the first time in my four years at this distinguished institution, that "Engineering Week" commanded more attention than "Tongue-lash the Geers and get a pat on the back from your peers" week. At last, all things are in their proper places.

Bob Driver, Civil Eng. 4

Helpful librarians overdue

The U of A is a large and complex facility whose 'raison d'etre' is the education of the students therein. Rude and inefficient personnel within sectors of our university system undermine the university's operation and reason for existence. The specific areas I cite as poorly staffed overall are the libraries, specifically North and South Rutherford and Cameron Libraries.

As with many staffs, our libraries contain extremes: the very capable and the abject. Unfortunately, the latter group far exceeds the former. Apparently, the farther down one is located on the library ladder, the less efficiency and courtesy are valued.

Many of the circulation desk personnel evidently feel if students are ignored long enough they'll go away. Persons responsible for putting away books have been noted spending hours reading them instead. Problems in locating material are often treated with sympathy and inadequate tentative suggestions rather than with the brisk, professional aid desired. Reaction to students' queries is as often hostile ("The library isn't here for studying") or evasive ("The person in charge of that is at lunch/a meeting/the North Pole) as helpful. The people you hear gossiping while you're trying to study are as likely to be staff members on their way to endless coffee-breaks as they are to be your fellow-students.

The university libraries are funded by the students, directly through tuition, and indirectly through taxation. Why are individuals of dedication, intelligence and organizational ability so few and far between? Possibly the qualifications of the different levels of library staff should be made public. Students would be able to judge for themselves whether or not we have the competent and professional help we deserve.

Sheila Read, Arts II

Gateway KGB tactics?

Recently I wrote a letter (sic) to you and, to my chagrin, found that the Gateway has grossly misled readers concerning its editorial policy. My letter was easily within the 250 word limit supposedly imposed and yet the Gateway chose to edit out the only part of my letter that could not be construed as libelous. Ironically, that part of the letter that was expurgated was concerned primarily with the necessity of freedom of speech and expression as an institution fundamental to protecting Canadians from the excesses of ideology that abound throughout most of the world.

It may well be that there was no malign intent when the Gateway failed to print a part of my letter that, to some over-zealous junior editor, may have appeared specious and unfocussed. But I am not so certain - my experiences with Radio Moscow's Mailbag are suspiciously similar: malicious distortion of people's views, for the obvious multitude of reasons, is regularly practiced by Radio Moscow through the same editorial methods that you recently applied to my letter.