

# editorial

I was expecting a lot of mail following the March 9 Women's Supplement but it has not materialized. Evidently the student body is either disinterested in the question of women today, or in tacit agreement with what the supplement said.

(I conclude the latter because it has been my experience that, regarding letters to the editor on any particular subject, no news is good news. I mean, what else provoked the abortion or creation debates this year but dissent?)

But forty-nine percent of students by definition have a direct interest in the women's movement. And, of course, so do the women. As for silent mass approval, well I'd have to admit that's highly unlikely. Actually the non-response to the Women's Supplement was probably a result of tedium, and perhaps even fear, of women's issues.

Why are people tired of hearing about "women's problems"? Because, it's said, everyone's got problems. The term "women's rights" is vague and wide open to misinterpretation. Too often in the feminist rhetoric, the movement's genuine concern for society's complementary injustices to men is not apparent. So many men - and women - feel excluded and/or betrayed by the women's movement...they reject it outright.

Others expected the movement to accomplish too much too fast. After a decade or so, with the fundamental question of equal pay for equal work still unsettled, these people are disillusioned.

To those who are thriving on the last vestiges of chauvinism the topic is frightening as well as tiresome. These people remain outside the debate because they prefer the status quo and are not about to fuel the fires of change by entering into the fray unnecessarily.

For these reasons, it's my theory that a cultivated apathy exists on campus as regards the whole subject of women.

The women's cause is no longer trendy. In fact there may even be a wave of reaction. It isn't uncommon to hear the epithet "libber" around campus in reference to any prominent female. Both the apathy and the reaction are worrisome.

The Women's Supplement was not meant to glorify the problems specific to women, only to review them for the younger audience. It was not strident. It was not sexist. It was supposed to be informative. But I guess many readers pulled out the section and with one graceful gesture, tossed it into the garbage because they thought they already knew what was in it. Unfortunately the information was lost to the very ones who probably needed it most.

There are problems with the women's movement - we haven't gained the full support of men, the issues are complex and confusing, we don't agree among ourselves and the strengths we've discovered within ourselves are threatening to outsiders. Maybe we're too cocky, but the women's movement is more than a passing fad.

A Women's Supplement like the one published March 9 should spark more debate especially on a university campus because it can never adequately cover the issues. The fact that it hasn't even caused a ripple of response is an indication that everyone is too smug.

And that's not just unfortunate. That's dangerous.

Loreen Lennon

## the Gateway

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If it happens on campus...it's news to us.

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## Fired chaplain responds

It is unfortunate that the other members of the University Parish team have been dragged into the matter of my firing. In her statement to the Gateway (March 16) the Rev. Mary Thomas, Chairperson of the so-called Ecumenical Chaplaincy Board, has told the media more than she has told me about the reasons for my firing. By laying the blame for my firing on complaints from my colleagues, Ms Thomas has placed yet another strain on a working arrangement which has subjected her staff to considerable stress over the years. This is the sort of insensitivity that has been characteristic of the Board's personnel policies.

I have always avoided

grumbling about my team-mates behind their backs, and I shall certainly not do so in print. The Holy Trinity would have had a hard time working as a team in the atmosphere of unreal expectations from our Board. A structure was built out of the Church Union enthusiasm of the 1960's which is entirely inadequate to the more flexible ecumenical cooperation appropriate for the 1980's. I personally have been subjected to bitterness and hostility over the failure of the Plan of Union between the Anglican and United Churches, in an atmosphere of petty jealousy. This structure of forced cooperation has made us guardians of our traditions instead of sharers.

It would be a terrible thing if the present controversy around our particular chaplaincy were to interfere in the excellent cooperative work that is going on through the wider, more flexible partnership of the Chaplaincy Association. It is ironic that this rigid structure which calls itself "ecumenical" may in fact be standing in the way of real ecumenical cooperation today.  
Fletcher Stewart

## 1984 one year early

As a foreign student I have observed the provincial election with great interest. I want to offer a few speculations about Alberta's political future.

On occasion of the next speech from the throne, the province of Alberta will be proclaimed a grand duchy, Mr Loughheed Grand Duke Peter I the Great, and Mr Amerongen Lord Chamberlain. The other Tories will be given harps to play "May Peter deliver us from the clutches of Ottawa" from dawn to dusk. The members of the opposition will serve as court jesters and be allowed one annual performance in St. Peter's Sanctuary.

Once a year the Grand Duke will hold court in splendidly decorated SUB Theatre. All students will be required, on pain of having their registration cancelled, to pay their respects to His Highness. Some carefully screened students will be chosen for the honor of exchanging a few personal words with the Grand Duke. In order to commemorate this most thrilling event of their lives, they will be given a medallion which can be

paid for out of the Heritage Trust Fund.

Around 1983, the subjects of the Grand Duchy of Alberta will be asked in a referendum to make these changes permanent and to extend the Grand Duke's benevolent rule across the 49th parallel through sovereignty-association with Montana. They will blissfully shout: "So be it!" and thus relieve themselves of the troublesome burden ever to go to the polls again. And they lived happily ever after.

I wish them joy.

Ludger Mogge

## Letters

Letters to the editor should be addressed to the Gateway, Room 282 SUB, Edmonton, or dropped off at our office. Please include your name, student I.D. number (if applicable) and phone number. Please limit letters to 250 words or less. If you wish to write a longer piece, come to see us. We reserve the right to edit all submissions for libel.

## Is everybody happy?

Letter to Cheryl Hume:

I noted in a recent edition of the Gateway, that your name appears on the bottom of two letters to the editor; once together with several other names, and the second time it decorates the bottom of an open letter to Premier Loughheed. I concluded that there are only

two logical reasons you put forward such an effort: that you like to see your name in print (\*\*PRESIDENT STUDENT UNION\*\*) or that you have passed the zero mark in political awareness, unfortunately heading in the wrong direction. Being an optimist, I hope it is reason number one. If not, I ask only that you focus your near-

look and see what is happening around you. You are attending college that is a text book case of a group of individuals that are militant in their desire to remain apathetic. At a recent all candidates meeting, the President member was the only one who had brains enough not to show, who bothered when only two students attended. Now that show of political awareness. Both of your letters sound tough: We demand this, you must do that, we should all vote this, blah blah blah... in reality they are straws in the wind. Since there are no longer any popular American issues to get deeply involved in, (Ban the bomb. Why? Everybody has one. Get out of Vietnam? It's only the Chinese in there now. Liberate the Iron Curtain countries from Soviet military occupation. Huh? Gee that's so old it's not even hip to talk about that.) seeing that we are living in an unprecedented era of milk and honey; well almost all of us, the student body doesn't give a damn who is running for what or why. Your own university election are a prime example of a non-event in action. I must end this letter, as I am falling asleep.  
Peter Neme

## Composition students

In a recent letter about quite another matter, Ken Graham wondered whether Melville, Dreiser, Faulkner, and Cooper might have failed freshman composition. The facts are that Melville never tried University but managed to teach school anyway at Pittsfield Mass.; Dreiser, armed as was usual with him with a woman's love and purse, had a miserable freshman year at the U. of Indiana; Faulkner, enrolled at U of Mississippi as a special student, got one "D" in freshman English and dropped the second course, receiving according to one source a failing grade and according to another no grade; and

Cooper was a successful student at Yale until a merry prank landed him in enough trouble to end his academic career.

Composition, by the way, was not taught in University in those halcyon days. Errors in basic English were noted in Dreiser's case by early reviewers, but not in the case of any of the others Mr. Graham worried about. And even in Dreiser's case, most reviewers were content to concentrate on his supposed immorality, which I imagine reflects the charity and good will of a lost and golden age of readers.

R.H. Solomon

Assoc. Prof., English Dept.