



editorial

Housing and Food takeover possibilities?

The housing crunch has been on for some number of weeks now, and the strains on the systems are beginning to tell. By "systems" I mean the two particular outfits to which my personal attention has been drawn in viewing how the housing shortage has been handled.

One of these systems is Housing and Food Services, which has as part of its responsibilities the running of the student residences and the running of Michener Park, a housing community catering mainly to married and mature students.

Because housing is short and demands are running higher, different weaknesses and inadequacies of systems that are geared to lower production levels are amplified and made more plain. From discussions with a few students who have lived in or have tried to gain place in Michener Park, it seems some suggestions are in order for Housing and Food Services in how to run the organisation during a crisis.

A couple of examples might serve to prove my point:

Just take a stroll through the community and look in the parking lots there. Count the BMW's, the Corvettes, and the Trans Am's you see parked out there all shiny and new. Those cars, for the greater part I would suggest, do not belong to students. They belong to the spouses of the students. These husbands and wives are working at good jobs and are making good money, good enough to buy the fancy cars anyway.

I would like to ask Housing and Food a few questions regarding this. How difficult does this situation make it on legitimate requests for government funding for low-cost student housing when the government can show that a good percentage of people living in already-subsidised communities are not students, and are in fact living high off the hog?

Why doesn't Housing and Food Services have some sort of sliding-scale priority list whereby those people who are in desperate need of subsidised housing (students) could have a higher priority in getting housing during a crisis than those who do not (married couples in which one spouse is earning a high salary?)

Another example might serve to make this point more graphic:

I talked with one married couple, graduate students from Norway, who were led to believe that housing would be available to them in Michener Park once they arrived in Canada. I say "led to believe" because they were given no notice whatsoever to make them think otherwise. When they arrived here, they were told to come back in January or February, when their names would come to the top of the waiting list, as Housing and Food was still operating on first-come-first-served basis.

Now that's a good joke. If I were partner in an arrangement similar to those I suspect may have in Michener Park at present and knowing that no other cheaper housing would ever come my way, I don't think I'd ever leave. I'd simply have my spouse enter grad studies, have her go for a doctorate or something to keep us in that nice subsidised neighborhood. I'm as selfish as the next guy.

But that wouldn't make it very fair for the people who actually do have a pressing need for subsidised housing, and who would more closely fit the requirements of "student" strictly speaking, especially during a crisis.

It is up to Housing and Food to see these disparities do not exist.

As well, getting back to the latter example, people should be warned about Housing and Food's inability to supply housing. The director of the service should have informed the Norwegian couple that they would not find housing when they got here, so they could make other plans. The director should have told them Michener Park was already full of fat cats and that legitimate requests for housing would not be considered until next January.

Now I know already that this couple has been "put to the top of the list" but that doesn't do them much good if they have to wait in the emergency housing trailers until the top of the list comes up. The system's disparities have already done their damage.

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READER COMMENT

Bookstore requests a bad risk

Close to the top of the list of things that bug me at this university is the demand made by the bookstore and at least one other campus business that students leave books, bags, and personal possessions outside while shopping.

This says to me, "You can't be trusted not to rip us off, so if you want to spend your money

here obey the rules." I resent that.

My money is as good as that of Mrs. Housewife and Joe Lunchbucket. They are not subjected to this indignity at Woodwards or Safeway. Why us? Is it because we are "captive" customers and they don't have to solicit our business?

To be fair I can see the

reasoning behind this demand in the case of the bookstore but I do not feel that justifies the risk we are forced to take.

One unfortunate person last year lost an entire year's work when his briefcase went missing from the front of the bookstore. And its not just rip offs we risk; there is a real danger of confusion and mix-ups, particularly in a busy time like this. I mean how many different kinds of briefcases are there?

Any business wishing to make such a request of customers should be prepared to assume the responsibility. Adequate facilities for the safekeeping of students property should be provided including some way to prevent accidental or intentional disappearance of these items. And the business should be financially liable for any property which does disappear while in its care.

For myself? - well I intend to ignore the signs whenever possible. If they are forcibly brought to my attention (as did happen at the bookstore) I will refuse to patronise that business then, or in the future.

Students may not have much money individually but collectively we should be able to sway student oriented businesses and services to provide the same standards as they would to the public at large.

Cathy Dafoe

**Gateway
STAFF MEETING
MONDAY
Sept. 15
3:30 PM**

**All Staffers and
prospective staffers; bring
your suggestions, line
up for press cards.**

The Pig's Pen

The psychology of registration

Having gone through my very first registration last week, I am left with the feeling that the whole show was a vast experiment for the Psych. Dept. to see how far they can push the already insecure first year registrant before he/she has a nervous breakdown. They don't want students, they want mobile pencils!

For me it all started when I moved into a University owned house, and had to be a student to stay past Sept. Now, I liked the region, and the house, so I sent off the application to University, requests for transcripts to the Exams Branch and Red Deer College, and went back to laying sod. That, I thought, was that. Foolish boy.

- My application form was incomplete. They're still not sure of my Canadian citizenship.

- My request for high school transcripts was filed under "Trash" and the money stolen. Yes I was trusting enough to send cash. Never again.

- My request to RDC resulted in a letter informing me that I never did pay for that night course. I took 2 yrs. ago and where did I get the nerve to ask for a transcript?!

Things were off to a flying start.

But I managed to get most things cleared up despite working, multiple hassles, and a constant stream of crashers in the house. So all I needed was my acceptance and that would be that.

I'm still waiting for my acceptance. They're still evaluating my RDC marks which are too late for me to use anyway. Bravo, Registrar's Office.

Then came my day. Oh Goody! I registered, being RIE-ROL starting 3:00 Wed. My

brother was all uptight but not me, I was calm. As he rushed from the house I laughed and began coolly to collect my stuff. Until I found that he had taken my timetable. Then I panicked! I built a new timetable and bolted for the W. Gym, thinking about fratacide and torture. I was to be in the same frame of mind for the next 36 hours.

At the W. Gym I was given a red tag and a letter and sent to the Registrar's Office. Not having found them too helpful in the past, I wasn't happy about going. But I went.

Upon arrival in the office I immediately joined my line of red taggers and waited. Ever seen the War movie where the battlefield medic shakes his head sadly and ties a red tag to the jacket of a badly wounded soldier? Do you remember the look of dull resignation on that soldier's face? That was the expression of everyone in that office!

In the line up you get to know the people near you quickly, not because they were overly friendly but because they desperately needed someone to talk to. One girl in first year fine arts had found out just before registration that her pre-registration had been refused. The one drama course she wanted had a 10 sequence number - no chance now. Another woman found they had changed the rules for mature students picking up a few courses each year towards a degree. But none had told her that she had to register before Oct. 31. And on, and on, forever.

But they finally gave me my conditional acceptance, pending the evaluation of transcripts they'd had for over a week, and I set out in search of my (obscenity) brother. Ever try and find someone on Registra-

tion day? In the Bio. Sci. Bldg? I was lucky to get out alive!

So the next morning, after a moment of grief for my late brother, I set out once more. First, the sixth floor of Humanities, where a smiling man added one course and deleted another. Clutching my destroyed timetable, considerably shaken, I moved on to Eng. Dept., where another smiling person rearranged everything. In a daze I moved on once more. And, other than going to the Medical Sciences Bldg. to register for psychology (I misread physiology) and getting lost in the Bio. Sci. Bldg. (again), things moved quickly.

Until the lineup in Humanities to have my timetable finally approved. I waited an hour and a half. Towards the end I could have killed the poor lady behind the desk for the time she took to crumple paper.

But she finally let me through and, with infinite patience, sent me on my way to the Ice Arena.

At the Ice Arena I got into yet another line - by now I joined lineups, any lineups almost automatically - I was in it for 10 min. before someone told me that, if I had no course corrections, I could go right in. Trembling with frustration, I elbowed my way down the stairs. Where, after some interesting bureaucratic hassles, I found myself on a stool facing a camera, with some jackass cracking jokes at me. I couldn't help myself, I started laughing hysterically.

So my ID card has a beautiful picture of my tonsils and my mind is just now beginning to work again. But in a way, I'm proud to have managed to get through registration. Because not everyone made it. Unfortunately.