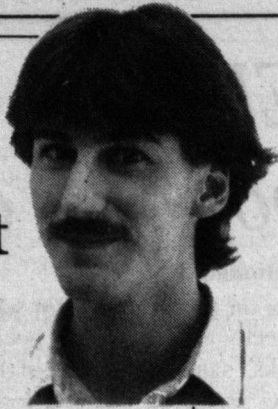


Opinion

Mike Spindloe

Tempest in a teapot



At the risk of giving more free publicity to the now infamous 'University Girls of Alberta' calendar, I'd like to express a few thoughts on this issue, which has unfortunately become bigger than the tempest in a teapot it really is.

Detractors of the calendar argue that it perpetuates sexism directed against women, a condition that is obviously all too prevalent in our society. Webster's dictionary defines sexism as 'prejudice or discrimination based on sex.' The question seems to me to be: Are the contents of this calendar prejudicial toward or discriminatory against women?

While the answer to this, strictly on the basis of the perpetuation argument, may be yes, there are other sides to consider.

First, the women photographed were presumably participating on a voluntary basis, whether or not they were paid. They were clothed (albeit provocatively); the calendar cannot be considered pornographic or even erotic. It is merely harmless titillation (forgive the pun) on the level of the 'Sunshine Girls' (and boys) that appear daily in a local newspaper.

Second, the advertisement in *The Gateway* for this calendar was surely no more offensive (and I think much less) than a great deal of advertising in various media for products completely unrelated to the more prominent features of female geography. In this case, the geography is the product (as ineffectually as it was portrayed); at least the advertisement was an honest one, which is more than one can say for the majority of ads flogging soft drinks, beer, automobiles and so on.

The artistic depiction of human bodies has existed for centuries and probably millenia. The calendar, like so-called adult men's magazines, is merely a further devaluation of this tradition; sad but ultimately harmless.

I am reminded of the case of the U of A professor who was recently forced to remove an abstract depiction of a nude woman from the wall of his office. The prevailing mentality here seems to be that we shouldn't celebrate, or even acknowledge, the physical aspect of our humanity. Certainly to do so is to risk offending someone's idea of the standards that should be applied to such celebrations, assuming that they agree with their existence at all.

Being part of the rarefied air of an institution of higher learning does not make us immune to appreciation of each other's bodies, and I certainly hope it doesn't make us all into prudes. The calendar is hardly worth the controversy, and whether or not it is worth the list price is up to you.

The Gateway

Editor-in-Chief: DRAGOS RUIU
 Managing Editor: ROSA JACKSON
 News Editors: KEVIN LAW, JEFF COWLEY
 Entertainment Editor: MIKE SPINDLOE
 Sports Editor: ALAN SMALL
 Photo Editor: CLIVE OSHRY
 Production Editor: RANDAL SMATHERS
 Circulation Manager: TERI CLARKE
 Advertising: TOM WRIGHT

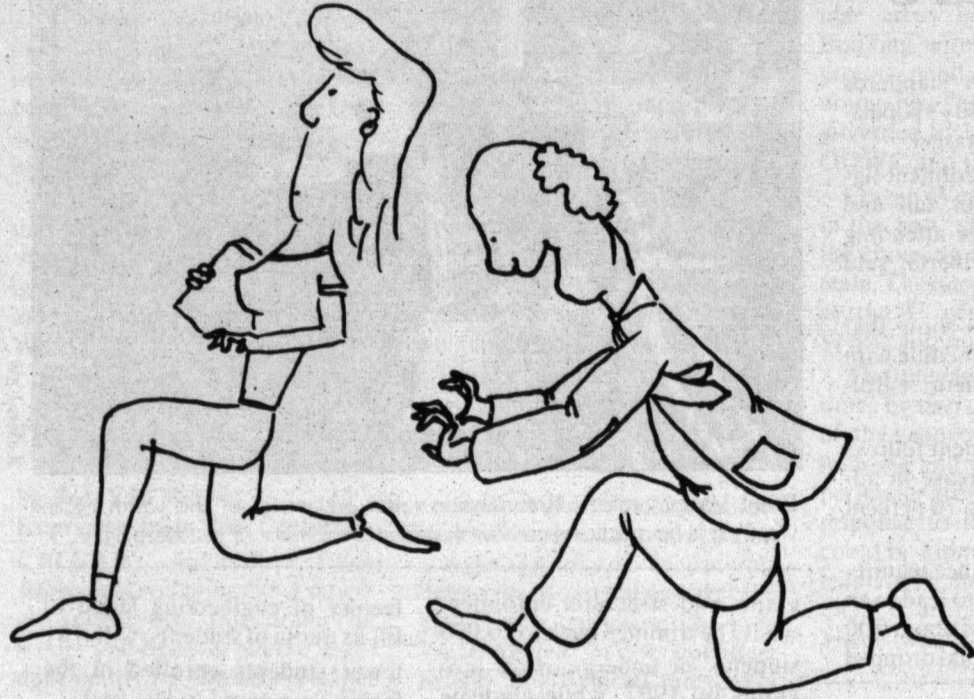
CONTRIBUTORS

WENDY CRISPIN, RACHEL SANDERS, PAM HNYTKA, GRANT WINTON, LLOYD ROBERTSON, RON KUIPERS, ALEXANDRA PARR, CARL LEGGO, SUE JACKSON, TERRY GEDDES, RICHARD THORNLEY, MARTIN WARREN, G.N. MOHANKU'MAR, MARK PRIMMER, ELUISE MURRAY, SHANNON TAYLOR, BORIS ZVONKOVIC, CAROL DASSIAN, MARTIN LEVENSON, DOUG JOHNSON, ANDREW LUMMIS, DARREN KELLY, MICHAEL TOI BOOM, JASON BODNAR, ERIC JANSE, NOIAN BERG, WINSON LAI, IAN HUNSCHE, JIM KNUTSEN, COLIN NORTHCOTT, ROB GAI BRAITH, BYRON COLLINS, GARRY MAKAR, RON SEARS.

All materials appearing in *The Gateway* are copyright and may not be used without written permission of *The Gateway*.

The Gateway is the University of Alberta students' newspaper. Contents are the responsibility of the Editor-in-Chief. All opinions that are signed by the writer do not necessarily reflect the views of *The Gateway*. Copy deadlines are 11 a.m. Mondays and Wednesdays. Newsroom: 282 SUB (phone 432-5168). Sports and production offices: 230 SUB (phone 432-5068). Photos printed in *The Gateway* may be for sale. Call the photodirectorate at 432-5168 or come by Room 235 SUB. Advertising: Room 256D SUB (SU Executive offices) phone 432-4241. Mailing address: Room 256D Students' Union Building, U of A, Edmonton, Alberta. T6G 2J7. Readership is 30,000.

IS THIS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?
 OH WHY DIDN'T I GO SEE THAT
 P.A.C.S.H. MOVIE TO FIND OUT !!



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.

Bench missed

WHERE THE HELL IS THE BENCH???

You have stolen our only home on campus. Now when we come to 1st floor CAB we have no place to sit! Are we supposed to eat lunch on the floor? It's not as though there is an abundance of seating in CAB!

Benchlessly Yours,

Barry Rooke, Sc II
 Susan Groves, Sc II
 Robyn Stephenson, Ed II
 Charlene Yarow, Arts II
 Richard Thompson, Sc II
 (and numerous others)

Computing success

Last November, the Association for Computing Machinery held an academic contest in the area of computer programming. We competed in Regina, representing the University of Alberta, and placed first in our section of Alberta and Saskatchewan. We also placed first in our region, the Mountain region, covering both Canada and the United States. Because of this, we have been invited to

compete in the North American finals during Reading Week, held in Kentucky. We wish to thank the Department of Computing Science for covering our expenses for the trip to Regina. We also wish to thank the Secretary of the U of A Computing Society, Silvia Marchesin, who put in a great deal of effort to get us there and back.

Patricia Evans, Comp Sci II
 Wade Holst, Comp Sci II
 Brendan Mumey, Math III
 Russell Schulz, Comp Sci III

In defense of the calendar

I want to make a statement in defense of the University Girls of Alberta calendar. First and foremost, I get totally upset at these moralists, many of whom have double-standards, who outright criticize this calendar because of its provocative nature. While I see some truth in the fact that the calendar does not project an accurate image of the female population, I could not label the calendar as degrading. These "girls" appeared there by choice, and they probably had to beat out many others to make it. We live in a democratic and egalitarian society. While we should not exploit others for personal gain, censorship is even more dangerous. If a calendar presenting females in nightwear offends you, there is no obligation to read it. Maybe next year we can also have calendars that would interest the ladies.

Rhys Davies
 Science IV

Chickens rejects

Re: Meat supplied free (Jan. 16)

I would like to clear up Jason Rohside's interpretation of the Electrical Engineers' stunt for Engineering Week. Jason has mistaken our stunt for an act of charity. Although we are involved in a number of charitable events (Santa Stomp and Blood

Donating, to name a few), the car full of poultry was not one!

These converted interior car decorations were obtained from a poultry processing plant. The plant had rejected them as not suitable for human consumption. Therefore, if any misrepresentation occurred, we are truly sorry. I guess students with limited financial resources will have to choose between some of the essentials, as you defined: textbooks or beer.

So Jason, if you or someone you know, has one of those chickens sitting in your fridge: reconsider the palate melting chicken dinner. Unless your budget allows for an ample supply of sodium bicarbonate or a suitable laxative.

Darcy Gratton
 Engineering II

HUB metamorphosis

Past: HUB mall.

Present: hub MALL.

Sophia Love
 M.Ed I

