

UBC engineers are sexist

VANCOUVER (CUP) — Despite fierce opposition from their own deans and from campus groups, the engineers at the University of British Columbia intend to proceed with their annual lady Godiva ride, now called the Peeping Tom parade.

The ride, which has taken place every February since 1951, involves parading a nude woman through the campus on a horse, surrounded by rowdy engineers.

"When the Lower Mainland community sees this ride, it sees that sexism is condoned," said Gloria Coombs, a first year applied science student.

Danica Gleave, a member of the Coalition Against Sexism on Campus, said: "This ride is a public display of violence toward women. Even if other people (than engineers) and women do not see the ride, it will still affect them."

But the engineers say the ride embodies the spirit of engineers and they are unwilling to break the tradition.

"Lady Godiva is the patron saint of engineering," said Rich Fitzpatrick, treasurer of the engineering undergrad society.

"The ride symbolizes a kind of spirit (engineers share) to stand up for what you believe in under pressure."

Fitzpatrick said he doesn't consider the ride sexist or degrading although he admitted he would "probably" feel differently if the woman on the horse was his girlfriend.

"But that will never happen," he said.

Axel Meisen, dean of Applied Science said the ride is degrading to both women and men and

asked the engineers to cancel the event. He said he lacks the authority to cancel it himself but will consider closing the engineer's club house (the Cheese Factory) if they proceed.

"That would be a very unpopular move," said Fitzpatrick. "I don't think he'll do it."

In 1982, Dean L.M. Wedepohl padlocked the club house door, successfully pressuring the engineers to permanently stop producing their newspaper, the Red Rag.

Michael Davies, associate dean of applied science, said he wants to see the ride stopped because of the negative effect it has on female enrolment.

"I think there are a number of women in grade 12 who think about (the ride) and decide they don't want to go into engineering," he said.

About 15 per cent of the 1800 engineering students at UBC are women compared to 50 per cent in other traditionally male dominated fields such as law or medicine.

Lady Godiva was a mythical figure who intervened when her aristocratic husband mistreated the poor.

She disrobed and rode through the town on a horse. By displaying her body which was considered her husband's exclusive property, she shamed him before the village.

According to the myth, the townpeople so honoured her that they collectively refused to watch her ride.

Only one man, Tom, defied the town and surreptitiously watched her. The myth gave birth to the English expression "Peeping Tom."



At a joint meeting the Dalhousie Senate and Board of Governors discuss the implications of the Royal Commission on Post Secondary Education report. Photo by Todd K. Miller, Dal Photo.

Daily accused of biased journalism

MONTREAL (CUP) — Sixty students occupied the *McGill Daily* office last week to protest what they call the biased and irresponsible journalism of the student paper.

"The *Daily* is totally unresponsive to student needs," said Perry Smyth, a third-year economics student. "What students want is more campus news."

Students also claimed the *Daily* is "cliquish" and anti-semitic.

In a petition circulated after the occupation, the students called for an amendment to the *Daily's* statement of principles "to accommodate the free expression of diverse opinion."

Organizers of the occupation made rallying speeches in the cafeteria and student union lobby before going to the *Daily* offices. According to Smyth, at least 30 people spontaneously joined the occupation.

"There was a wide cross-section of students there," Smyth said. "They weren't all conservatives by any stretch."

Students carried placards that said "Put the dogma to sleep" and "Free speech at the *Daily*."

Senior news editor Brendan Weston objected to the disruption. "We've always discussed issues with any student who asked, and our staff and staff meetings are open and democratic," he said.

"We've explained this to the organisers. It's just a few students grandstanding."

Editor-in-chief Melinda Wittstock pointed out that all newspapers are biased. "The difference is that we admit our bias," she said.

"The *Daily* is an alternative press," said Wittstock. "Its purpose is to combat racism, sexism, heterosexism, and economic injustice, while covering news fairly, accurately, and to the best of its ability."

Smyth said staff members told him if he wants to change the paper he should write for it. "To get something worth paying for, I don't think I have to do that," Smyth said. "Most students don't have time to be journalists. We

have careers and whatnot."

The *Daily* is being attacked on other fronts as well. The McGill Students' Society is refusing to sign a rent agreement with the *Daily* unless its statement of principles is changed. An opt-out campaign, where students could choose whether they want to pay fees to the paper, has also been organised.

The *Daily's* statement of prin-

ciples is based on the belief that Canada is a class society and that the newspaper should be an agent of social change.

"I don't want to see the paper die," said Smyth. "I think having a *McGill Daily* is great, but there has to be some way set up so students can register their approval or disapproval."

The *McGill Daily* is celebrating its 75th year of publication.

CKDU FM one year old

By JOHN PITT

DALHOUSIE'S OWN ALTERNATIVE radio station, CKDU 97.5 FM, celebrates its first year on the air this Saturday. Over the past year the station has overcome some obstacles which have helped it to mature.

Charles Blair, CKDU's manager since last spring, says the station had to face some dry spells during the summer and Christmas vacation periods, when the number of volunteer staff hit an all-time low. Blair says CKDU pulled through its hard times, and now has about 100 volunteers to cover its non-stop broadcasts.

"Things have changed a lot in the year, both on and off the air," says Blair. For the listener these changes mean the station's on-air staff's style is more professional. Program scheduling is also more consistent through the week, and its variety has broadened.

CKDU now has calypso, funk, reggae, more jazz and blues, and multicultural shows including Greek, African, Chinese and Indian as part of its rosters. As

well, the station's short-wave receiver brings British Broadcasting Corporation news to Halifax three times during the week.

Blair says the station wants to meet the demands of its audience. "We are purveyors in new tastes," he says.

Off the air, CKDU has sponsored a year of Dal entertainment by promoting such artists as Philip Glass, Halifax flutist Steve Pedersen, writer Steve Katz, and Vancouver bands Skinny Puppy and Grapes of Wrath.

"In the future, we are bringing in poet Alan Ginsberg," says Blair.

But CKDU can't meet its operating expenses without the generosity of its audience. "It's important to understand that the station is a co-operative thing. We are giving people an alternative, but we can't do it for nothing," says Blair.

CKDU will kick off a \$10,000 fundraising campaign on February 28 to help meet its costs. The station doesn't want to increase its advertising sponsorship, and can't, says Blair. CKDU also receives about \$79,000 in student fees.

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