

# Varsity Voices

## Not So New

To The Editor:

I would like to make a few observations about the article "Group for Humans Formed" which appeared in Gateway, Dec. 13, 1963:

1. Mr. Dekker states that this newly formed society will "try to show that there are alternatives to the idea of Christianity . . ."—this should not be very difficult, since it is common knowledge that other religions exist which believe in a deity, or deities, other than Christ, e.g. Judaism, Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Hinduism, etc.

2. The object of this "Student Humanist Society," Mr. Dekker tells us, also, is to show ". . . that man is alone in the universe, . . . No gods aid him, and therefore he must dispose of metaphysics." This is to reduce man to the level of animals, since it is the existence of the supernatural soul, in man, and the gift of intelligence, by which he may by the use of reason, trace the branches of human knowledge to their first principles which elevates him above the animal kingdom. Therefore, I suggest that if the members of this Society do not recognize these supernatural qualities in themselves, "human" nor "humanists," and therefore the heading of the article "Group for Humans Formed" should have read "Group for Animals Formed!"

3. Mr. Dekker goes on to state that the purpose of this society is to provide some representation for non-religious people, such as atheists and agnostics. I suggest that Communism is the ideal representation for such people, since the first requisite for a good Communist is to renounce religion and deny the existence of a soul, or any supernatural being on which man is dependent.

Perhaps this is what Mr. Dekker is actually advocating, since he admits the so-called Humanist Society "is not unique" and "is related to an international philosophy of life."

Could the formation of this Society therefore be just another cloak for Communism? As Shakespeare said, "a rose by any other name . . ."

Yours sincerely  
Alexander Royick  
Graduate Studies

## Student Opinion

To The Editor:

The December 3rd edition of The Gateway carried an editorial discussing the brief on student opinion being prepared by the U of A Social Credit Association for submission to the Provincial Government. I would like to clarify a few points with regard to this brief.

First, no resolution sent to us for inclusion in the brief will be screened or edited in any way.

Secondly, the brief will contain no resolution sponsored by the Social Credit Association itself.

Thirdly, each resolution included in the brief will be accompanied by the name of the organization sponsoring it.

Fourthly, in the preface to the brief it will be made abundantly clear that those contributing resolutions are not thereby identifying themselves with the Social Credit Association or its views.

Finally, your suggestion that the preparation of a brief on student opinion might better rest in the hands of the Political Science Club is a good one. The fact remains, however, that no such action has been initiated either this year or in the past. Perhaps this will be done next year. The important thing is that a channel be established and maintained

whereby the views of students on provincial matters can reach the government.

Resolutions must be submitted to the government fairly soon if they are to be considered before the legislature opens. We hope that student organizations will co-operate in making successful our effort on their behalf.

Preston Manning  
U of A Social Credit  
Association

## Holier Than Thou

To The Editor:

Congratulations on winning the MacKenzie and Ottawa Journal Trophies, and on not winning the Bracken Trophy for editorial excellence. All three decisions were just. While cartoons are fine, they hardly replace the decisive, controversial and significant editorials one might expect of a university newspaper.

With the single commendable exception of your editorial on the fraternity influence in student government, the editorial policy of The Gateway, if indeed there is such a thing, has succeeded in producing an endless array of articles which have been insignificant, and/or ambivalent, and/or evasive. You have been consistent in your refusal to deal with most of the truly important questions at our university this year. For example:

(a) Between October and December, members of the staff and the student body have been actively engaged in the controversial Hawrelak affair. The Edmonton Journal has seen fit to print at least four editorials concerning the issues involved, but The Gateway has neither discussed nor taken a definitive stand on these issues. A token editorial was printed deploring the lack of police at one demonstration, which neatly avoided making any judgement on the real issues which prompted the whole affair.

(b) The question of UAC autonomy has been current this year, and it is a question of importance, to all students, particularly those here and in Calgary. Thus far, The Gateway has failed to make any firm statement for or against UAC autonomy. From past performances, an editorial on the subject will run: "I guess it's all right as long as no one objects . . . maybe."

Your only controversial editorials have treated trivial, harmless topics, while you have consistently failed to take forthright, provocative stands on any significant questions concerning this university (with the exception already mentioned). I trust that you will summon the courage to rectify this in the near future.

Yours truly,  
Russell Purdy  
Arts III.

EDITOR'S NOTE: You are apparently ignorant of a number of pertinent and irrefutable facts, which are absent from your letter.

(1) The Gateway was a runner-up for the editorials trophy. (Twenty-nine papers competed.)

(2) As regards UAC autonomy, it appears that you did not read the editorial "University Government Reform," Jan. 10.

(3) The Gateway felt the activities of your demonstrating group (here you fail to point out you were one of its leaders) were detrimental to this university and therefore did not support them.

Another item which may interest you is that on Jan. 10, for example, the Bracken Trophy winner (The Ubysses) saw fit to reprint one of our editorials. Its title—"Maturity."

## A brief on briefs; A statement on Finances; A slam on editorials; A search for "what"!!

### Humanists Not New

To The Editor:

With reference to Robin Hunter's comments in "Spectrum" may I recommend to those members of the newly-formed Humanist Society who might be interested in the history of their movement, a recent book by Enno van Gelder, *The Two Reformations of the 16th Century*.

Even a cursory glance at this work will indicate that the Humanists (U of A's version) do not have "some new and challenging ideas." Should the Humanist society wish to carry its enquiries into the 18th century, I would suggest Carl Becker's *Heavenly City of the 18th Century Philosophers*.

Speaking of Voltaire, who undoubtedly will be adopted as a patron saint of the new society, Becker writes: "Voltaire, sceptic—strange misconception! On the contrary, a man of faith, an apostle who fought the good fight, tireless to the end, writing 70 volumes to convey the truth that was to make us free." The humanistic point of view has thus had a number of worthy advocates, many of whom would furnish arguments for their 20th century descendants (even the U of A variety).

Turning to another aspect of Mr. Hunter's article, there appears to be an insinuation that the defenders of the "cherished dogmas of our society" are somehow opposed to free, rational enquiry. At the risk of being dubbed a slave of superstition may I quote John XXIII on this subject: ". . . every human being has the right to respect for his person, to his good reputation; the right to freedom in searching for truth and in expressing and communicating his opinions." (*Pacem in Terris*, 1963)

Admitting that the "search for an ever-elusive truth" is essential to the university atmosphere I cannot help but conclude that the Humanist Society is really putting old wine into new bottles. In the words of William Blake:

Mock on, Mock on, 'tis all in  
Rousseau: vain!

Mock on, Mock on; 'tis all in  
vain!

You throw the sand against  
the wind,  
And the wind blows it back  
again.

A sceptic (about Rationalism)

### Lecture Costs

To The Editor:

In considering the number of lecture hours each year, and the annual fee payment, I have come to the conclusion that each lecture costs me about 70c. Since lectures are prepaid, I have also come to the conclusion that in order to get my money's worth, I should show up at every one.

By the same reasoning, if a lecturer has 50 people in his class, each person paying 70c per lecture, each lecture brings about \$35 to the University. If a lecturer has not officially cancelled a class then, I feel he should show up to administer \$35 worth of lecture, or some part thereof.

This is especially true during the days immediately preceding a school holiday. Although many students might be away, I feel it is the duty of the lecturer to at least show up to see how many people want their money's worth. It is very inconvenient to go to three lectures on the last days of school only to find the lecturer has not shown up. In such cases I am sure the University is not willing to refund the cost of the lecture to each student, although in effect, there has been no value rendered for money received.

My point then, is that during days just before long holidays, when many people will not be at lectures, the lecturer should either officially cancel the class or should show up. Believing there will not be enough students to hold a class is a poor excuse for not showing up. There are still some students who like to receive what they pay for.

Sincerely yours,  
Dale Rusnell,  
Arts 3

## Richard McDowall's Musings



Flinging a scarf around my neck I called to Rastus the dog, and started my short walk out of the slight depression our house lay in, to the higher plateau of hills west of the house. It was cold outside and I was glad I was walking west for an eastern wind was blowing at my back. Scrambling thru' the frozen snow I finally reached the hilltop with old "Rasty" right in my footsteps. There in the western sky above the Rockies, spread as far as I could see, was the "Chinook Arch" which generally precedes the famous Chinook wind of Southern Alberta.

"Rastus, did you know that the Chinook is one of the freak winds that give weather forecasters gray hairs, found in the world's mountainous regions (the Sirocco in the eastern Mediterranean and the Föhn in Alps are among others) and is named after the Chinook Indians who inhabited the mouth of the Columbia River on the Pacific coast?"

He nodded in agreement.

"I'll bet you didn't know that as this basically mild moist Pacific air rises over the mountains, precipitation results. Due to the latent heat of condensation, heat is added to the air mass warming it up. Now if this large air mass moves over the mountains, it is subjected to mountain air stream turbulence and as this air mass descends on the prairies it wedges under the cold air. As this mass drops in height it increases in pressure, which theoretically adds more warmth to the air masses."

He flipped one ear up and again nodded in agreement. Smart Dog. "The chinook arch before us which generally precedes the Chinook wind is built when a cloud mass forms above the warm Pacific air as it slips over the Rockies. The bases of the Altocumulus is usually about two miles above ground and the formation looks like an arch because its ends are long apart and appear to bend toward the horizon."

I had no sooner said this than Rasty pointed his wet nose toward the mountains and lifted both ears as though he was listening for something. Then I heard the sound I had waited to hear—that dull roar of the west wind as it comes shooting through the mountain passes: ahead of us I could see little bits of snow being lifted and carried along toward us.

Flinging my scarf around my neck, I called to the dog and turned toward home. I was glad I had my scarf on, for there was a strong wind at my back from the west.

## Adam Campbell



### Short and Sour

I had the strangest dream the other night.

I was standing in a long line of young people outside a structure which resembled a factory. A state of anxiety seemed to abound.

Suddenly I felt the ground move under my feet and saw that I was standing on a conveyor belt. As the belt conveyed up through some gates, a little hammer tapped each forehead leaving an imprint, "TOP 5 per cent."

We continued to be transferred as if paralyzed until we entered a cavern-like structure. Over the opening was written, "PLATO'S PLACE."

It seemed that nobody could smile once inside the cave and the most peculiar thing happened. Everybody suddenly became a grotesque homunculus.

I overheard a couple of these monstrosities grumbling about somebody called "Mac" who somehow slipped by the selection board and who could not adapt.

It seems that "Mac" had erected a small theatre alongside the belt that transported the beasts to their meals and was forever showing movies.

Sure enough, as I went by, I spied a sign—"Smile with MacHowell." "Mac" showed movies of the outside mundane world (the world of the other 95 per cent), where people smiled, admired sunsets, children frolicked in the snow and celebrated Christmas—and other useless endeavours.

These movies disgusted the homunculi who were busy flushing political speeches down toilet bowls, trying to find correlations between the diameters of little yellow holes in the snow or that only actors should be allowed to wear beards—(to prove that they are not THAT way I suppose).

Somewhat I got caught sympathizing with "Mac" about a fairy tale called "Le Petit Prince" and we were tried and sentenced to a life listening to incumbents' speeches.

I awoke in a state of shock.