

## EDITORIAL

## Brave new spud

The hot topic at the recent U of A Senate meeting was artificial potato skins.

It seems the university has been doing research on manufacturing potato skins for the past little while under an agreement with I & S Foods.

Now, there are many advantages to manufacturing artificial potato skins. With the current popularity of the once-reviled potato skin as an appetizer or light snack, fast food outlets are demanding more and more potato skins.

But the best news about artificial potato skins is their marketability. That's right, we're talking Technology Transfer. Can you say that? Good. Because technology transfer is one of the areas the Alberta government is ready to put big seed money into as part of its five-year plan for a new, improved, hi-tech future for Albertans.

Big demand for potato skins; big cash crop opportunity.

Alberta wants a more diverse economic base, preferably a profitable one like Japan's hi-tech base; push for a made-in-Alberta hi-tech industry.

Potatoes — i.e. cash crop — don't grow well in Alberta; make fake potato skins — i.e. hi-tech growth industry for Alberta!

Not only will we be rolling in the starch, we won't have to dig it up. That's right. People won't have to suffer mundane jobs like farming and assembly line inspection. Everyone will be free to pursue that great leisure suit and cottage-by-the-lake in the sky.

This all sounds fine and dandy on paper, but Prince Edward Island and Maine, not boom-time areas, had potato surpluses this year. They might have surpluses next year. And the next.

Or they might not. But the potato skins fad might not last through next year. Or the year after.

And it's nice to see that the government believes people should direct their energies toward more humanistic ends rather than dead-end, labour-intensive jobs.

But what would potato growers and plantation workers do if they were replaced by a bunch of chemicals in beakers? Become poets?

The type of jobs created by new technology is very different than that which would be lost to hi-tech.

Only a small elite would be able to compete for these bright, new hi-tech jobs while the vast majority of people would become starving poets standing in the dole queues — for UIC, not artificial banana skins.

Maybe that's overstating the issue. Our venerable Senators seem to think Canadian society can be transformed into a model of the hierarchical, socially regressive, conformist but damn successful Japanese society.

In Japan, one Senator pointed out, people who lose their jobs to robots and lasers are streamed into the area of sales (someone has to flog off all these new-tech toys) where presumably customers prefer to be imposed upon by a flesh-and-blood sales rep. rather than a mechanical one. At least for the time being.

The moral of the story? Take the B.S. the university offers and don white shoes and a white belt and become an artificial potato skins salesman.

Suzette C. Chan

## Bums go home

Thirty thousand drunks roll into Edmonton for a three-day binge, and we greet them with open arms.

On the evening news, we see trainloads of yahoos in such a state of stupidity that it's all they can do to remember the words: "Here we go Bombers, here we go." Alcohol abuse is not funny. Yet reporters get a chuckle out of trying to draw a few coherent words from drunks on the verge of collapse.

Hotel owners clear lobbies of ashtrays and lamps; they secure remaining furniture for the invasion. Edmonton becomes a giant monkey cage.

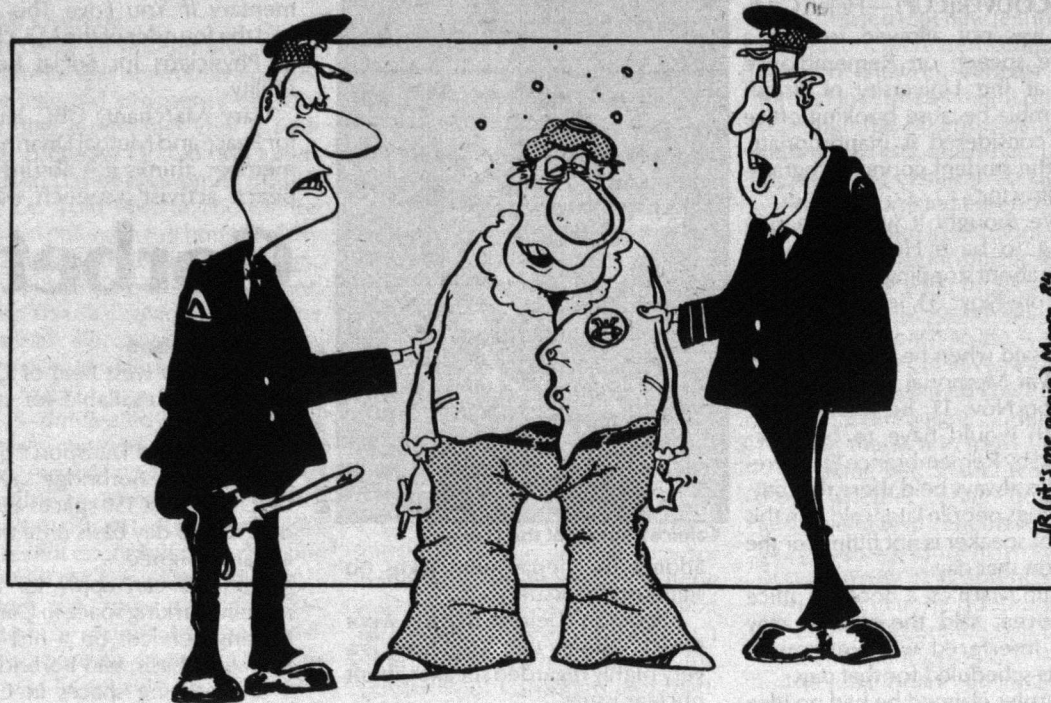
Every fifteen minutes, the animals come in busloads to downtown bars. They're preceded by a ringleader with a bullhorn: "Grey Cup Express leaves in fifteen minutes." Hoseheads have a quarter-hour to drain the shelves of anything even remotely resembling alcohol. Then the circus moves on, closely followed by another busload.

Hookers report a brisk trade. Again, images are sent across the country on the evening news of a smiling reporter chatting amusedly with a 6th street regular.

And now, after the onslaught, we are told that Grey Cup weekend was a huge success. For the second time in a year, Edmonton has become the repository for Canada's drunkards, and we're supposed to be proud of our hospitality. Battening down the furniture and sweeping the vomit under the carpet is considered good hospitality.

While the architectural beauty of Vancouver's Expo '86 is aired on national news, and Toronto's film festival is gaining world recognition, Edmonton is becoming known as a great place to get drunk and pick up hookers. And we're supposed to be proud.

David Jordan



"I'll sure be glad when these drunk Winnipeggers go home."

"Hey watch what you say around the Manitoba Premier!"

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

## Empty generalities

I must admit that Kent Cochrane's editorial about Ronald Reagan's re-election was biased. It is always risky to make generalities about an entire nation simply because of the man who is leading it. However, Dale Mounzer's strange rebuttal does exactly the same thing. To listen to him, Reagan's administration has never made a blunder in its political life. Nor has America in its 200-year history been guilty of any misnomer, mistake, misdeed, or miscalculation (my God, I bet they don't even spit on the street). Let's face it, guys, America has given much to the world, but it also has skeletons in its closet, just like any other nation. It isn't the devil-in-disguise that you think it is, Kent. On the other hand Dale, America isn't heaven-on-earth.

I guess what I really want to say is that generality doesn't work in real life. There is nothing worse than someone blindly bashing America over the head, unless of course it is somebody else zealously screaming 'America the Beautiful' right behind him.

P. Morg  
Arts IV

## Does not compute?

I was disturbed by the article in the Gateway (Nov. 8) concerning Computing Services user fees. There appears to be a discrepancy in the university's fee collection policy.

If these Computing Services fees are strictly "user" fees, then why is this policy not extended to health services and athletic board fees? While these services may be available to all students, they are certainly not used by all students. It is even more disturbing when one considers the large portion of athletic board fees that go towards maintaining intercollegiate sports, in which even fewer students participate.

Secondly, if the use of these terminals and services are required by university courses, should they not be paid for out of the appropriate faculty's tuition fees? Could it be that the Board of Governors is circum-

venting the problem of a zero per cent tuition fee increase (since the provincial government did not increase university funding last year) by introducing additional "user" fees? If it is, I find this both distasteful and dishonest. I have always believed that the levying of extra fees such as the lab fees, class note fees, material fees, etc. was an unfair and "backdoor" approach to the collection of monies. Are these academic services and related materials not what our tuition fees are collected for?

I am fully aware of the financial woes of this university and of the short-sightedness and ineptitude of the provincial government to provide the necessary funding. But if students are going to be burdened once again by the university's financial problems, then let the Board of Governors and the university administration at least clarify their fee collection policy and be honest with students and the public about what is really taking place.

Dean Olmstead  
Grad. Studies

## Computer literacy

As an undergraduate computing science student I am required to take English 210 in order to learn how to "write an intelligent coherent report based on fact applicable to my field of work."

My first essay was returned with the following remarks from my professor: "There are so many elementary weaknesses and errors in your paper that I cannot give it a passing grade." Upon confronting my professor, the only response was that I should a) consider hiring a tutor, or b) reconsider my position as a student in University.

Enrolled in an interpretive literature course, it is assumed that I am already able to write coherently and to the standards set forth by the department of English, and should therefore be concerned only with the study and interpretation of literary works. The necessity of hiring a tutor would tend to indicate that the course is not teaching the skills I am required to master. If my writing skills are so deficient that I shouldn't be in University, what the f--k am I doing in an interpretive literature course? Having received a

## The Gateway

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Early one evening, just as the type was setting, Mike Evans spotted Tom Huh and Tim Hellum flashing Warren Opheim in the valley below. Diana Wiberg and Greg Owens were aghast. Bill Overend and Bill Doskotch became all-time best friends with Shona Welsh, while Ross Gordon lost his manuscript. Jim Moore took a shot at the bear, Shane Berg tooned in and turned out, and Hans Beckers contemplated both sticks and stones. Jim Herbert cleaned up the managing editors' desk and headed home through the valley.