



A typical weekend line-up for Student Cinema outside the SUB theatre

Student cinema exposed

by Greg Neiman

The U of A cinema is a good place to see a movie cheap instead of a cheap movie, but there are drawbacks, like excessively long lineups, large crowds, and no popcorn.

Vern Torstensen, director of Student Cinema, with a staff of eight, work under the auspices of the Students Union to bring us "Little Big Man," "Steelyard Blues", "Carnal Knowledge", and a host of other flicks to provide the students with inexpensive service.

The theatre seats 650, and attendance is always excellent. This is reflected in returns which

far exceed guaranteed film rental rates.

For instance, "Little Big Man" costs \$500 to rent, or 50% of gross ticket income, (whichever is greater).

There were six showings of the film, four of which were sellouts.

"We always pay 50% because we have that kind of attendance," says Torstensen.

There have been times when some movie-goers sat in the aisles to watch the movie, yet Torstensen says no more than 650 tickets are ever sold.

Torstensen says that advance ticket sales exceed that of door sales, indicating that students are interested in the

cinema service. Advance tickets are obtainable in the box office in SUB, which gets 5% of advance ticket sales.

The cinema is equipped with machinery to show Cinerama and Vistavision movies, which greatly widens the choice range of the theatre.

Movies are supplied by a distributor in Calgary, and are chosen either by Torstensen, or by students coming into his office and making a request.

Right now, despite the large numbers of people coming to see the movies, there are no plans of expansion. Torstensen says, "Right now, it's a good service...there's no need to make more money."

SLS provides aid

by Gary Draper

Is your landlord threatening to evict you or refusing to return your damage deposit?

Need a divorce? Finance company trying to take back the TV?

If you can't afford a lawyer and Legal Aid doesn't cover your problem Student Legal Services may help you.

Student Legal Services is a group of law students at the university who are trying to aid people who can't afford expensive legal advice.

SLS handles about 4000 calls per year. Often they will refer callers to an agency better able to help them.

The law students work under professional lawyers, who check the work at various stages, to help with any unexpected difficulties.

Generally SLS staff members can't appear for clients in court, but they can give a client the knowledge needed to handle himself in court, as well as helping with various other legal problems where a court appearance is unnecessary.

They encourage people to help themselves.

SLS has a number of offices throughout the city. The office in the Students' Union Building, is the general city office.

Offices in Boyle Street, Hardisty, and West-10 cater to those communities.

The basic philosophy of Student Legal Services is two-fold. First, is what they call "band-aid" work. This involves

helping a client with the immediate problem at hand (ie. getting somebody back their damage deposit).

The other portion is educative, teaching people what the law is in general and how to use it.

This project is called AGIT-PROP (for agitation propaganda). Its director is Andy Sims, author of the Craig Report, which initiated the Kirby Commission's inquiry into justice in the lower court system.

The people in this area produce pamphlets as a guide to people on welfare so that they are not intimidated by social workers.

They appear before classes of high school students, and conduct seminars to educate community groups.

Sims says, "A lot of people get into legal problems because they just don't know what they are doing. If we can give people an understanding and confidence in the law, it will enable them to use it to their advantage."

Student Legal Services' best known project is its office in the Boyle Street Co-op.

Boyle Street project director Ron Liteplo agrees; "Instead of just working on individual problems, we also have to work on the cause as well as the effect. We want to give people some sense that the law exists for them and not only against them."

Liteplo, states that the majority of their cases involve transients,

single parent families and widows.

"Most of them are unemployed and welfare is almost universal."

"These people haven't access to regular legal advice."

He feels that SLS has to work toward developing a community spirit and demystify the law for these people.

When asked about their relations with the legal profession, Director Dave Findlay said that they were generally very good.

"We have 40 lawyers participating in the program in one way or another."

"Some lawyers don't think we should be around, that we're a danger to the public. But these people don't know the program."

"They don't understand our double check system to prevent mistakes and they don't realize the extent of the problem."

"There are just so many people requiring legal services and have no access to them."

I asked Dave Findlay what their clients thought of SLS.

He said, "I think people are generally satisfied with the work we do here. We really have no means of measuring that though."

In a survey of 77 past clients, however, 60 felt that SLS did a good or very good job and only 17 thought they did only a fair or poor job.

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Healthy outlook ahead

by Brian Tucker

Two years ago the board of governors issued a challenge to university health services by levying a voluntary health fee for students.

Faced with having to prove its worth, the service cut its staff to a bare minimum and awaited reaction from the 18,000 university students who support the service.

With an average of 200 patients a day streaming into the facility (an increase of 15 per cent over last year), acting director F.B. Cookson is more optimistic about its future.

"The students told them (the board) what they wanted," says Cookson, who is filling in for M.J. Ball. More than 13,000 students have paid the voluntary \$10 fee this year.

The service provides walk-in treatment.

It also has gynaecology, obstetrics and psychiatric clinics, offers preventative dental care and prescriptions for a standard \$1 fee.

It will cost the university \$165,966, up only \$15,000 from last year despite an increase in salaries.

Since his appointment as acting director, Cookson has reviewed the operation to determine the minimum requirements for adequate service.

He found that research and administrative functions were stressed too much in the health service.

"This place has only one real purpose - a student service. Everything else comes way down the line."

He set an example by cutting down on the meetings and seeing patients several mornings a week.

"You can build these bureaucracies up, take the students away, they would still be operating," he observed.

It's not that students are a privileged clique that deserves special treatment. It is a fact, however, that students function in a unique environment.

Due to the high population density on campus, students are prone to infections and viruses. In particular pneumonia and severe mononucleosis are common.

Incidence of the latter is four to five times that in the community.

As a result, one of the services offered is an infirmary, in which students receive treatment while attending classes.

The large city hospitals could handle these cases, but they assume the patient has a home where basic needs such as food and clothing are provided by relatives or friends.

Many students live in residences, which are "highrises without the facilities of high rises; in a sense, they are overcrowded slum houses," says Cookson.

"It means that the type of thing you could treat at home now needs to be admitted to the infirmary."

Also to be considered is the high level of psychiatric problems at the university, he adds.

"You don't see an awful lot of heavy psychiatry, psychosis and schizophrenia, but you have a lot of anxiety and depression."

They are symptoms for a majority of patients in the infirmary, which is usually 85 per cent occupied during the academic year.

Students have too much invested to afford to miss many classes, says Cookson. "But so has the community. You're saving economic dollars too."

Dr. Cookson is willing to accept that his service is being examined by the board of governors and a recently established general faculties council committee studying student services.

He thinks it a good thing. Last year, though, "it did affect the staff. They weren't sure they would be here."

The service now has a full-time and part-time medical staff of 33, including three full-time physicians and eight others who work on a part-time basis during the academic year.

Even with staff restrictions, several pilot programs have been initiated, largely with volunteers.

Four weeks ago, Cookson opened up a Saturday morning gynaecology clinic as an experiment. It worked so well - 25-30 patients were received - that he plans to make it a full-time feature.

Another new service which has caught on with students is the weekly weight watchers program, which has well over 35 participants.

After more than a year as acting director, Cookson recommends greater co-ordination of the health service with other student services, particularly counselling.

As at the University of Calgary, health care facilities and counselling should be housed in the same building; this might solve the apparent lack of communication between the two services here, he adds.

Discussions have been under way to extend the service to non-academic staff at the university, thus providing an additional source of revenue. Such a move would require a voluntary fee for non-academic staff members and approval of the non-academic staff association.

Government assistance for the service has been discussed, with the government contributing a fixed amount on an average cost per student basis.

But the plan has been shelved for the moment, so that each side can study the costs involved. "Under the scheme, it is possible the university may be paying more," Cookson says.

"The service is now reasonably well organized and functioning adequately," he says. "From this basis, we are now in a position to move toward the expected goal of being as nearly self supporting as possible."

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