

Opinion

Dragos Ruiu News a creation



Straight Propaganda. That's we are being fed by modern media. It's an honest form of propaganda, but nonetheless, it's only propaganda.

It is motivated solely by reader desires. Reader desires mean sales, viewers, advertisers, and continued financial prosperity. Sensationalism sells.

How many times in this last month have you seen death-counts on a *Sun* headline, screaming out at you in forty-billion point type? How many times have you read articles about inconsequential reports with flashy conclusions in the *Journal*? How many times have you seen stupid interviews with the second cousin of the wife of a murderer's next-door neighbor on CFRN news?

Too many times.

Soon you realize that the media does not merely discover and report news — it CREATES it. Competition constantly forces the media to put responsible, comprehensive coverage behind the flashy "sound-bites" that will draw the juvenile minds of the reading/viewing/listening audience.

Case in point: Here at *The Gateway* we were allowed to see a copy of the CAPS report that says employment options for science students may be weak in some areas. We dismissed it. It was a good study, but the sample was small. It was only a preliminary test for what was hoped would be a larger study.

The local media quickly pounced on it — it had some surprising conclusions, if you didn't take the survey in context. All of a sudden because of twelve meteorologists, meteorology had an 88 per cent employment rate. The survey became news, merely because it was reported on.

The *Edmonton Journal* even managed to parlay this study into two news stories and a education column. They swayed popular opinion enormously. The survey was even brought up in my Sociology course.

News coverage in these enlightened times does not count on important facts, merely eye-catching ones.

Here at the university we have Faculte Saint Jean residence, smoking petitions, and Scroll campaigns. If you read *The Gateway* you will have heard of these issues; they're trendy. You can talk to people in your classes about them because they are remembered. But in the end they will not mean as much as say, the university's planning document: The Next Decade and Beyond. I wonder how many people out there remember what that is?

The Gateway

Editor-in-Chief: DRAGOS RUIU
 Managing Editor: ROSA JACKSON
 News Editors: KEVIN LAW, JEFF COWLEY
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CONTRIBUTORS

THERESA PIRES, MICHELLE LAGRANGE,
 WILL GIBSON, MARTIN LEVENSON, KING
 LO, AJAY BHARDWAJ, RON KUIPERS,
 OSCAR STRELKOV, ROSS GRAY, DAVID
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 WINSTON PEI.

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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 492-5168). Sports and production offices: 230 SUB (phone 492-5068). Photos printed in *The Gateway* may be for sale. Call the photodirectorate at 492-5168 or come by Room 235 SUB. Advertising: Room 256D SUB (SU Executive offices) phone 492-4241. Mailing address: Room 256D Students' Union Building, U of A Edmonton, Alberta. T6G 2J7. Readership is 30,000.

(MARV MOORE PRESS CONFERENCE)

I WON'T BE RUNNING AGAIN,
 I'D LIKE TO BE A SENATOR
 INSTEAD...

SORT OF EARLY RETIREMENT
 WITH BETTER BENEFITS!



Letters

Senate Reform worth working for

Re: Triple E Senate no benefit to Albertans (Feb. 3)

Contrary to the opinion expressed by Martin, Senate Reform isn't the dead issue he claims it to be. While it is much easier to be cynical and do nothing than actually admit it's a good goal to shoot for, Martin misses on other levels as well.

Firstly, it's not some fascist plot to undermine democracy. Senate Reform suggests that Canada is a country of regions, and these regions could be better represented at a federal level. Ontario and Quebec still have their justly deserved majority in the House of Commons; why not have a House (the Senate) that puts each province on equal footing in discussing legislation.

Secondly, the move to executive federalism does not make the Senate a waste. The agendas of First Ministers' meetings are restricted to Finance and Constitutional changes. While both are very general subjects, they are not all encompassing. Thus, regions still need a voice at the federal level.

Space doesn't permit a continued rebuttal, but the point needs to be made that Senate Reform isn't just some hamburger offered to a hungry electorate. Even the campus Tories recognize that it isn't going to happen overnight, either. It is, however, an issue worth working for, because it adds to Canadian democracy not takes away from it. I'd encourage concerned Canadians to sign the petition and be a part of the process to at least attempt Senate Reform.

Randy Thompson
 VP Policy, U of A Tories

Baich a butt-pirate

Re: Mr. Baich's cartoon in "Opinion" (Jan. 31)

We are shocked and amazed that a University student has such a narrow perspective on the merits of a truly outstanding cinematographic production. *The Accidental Tourist* was an intensely reflective yet refreshing break from the obvious plots and characterizations portrayed in the very mediocre production, *Twins*.

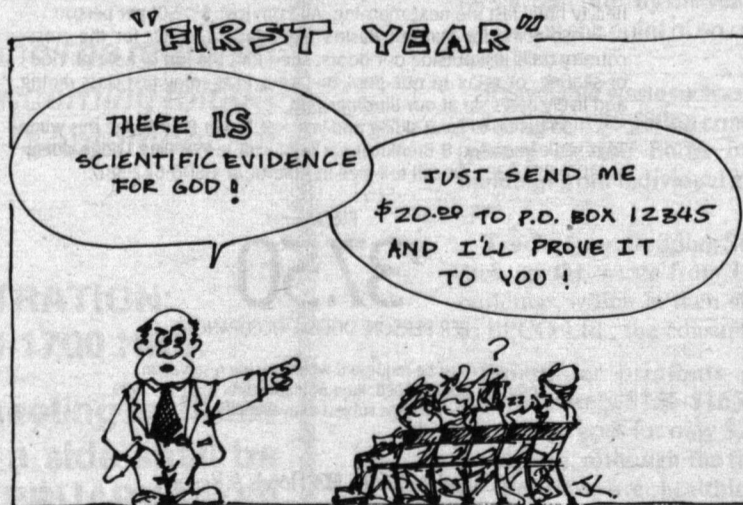
If Mr. Baich had the literary competence to read the novel the film was based on, then perhaps he could comprehend the subtle, artistic nuances portrayed therein.

In describing scenes from *Twins*, Mr. Baich comes across as a superficial butt-pirate interested more in Mr. Schwarzenegger's anatomy than the plot of the cheap excuse for a movie.

We hope that our friend would consider enrolling in an interdepartmental film studies course to develop a true appreciation of the visual arts. His narrow-minded conception of *The Accidental Tourist* is typical of this right wing PC campus.

For Shame!!

Gary Godziuk, Arts IV
 Charles Vethan, Sc. IV
 Jill Chesley, Arts III
 Jodi Querengesser, Sc. III
 Cori Nafe, Arts IV



Fundamentalists frightening

Re: Respect Religions (Feb. 3)

Rev. Bogert-O'Brien is not the only one with unease over "Christian Awareness Week." However, Fundamentalist Christians won't see a need to indicate from which tradition they speak, because they believe they're the only true Christians. I really doubt that they will ever change. They are a cult of enthusiasm whose members support each other by telling each other how right they are. They take the Bible, make it fit their

interpretation of faith, and then claim it supports them. In philosophy, this is called begging the question.

It is really unfortunate that such a way of thinking exists so pervasively in these churches, especially if they continue to gain power and influence in our society as they add new members. I worry that many of our cherished freedoms will erode in the hands of dangerous closed mindedness.

Tony Morris