

## DIBDIN'S PERSONAL REPLY

Dear Sir:

Since the publication in Gateway of what you termed "The Dibdin Papers", various letters have appeared concerning the issues involved. Most have been sympathetic to my position and to the authors of these, as well as of the many private communications I have received, I can only my thanks for their understanding.

However, a number of other points have been raised which I should like to comment on. The most obvious of these is the continual reiteration of some phrase to the effect that my motives in publishing the letters might be questioned. Now evidently if one is predisposed to question my motives, a priori there is no point in my attempting to explain them to him, since any explanation will be subject to the same predisposition. For those who are not so disposed I will simply say that the matter seemed to me of sufficient importance as a symptom of one aspect of academic life to warrant it being brought to the attention of the student body. Some people have argued that it would have been more in keeping with Departmental esprit de corps to keep the matter so to speak *sub rosa*, but I fail to understand how such gentlemen's agreements can be expected to hold after one party has demonstrated conclusively that they are not gentlemen.

I entertained no hopes of affecting any material change in the state of affairs the letter revealed. It will take more than the cheap betrayals of a snivelling Judas to divert Fate's lieutenant from his predestined course. Nor did I harbour any resentment for the faculty involved, any more than I do for any species so obviously doomed to extinction and meanwhile struggling to survive in a world it understands less than a 15-year-old panhandler. One cannot hate such people. Even in their anger they remain pathetic: the tone of true authority eludes them and all that remains is petulance and vague threats. But neither is there any future in trying to fight them. One simply keeps out of their way.

Which brings me to my next point. Apparently rumours have been circulating in the Dept. of English to the effect that I was in fact forced out of the Ph.D. program by poor grades and subsequently had the letters published in a fit of pique. If anyone believes this story I wish he would say so in print, so that I could sue him for a considerable amount of money. The facts of the matter are that having decided that I did not wish to pursue research at this university (for reasons that should be obvious), I deliberately failed to submit a written assignment in English 695 (a half-year course). As a result I drew a failing grade (4) representing 50% of my work. Anyone wishing to verify these facts should contact either Dr. R. Merrett or Dr. A. T. Elder,

respectively the instructor of the course and the Chairman of the Graduate Committee, Department of English.

Finally I should like to lay to rest various minor points that have been brought up, most notably in John Hodgkins' letter (Gateway, Jan. 27).

1) Almost every correspondent has missed what seems to me to be the crucial significance of the published letters. The one exception was the author of the petition included in Ralph Lysyshyn's communication, who got admirably to the heart of the matter - namely that the question is whether or not one should address faculty members by their titles or attach informal notes to essay assignments but rather the manner in which conflicts between faculty and the students resolved, *irrespective of the issues at stake*.

2) There were no "significant antecedents", to borrow Mr. Hodgkins' elegant phrase. My only contact with Rose apart from the letters consisted of an exchange in the corridor outside his office, in the course of which he saw fit to criticize my clothes (a tie-dye sweatshirt and blue slacks) as being unsuitable for 210 instructor. My contacts with Bilsland were of a purely routine nature.

3) Mr. Hodgkins speculated on the reasons for Dr. Rose's refusal to comment on the incident. He suggests that it stems from a decision not "to indulge muckraking". I feel that Rose's past record in polemic tends to cast doubt on this charitable hypothesis. I would further suggest that the answer is in fact much simpler: that Rose and company realized that the letters made them appear incredibly silly, that any rejoinder could only add to the effect, and that their best recourse was to a silence which might somehow suggest some remaining shreds of dignity.

4) On the question of why I did not take the material to the Gateway sooner I need only say that when the incident occurred I still had hopes of completing my Ph.D. and while not being immune to the inevitable is an idea I have had to get used to, I saw no reason to provoke the unnecessary. As the Chinese say, "A wise man does not approach the dying dinosaur." It may be of interest to your readers to know that I received two phone calls from members of the Department concerning the letters, both of whom mentioned in passing that they knew people who had in their possession letters from Rose which made mine sound like a greetings telegram.

Yours sincerely,  
M. Dibdin

## Reading Week

Dear Sir:

This regards your editorial of Tuesday, February 1, 1972, advocating a "do as you please and don't give a damn about anyone else" policy to obtain a study week on campus. It's a constant source of irritation to me to see student activism and revolutionary zeal gradually pass from its initial concern for the fundamental issues to its present

involvement with trivia.

You've grown old and you make a farce of revolution. Your contrived issues have as much bearing on social reform as past debates on the number of angels in heaven have had to religion. You seem to have some zeal for private issues, but what is required is a revolution for man.

Sesto Vespa  
Grad Studies

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## Consideration of the Minority

To the Editor:

I am one of the 6,000 who did not sign the petition to implement a reading week. I am also one of those opposed to such action. For this reason I cannot sanction by silence your editorial urging the students' audience to force the existence of a reading week, with or without administrative recognition and without any rationale other than that the majority wishes to have it. (A rule by consensus is a democratic dictatorship.)

Have you considered the minority and we who oppose it? Must we face the possibility of a week of cancelled classes because of deficient attendance? Must our class time, which we *paid* for, be sacrificed because 12,000 desire a moratorium? The answer is no. Might does not make right and neither does numbers.

Even if I were one of the 12,000 in favor, I would not join your strike. For to do so is to admit that action supported by numbers reigns over action supported by thought -- rational thought. Furthermore, if I have *reasons* for a reading week, the GFC's ruling would be irrelevant, and I would not need *you* to prompt me to strike.

A final thought: of the 12,000, what fraction have intentions to use the reading week for its acknowledged, academic purpose?

Yours truly,  
Mon-art Pon  
ArtsII

## A Lost War

Dear masses:

*Come Wind, Come Weather* (1941) was Daphne duMaurier's contribution to the war effort. It's a collection of a dozen or so anecdotes about how humble, sordidly selfish little men and women had their lives transformed by the war and turned from petty quarrelling and jealousies to a better life of humility and self-sacrifice for one another and the cause. I was struck by the fascinating similarity between this theme and the fascist view of the war as an ennobling, cleansing thing which brings out the best in man, and set out with it to my 9:30 class last Thursday planning to show it to various people I thought would be interested. Alas, fate dealt me a cruel blow: I dropped it somewhere along 112th Street. If any of you out there happened to pick it up (or know how I could replace it), would you be so kind as to bring it to the Gateway office or phone me (439-1985)? Thank you.

Jim Dunlap  
Arts.

## You're over 18 — Take your reading week

Dear Gateway:

Oh hum... so the GFC won't sanction a one week vacation so we can all go of skiing or sleep in late or get caught up on our reading. Tough luck, Dave baby, but I'm sure the kids will remember that it was your name on the bottom of all those posters when Students' Union election time comes around... anyway, back to the vacation: if there is a law that states that thou shalt not miss classes at U of A, I'm unaware of it; so if you want a week to go

# The Gateway

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staff this issue are all imaginary



In fact you can't even see this paper.

Out of consideration for Stu Layfield we

have omitted his name along with the others.

Departments Editor-in-chief-Bob Beal (432-5179), news-Elsie Ross (432-5168), Sports-Ron Ternoway (432-4329), advertising Percy Wickman (432-4241) production-Jim Selby and Ron Yakimchuk, Photo-Barry Headrick and Don Bruce (432-4355) arts-Ross Harvey, and last but not least, publisher Harvey G. Thomgirt (432-5168).

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## Homosexuality and the Bible

Dear Sir,

I should like to comment on Mr. Ken Orr's letter to The Gateway concerning Mr. Robert's article on homosexuality.

Mr. Orr may be congratulated on his firm views and for his reliance on "Apostles and Prophets ... who have recorded the mind and will" of God. Indeed such a reliance affords the believer an infinite security. Having once been an active member of the same church as Mr. Orr I can appreciate the secure height from which he views Mr. Robert's article. I believe, however, that Mr. Orr's reliance on Prophets has perhaps distanced him from the world and caused a misinterpretation of Mr. Robert's article.

If one reads the preamble under Mr. Robert's photograph surely one realizes that what is being called for, above all else, is an understanding heart. The article that follows is an attempt to inform those of us who are fortunate enough to be normal of the causes of homosexuality and the dilemma of those who have undergone such an error in their sexual development.

It is this call for understanding that seems to have escaped Mr. Orr, who, from the rarified atmosphere of Mount Sinai, feels that he "cannot condone homosexuality." Perhaps in his struggle for perfection (Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. Matthew 5:48) Mr. Orr has lost sight of "and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors (Matthew 6:12)," or "judge not, that ye be not judged (Matthew 7:1)." Of course Mr. Roberts is not asking for forgiveness; rather the emphasis of the article is on giving information. May I recommend that both Mr. Roberts and Mr. Orr write to the Society of Friends, Euston Square, London N.W.1, England for an excellent pamphlet entitled "A Quaker View Towards Sex"

Yours,  
Anthony Fleming-Blake  
Grad Studies

The profits (sic) and apostles do have things to say, true, but they are fallible human beings, and many of their admonishments to men are disregarded by today's society. (Wearing hats in church, not speaking in church, etc.) The only society that has any prohibitions on Gays is the judo-Christian (sic) society that we live in.

If people would only read their Bibles with a grain of intelligence instead of blind unquestioning acceptance; if they would stop and think before accepting the dogmas that the churches ram down their throats they would see that it's not all its made out to be.

Jesus loves me and He knows I'm gay.  
Michael Roberts  
Co-ordinator G.A.T.E.  
Box 1852, Edmonton.

somewhere, why the fuss? You just decide whether or not you would get more out of attending classes and listening to lectures or sitting in your tomb "catching up" and if the former is dispensable, do the latter. See, if you are over 18, you don't need daddy's permission to stay home from classes. Just do it -- but don't screw things up for the 6,000 or so who didn't sign up for a week off.

Also, at the risk of committing the incommittable

and appearing to take the position of the professors into consideration, seems to me one of the first bitches one often hears is that they never "plan ahead" in their lecture schedule. Yet here we have the Vice President Academic working up a petition to ball up any planning which may have been done. Oh well... wait until next year.

Sid Stephen  
Arts 4