

Opinion

Editorial

Kevin
Law



Riding the bus the other day I saw an advertisement from a social action group with the heading "Nuclear War (who cares)."

Who cares indeed. Too often it seems, we have become complacent in the wake of today's neo-conservative ladder-climbing and pleasure-seeking society. The accelerated pace of our lives pushes us along at breakneck speed, like a giant wave crashing against a shoreline. So who has the time to read the news and follow current events?

Perhaps we are ignoring certain larger priorities. Read the news and become more aware of our world. Many of the things that are happening, whether social, economic, or political, are spinning out of control. But it doesn't have to be that way. Our generation seems not to realize that there is strength in numbers. With organized, informed voices we can change nearly anything.

A good example is 1960's America. A massive social and civil upheaval took place because people questioned the validity of events around them. They were informed. As a result, they achieved such things as civil rights for blacks and more equality for women. And they stopped a brutal, bloody war in Vietnam.

Where is the social awareness and dialogue of those times today?

Priorities for today's students seem to be higher marks to earn big bucks to consume pleasurable products to wrap ourselves in an ignorant cocoon of temporal bliss (another Yuppie is born).

Reading news and becoming informed of events that affect us can lead us to rally for changes in society. For example, we can make or break free trade. But not many have bothered to read the recent myriad of newspaper and magazine articles informing us about it.

On campus, students can produce changes as well. Demand more food services in SUB. More lounge space in HUB instead of less. Prevent established HUB businesses from being thrown out to make way for ostentatious, high profile shops. Read *The Gateway* for issues that affect you, then do something about them.

If we become too indifferent, if we don't arm ourselves with knowledge of what's around us, we could find ourselves, like the old man in Poe's *A Descent into the Maelstrom*, being sucked into a great spinning whirlpool of social degeneration. And by then it will be too late.

The Gateway

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The Gateway welcomes letters to the editor.

If you have a comment which would be of interest to the students of the University, please do not hesitate to send it in. Letters may be dropped off, or mailed to our office (Room 282 SUB), or may be dropped off at the SUB or HUB info booths. The writer's name, faculty and year of study must be included. Addresses and phone numbers are required, but will not be printed.

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Letters

Don't party too hard

Yes, parties are fun. People like to drink — sometimes a little too much. Basically, people like to have a good time and starting a new school year is the perfect excuse to have a party and a good time, but at whose expense?

I was at a fantastic party Saturday night. I danced... I talked... I had a great time and so did everybody else. Unfortunately, somebody had too good of a time and decided to smash the windshield of my car, parked by the university's health services building. It was smashed with a beer bottle. Now tell me how good of a time that was. Is that really fun? Is that any way to party? I don't think so.

Make parties fun. Drink if you really want to. Just make sure you can handle it or have good friends around to keep an eye on you. Most importantly, do not make parties an excuse for destructive behavior. In the end, the mess you make will have to be paid for and not all of us have the cash to throw around. Please do not be a jerk at my expense...

A wise but wary partner.

Kisa Mortenson
Arts III

Thanks for FIW

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who helped make FIW '88 a huge success.

The activities of FIW were intended to welcome students and help create a sense of U of A pride on campus. I believe that the week accomplished these goals and more.

The success of the week was due to the work of Florence Pastoor, FIW Coordinator. Flo put hundreds of hours into making the week work, and ensuring that everyone had a good time. Special recognition is also due to University Athletics Board, IFC, the Registrar's Office, the Dean of Student Services and the University Administration. Many other campus clubs and organizations came together to make this huge event work.

Thanks to all of you, and Entertainment Maestro Gerry Stoll. FIW '88 was a great party!
Paul LaGrange
S.U. President

Bookstore inefficient

In the Soviet Union, lineups are a way of life. It can take three hours just to buy a blanket, two hours for a chunk of meat, and for toilet paper (if it's available at all) the story is the same. In the West we take pride in our fast, efficient service — and it does exist in most places... But when a friend visiting from the Soviet Union saw the lineups in the University of Alberta bookstore this past week, she exclaimed that life here sure looks similar to what she knows in Moscow. Fortunately here, unlike there, the problem is not that we don't have enough of each product to go around. But looking at the situation in our

bookstore there is still a frightful comparison.

Certainly, dealing with some 29,000 students who all need books is a great challenge, but I think the problem could be resolved in a very simple way. For example, an alphabetical schedule of when students should come to buy books could be made for the Friday and Saturday of the week classes begin. There could always be a line reserved for students unable to come at the designated time. A separate express line could be kept for students who need to buy only two or three books. Other possibilities could be discussed and acted upon. As an end result, surely some semblance of order would come to this biannual nightmare.

Although this severe problem with lineups exists, a solution is not necessarily possible. Unfortunately the bookstore, like Soviet companies, has a monopoly on textbooks and only it can decide whether it cares enough to develop a better way of dealing with the students at the beginning of each term. Perhaps it has already realized that it will make its money whether the students have to stand in line for hours or not.

What our Soviet friend saw in our bookstore has marred her impression of Canada. We can't tell her that what she saw is not our reality, because it is. She saw it — and so have thousands.

L. Klein