

Sittin' by the clock of the A&A

by Chris Lambie

You've probably seen him sitting in an easy chair on a little Persian carpet just outside the A and A building. Maybe you have been lucky enough to catch him lounging beside the Student Union or the Dunn building. Well, his name is Daylian Cain, and he's been sitting all over campus for at least six hours every school-day for over three weeks.

I noticed him last Monday. He smiled at me as I was going into class. Three hours later, he nodded in a friendly manner as I left. The next day, there he was again; I was intrigued.

He will tell you that "it's not a frat thing, a bet, a dare, a protest or a religious cult", but that's all he'll tell you. He loves to entertain guesses because, as he says, they keep him entertained. The most common one so far is that he is playing with the student mind by



doing some sort of psychology experiment. Well he isn't (I don't think).

He is, however, conducting an interesting study into what he calls "the dynamics of personhood". Daylian has recorded that 219 people have asked him if he is "comfy" or "comfortable" and that

77 have said "quite the set-up" (in reference to the easy chair). "Only one has said just right".

He told me that people are usually more negative in the morning, "they think I'm just goofing off or girl watching". By the afternoon "students and profs tend to graduate to a more pleasant state of mind, and even if they don't have anything to say, they usually smile". While I sat with him, at least a dozen people approached, with their hands raised in a pseudo-defensive posture, and said "I have to ask". Well he ain't telling, "not yet anyway".

"Soon it will not be why am I sitting here, but why isn't there a person sitting in a chair on every campus of every university across this continent". It sure seems like some kind of protest, doesn't it?

He says he "hasn't legitimated [his] reasons yet", so nobody knows why, not even his Mom. This computer science/philosophy major who loves "tennis, windsurfing, cooking, competitive bass fishing [???] and, oh yeah, sitting" plans to keep it up for "at least a couple more weeks". He's ordered pizza here, and he tries to study, but the book he's reading on the philosophy of language is barely cracked. "There's just too much to look at out here", he says.

He got sick last semester and lost a whole term and nearly forty pounds. Now he says "I'm enjoying my time in between blanks a little more than I used to". He laughs at the public curiosity concerning his activities; "it's not fame or respect [he says], it's just notoriety".

The nasty weather doesn't seem to bug him too much. He notes that he's "freezing [his] ass off", but that he likes "to sit here, and while my reasons are idealistic, I am trying to turn this marathon

sitting into a profit". When I asked if he gets stiff he said "I like to do a little Tai Chi when nobody's looking".

I asked if he's got any political aspirations; he told me, with a big grin on his face, that he'd "like to be the first governor of Canada". With a general "life is good" philosophy, Cain seems to embody a very relaxed and pleasant spirit. Maybe he is a bit flaky, maybe he's just crazy, but at least he's still sitting there.

Before I left, yet another fellow strolled over to ask what was going on. Daylian gave him the spiel and the guy just laughed. But as he pedalled his bike away, he shouted "hang in there" over his shoulder. Cain muttered "me and my magic carpet" underneath his breath and waved as another group of students shuttled by.

He says that a couple have thrown him money since the United Way sign went up... Others have made L-signs on their foreheads and called him a loser. "Sure I'm a little bit odd [he says], but it's becoming a fetish". Daylian Cain, Dal's newest guru or just another student with nothing better to do? Go and talk to him before you decide.

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