

## Freedom to choose

It's happening. All of those things we have heard about over the last few months are coming true. Alberta's provincial government is bringing its heavy hand above ground, in order to squelch any freedom of choice and direction at universities.

Recent events illustrate the government's overwhelming desire to tailor secondary educational institutions to their narrow vision of what's good for the province. Last month, the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower made the statement that the government will become more involved in the operation of universities if the institutions "fail to make the necessary and very difficult decisions required to examine and readjust their direction."

In other words, play it their way, Myer, or you won't be playing at all. One would assume that the number of like-minded students being churned out is diminishing; that the government is worried that their regime will not be properly served by the current university structure. Not enough petroleum engineers, Pete?

A government official went on to say that the government "expects the boards, and most particularly the public members of boards, to be able to reflect the expectations, views and values of the general public." That's garbage. If the values and views of the general public can be defined by the government then they are doing much better than what countless documents and committees have been able to achieve.

And then last week, we heard the announcement that tuition fees will again be increased. So much has been said about that issue on these pages that there is no need to repeat it. But, it's simply insane to view education as a privilege for the rich. One can only wonder how long it will be before high school becomes a similar privilege. Or medicare. Or anything a rich, responsible government should offer its citizens.

With the government publicly outlining its animosity towards the principles of higher education, it is up to the university administration, staff and students to fight the battle. FAS cannot do it alone; students who feel any concern about this issue have to come out and make their opinions known. Tuition fees will continue to increase, and programs and courses deemed non-viable by the government will quietly be eliminated. Is this what we want?

The professors and administrators must also become more vocal. It won't be long before programs are challenged by the government and it will be teaching positions that will suffer the axe when this happens.

One can only muster the troops so much. The time has come for a complete evaluation by each student and professor about his or her role in the university system. No incentive will come from the provincial government.

The Tory clique running this province are making shambles of some of the best universities in the country. It's time the people of the province stepped in to make the "necessary and very difficult decisions required to examine and readjust their direction": that is, the direction of the provincial government.

Gordon Turtle

# the Gateway

If it happens on campus...we'll probably miss it

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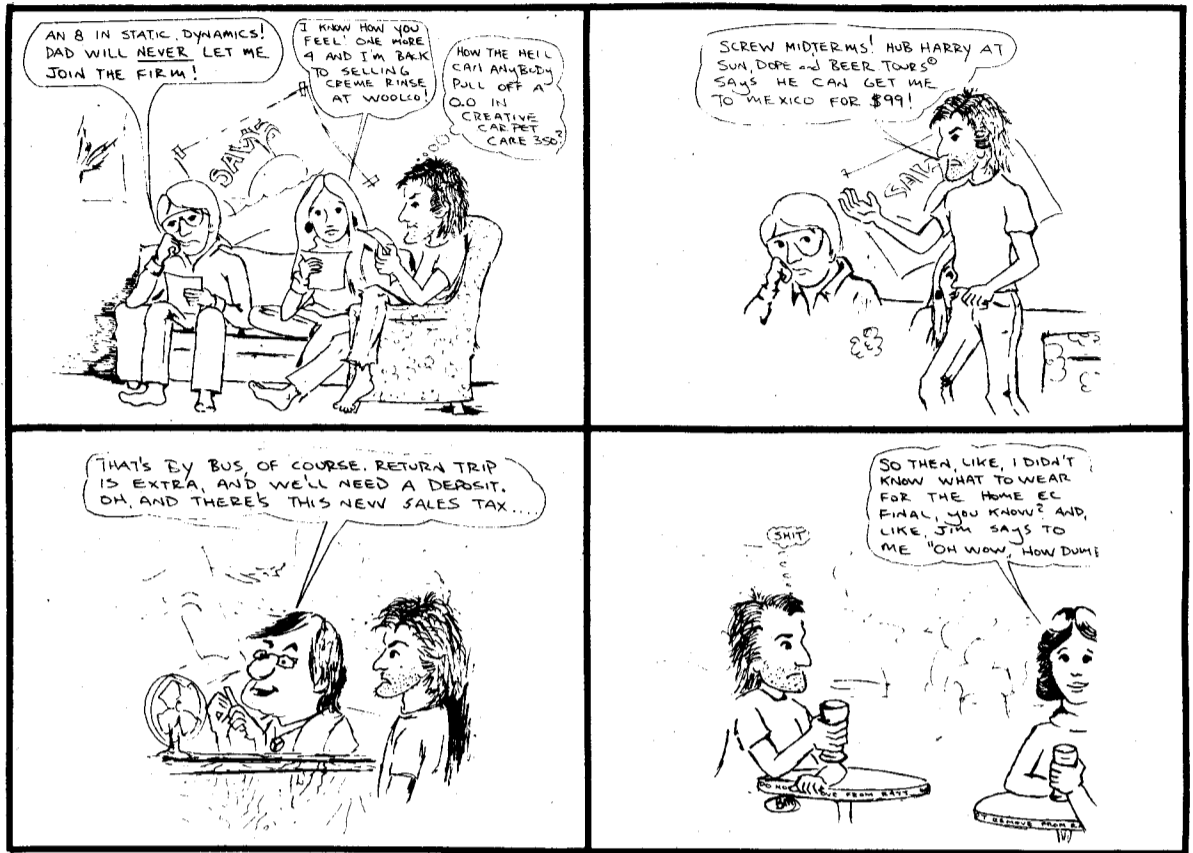
THE GATEWAY is the newspaper of the students of the University of Alberta. With a circulation of 18,500, the Gateway is published by its proprietor, the Students' Union, Tuesdays and Thursdays during the winter session. Contents are the responsibility of the editor; editorials are written by the editorial board or signed. All other opinions are signed by the party expressing them. Copy deadlines are 12 noon Mondays and Wednesdays. The Gateway, a member of Canadian University Press and the Youthstream Network, is located at room 282 SUB. Edmondson, Alberta, T6G 2J7.

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## ETON RUN



## Final word on fraternities

Irresponsible journalism part II: "Who really cares about fraternities, beyond those actually belonging to them? You are lucky that the Gateway gave the fraternities any exposure whatsoever." (Gateway November 6)

Mr. Lear again exhibits his omnivorous sense of responsibility and compassion for his fellow students, and I again ask the question, who is Mr. Lear? Although he claims to be a student at the University of Alberta, I would be inclined to seriously question this statement.

As a student myself I am fortunate enough to be able to pay, as a part of student union fees, a sum of money towards the operation of a student newspaper. In return, as a member of a student group, that being a fraternity, I would expect to receive reasonable coverage by the student newspaper, as do other student groups such as the ski club, the soccer team, the engineering club, and so forth.

I find it hard to believe that Mr. Lear can actually question the value and worth of the modern fraternity system. As a part of a burgeoning educational system, the fraternity can and does serve as a useful element of socialization. The fraternity provides a unique security in that it collects its members, trains them to be cooperative and sensitive to each other and utilizes this atmosphere of confidence to allow each member to attain his own fulfillment in his own way.

If Mr. Lear is indeed in doubt of the quality and attitude of fraternity members as was implied through his reference to Animal House, I present the following quote from Baird's Manual: "It seems to this observer that good fraternity men and women very evidently come from an elite group whose members possess a dynamic combination of character and intelligence. They simply must value something besides a diploma."

Mr. Lear, I sincerely hope that if you should gain a diploma you will value it greatly. Through your article and your recent letter it has become fairly evident that you do not value your own intelligence or integrity.

In closing I must again remind you, Mr. Lear, that it is the duty of a student newspaper to present accurate articles pertaining to student groups. If your illusion of Animal House still prevails, perhaps you should question some of the many prominent fraternity alumni serving our society on University faculty, in the various levels of government and in the various prestigious professions.

Bernie Williams  
President  
Kappa Sigma Fraternity

The editor replies in great length to the unwarranted attacks on John Lear and the paper in general:

It all began with a small story appearing in the back pages of an October Gateway. In an attempt to give some publicity to fraternities, we ran a story that briefly explained some aspects of the fraternity system. However, the information we received from fraternity contacts was outdated, and contained information that is no longer correct. Unsuspecting, writer John Lear simply transcribed some of this information into a news story. It was a mistake, and both Lear and the news editor have publicly apologized for it.

But Bernie Williams is not satisfied with this. Nor was Roy Rampling, who is, according to Steve Kraus, Inter Fraternities Council media man, a friend of the fraternities. In a letter appearing in the November 8 paper, Rampling accuses Lear of reporting his personal feelings and fantasies. He also mentions that Lear and the Gateway came dangerously close to facing legal action.

Well, Rampling, what you know about legal action apparently couldn't fill the back of a postage stamp. You are refer-

ing to a letter that Lear wrote, not a news story. As your letter so flagrantly indicates, opinion pieces are not meant to be newsreporting, and Lear was perfectly within bounds when he defended himself in the letters section. He is entitled to his opinion, and is entitled to state them publicly, especially when his abilities as a news writer had been so viciously attacked by Williams. Like Rampling, Williams confuses journalism with opinion in his letter published in this issue. He is, as well, totally wrong about the use of his students' union fees.

The Gateway costs each student less than one dollar a year. If Williams feels he is being cheated of his 78¢, then he is welcome, but the mere cost of printing his asinine letters is well over the 78¢ mark. Perhaps students should demand recompense from Williams directly.

I congratulate Williams for succinctly summing up the purpose of student newspapers; too bad his simple-minded, self-serving interpretation leaves most readers totally bored. If we spent time covering the archaic fraternity system, we would lose the 98% student population that don't give a damn about them. If you want free publicity for your immature little events, then publish your own newspaper.

What, by the way, is a Baird's Manual? Allow me to quote from Hollis Brown's "Treatise on the Status of Fraternities": "It seems to this observer that good frat rats very evidently come from an elite group whose members possess a combination of money and parents. They simply must value something else besides responsibility, education and intelligence."

Like I've said to Steve Kraus, the over-reaction of Williams and his gang is indicative of fraternities' inability to justify their programs. We apologize for the little, tiny story we ran, and believe me, it will never happen again.