

Letters cont.

SU prejudice

To the Editor,

The Students' Union is discriminating against the Muslim Students' Association (MSA) this year by refusing to provide financial assistance.

The reason SU states is that the activities of the club are 'purely religious'. But it should be noted that the SU has provided assistance to the MSA for the past three years and the activities of the club still follow the same general guideline.

We also have sufficient reason to believe that some Christian clubs on campus received financial assistance from the SU, although their activities are comparable to those of MSA.

So when the SU does not have well-defined criteria for 'purely religious' activities, its stand against the MSA is certainly discriminatory.

Some activities of the MSA, like the daily and weekly prayer and the readings from the Quran, are certainly purely religious, but if SU officials would care to look into the financial report, they would find that those activities as well as the annual socials and the library are all self-supported by the MSA. Even the weekly seminars on contemporary topics (which certainly are not purely religious) are self-supported.

MSA asked for financial assistance only for the public seminars and symposiums, because the speakers for these events are often brought in from the United States or sometimes from as far as Saudi Arabia. The travel and accommodation costs for the speakers and the advertisement costs for the events are the only expenditure for which assistance from the SU is sought.

These public seminars are highly academic and educative. In previous years, seminars on compatibility of science and religion, the way to world peace, Islam against communism, and other similar topics attracted many political science, religious studies and social studies majors and teachers.

If the SU finds some of the seminars or symposiums 'purely religious', it certainly can refuse to finance that seminar, but branding all of them 'purely religious' is certainly a blatant discrimination against Muslims.

We feel that the West has discriminated against the Muslims enough already by their representation of Muslims as fanatic, fatalist terrorists.

It is time that the world learns about true Islam, the religion of peace.

The SU can do its part by realizing that the public seminars arranged by the MSA are about the only source of that learning for U of A students, and the MSA is worthy of financial assistance.

Sincerely yours,  
Muhammad Lutful Kabir Khan  
on behalf of the  
Muslim students of U of A

Women not dead

Letter to the editor:

The U of A Women's Centre has some words of comfort to share with all of you who have been barraged recently with messages in the media (e.g. Gateway, Nov. 21) smugly proclaiming the death of the Women's Movement:

We've only just begun! The Women's Centre on this campus has more than tripled in size within the past six months. Other women's organizations, dedicated to social change, are experiencing similar development. The National Action Committee on the Status of Women has grown to over 400 member organizations. We ARE the Women's Movement and


WE are not "over".

Actions on the part of the government, such as the indexing of family allowances and withdrawal of funding from organizations dedicated to improving the status of women in this country directly attack the welfare of women and their families. Across Canada, women are organizing and working together for social change for the benefit of women, men, and children. The Women's Movement has branched out over the last decade in recognition of the diversity of issues affecting us all. While there has not been a focus on any one issue, it must be realized that issues such as pornography and reproductive choice have an integral place in any discussion of economics. Organizations such as Edmonton Working Women deal primarily with economic issues and women in the work force, both paid and non-paid labour. Their growing memberships indicate a developing recognition by women of the need for awareness and action.

As for the image of feminists, the Women's Movement and public perceptions - let's consider the primary source of information in our society: the media and the educational system. It is essential that young people be aware of social reality. If they are not - don't blame the Women's Movement. Instead, take a look at where young people, including high school students, are receiving their information. If they are not getting adequate, accurate information about the social realities of their world, including what's REALLY happening with the Women's Movement, then we must ask whether the media and our education system are adequate, accurate sources of information.

Siobhan Avery  
Spokesperson for the  
Collective of the U of A  
Women's Centre

P.S. For an alternative source of information, the Women's Centre is open Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m., Rm 030E SUB.

 Enough already!  
Die cyclists die!

Dear Gateway:

I'm ever so sorry I, Robert Sears, forced Wayne Lavold to respond. It seems the intent of his first letter was misunderstood. But what do you expect when he used flowery words to insult cyclists in general.

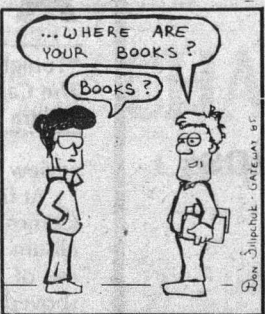
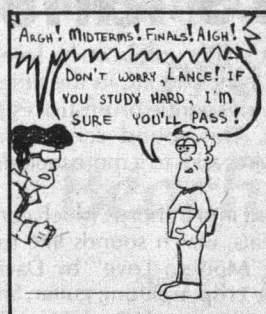
My letter was to express strongly my displeasure with a writer who used an elementary technique, insult, in addressing a serious and rapidly growing problem. The problem being cyclists taking over the streets and sidewalks. He tried to make cyclists think about their conduct, but nobody will listen to someone's theory if they have to insult their reader in the process. If he could have written his first letter in the thought-provoking, concerned manner that he expressed in his second letter, he would have gotten his point across without any rebuttal of character. Obviously, Wayne Lavold didn't grasp the purpose of our letter either.

Now I understand the purpose of Wayne's first letter, to make cyclists think about how they conduct themselves and to promote positive change if possible. And I hope he understands the purpose of my first letter too. After all, it seems Wayne Lavold and I are concerned about a serious and growing problem.

Concerned Cyclist  
Robert Sears

P.S. Sorry for the title bit; I guess since you didn't choose the title, your sex life can't be attacked.

The Comic Zone



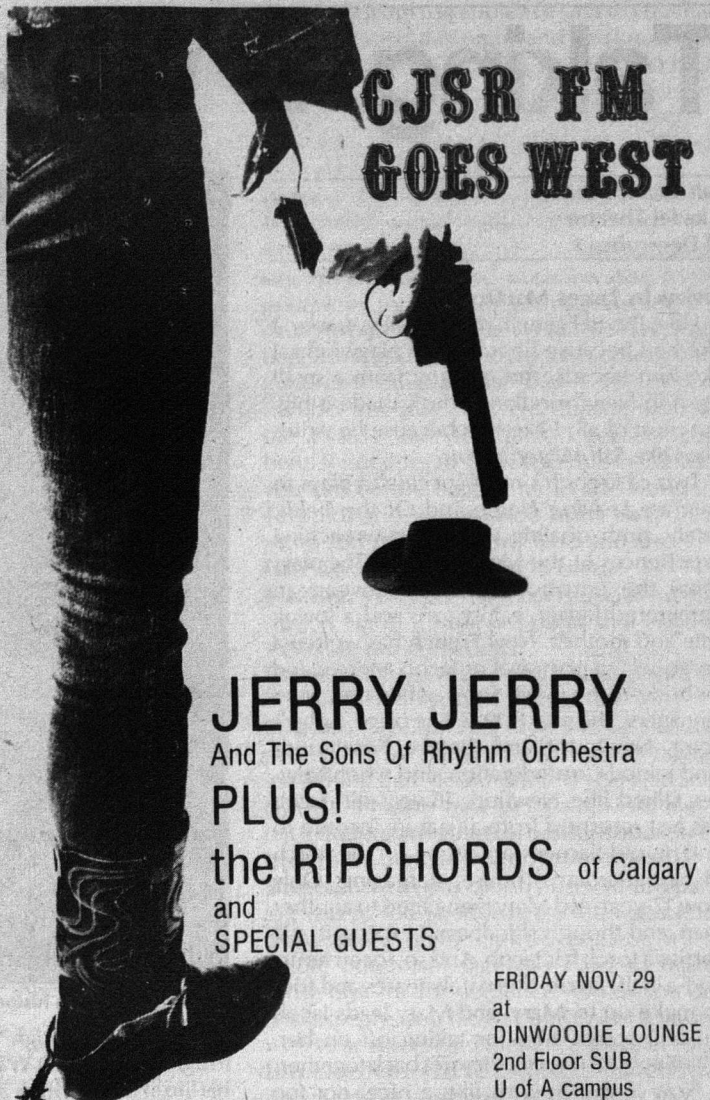
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