

# Opinion

Randal Smathers

## Tupper tested



Last spring the students of this institution elected David Tupper to represent them as VP External in a burst of something optimistically termed "Together"-ness.

I suspect Tupper is a reasonable norm for successful student politicians: young, bright, ambitious. At least, that's how he struck me when we shared a Political Science 200 class three years ago, and the few times I've seen him in action since.

It's certainly a good thing that Mr. Tupper is bright; I'd hate to attend a school that elects dullards. His youth is another matter: to me it implies inexperience. SU controls a lot of money, and can affect our lives as students dramatically, and I'm not sure I want anyone doing on-the-job-training on my time and money. This is true not only of Tupper, but of almost the entire Students' Union.

Tupper is undergoing his first major test: the food pricing uproar is largely his doing, and his performance has not been flawless to date.

In a classic case of speaking before confirming his facts, Tupper started his whole crusade using the wrong figures. Housing and Food Services are allowed a four percent increase in *net revenue*. Tupper's original protest was that *food prices* had gone up seven percent: a substantial communication error.

Also, several people I've heard from in the administration end of things were concerned that they hadn't had a chance to answer Tupper's charges before he went public (by telling *The Gateway* that Housing and Food Services had "gouged" students). If indeed this is true, there are two possible explanations: Tupper had failed to stir the HFS overloads and used the media as a tool to exert pressure, or he wanted a little easy glory. Either scenario is possible.

Enter Tupper's third quality: ambition. He seems destined for a political career, surpassing his father's school board membership. To an ambitious young politician, food price increases are a ready-made chance for headlines, and headlines amount to making a name for oneself.

Now that he has his headlines, Tupper is feeling pressure from the other side. He and Aruna D'Souza, SU Housing and Transport Commissioner, were taken out for a meal by David Bruch of HFS — not in Lister, but at the Faculty Club. (D'Souza points out that they didn't get to go upstairs, though, "just the bargain basement.") Will Tupper hold his ground when attacked? When wooed?

Perhaps I'm being too cynical. Perhaps Tupper is motivated only by an altruistic desire to do his best for the students he represents. At any rate, I hope Tupper likes what he has learned about representing U of A students so far.

More importantly, I hope the students like the way Tupper is representing them.

## The Gateway

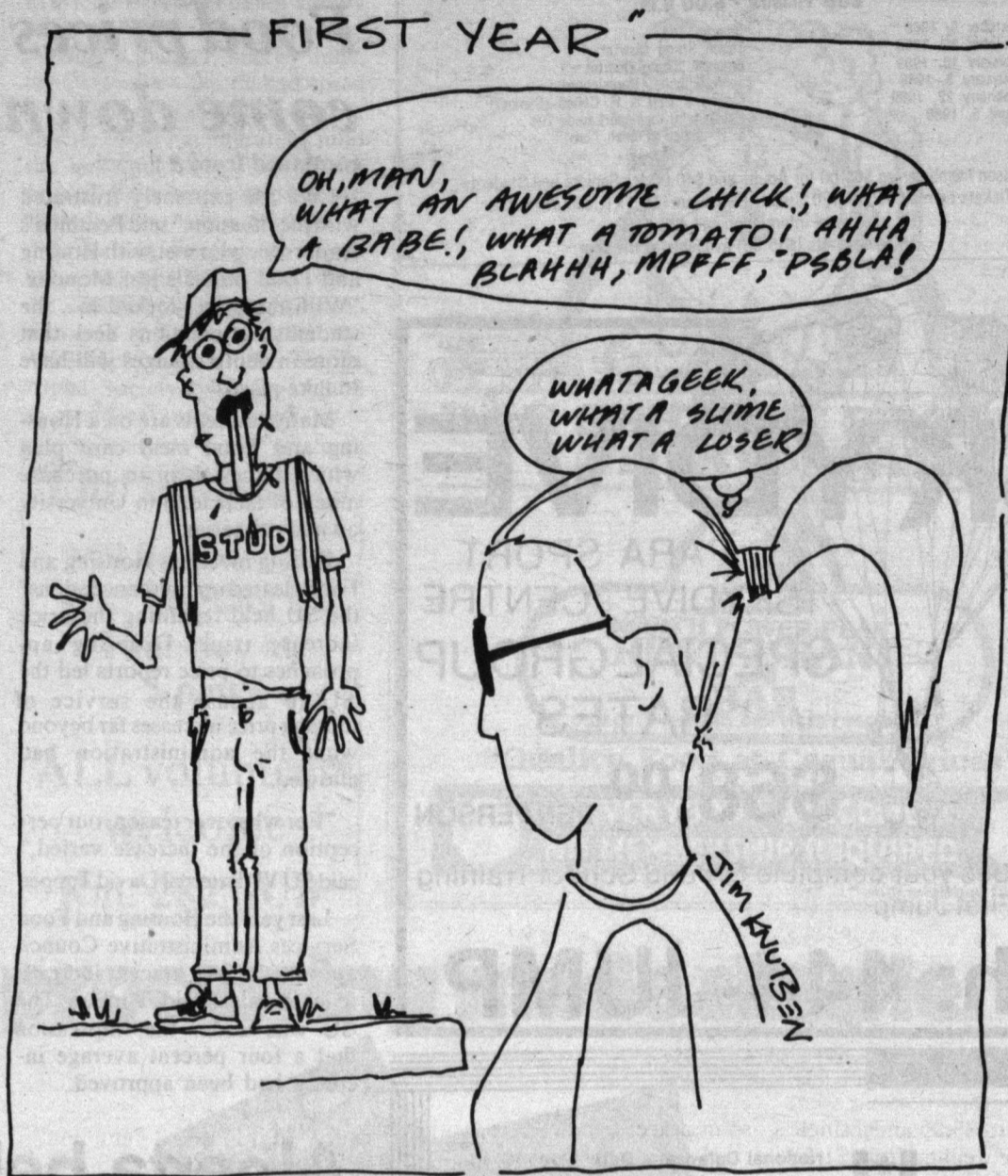
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## Letters

**The Gateway welcomes letters to the editor.**

**The name, faculty and year of study of the writer must be included for publication. The writer's phone number and University of Alberta I.D. number must also be provided, but will remain confidential.**

**Letters should be double-spaced, and typed if possible. They must not exceed 300 words.**

**The Gateway reserves the right to edit for length or clarity. Material of a racist, sexist, homophobic, or libellous nature will not be published.**

**Please submit letters to Room 282, SUB.**

### HFS' priorities wrong

I would like to add my concerns to those that have already been expressed concerning the management of Housing and Food Services' (HFS) outlets on campus. Specifically, I would like to address the mandate given to HFS by the University of Alberta to break even this fiscal year. It sounds desirable in principle, but is it in practice? How do they intend to accomplish this task without lowering the quality or increasing the prices of the services they provide?

We have already seen some of their cutbacks with the closure of HFS' SUBway outlet and other lunchrooms around campus. Residence dwellers have had their meal selection reduced and prices that were lowered last year raised again.

The average cost of lunch purchased from HFS has risen to over five dollars.

Is Housing and Food Services still a service when operated as a business? Before this year, HFS received financial support from the University. This has ceased. Other services still receive subsidies: the Van Vliet Centre, Student Services, Campus Security, University Libraries, University Computing Systems, University Health Services, and the list continues. How many people do you know who lack the knowledge to utilize University Computing Services but eat at CAB to cope with their daily workload? Are the proper facilities for University sports' teams more important than the students' dietetic needs?

We all eat HFS food sometime during our university career. Why is the one service being used by all students not supported?

**Question:** When does a service become a business?

**Answer:** When it no longer serves the needs of the public but of its finances.

Rami Hastings  
 Pharmacy II

### Lister unsanitary

On behalf of the residents at Lister Hall, we would like to inform you of the ongoing battle we face daily with Housing and Food Services. As we am sure you are aware, SUBway has been closed since April, prices at Lister have increased dramatically (some as high as 171%) and they have discontinued hot breakfasts completely. Therefore a resident wishing to have an egg in the morning needs to jog to CAB before classes. A little ridiculous wouldn't you say?

This is only the beginning of our seemingly endless list of problems. What we are writing to you today is of even greater concern. September has almost come and gone and a surprisingly high number of residents have had to visit medical services, not because of food poisoning but because of the lack of sanitation leading to colds. We realize living in such close quarters tends to spread germs quite easily, but this lack of sanitation can only be adding to the problem.

Often employees serving food are without hair nets or gloves. This in itself is enough to spread disease. Bread is simply left in bags for all students to touch. Muffins and buns are left open for hours with people continually handling them and above all the condiments are placed in large open containers for all to place different knives and spoons in, instead of being in individual packages. Housing and Foods claims that this form of packaging is too expensive, but if thought out logically it would save them money on the portions served. The tables and chairs are not cleaned regularly; thus remnants of past meals continue to haunt us. This lack of sanitation continues on each of our floors. Did you know that last year Housing and Foods was asked to bring in an exterminator to get rid of the growing bug problem in over three quarters of the washrooms? Shall I continue?

With such obvious problems as these, we often wonder why the health inspector has not yet closed it down completely. Something must be done now about this situation not only to help us, but also for future students whose only option is to live in residence.

Tanya Friedrich  
 Carol MacDonald  
 Lister Hall Residents