

Opinion

Kevin Law

Take a number



Be a number; come to the U of A.

A recent lecture by my sociology professor made me contemplate the dubious virtues of a large university. One of the most important aspects of any large institution is the socializing environment it creates for the people it is designed for.

The question for enquiring minds then, is what kind of socializing environment exists at the U of A? Close consideration reveals that the University is about as conducive to social interaction as a waiting room at a doctor's office. Indeed, this analogy is more comparatively correct than one might think. A medical waiting room is full of people with specific problems waiting for specific treatment, and, with few exceptions, a waiting patient has little need or desire to interact with those around him. Only one thing is on his or her mind: leaving as quickly as possible.

The U of A itself suffers from "waiting room" syndrome. With some exceptions (the Arts faculty first comes to mind), most faculties engage in specialized training for specific fields.

While the University has on-campus residences, it is basically a commuter school — few live on campus. Students can come to classes and then go home without having to talk to anyone, and while there are many clubs and activities begging for involvement, the whole un-family like atmosphere does little to inspire student body cohesiveness. Witness poor voter turnout at Students' Union elections, or, even worse, the tenuous, almost non-existent alumni loyalty to the U of A. Some consider the Alumni Association and its fund raising efforts a joke because alumni feel no attachment to the old alma mater.

As well, faculty departmentalizing has led to less emphasis on teaching effectiveness. Instead, research has become most important to competitive professors rather than creative, personal teaching methods.

The recent downward spiral of education funds will probably continue. In light of this fact, perhaps the question the University administration should be asking itself (unpopular as it may be) is should the U of A get smaller instead of bigger. For my money, a more liberal arts, interpersonal skills, teaching effectiveness oriented approach beats departmentalization.

Jobs are important of course, but so are people. Unfortunately, it is unlikely anything will change in the near future, if ever. So take a number and wait.



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.

Services essential to troubled students

Re: Counselling alternatives (Mar. 14)

I would like to add my support to the message in the letter to *The Gateway* from the people associated with Student Help, bringing attention to Student Help as a counselling alternative on this campus. There is no doubt that the resources of Student Help, of the Chaplains' Association, and of many others have, and continue to offer very significant services to troubled students.

A. Vander Well, Director and Staff of Student Counselling Services

Mudslinging mistaken

By the time this letter is published, the SU election will be over; therefore, the purpose of this letter is not to sway voters, but to comment on the letters that appeared in the March 9 edition of *The Gateway*. I, having submitted a letter

regarding the behavior of the Representative slate during the election campaign, felt that the comments of a lot of the letters were unjust. I would like to state that my letter was written on my own accord. I cannot speak for the others who wrote in about the Rep. slate, but mine was definitely not solicited by a candidate as Mr. B. Posner's and M. Goel's letter directly accused it as being the case. It was written because the Rep. slate's classroom presentation provoked a strong enough negative feeling for me to consider it necessary to do something about it. I used the singular form of presentation because I was only visited once by the Rep. slate, and from the comments of my friends I do not believe that the so-called "mudslinging" was an isolated case as Mr. S. Henderson's letter implied. Also, if Mr. J. Hicks, can read more carefully he would know that not all the students who spoke out against the Rep. slate were Arts students, since I, for one, am in the Faculty of Science. My point is that the students whom I have mentioned and maybe others are guilty of overgeneralization; the situation does not apply to everyone, if to anyone at all.

Ann Kwan
Science III

Greenhouse problem serious

Re: Greenhouse effect demands research (Mar. 21)

In response to Dr. Schwarz's letter, I would like to clarify one or two points regarding the original article and quotations about the "greenhouse" effect. To my knowledge, no group or individual at U of A is involved in research which is attempting to predict the climatological changes resulting from increased at-

mospheric CO₂. I did not intend to imply that there was no research being carried out with respect to possible consequences in other areas, as the result of the predicted global warming.

The choice of the word "thinking" in the description of the need to examine economic, social, and ecological effects should be attributed to the writer of the article, who generally has paraphrased a number of points made during an interview. I agree entirely with Dr. Schwarz that research is needed in these areas. I myself am involved in research which examines aspects of the possible impact on permafrost conditions in arctic areas. The problem is indeed a serious one, with many possible effects on life as we know it.

David Halliwell
Assistant Professor
Dept. of Geography

Coloured condoms not expired

Re: Coloured condoms expired (March 21)

I am writing this letter to clarify the possible misunderstandings caused by the date printed on some of the condoms that were distributed during Health Week. The printed date, 2/11/88 (day, month, year) does not indicate expiry date, but rather the date of manufacture. Therefore, with a condom shelf-life of three years, you can feel safe using them until the fall of 1991. Our coloured condoms are of very high quality, and they are one of the most effective means of helping to prevent the transmission of the AIDS-virus, and other STDs.

Derek Borowka, Science IV
Peer Education on AIDS
Univ. Health Services
Sherrill Berg
Health Ed. Coordinator

The Gateway

Editor-in-Chief: DRAGOS RUIU
Managing Editor: ROSA JACKSON
News Editors: KEVIN LAW, JEFF COWLEY
Entertainment Editor: MIKE SPINDLOE
Sports Editor: ALAN SMALL
Photo Editor: CLIVE OSHRY
Production Editor: RANDAL SMATHERS
Circulation Manager: TERI CLARKE
Advertising: TOM WRIGHT

CONTRIBUTORS

JO-ANNE JAIT, RACHEL SANDERS, PAM HNYTKA, LISA HALL, RON KUPERS, OSCAR STRELKOV, JIM KNUTSEN, ROSS GRAY, CHAD ORYDZUK, TIM TERRY, DOUG JOHNSON, JASON BODNAR, KISA MORTENSON, JENNIFER VOLRATH, RODNEY GITZEL, TERESA PIRES, CATHY DUONG, NAOMI MCILWRAITH, IAN ISTVANFFY, MARIO TRONO, BRIAN CROWLEY, RON SEARS, BYRON COLLINS, HEIDI MCFADYEN, COLIN NORTHOTT, NOT ROB GALBRAITH, CARL LEGGO, BONNIE BISHOP, MARY HOWES, NEIL SCOTTEN, LARISSA KLEIN, CHRIS RAYE, YIN LIN, LISA EISENBEIS.

All materials appearing in *The Gateway* are copyright and may not be used without written permission of *The Gateway*.

The Gateway is the University of Alberta students' newspaper. Contents are the responsibility of the Editor-in-Chief. All opinions that are signed by the writer do not necessarily reflect the views of *The Gateway*. Copy deadlines are 11 a.m. Mondays and Wednesdays. Newsroom: 282 SUB (phone 492-5168). Sports and production offices: 230 SUB (phone 492-5068). Photos printed in *The Gateway* may be for sale. Call the photodirectorate at 492-5168 or come by Room 235 SUB. Advertising: Room 256D SUB (SU Executive offices) phone 492-4241. Mailing address: Room 256D Students' Union Building, U of A Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2J7. Readership is 30,000.