

## letters...

## ...editorial

*In Response to "Sacred Cows" column by Peter Gillis dated February 18, 1997.*

Letter to the Editor,

The only disturbing trend identified by Peter Gillis, is the trend of too many men paying lip service to the battle against sexism leaving all the real fighting to women. The fact that the author admits to having no idea what constitutes harassment, no name for affirmative action, and apparently associates "respect" for women with opening doors, following women with his eyes, giving flowers and barbie dolls to "especially beautiful" women in his life is terrifying! His analysis is limp, research non-existent, and content connections loose - leaving the article without merit.

A critique of all the issues stabbed at in this edition of "sacred cows" would take much more than the allotted 500 words, but I will try a blanket approach. The nature of law and legal tradition in western society is rich with intricacies of human relations. The law has proven to be both an agent in leveling inequalities while it simultaneously defends them. Peter Gillis has chosen to contemplate the moral character of men using as a backdrop law as a reflection of it. The law is a normative, as opposed to scientific, entity and as such often acts to mirror society rather than to project moral absolutes of truth and justice. A critical examination of the nature of law and legal traditions reveal deep rooted inequalities, injustice, and selective legislation which establish and protect those who have economic and political power in our society. It is not my contention that men "suck" any more or less than women. Rather, I wish to point out that the law protects the interests of those who by and large created it - it so happens that this was indeed a select group of men. Evidence of the devaluation of marginalized groups by the law is provided by recent personal injury cases in which women and men with similar future earning forecasts received remarkably different settlements. (Female: *Newell v. Hawthornthwaite* (1988), 26 B.C.L.R. (2d) 105. 15 year old female, catastrophic injuries, honor roll student. Amount awarded 360,000.) (Male: *Lambright v. Schmidt* (Unreported) B.C.S.C., New West Minster Registry No. C861662, July 12, 1989. 17-year old male, high-school drop out, lack of interest in trade. Amount awarded: 575,000.) There is an old adage that says the "hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." If this were true, the majority of impoverished people would not be women and children.

For the record Peter Gillis is a candidate for Student Union President. Prior to election day candidates may want to brief themselves on issues relevant in the 1990's - say the chilly climate, date rape, and systemic barriers! What will your campaign slogans be? Perhaps Peter Gillis could say something like, "I see what is meant by gender equality being a step down, and I have no idea what constitutes harassment!"

A not so subtle reminder to vote,  
Amber Liv Allin

## Tuition hikes a reality

Everyone is probably sick of reading about tuition hikes, but I am determined to make UPEI students check their wallets and admit that the sale's ticket for education in a couple of years is going to be beyond the price range of the average shopper.

Next year the students of UPEI are going to receive a ten to twenty percent tuition increase. Wow! Talk about high inflation rates. Yet, the customers shopping at UPEI do not seem to mind spending these "few" extra bucks for their education, at least that's the impression I get from the apathetic drone of the studious minds on campus.

Please let me explain: very few letters to the newspaper are submitted from angry students; barely any students, other than a regular hand-full, go to the Student Union and tell them that they want to have a protest; and I haven't yet witnessed students rallying together to form a united angry voice.

Okay, I just want to know if I am reading the opin-

ion of the masses correctly. Does the majority of students believe that the solution to the government debt is to cut funding to secondary education? And are most students willing to sacrifice a piece of their education to pay back the over-spending that our fore-fathers committed. I must admit, if this is the general consensus, I congratulate all future university students for being educational martyrs.

I, on the other hand, am not quite as gracious. But thankfully I am finished at UPEI this year, and I will selfishly reveal my happiness for getting away with paying the tuition that I did. And I can't help but feel sorry for future university students who, if they do decide to pursue a post-secondary education, will incur high debts.

But hey, maybe tuition increases and university service decreases are the solution for the future. Maybe, if the Canadian government discourages enough people from gaining a higher education, we'll have more people to work in

the service industry. We definitely need more competition for the jobs at Wendy's and McDonalds. Maybe we want to become another state of our southern friend, the United States of America. I kind of like that class system where the rich get schooled and the poor get nothing. It's important to know where you stand in a society: serving the rich, or being served...none of that confusing grey area.

And to think that I thought the government was being selfish by trying to save money through education cut-backs. Why, they must know how useless the right to a fair education is, seeing as how they were given one. How could I be so ignorant to their supreme knowledge? I guess, from this perspective, I am the selfish one! Boy, that slogan, "The customer is always right" certainly does not apply to education, rather than wanting to cater to many average students, the brilliant government would prefer catering to an elite few.

CCV

