



Let me tell you a story...

Stop me if you've heard it before...

"So Peter, it must be good to finally be back to school. What are you studying?"

"Philosophy."

"Philosophy? What's that going to get you in this life?"

Or maybe the punchline sounds like this...

"Philosophy? Great, we could always use more taxi drivers!"

Or maybe the punchline goes...well, I'm sure you get the point. Feel free to substitute your name, or your major, because everyone here at UPEI has heard those comments before. Arts, Sciences, Education...even mighty Business courses have become the butt of one liners and puns over the years.

Could someone please tell me when University degrees became such a joke?

It wasn't long ago that University students were kings of the mountain. The intellectual elite. The golden ones who, upon receiving the sacred lambskin, had years upon years of opportunity and work laid at their feet. Now it

seems we are all enrolled in Taxi Etiquette 101.

Where did it all go wrong?

Maybe it happened during the seventies, when Canada stopped creating things and merely started producing them. After all, you don't need a degree to work a factory line. Maybe it happened after the baby boomers all got their degrees. If the group that made "deficit" and "prozac" household names could get degrees, perhaps they really are not worth having. Maybe it happened after the government turned their collective backs on education. If our own leaders don't think it's worth paying for, why should we? Who knows when it all went wrong; but it did,...didn't it?

Fact: More and more employers are requiring university education from their prospective employees. Fact: Government studies show that university graduates make at least \$10,000 a year more than high school graduates. Fact: The same studies show that those with doctorates average \$50,000 per year, almost double what the average Canadian makes. So why all the disgust?

Well, for one, the government would love it if we all felt we had to stay in school in order to get ahead. You see, students aren't reflected in the unemployment rate. So by all means study forever. If a B.A. is not enough, get your Ph.D. Once you have gone that far, pick another discipline and do it all again. Just don't enter the "real world" and bring that rate over 10%.

Second, much of the disgust is probably our own fault. Our generation has spent years hearing how we should expect to pay more for less; and how useless university degrees are. Our problem is that we believed every word. Why do you think massive tuition hikes didn't start until the nineties? Schools had to wait until the group that made "apathy" a household name came along. The boomers would never have accepted it.

What I really want to know is why a degree is worth only what it can get you? Why don't we see it worth something unto itself...for what it represents? A bachelor degree stands for four long years of hard work, concentration, and dedication. It denotes a trained mind. It represents education; and education has intrinsic value. It is something that makes you more.

It is knowledge; and knowledge is power.

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"Everything. It means I think..."

# EDITORIAL

Congratulations, you have made it through the first week of the new academic year! For some of you, this week has been a familiar routine, but for others it is a brand new experience.

Either way you approach it, this is a great time of year. While most people consider January 1 to be the beginning of it all, we students know better. September is when things really begin. This is when classes are enthusiastically attended, new friendships form, and good resolutions abound. You know the kind I mean: I promise to attend every single class this year, I will study every day and get my assignments in on time, I will run for student council, and I will not waste my student loan on drinking. Unfortunately, many of these resolutions are thrown out the window by early October.

You don't need to lose these grand ambitions. Despite what some parents and profs will tell you, there is more to university than getting good marks. Part of the experience is getting involved and doing things like writing for the student paper (hint, hint) or run-

ning for student council. These are the things that are going to make University fun. Right now is the time to get out there and make yourself known. There are innumerable groups on this campus, so there is bound to be something to fit your interests. For those of you who have journalistic tendencies, the student newspaper is the perfect place to be. We always welcome fresh blood, and there are even some paid positions available. We need people to write news, draw some cartoons, and help us figure out our computers.

This is our first issue of the year, so please bear with us -- we are still trying to get all the bugs worked out. If you like what you see let us know. If you hate it, then tell us what you would rather see in these pages. We are always open to constructive criticism and new ideas. This is your student newspaper, so we need your input. Our meetings will be held every Thursday at 5pm in the basement of Main Building, and there is usually someone in the office at all hours, so stop by!

Have a great year, and watch out for that last resolution... it's a killer.

A. Chisholm