

Letters to the Editor

I'm far from uninvolved in UPEI

Dear Editor:

This is a letter addressing Student Union President, Brandon MacKenzie, and what he says about me in the article "SU Bi-Election Speeches Commandeer Courtyard, People Eating Startled," printed in September 29th's issue of the Cadre.

First, you mention a few things in that article that I think could be misleading and that should be clarified. The Student Union building, the "free" yearbook for graduating students, the Cadre and the student handbook are all paid for in our Student Union dues (which total \$168 per year). Yes, students do get medical coverage here on campus, but we pay between \$179 and \$2,138 per year, depending on our status, (this only gives us 80% coverage) and we are not allowed to opt out unless we have medical coverage elsewhere. We don't actually get any of these things for free; we don't even have the option of not paying for them if we don't want them. Student Union doesn't "do nothing" but it does make us pay for a lot of 'services' we don't necessarily want (or need), and can't necessarily afford.

To my main point. I am the "she" that you, Brandon, so quickly judge in your message in the Cadre. According to you, I believe that Student Union does nothing for me; I do nothing to get involved, and, I "seem to please myself by bringing apathy and despair into our school." According to you, I am the reason why Student Union's initiatives are faced with failure.

Brandon, you don't know me. Not only do I think it's wrong of you to make an example out of someone you don't know, but I also think it is wrong of the Student Union President to talk negatively about a student behind her back. I didn't run out of the room after I listened to the responses, and you could have easily walked up to me in the courtyard and spoken with me personally rather than speaking about me

to the Cadre. If you must backstab me Brandon, you should at least quote me properly. I was not saying that Student Union does nothing, I was stating that I'm sick of hearing about tuition freeze and only seeing my tuition go up. This is a truth you cannot deny.

Just for reference Brandon: My name is Grace; I am a mature student; I am taking 5 courses this semester; I am the single mother of a seven month old son; I participate in this university as much as I possibly can. If you had taken the time to have spoken with me, you may have discovered just how involved I have been, and am, with this campus: I used to work for the campus paper; have acted in the Vagina Monologues; I gave a lecture in the "Bad Girls" lecture series; I was the mediator for the Culture Café hosted by the Philosophy Department; and, I offer my assistance to the Women's Centre here on campus as often as I can.

Ask any of my peers and they will tell you I am a friendly, out-going and animated person. Speak with any of my professors and they will tell you that I am an extremely active student, I have pretty good marks, and I am always willing to assist my fellow classmate. Anyone who knows me will tell you that I love being a student, I love this university and my future goals include becoming a professor and hopefully teaching here at UPEI. That, Brandon, is how much I love this university. Your generalizations are sweeping and wrong.

Clearly Brandon, I don't "do nothing," and you picked the wrong "she" to try to make an example of. I take great offense to you pre-judging me. I take an even greater offense to you accusing me of being full of apathy. If that were true, I wouldn't have written this letter, would I have?

Grace Kimpinski,
A non-apatetic student

Dear Editor:

I was saddened, yet unsurprised by the comments made by a certain young lady in the W.A. Murphy Centre during the student Council by-elections.

As a former Liberal candidate in the previous provincial election I spent every waking hour of the better part of two months driving up long dirt lanes, making repetitive phone calls, and knocking on each door in my district. I didn't have a political agenda, I wanted to meet and hear from each member of my district, leave no promises except to work as an MLA full-time, without the stress of family or burden of work. But still people pointed fingers, snubbed their nose, or pretended to look the other way on occasion. Sure there were a number of reasons for this: they were Tories, they didn't like a 22 year old with initiative based on the fact that he was 'too young', and that many of these people have instilled in their minds that unless a politician does something which directly affects me then he has done nothing at all.

In my search for support I came across the most amazing people. People who have lived in my community, and sometimes backyard for all my life. People who had personal vision for our area, initiative to see their visions through and who have overcome the most difficult personal battles. It is too bad that much of this was overshadowed by a few pessimistic individuals who all asked the same question... "what has the government ever done for me?"

Standing in front of our community hospital one gentleman asked me this question and then proceeded to explain that he voted his entire life, "always of the winning side", but was never given a job by his governing member.

I set out as a candidate because I believed that our area could benefit from an individual with no impending commitments and one who was unshackled by the party line...full of hope and aspirations for my community and each person in it. My energy became frustration some nights as shortsightedness and self absorption of some overcame the enormous applause of high spirits and positive reassurance of the majority.

Given the benefit of the doubt I do understand that comments can be taken out of context, not only in the political arena but also in our deeply beloved Cadre. In this case I still ask the question "why don't you put your name on the ballot?" Maybe then you can understand the frustration a few shortsighted individuals bring when they ask... "what has the government ever done for me?"

Phil MacDonald

The Cadre misquoted my questions to the Student Union

To the Editor:

I have to address the article "SU Bi-Election Speeches Commandeer Courtyard, People Eating Startled." Near the end of your article you mention a woman who seemed to address a question to the Student Union rather than at the candidates. I'm the woman you speak of. Almost everything you "remember" me saying is incorrect and I want to set the record straight.

As question period was going on the topic of tuition hikes/tuition freeze came up. This is when I interjected. I said, basically, that I have been at this campus off and on for the last 10 years. In that time, whenever SU elections come about the topic of lowering or freezing tuition gets mentioned and

the candidates always say they'll try to lower tuition. I then said that I have only ever seen my tuition go up, and as a matter of fact, not only did it go up again this year, but I also had to come up with a \$100 deposit before I could even register for my courses. Then I said that "I don't see the fucking point, what can Student Union really do for me?" (In reference to lowering/freezing tuition.) I did not say "what in the past 10 years has the Student Union really done besides make promises and hide in their offices?" I would never say that for the simple fact that I know that Student Union has made some good changes around UPEI, I was simply referring to tuition.

Also, as a reporter and editor

of the campus paper, I want to suggest you try a different approach to covering stories. Perhaps you can take a pad and pen with you and take notes, you could take a tape recorder and record what is being said, or, you could do interviews and get information from the people involved in your story. All of this helps you later when you go to write your article. You have something to refer back to which allows you to report more accurately what actually occurred. It also allows you to avoid having to recall subjects as "you can best remember."

Thanks,
Grace Kimpinski