

By Peter Gillis

... SACRED COWS

There is an old saying that goes "Be careful what you ask for, you just may get it." Last week I asked for students to come to the pit and challenge my stance on various issues as I run for SU President. They did, and then some. The questions were varied, ranging from "What is your definition of quality, affordable education?" given by one concerned student, to "when did you stop beating your wife?" offered up by one concerned idiot. Next time, I'll ask for comments by e-mail.

Two questions in particular stand out in my mind, though. After criticizing the effectiveness of the Student Union, I was asked why, if I consider our government so useless, am I bothering to run for President. My only response to that was the truth. I ran to ensure that, this time, no President would win by acclamation. I ran to generate debate, to get students to voice their concerns and to force their candidates to take a stand. That is exactly what happened.

Students now know that, if elected, I would scrap any

mandatory contribution to our building fund. I would fight to stay in CFS, base my decisions on the informed opinions of students and guarantee that the student body knows exactly what their representatives are doing -- good and bad. I would go so far as to occupy the offices of our provincial government in order to make them listen to our concerns. That is what I stand for. Much to my chagrin, though, it doesn't end there.

It seems that my competition for the post, my hated adversary Janice Broderick, also stands for these things. She is just as opposed to rising costs, just as opposed to breaking promises and just as passionate about doing what's right. Like me, she believes in keeping students informed; and, like me, is no pet voice-piece of the administration. Intelligent, experienced, concerned -- where does she get off? There I was, trying to take the moral high-ground, only to find I wasn't alone. What a kick in the teeth.

This brings me to the second question; and the one I am still thinking about to this moment. Considering Janice

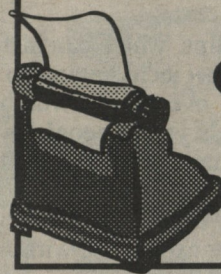
and I stand for the same things and share the same views, why should someone vote for me over her? What makes us different, or, in other words, what makes one better? At the time, I answered truthfully that I didn't really know. Now I do.

You see, I am running on principle in order to make some points about the election process and the SU that are very important to me. Janice, though, is running for much more. She is running for you and your future as students. All things said and done, which is of greater importance to you?

I have no doubt in my mind that I would be a good President. However, as I've written, the only honest way to elect a President is to get the truth; and the truth is, no matter how good I would be, Janice Broderick would be better. As painful as that is to admit, to do less would be unfair to you.

So, next week, vote Peter Gillis for Student Council President. Or don't; but if you don't you'll get exactly what you deserve.

Janice Broderick.



letters to the editor

Mandatory Building Fee

Dear Students,

The building donation is a controversial topic this year. First semester, approximately 800 students requested to keep their donations after word was spread that the twenty dollar donation was refundable.

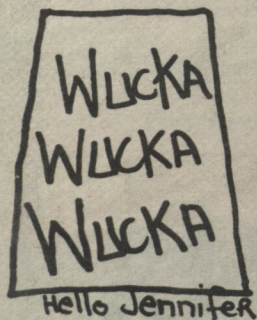
In reaction to this decrease in funds -- funds that are going to two very important building projects -- Student Union Executive gave notice of motion to council about making the donation a mandatory fee. This motion was tabled in exchange for the implementation of an information campaign; central to the information campaign was a mass mail-out to all students explaining the purpose behind the building donation.

When students paid for their second semester tuition, they were asked the question, "Do you want to continue to support the building campaign?" Considering that each UPEI student was asked directly about his or her support of the building fund, and only 800 students got their money back, the campaign can be considered a success!

Unfortunately, approximately 1,600 student withdrawing from the building funds translates to \$32,000 less revenue; this puts the building projects in jeopardy. On 16 March 1997 Student Council voted in favour of making the donation a mandatory fee. One reason for this change is that the Student Union must have a fixed-amount contribution in order to solicit donations off campus.

We, the Student Union Executive, would like to thank students for their support during this tough economic and academic year. Please remember, this Council vote ensures that the future students of UPEI will enjoy a new student centre thanks to the generosity of the present students; this vote ensures that the future students of UPEI are left with a good example to follow, such as the one left us by the students who donated towards the renovations of Main Building.

Sincerely,
Lindy MacKenzie,
VPF, on behalf of the Student Union Executive.



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