

Letters to the Editor

This letter is in response to Brandon MacKenzie's write-up of his trip to England.

To be honest, I don't even know where to begin. I am not someone who would normally take the time to write a letter in response to somebody's comments, but I can't just ignore your column. It's not like I really think people will take your descriptions seriously, but because of the slight chance that somebody will, I need to clear some things up. Mainly this is because I've visited England numerous times, twice for four months at a time, and I can proudly say that it's the "Best Place in the World."

A lot of your comments lead me to believe that you were in England for all the wrong reasons and that's why you've come out of it with a negative impression. Calling their accents "amusing" was my favorite part. Yeah, we all love their accents but I find that after being there for a short amount of time it becomes so clear that we're the ones with "amusing" accents. Islanders can't speak, I mean since when is there a "D" in Wat(d)er? You almost seemed annoyed when you said: What the hell is a 'queue' or 'lift' for that matter? Isn't that part of the fun of going to another country? And just to get the record straight, you'll encounter 'funny' words wherever you go, so this is hardly a reason to 'skip England'. "Pedestrian mashing" is also great - welcome to the city life. It's not like this isn't the case in places like Toronto too.

Now the expense thing seemed to be key. Yeah, it's bloody expensive and there's not too many ways around it. You need to have things planned and know what the hell you're doing before you step off the plane. Food is always cheaper at grocery stores than restaurants so that

can save you a bit. Other than that, you just have to save. Or, get a job like I did. They pay well and when you come home you get to double anything you saved. Even if you're only there for a bit, and didn't bother to get a Visa, it probably doesn't matter. You can find work and get paid 'under the table'.

Another alternative is to skip London and head up North. It is WAY CHEAPER IN THE NORTH. You can usually get a pint of beer for about two pound (\$4.50). Still sounds expensive but it's better than London prices. Plus the north has Manchester - wicked place and its night-life is supposed to be better than London's.

Brandon did make one good comment (and I think only one), when he said to get out of London and go to a smaller town. It is fresher, cheaper, and life really does go on outside of London. Some people seem to forget that when they're there.

The fact that you mentioned a week in Greece and casinos in Prague make me think that you went on an all-expense paid, drunk trip. Maybe you just went to England cause it's the place students are almost meant to go. But if this is the case for you, or anyone else, than by all means skip England. It's for people who want adventure, and who are okay finding themselves in the shit and then getting themselves out of it. It is really challenging, but definitely worth it.

So, anyway, this turned into a lengthy way of saying: Brandon is wrong, and anyone who is interested should definitely go to England. There is so much to do, and as long as your independent and can handle some rough times, then you'll have a blast.

Kelly Costain

Dear Editor:

In response to Grace Kimpinski's letter to the editor printed in the October 13th issue, I would like to first thank you, Mr. Editor, for ensuring that her concerns were once again made aware to me. Your personal and professional dedication to this University is clear as you go beyond the scope of your job description to ensure that the level of public debate at UPEI only increases.

Responding to Grace's concerns, I would like to first thank Grace for taking the time to submit her views. In a democratic society, it can sometimes be difficult to appease every constituent; however, criticism - or better yet, constructive criticism is a great method of feedback whereby we can be made aware of important issues that escape us. It is great to see someone making an effort to submit their opinions to the editor as it is my mandate to increase student involvement campus wide.

More specifically Mr. Editor, I am concerned with her comments regarding the student health plan. I know first hand of the cost this represents to many students and the difficulty it may bring to those who wish to opt-out. I too rely on this plan to cover my medical dues and quite painfully learned the cost a student can bear when the plan only covers 80% of prescriptions the day a careless driver decided to introduce their Oldsmobile engine block to my motorcycle at high speeds. However, for clarification, the requirement for a student health plan was mandated by the Board of Governors of UPEI. We

did not decide to involve every student by default - it is simply a policy of this University that every student be covered by a medical plan for obvious reasons. We were asked to be the administrators so as to best represent the concerns of UPEI's students. The alternative is to have the University administer the process and I only assume that they will not do so without covering their expenses. I can be the first admit the policy is not perfect; however, I can assure you that the perfect policy would be at least twice the cost as the policy carried now - that is simply the reality of today's insurance industry.

I do take Grace's concerns seriously, in fact I would not be doing my job if I didn't. Like her, I imagine many students at UPEI have concerns that they would like discussed or addressed at some level within the University, so I ask you - like Grace did - please let us know. I can assure you that the present executive will give everyone's comments the due process they deserve. Just last week I had two people come to me and ask why there wasn't a microwave in the Courtyard. A simple request, one which will likely be solved because those two people took the time to ask.

In response, over the coming weeks, we will be printing the names and pictures of the councillors elected to represent the students of UPEI. I invite you to feel free to contact any of them or myself directly to address your concerns - that is why we are here.

Brandon MacKenzie

Vagina Monologues

If you are interested in being involved in this hit stage production

whether acting or behind the scenes - please attend a general meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 22, at 5:30 pm, at the Women's Centre. (Room 265 North, WA Murphy Student Centre)

Ruth Freeman, Coordinator
UPEI Women's Centre
550 University Ave.
Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island