

Up With the Smoking Ban: A Non-Smoker's Reaction

By Brian Linkletter

We've heard from David Gallant and Kevin McLean about the smoking ban at U.P.E.I. Both gentlemen have expressed their own views in the past two issues of the Gem. They have wallowed in their paranoid delusions long enough. Now it is time to hear a non-smoker's point of view.

Mr. Gallant spoke about a smoker's right to smoke. Let us explore a non-smoker's right not to smoke. Every Canadian citizen has certain rights provided that they do not infringe on the rights of others. Cigarette smoke irritates many non-smokers. Smokers should respect the rights of non-smokers to breath clean air at all times. If they do not willingly respect the non-smoker's rights, they should be made to. Hence the smoking ban. Not all smokers are guilty of infringing on non-

smokers' rights but there are sometimes a few and that is always enough.

Non-smokers' wishes to breath clean air overrides smokers' wishes to smoke. Smokers can do without smoking. A smoker depriving himself of the "pleasure" of a smoke is making far less of a sacrifice than a non-smoker enduring the irritation of cigarette smoke. The smoker merely delays his desire, much like deciding to wait to eat a chocolate bar, but the non-smoker is irritated and possibly harmed by smoke that is not of his own making or in his control. The relationship is akin to the Canada-U.S. Acid Rain dispute.

Mr. Gallant argued that most of the evidence about the harmful effects of smoking is not 100 percent proof that smoking is harmful. However, the onus of the proof is on the smoker to prove

that smoking is not harmful to those who directly or indirectly (the non-smokers). Until such proof is delivered, it is only sensible to protect those who wish to avoid the possibility of harm from tobacco smoke. Those who smoke have accepted the risks; those who do not should not have the risks imposed upon them.

Mr. Gallant's other arguments about the smoking ban being "a first step toward a police state" and being used to expel students, and his suggestion that non-smokers should wear gas masks are too ridiculous and idiotic to deserve a reply.

After reading Mr. Gallant's article and Mr. McLean's letter, one can only assume that, even if smoking isn't as harmful as all the health officials say, it definitely leads to mental retardation in certain individuals.



Clearing the Air on the Smoking Ban

The Gem agrees with Mr. Linkletter that smokers should have the courtesy not to smoke in front of non-smokers. However, Mr. Gallant's article in the previous issue of the Gem addressed the larger question of whether or not UPEI has the legal and moral right to ban cigarette smoking on all its premises, which include professors' private offices and students' dormitory rooms. These two points should be clearly

distinguished in discussions on the proposed total smoking ban at UPEI.

If the proposed ban is passed, UPEI will be the first among Canadian universities to do so. This ban is not without consequences. As an example under the proposed ban, one will be able to drink liquor and beer but not smoke cigarettes at pubs in the Ban. The Gem invites students to voice their opinions on this issue.

Letters

Dear Editor:

This letter is in response to the Gem's article on the smoking ban. The article was obviously written by a smoker who is oblivious to the concerns of nonsmokers. The author of this article kept repeating the idea that smoking is a right. A right, however, exists only until you start to infringe on other individual's rights.

One of my basic rights is the right to a healthy environment, and smoking infringes on this basic right! Smokers might bring up the idea that it's a habit, but infactuating is one of my habits, and I seem to be able to control it.

When anyone goes to the Robertson Library Lounge to relax, and then eventually leave, they find that they and their clothes have a certain disgusting aroma of cigarette smoke.

I admit people who want to smoke have every right to destroy their lungs and brain cells, but when they start to destroy mine, I get extremely upset!

Angus McLusky



Kevin MacLean SPEAKS



Dear Editor,

I'm pretty well fed-up with CIMN. For the past two-and-a-half weeks they have been playing the same old tape. If I remember correctly, the station was supposed to be fixed up by Christmas. Well, I was up there about two weeks ago and it was still a mess. I'd just like to remind the station that part of my forty dollars that paid to the student union does go towards CIMN. Get some music on and stop playing the same damn tape over and over again. I'm sick of it and a lot of other people are too.

A Resident Student

Editor's Note: This eleven-year-old letter was found on the bottom of a long-forgotten drawer.

Dear Editor:

I am shocked and appalled at the insulting cartoon you placed next to my letter last week. Despite my printed protest, my girlfriend broke up with me because of my association with your detestable newspaper. To add insult to injury, you even dared to call me a jerk. I demand a full and complete apology. Truly, there is no justice in this world, where great men are often looked down upon.

Kevin MacLean

Editor's Note: We offer no apologies to great men. Their greatness should be self-evident to all readers of our journal.

OFFICE HOURS

The hours for the editor of the Gem will be:

At the Main Building 4th floor office:

Monday 10:30 AM to 5:00 PM

Tuesday: 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

In the Robertson Library student lounge:

Friday: 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM

If the editor is not in the office, submissions or messages may be left by placing through the slot in the office door.

Submissions for the Gem

should be made no later than 1 PM Monday on the week the submission is to be published. Submissions should be typed and double spaced. Early submissions are much appreciated.

Views expressed in the Gem are not necessarily those of the editor, the Gem, or the UPEI Student Union. The Gem is an equal opportunity newspaper.

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