

Letter To The Editor

Residence Security

Panther Prints: Where's the Edge?

I wish to express my disappointment with the recently selected name of UPEI student newspaper (both *Panther* and the *Panther Post* were less than suggestive of sophistication); more important still, I am very disappointed about the quality of the first issue of *Panther Prints* which is not as good as last year's *X-Press* editions. The cover page is as heavy-handed as the cover of the *Auto Trader* than of a student newspaper.

Traditionally, student newspapers have played pivotal roles in the intellectual and social landscape of Canadian universities. They have encouraged discussion, debate, and have provided a critical analysis of events on the campus.

Where is the journalistic edge of UPEI student newspaper? In the first issue of the *Panther Prints*, there is only one significant item of campus news: "AVC Expands Its Mandate"; the article is given only one 1/6 page. Where is the real coverage? Where are the interviews with students, faculty, and staff on how this change will affect their roles? Where is the journalistic edge?

When I hear students grumbling about some new change on campus, I expect to see that concern voiced in their newspaper. The sad fact is that I rarely see that. Where is the investigative reporting and constructive student criticism of the university? Your paper appears to silence rather than voice it.

The *Panther Prints* uses the first issue to proclaim itself "the NEW and IMPROVED student voice for UPEI." If that is problematic, then, when I see the issue of gender neutrality (e.g., "manhood" rather than "humanity") in the editor's article on *Canadian Symptom*, where are the sensitivity and objectivity of good editing?

Here are some constructive suggestions: I see some impressive announcements and advertisements (with complex layouts), providing information on the Women's Centre (pg. 6); the Student Centre plan (pg. 8); and a preview of the UPEI's forthcoming performances (pg. 4). I look forward to seeing

follow-ups and investigative reporting on these and other promising campus topics.

Also, the informative article on AIDS (pg. 8) is a step in the right direction in that it provides detailed information and shows depth in soliciting key views from the people involved and then connects the story with campus life. But again, this article needs good editing: it needs to incorporate quotations rather than paraphrase its sources; and it needs a better layout and structure to do justice to the many excellent points presented.

I look forward to seeing my letter published (unedited) in the next issue of your newspaper; I hope you will invite student response or debate about the issues I have raised and I look forward to an exchange on how to improve the *Panther Prints*.

J. Paul Boudreau, Psychology

Editor's Response:

Thank you for your constructive criticism. We welcome comments and suggestions from all of our readers. The name Panther Prints was chosen for two reasons: Panther in honour of our school mascot, and Prints for animal prints, and for the printed word.

It is true that the Panther Prints may not be as "professional" as other newspapers. We believe that everyone from the university community has a right to contribute to the paper, regardless of their level of experience. This policy of accessibility allows students to develop their abilities in such areas as editing, writing, production, and management. Unlike other student publications, we do not have a journalism department at UPEI to draw from. My informal motto for the paper is: "If you do not like what you see, give us something better." Since you seem to have some good ideas to improve content, we look forward to receiving a news article from you in the near future.

Aldera Chisholm,
Managing Editor

by Yvonne MacKean

Two weeks ago, on Friday September 29, there was an altercation in the residences. Blain Jensen, Director of Student Services, was more than willing to help clarify the situation.

According to Jensen, a Marian Hall resident signed in a number of people, who were apparently friends or acquaintances. These visitors began to cause a disturbance involving pushing and shoving. The Resident Assistant and security attendant on duty became involved as the persons were removed from the building. The crowd was dispersed by UPEI security. One individual became agitated and kicked out a window in the security van. Shortly thereafter, some of the instigators assaulted a Marian Hall resident, who was in the wrong place at the wrong time. He received no serious injuries. The perpetrators were charged and removed from the area by city police. Those charged were also banned from the residences and their proximities.

Jensen also said that problems of this nature are typically caused by those who are not residence students. These people do not care about the buildings, like the resident students do. An added dynamic is the larger numbers of students, including more first year students in the buildings, who have friends in the area. Security in the buildings thus became an issue early in the year. Adjustments have been made, specifically in Bernardine with respect to sign-in policies, to better secure the buildings. Residence students have to take responsibility for

themselves and their guests. In this case, there was also alcohol involved -- a factor which occurs in eighty to ninety percent of incidents in residence. The three persons charged were not UPEI students.

Prevention of such incidents in the future has primarily fallen on the students. The Marian Hall residents, especially, have banded together and have reached informal understandings with each other with regards to sign-ins and security. Bernardine Hall residents were also reminded as to how important common sense is and how individuals have to play a role in their own safety (i.e. not signing unknown people in).

Jensen was happy with the residence staff and security's response to the situation. The important thing to note is that the persons involved were not residence students. The resident who signed them in was responsible for his guests, but Jensen does not believe he was culpable as he did nothing to encourage, but rather discouraged the people.

Jensen adds that Student Services and Security have been working together, especially with there being more residence students, to secure the buildings. The increased number of students in residence has affected security. The buildings are on 24 hour lock-up, and the current policies may be altered according to students' input and visions for the future. Security is very important to Jensen, and he, with residence staff, will continue to monitor and remedy problems if they occur.

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