

EDITORIAL

As the grey area on the facing page states, Jim Lai has resigned as Editor of the **Gem**. My name is Lori Anne and it is I who has assumed the position of editor. I expect to remain on staff in that capacity, in addition to my usual production duties, at least until Christmas. At that time, the Student Union and the **Gem** will come to a decision regarding formally filling that position.

Concern has been expressed by many members of the University Community about some of the material included in last week's issue. A common question has been, "Are there any guidelines for the editor to follow regarding offensive material?"

There certainly are. The **Gem**, as a member paper of Canadian Universities Press, has a duty to uphold the following principles:

- That the major role of the student press is to act as an agent for social change assisting students in understanding and mobilizing against exploitation and injustice wherever it may be found, and emphasizing the rights of the student;
- That the student press must, in fulfilling this role, perform both an educative function, and support groups serving as agents of social change;
- That the student press must present local, national and international news fairly, and interpret ideas and events to the best of its ability; and
- That the student press must use its freedom from commercial and other controls to ensure that all it does is consistent with its major role, and to examine the issues which other media avoid.

The statements above were included in the 1977 CUP Editor's Manual. Below you will find duty #10 of the 1977 Manual's summary of the Duties of a CUP Editor:

- #10. Ensure that the newspaper is aware of and respects the CUP code of ethics, with particular attention to ensure that the paper will not publish racist or sexist advertising and copy.

The statement of Principles first appeared in 1959, dealing with the principles of CUP, abuses of newspaper freedoms and papers' rights and duties. CUP was then seen as a marketplace for ideas.

In 1966, the phrase "agents of social change" appeared. At that time, CUP was committed to an anti-racism policy, but sexism was not yet mentioned.

By the mid-1970's, CUP committed itself to being an alternative press. Students were recognized as an interest group, and papers were committed to defending students' interests. Social change was defined as education and mobilization of students against exploitation and injustice wherever it may be found. CUP was thereby committed to an activist function. As well, a new commitment to sexism was entrenched in the principles. Since that time, an anti-homophobia policy was included in the principles (that means that CUP is opposed to discrimination against gays and lesbians).

As you can see, we are guided by extremely clear policies and principles set by CUP. Policies and Principles are subject to never-ending re-evaluation — the **Gem** office's file cabinet is full of information generated at past conferences regarding these matters.

Now. The next question is, "How did all of this information get overlooked?" I shall not presume to speak for Mr. Lai, but I would venture the opinion that an ignorance of the information's existence, combined with the lack of editorial existence, led to last week's disastrous issue.

And so we pick up the pieces. I hope I've been able to answer some of the questions of the hour. I am very encouraged by your response to last week's issue, and I hope that you will continue to send letters and comments to the editor regarding future issues. As editor, I now have ultimate control over and responsibility for what is printed. If you are happy with the paper, please tell me — no one loves a compliment more than me. If you are **not** happy, I'd like to know that, too — perhaps something can be done. It's been an exhilarating experience thus far, and I trust it shall so remain. ENJOY the paper. It is, after all, for you.

Lori Anne Heckbert
The Editor

YOUR COMMENTS

Dear Editor,

Is it necessary for a university newspaper to print anything, no matter how vile it may be, that crosses its desk?

Is the **Gem** so desperate for copy that it must print the result of a mental maturation exercise carried on by a group of adolescent minds?

I refer to the Engineers bi-weekly section which has out-

done itself with an entire page of sexist drivel which can be called nothing but offensive. If someone believes that people actually want to read this shit, let them post it beside a toilet.

I suggest the next trip to the printers include a stop at the dumpster, if you wish people to take this paper seriously.

Sincerely,
C.K. Stevenson

Dear Editor:

Last week, concern was expressed in the **Gem** about the invitation list to the Academic

Awards Dinner.

In the past few years, invitations have been limited to students who have achieved Deans' List standing in the 2nd semester. As your writer pointed out, this meant that students who had been on the Deans' List 1st semester but not in the 2nd semester were not invited to the Dinner, while students who were on the List in 2nd semester were invited regardless of whether they were on the List in 1st semester.

The Deans have been concerned about this and had preliminary discussions last week. I can assure all students that changes will be made in order to prevent this apparent discrimination, effective with the Awards Banquet in the fall of 1987.

J. J. Revell
Dean

Stop The Graffiti at U.P.E.I.

Dear Editor,

Someone at U.P.E.I. is writing graffiti over the walls. Most of the sayings have a religious affiliation. You must have seen them; you cannot miss them. It makes the walls look disgusting. The writing cannot be scrubbed off the walls because it is written in marker. This means that the walls will have to be painted in order to cover up the mess, which will likely cost the U.P.E.I. students.

Would the person who is writing this graffiti, please stop. If you are the christian

you claim to be, then you should know that christians don't deface their neighbor's property. Secondly, you are breaking the law by destroying public property. Writing over a wall is not age appropriate behavior for a person who is attending university.

Here at U.P.E.I. if someone has a message to get across, you write it down on paper and post it. So stop using the walls and start using the bulletin board.

Sincerely,
Patricia Kenny

From the Editor's Desk

Dear irate Vet student:

I have received your article entitled "Why a banana is better than a male UPEI engineer."

I have read the article, and I will not print it.

Irregardless of what happened last week, the **Gem** is still governed by the principles of CUP as outlined in the editorial on this page. If you read that editorial, you will understand that we have a duty to uphold a policy of anti-sexism. Sexism is a two way street.

Although it is not my responsibility to apologize to you about last week's issue, I feel compelled by conscience to do so. Last week's Engineer's submission ought never to have been printed. I'm sorry that we, women and men alike, had to read such offensive material. I'm sorry that you felt such anger and grief over this distasteful com-

parison of women to objects, and that you felt compelled to respond in the way you did. I share with you my deepest regrets.

I am not out to "get" the Engineers. They are free to submit what they please, when

they please. I do warn that unless considerable care is taken to improve the quality of their submissions, I shall not print them. That is my right and duty.

In solidarity,
The Editor

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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