

Letters To The Editor...

Prod. Editor's Note:

Due to a complicated computer thingy, last week's letter from Phil Ferraro came out in a foreign language. Here is Mr. Ferraro's letter as it should have appeared.

To the Editor:

Your response to the Maclean's magazine rating of universities said nothing to convince me that the survey was inaccurate. The point made that the value of an institution cannot be measured by a their party is valid. However, it cannot be successfully defended on the notions of hometown pride.

Rather than trying to convince readers that they are not swimming in the bottom of the barrel, the campus press should argue from the viewpoint of creativity and uniqueness, standards which set UPEI programs on the leading edge of a curriculum that is relevant to the 90s.

"To integrate your traditional values with the evolving trends for a global society." This is the memory engraved in granite on campus by the class of 1969. Did Maclean's miss this aspect of the university or did the contemporary nature of this school's programs extinguish with the idealism of the 60s? Maclean's may be misrepresenting the university due to its selection of criteria with which to evaluate education. However, if there is any credibility to its claim then the student body should use the survey as partial evidence for the need to restructure the curriculum.

In a world on the verge of ecological calamity with virtually every issue one could list, relevant education means that ecological consciousness must be present in every program. Environmental conservation in the 1990s is as essential for preparation in life as the Three R's. Any subject presented without regard to its ecological consequences should be reevaluated.

The traditions of PEI are founded upon a determination to created a self-reliant/sustainable culture. This history, as well as the Island's contemporary issues, make it an ideal location for learning to harmonize with nature.

The Institute for Island Studies, located on the UPEI campus, is one example of this institutions' link to environmental concerns. Hosting a recent international conference on Island self-reliance is only one of the many notable accomplishments of the Institute. In 1987, these Island Studies people commissioned George McRobie, author of *Small is Possible*, to tour the

Island in order to observe that environmental education in the formal education sector was "in obvious need".

Although, McRobie witnessed a strong infrastructure with the potential for sustainability, he noted that the education and training designed to motivate and equip people for self-reliance has been neglected for several generations and is now in need of high priority.

These qualities, according to McRobie, are gained through student directed problem solving where students learn economics and sociology by doing projects in a community. The students' role is to unfold environmental options for community development. Business organizations and workers study new forms of relationships and on farm research of sustainable technologies assists regional agriculture. A sustainable education program enhances local economic development through apprenticeship programs. Energy resources (in our case wind solar and water) are studied fro their potential. In some instances money for local enterprises can be raised through the development of ethical investment funds.

Concerns for the ecological and social relevance of modern education is the most serious evaluation today's students should be concerned with. The incorporation of these aspects of education into the formal program is a claim most universities are ill prepared to make. The Institute for Island Studies is an inspiring beginning to this process. How far its ideals have been able to permeate the university curriculum is the real standard by which to evaluate the institution.

Phil Ferraro

CORRECTION

In last week's story "Tops off to talking about breasts," the second last paragraph should have read:

"This lack of connection between issues is an obvious flaw in what Gwen Jacob calls "the third wave of capital F Feminism" (Yikes. If this is third wave feminism then I ain't goin' to no beach)."