

Dear Editor,

Last Thursday's Daily reported that Sadie's Tabagie is going to continue to sell tobacco, fearing that loss of revenues will force the store to close. The SSMU in its "wisdom" passed a resolution last year forcing Sadies to phase out sales by May 31, 2005. "Clubs' Representative Nafay Choudhury was appalled" at the stopgap measure adopted instead - removing tobacco displays, hiding tobacco products behind the counter and installing warning signs about the hazards of smoking.

Last I checked, tobacco was still legal and students on campus old enough and intelligent enough to weigh the risks of smoking against its pleasures. It seems the SSMU has joined government efforts to demonize, harass and belittle smokers. Although we are all bright enough to attend one of the best universities in Canada, apparently we are all so childishly attracted to the bright colours of cigarette packages, that upon a trip to Sadie's to buy a chocolate bar we will forget the bombardment of health warnings from Health Canada and in a trance ask for a pack of du Maurier. Apparently, smokers are so lazy, walking to the nearest depanneur is far too much effort, and if Sadie's stops selling cigarettes, they will be bound to quit.

But speaking of health hazards, what was I thinking, suggesting that a chocolate bar was something innocent? Haven't I seen the levels of obesity in Canada these days? In fact, what does Sadie's sell that isn't a serious health risk? Do you know how much sugar is in a can of coke - and don't reach for the diet, do you know how bad aspartame is for you? Forget about the gum, a person could choke on that. And those chips...well, they won't be around for much longer anyway, trans-fats have been banned. Perhaps its not such a bad thing if Sadie's closes after all. Or perhaps, the SSMU and the Canadian government should stop patronizing us, leave us to make our own decisions and get on with things that really matter.

The SSMU, by assuming the banning culture, has stepped onto the slippery slope that already has the Canadian government out of control. This slope is positively dripping with good intentions, but we all know where that leads. The living hell we are heading towards is a perfectly sanitized one, and incredibly long and boring. Congratulations are in order to the SSMU exec for adopting the worst patronizing and politically correct aspects of our government - I'm sure they'll all make fine House of Commons ministers. And when Sadies closes because of the ban, at least the students who used to work there won't have any more disposable income for cigarettes, chocolate bars and chips (or tuition). Thanks for protecting us from ourselves, SSMU!

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