

Lister the last bastion of spunk

They came out in droves, demonstrating that Listerites are still willing to rise up



ADAM
GAUMONT

As someone who has never lived in Lister, my knowledge of life on the other side of 87 Avenue is limited to tales of bad food, drunken debauchery, dodgeball tournaments, and random outbreaks of various transmittable diseases in an enclosed environment. And while I'm only too happy to unquestioningly subscribe to these and other amusing stereotypes, I now have one more Lister legend to add to my list: champions of democracy and varsity spirit.

Okay, so it's not exactly the civil rights movement, or even the Orange Revolution for that matter. But last night, when hundreds of students packed into the cafeteria in Lister Hall to debate, protest, and just to show that they cared, they did what countless other protesters couldn't do: they actually got the University to go back on a decision.

Those bothersome activist types are actually right, in a way, when they encourage you to come out to those rallies. Because if tens of thousands of students were ever to march across the High Level Bridge and camp out on the Legislature grounds until tuition fees were lowered (or at least until the

government acknowledged them), it would probably work. In fact, such things did occur back in a mythical age of activism and protest that occurred when you and I were still in grade school.

Our generation, on the other hand, is a pretty apathetic bunch. But even today, despite so many lame turnouts at so many lame SU events, U of A students have shown that they aren't apathetic about *everything*.

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A telling example: the single most massive and organized student turnout I've ever seen in my four years at this institution came this past December, when thousands upon thousands of nervous undergraduates flocked to SUB, waiting for hours on end just for one fleeting moment with the person that they came to see. Only it wasn't inspiration they were looking for, it was vaccination, and it wasn't a rush of youthful adrenaline they were getting, but a shot in the arm to protect them against the mumps.

Yes, it took a vague and shadowy threat to their personal health—not the threat of increased tuition fees or equally shadowy provincial legislation—to mobilize the general U of A student population in droves that I have never seen before or since. But that shouldn't come as much of a surprise in such an affluent, conservative province as this one and at such a sprawling and populous commuter campus.

In fact, that's just it: commuter students versus residential ones—those who leave versus those who stay. Lister Hall is a holdover from the traditional university experience, now the exception rather than the rule, but still a near-perfectly intact microcosm of school spirit and post-secondary idealism, unsullied by the quotidian distractions of home life or the invariably more right-leaning views of their tuition-paying parents.

In residence, you actually have a chance of getting to know your colleagues, your floor mates, your dodgeball dudes, and your drinking buddies. You get to stay on campus 24/7, soaking up the academic experience along with a few more pragmatic alcohol-fuelled life lessons. You get exposed to the Norwalk virus. You get to pick the next SU president—if Michael Janz and Jordan Blatz are any indication. And if yesterday's demonstration is any indication, you get to have a say in University policy too.

Microsoft's purchase a reason to say Yahoo!



MIKE
KENDRICK

"While its early anti-trust accusations have raised some eyebrows, the deal seems to be pushing ahead and could benefit both Microsoft and Yahoo. While Yahoo gets some much-needed financial investment (as its shares have hit a four-year low), Microsoft gets a crash course in what "cool" means in the future."

Earlier this week, when software giant Microsoft offered \$44.6 billion for the acquisition of second-place search engine Yahoo, Google—the web's reigning leader—began to show signs of concern for the first time in recent memory. While it's been the uncontested search engine champion for years, the tech industry wasn't always so focused on Internet supremacy.

Remember the days of yore, when the schoolyard skirmishes between Microsoft and Apple topped the tech headlines? Microsoft would show up with a shiny new operating system that would make it the envy of all the sandbox, and in response, Apple would show off its latest bits of hardware, too.

Then, one day, a new kid came to town and took everyone by surprise. Gone are the days of playground hardware mudslinging: now that this Internet thing is starting to take off, Google has suddenly risen to the top of technology's ranks, leaving the former big dogs in the dust.

But everyone knows how these things go once middle school is over—Apple became that mysterious, turtleneck-wearing artist that all the hipster chicks fawn over, while Microsoft remained the nerdy rich kid that spends its weekends building model rockets and watching *Babylon 5* reruns. Google, on the other hand,

is suddenly the big company on campus and the envy of every freshman startup around.

While Apple seems content to brood among its clique of artsy beatniks and indie hipsters, Microsoft can't seem to shake those memories of when it sat atop the computational totem pole and Google was just a colourful kid that nobody really understood. Needless to say, a self-entitled suburbanite brat like Microsoft wasn't raised to handle living in second place, and it's been desperately trying to catch up ever since.

Enter Yahoo—the laid back, hemp-and-sandal-clad toker that's always sat at the back of class and has spent its life in the pursuit of chilling out. It's had its moments in the past—people used to dig its forward-thinking nature and the way it seemed to have an answer to everything. Though it's no Google, it's got the kind of cool factor that Microsoft needs to climb back up to Google's level—with a little financial coercion, of course. This is exactly the kind of high school comedy/drama that writes itself.

Google's not one to just sit back without a fight, though. It's taken a look at the situation and now realizes that this kind of deal could be a legitimate threat to its position. While its early anti-trust accusations have raised some eyebrows, the deal

seems to be pushing ahead and could benefit both Microsoft and Yahoo. While Yahoo gets some much-needed financial investment (as its shares have hit a four-year low), Microsoft gets a crash course in what "cool" means in the future. Because let's face it: Vista was hardly a step in the right direction.

What's more, a tag team like this is putting some welcome pressure on Google's superiority. The search-engine giant became the uncontested leader in the battle for Web 2.0 technologies, but it's for the best that it doesn't get too comfortable in its victories. With the combined efforts of Team YahooSoft, we're likely to see a fresh new rivalry that could only be settled in some sort of climactic dance-off, complete with celebrity cameos.

Of course, the anti-trust lawyers will have to go comb through their policy manuals to make sure that a union like this is even acceptable in the first place, but Microsoft is no stranger to dodging lawsuits. Once the dust settles and the credits roll, it's likely that Google will still come out on top, but everyone will have learned a valuable lesson about doing business in the future—and Apple might even finally make it with that shy hottie AT&T. If anyone's a true winner, though, it's the audience—I'm certainly smelling a sequel.

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