

The SFU Car Lot

by Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Tuesday, November 16, 2004

<http://politicsrespun.org/2004/11/the-sfu-car-lot/>

Update! See below!

O bliss! On Tuesday, November 9, 2004 some marketing students turned SFU into a GM car lot.

They even got some [advanced press](#) about it with a truly absurd analogy from business prof, Colleen Collins-Dodd:

"We have a business school on this campus. I don't think we need to apologise for that," she said. "In biology they go out and examine bugs and birds and animals and plants. In chemistry they look at chemicals in the lab . . . this is no different - this is students doing a business project for a business course on a business. That's what we do in the faculty."

Without going into a large rant on how post-modern business faculties generally aren't, it is way too much of a stretch for me to accept that bugs, birds, animals and plants have as little feedback effect on the social structure of post-secondary education as bringing a car lot onto campus. Corporate commodification is more pronounced than flora and fauna.

And then, I just couldn't keep my opposition to myself.

[Flashy cars and sold souls](#)

Stephen Buckley

I want to send a big thank you out to the students of Business 448 - Sales and Promotion Management. Thank you so much for reminding us all that we are consumers, not citizens or students. Thank you for turning our campus into a General Motors car lot on November 9. Thank you for reminding us of the value of corporate growth, profit, marketing, and the capitalist core that should underwrite all university activities. Thank you for adding to the corporate commodification of learning. You are now in the good company of corporate-sponsored classrooms at the Harbour Centre campus and the new market condos on the hill that do not rate as affordable student housing.

Thank you for setting up your corporate co-optation freak show near the Terry Fox statue, just to let us know that you have no sense of irony. Thank you also for perpetuating the myth that corporations care about suffering, poor humans (who, oddly, are minimal consumers) by bribing students to sit in your little red car with food for the food bank, when you marketing students could have instead just designed a campaign to support the food bank without littering our campus with shiny brand-new cars. Thank you also for e-mailing the entire SFU Greens e-mail list with the surreal request that they advertise for you, again missing the irony of soliciting support from a group that contains members who are against consumerism and automobiles themselves. In short, thank you Business 448 students for reminding us

that public-private partnerships (P3s) suck, and that being citizens before consumers takes a bit of work every day.

[Update!](#)

Someone [replied](#) to my letter to the editor!

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