Protest wrongly relocated

It should be expected that protesting war will be a controversial action. However, it would be difficult to predict the outrage that resulted from the decision of Anti-War @ Laurier (AW@L) to protest war at Veterans’ Green this past weekend.

Much of the outrage felt by the community makes one wonder how much attention people paid to AW@L’s announcement of the protest. The protest wasn’t meant to be disrespectful, and the group never questioned the value of veterans’ sacrifice.

The protest questioned Canada’s involvement in Afghanistan and was a rally organized by a value veterans fought for, just the right to free speech that those opposed to the protest were expressing.

Before people immediately dismissed the group’s plans, they should have heard what AW@L had to say. It is not enough to simply have the right to question and the right to protest, we must actually engage in these acts and question Canada’s involvement in war.

Instead of questioning the nation’s current involvement with war, people jumped to the conclusion that the protest was up to no good. They assumed that the protest was a radical and trouble-making event.

This assumption only serves to further develop the mainstream image that protests are violent, radical and out-of-touch with everyday people. As a result, people are discouraged from protesting, disagreeing and questioning beliefs and policies.

Ultimately, AW@L should be commended for agreeing to move its protest. Regardless of whether it was in good taste or not to hold it at Veterans’ Green, as a public space, it was their right to gather there. Despite this, they listened to the community.

It’s unfortunate that the protest was unable to go ahead in the location originally planned. Veteran’s Green was a sensible location for the protest and it was not disrespectful. By moving the protest, at least AW@L was able to make sure that the protest remained about the issues being questioned rather than a fight over the appropriateness of the location.

Monopoly ridiculous

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Explains OneCard office manager Nick Tomljenovic, “If WLUSU feels the need to have any overlap on an of-campus, that’s okay.”

WLUSU’s espoused mission is to “provide for the needs of Students.” And yet, even after Pilot Pita collected over 2,000 student signatures on a petition requesting it be added to the OneCard system, it has been ignored.

The students’ union is in place to represent undergraduate students’ needs, not to make a dime (or a financial gain pushed aside for a questionable social cause).

WLUSU has a high-profile business faculty – manages businesses whose success hinges on the fact that they are far more convenient than any of their competitors.

Apparently, the free market is one of those theories that never leaves the classroom.

Why improve the Pita Shack’s abysmal level of service or quality to compete with Pilot Pita, which serves a much tastier pita, when the students’ union can unilaterally retain the Pilot Pita monopoly?

The fact that WLUSU is vetting fast-food restaurants from being allowed to accept OneCard payments, particularly those that have been campaigned for by students and for the students, is nothing short of selfish and heartless. Students are being pushed aside for a financial gain that is meaningless to the union’s shareholders: the students.

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The students’ union is in place to represent undergraduate students’ needs, not to make a dime (or a great sum more). It’s interesting that WLUSU – the students’ union at a school with a high-profile business faculty – manages businesses whose success hinges on the fact that they are far more convenient than any of their competitors.

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These unsigned editorials were approved by at least two thirds of The Cord’s editorial board and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Cord’s volunteers, staff or WLUSU.

Halloween unique

October is one of the times in the course of the year that we are able to disregard all of our inhibitions and allow ourselves to revel in the freedom that anonymity affords.

Sure, there are numerous nights when students go out and party themselves into oblivion, but on most of these nights their identities are clearly on display, and they are invariably acting as extensions of their personalities.

However, the ritual of dressing in a Halloween costume is liberating, as it allows us as individuals to express ourselves while wearing somebody else’s shoes.

Perhaps this is why so many people love the annual holiday so much; it allows them to be something (anything) else – at least for one night. For the most part, our identities are tied to the recognizable aspects of our everyday lives: our areas of study, our interests, our hobbies, our personality traits and all of those other aspects of ourselves that we affirm as being integral to our conception of self.

All of these characteristics, and those supplied by those around us in the real and imagined communities that we inhabit, combine to orient us in regards to our situations. For good or bad, these are the ideals that we draw upon when we look at ourselves and try to determine who we are, and whether what we are doing fits within our conception of who we view ourselves to be.

While for the majority of the year these frameworks of identity guide our actions, on Halloween we are provided the opportunity to throw away and step inside the skin of someone else. While our personal identity is never truly gone, as we ultimately rely upon the idea of the self to guide our actions, Halloween offers a chance to experiment and play with our identities in a safe and forgiving way.

Why else would someone dress up as a “slutty nurse” or a favourite super-hero, if not to enjoy the freedom that these costumes afford?

Why else would someone dress up as a “slutty nurse” or a favourite super-hero, if not to enjoy the freedom that these costumes afford? Just because we dress up as something outside of the skin of someone else doesn’t necessarily represent an aspect of our own selves; it might just be that October 31 offers us the chance to express something that we wished we had or imagine would be fun to have.

While as sounds, it becomes dressing up as someone else we are able to come to terms with who we really are or what we would like to be. Of course, it’s a lot easier to play it safe and avoid wearing a costume that no one else gets or thinks is funny, but how will you know who you are if you never push yourself towards the ledge of insecurity and take a peek over?

Only then will you know what fits your personality and what doesn’t. Without the moment of fear that accompanies letting yourself go for just one night, you will never have the chance to push yourself out of your mundane bubble of comfort and see what lies outside of it. And that is most certainly a shame.

Halloween is the perfect time for such identity-defining experiments to take place. After all, it is the one night of the year when you are forgiven if you let your hair down and become a little unruly. No, that is all wrong. It is the one night of the year when you are encouraged to run amok and push the boundaries of good taste.

So don’t be afraid of dressing up and acting a little out of character on Halloween. It’s good for you. Not only is it cathartic, but it can also reinforce or reject the pre-conceived notions that you have about yourself.

This is not to say that Halloween is a chance to go out and act stupid and completely out of character, temperance is a virtue that should be maintained. But stepping outside of yourself for a few hours once a year might allow yourself the chance to affirm everything that you feel about who you are.