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GAZETTE

WHIMSY POP

Halifax musician Brent Randall brings his pinecones home p12

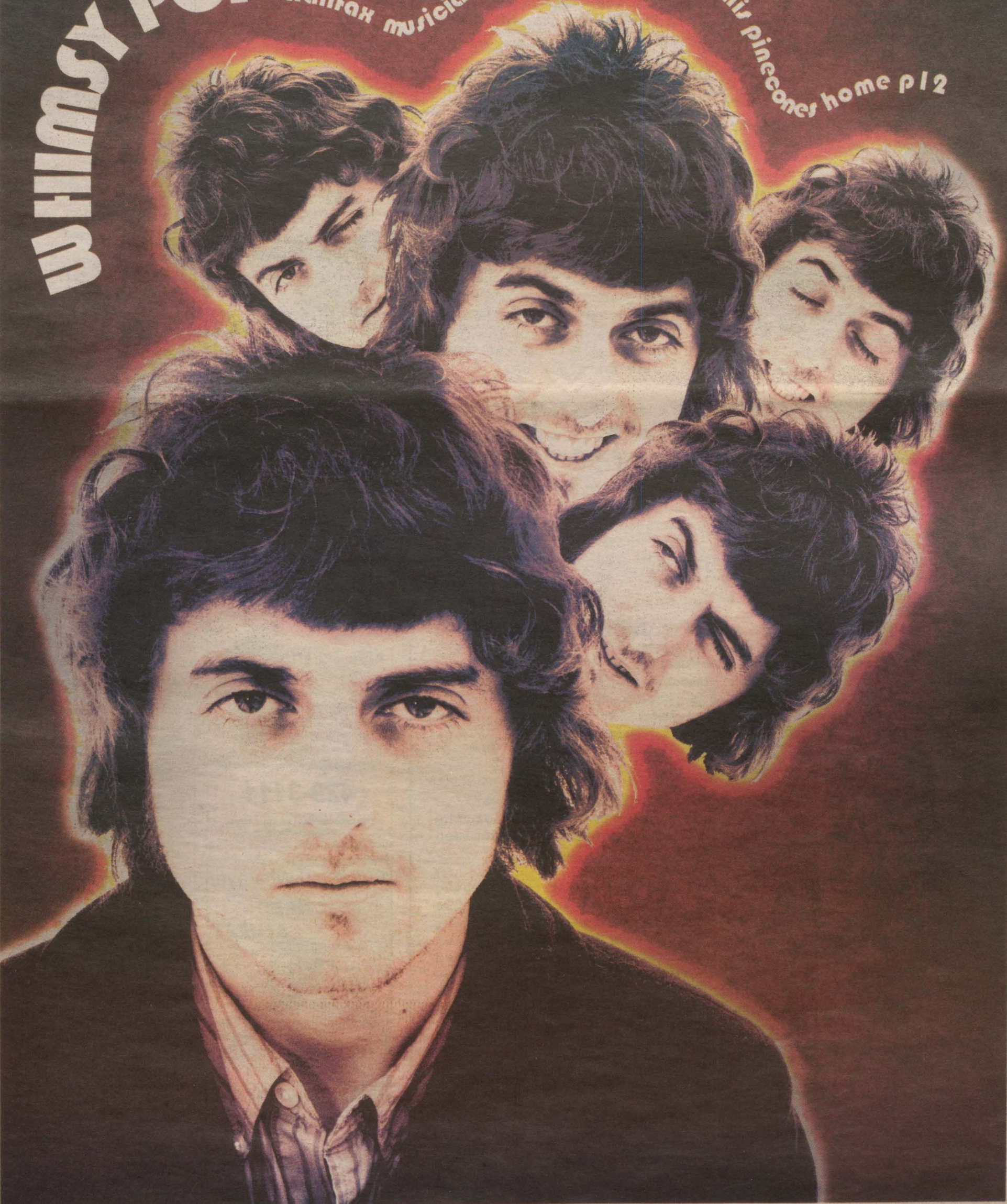


Photo Illustration: John Packman



WEEKLY DISPATCH

Hello, Dalhousie students!

23,000 and Counting

Congratulations to Dalhousie on over 23,000 acts of green in CBC's One Million Acts of Green challenge. Dal took on Acadia in a competition that started Thursday, January 15, and lasted a whole...one day! Dalhousie's goal was 16,000 acts of green, while Acadia had to reach 3,000 acts of green to win the competition.

Not only has Dal come out on top in its competition with Acadia; according to CBC's One Million Acts of Green website, we also rank first across Canada!

Keep up those acts everyone. Let's show Canada that Dalhousie cares about the environment!

For more information, visit <http://green.cbc.ca> or email dsu.sustain@dal.ca.

Health Plan Opt-In

Just a reminder that students who are registered for the January semester, but who were not registered for the September semester, are required to opt-in to the DSU Health Plan in order to be covered. The opt-in period runs until January 30th, 2009.

For more information about opting-in to the DSU Health and Dental Plan please contact Krista Ali at the DSU Health Plan office located in the basement of the SUB. Phone: (902) 494-2850 or e-mail: dsuhealth@dal.ca.

Speakers Series

This semester has something for everyone, with talks by Sue Johanson, Richard Stallman and Dr. Samantha Nutt.

Richard Stallman on The Free Software Movement: January 27th - 7 PM at the McInnes Room in the SUB. Admission is free. Co-hosted by the Dalhousie Computer Science Society, Richard Stallman will speak about the Free Software Movement, which campaigns for freedom so that computer users can cooperate to control their own computing activities.

Dr. Samantha Nutt, Founder of WarChild Canada on Taking Your Vision to Action: February 10th - 7 PM at the McInnes Room in the SUB. Admission is to be determined. Co-hosted by WarChild Dal, Samantha Nutt comes to campus to bring her passionate and inspiring message to the Dalhousie Community. Everyone is talking about progress and change, but what do we need to make it happen?

Teaching Awards

Have you had an excellent professor this term? We want to hear about it! The DSU teaching awards are some of the university's most prestigious honors, as they are decided entirely by students!

To nominate a professor or instructor for a teaching award, please fill out the nomination form available online or at the DSU information centre in the Student Union Building. Please remember to attach a cover letter supporting the nomination. Applications must be submitted by February 13th 2009. Forms can be addressed to Amy Florian and may be dropped off at room 222 in the Student Union Building or emailed to am476210@dal.ca.

Check back next week for more news, and as always, contact us with any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

Your DSU Executive



Photo Illustration: John Packman

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CORRECTIONS POLICY

The Gazette is steadfastly committed to accuracy and always strives to provide correct information to students. We are human, though, and we do make mistakes. We promise to correct them as promptly as possible. If you spot an error in The Gazette in print or online, please report it to copy@dalgazette.ca.

THE FINE PRINT

The Gazette is the official written record of Dalhousie University since 1868 and is open to participation from all students. It is published weekly during the academic year by the Dalhousie Gazette Publishing Society. The Gazette is a student-run publication. Its primary purpose is to report fairly and objectively on issues of importance and interest to the students of Dalhousie University, to provide an open forum for the free expression and exchange of ideas, and to stimulate meaningful debate on issues that affect or would otherwise be of interest to the student body and/or society in general. A "staff contributor" is a member of the paper defined as a person who has had three volunteer articles, or photographs of reasonable length, and/or substance published in three different issues within the current publishing year. Views expressed in the Hot or Not feature, The Word at Dal, and opinions section are solely those of the contributing writers, and do not necessarily represent the views of The Gazette or its staff. Views expressed in the Streeter feature are solely those of the person being quoted, and not The Gazette's writers or staff. This publication is intended for readers 18 years of age or older. The views of our writers are not the explicit views of Dalhousie University. All students of Dalhousie University, as well as any interested parties on or off-campus, are invited to contribute to any section of the newspaper. Please contact the appropriate editor for submission guidelines, or drop by for our weekly volunteer meetings every Monday at 5:30 p.m. in room 312 of the Dal SUB. The Gazette reserves the right to edit and reprint all submissions, and will not publish material deemed by its editorial board to be discriminatory, racist, sexist, homophobic or libellous. Opinions expressed in submitted letters are solely those of the authors. Editorials in The Gazette are signed and represent the opinions of the writer(s), not necessarily those of The Gazette staff, Editorial Board, publisher, or Dalhousie University.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR... GAZETTE



PRESS PHOTO

The business world just got a little tougher.

Grad school is for the unemployed

JULIE SOBOWALE
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

If you are one of the thousands of students graduating this year, good luck. This year is perhaps one of the worst times in history to be an eager young graduate searching for work. The global economy is tanking, people are losing their jobs and the government is running out of money. In these not so cheerful times, perhaps delaying full-time employment with graduate level education would be your best option.

Grad school is a great way to delay entering the real world. Students can stick with their friends, continue sleeping in till noon and still go out for beer every night. The work may be a little tougher but a graduate degree would likely help you find better employment in the future. Plus, there's money to be made at the graduate level. Grants, scholarships and research assistant jobs are reserved for those post-bachelor students.

With only four months left in my master's of business administration program, I haven't succumbed to the fear of the bad economy and neither have most of my classmates, but there is reason to worry. According to Statistics Canada, 34,400 Canadians lost their jobs last month. Those numbers may not sound alarming compared to the half a million jobs lost in the U.S. in December alone but lost jobs is a sign of a slowing economy. Unless your home province is Alberta, finding a job is going to be difficult.

Students across Canada are contemplating their options. *Maclean's* magazine recently reported some Canadian universities are experiencing a 10 per cent increase in grad school applications. The jobs students were promised would exist are no longer available. The *Maclean's* article noted entry-level job postings are down by nearly 25 per cent. With those grim job numbers, how can a student afford not to consider grad school?

Unfortunately for all of us in the class of 2009, we're fighting increased competition for jobs, grad school and financial aid. Since we are part of the echo generation, the children of baby boomers, we have to compete for everything much more than our parents did. Government cuts in summer job programs and student assistance doesn't help.

Not all is lost in these depressing times. The *Globe and Mail* recently reported on a study looking at the effects of a recession on post-secondary graduates. According to the Statistics Canada study, graduates during a recession suffer significant wage losses in their first few years of employment but eventually recover within 8 to 10 years after graduation. The class of 1983 didn't do so well when it looked for work during a recession. In the *Globe and Mail* report, University of Toronto demographer David Foot says

for that generation everything was delayed for five years, from marriage to buying a house to establishing their careers with well-paying jobs. Many were doing well by their mid-30s.

Graduation can be a scary and exciting time. This year it's also a time to be anxious but the pain won't last forever. At least there's a Plan B.



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Armed robbery sparks questions about emergency texting

MICHELLE HAMPSON
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

The robbery of the Personal Computer Purchase Centre (PCPC) on Jan. 13 has some students wondering if Dalhousie should have used the emergency text messaging system.

Jacob Hitchcock, PCPC storefront manager, says a disguised man entered PCPC at around 12:05 p.m., threw down a bag, pulled out a gun and said "I want laptops in the bag."

Hitchcock proceeded to the backroom of PCPC and grabbed three laptops.

"I didn't care about the computers, to be honest. I just wanted him out of the store," he says. "That was my only focus - whatever needs to be done to get this guy to go as quickly as possible is all that matters."

Along with the laptops, the robber left with some money from the cash register. With a laugh, Hitchcock describes the robber as "picky" because he refused an offered roll of loonies because of its weight.

The three stolen laptops were used rentals, covered by insurance. They all had serial numbers and can be tracked easily if sold.

There were no customers in the store at the time of the robbery. There were two full-time employees, Hitchcock says, and two part-time student employees.

"Everyone did a really good job of staying calm," says Hitchcock.

Dal's media relations manager, Charles Crosby, says PCPC staff handled the situation well. But some students were far from praising Dal's decision to not use the emergency cell phone text messaging system the school set up last year.



PCPC is not taking extra security measures after three used laptops were stolen from the store Jan. 13.

JOSH BOYTER / DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

Dal News posted an online article about the robbery, prompting posts questioning why the school didn't use the emergency text messaging system.

Crosby says the emergency texting system is used for "when we are actually requiring action on a part of the Dal community."

"In this case there wasn't anything we were asking people to do," he says.

"It wouldn't have been an appropriate use of the system."

Crosby says an example of an appropriate text message is: "Henry Hicks building on fire. Avoid the area."

Chelsea Fennell, a 22-year-old student at Dal, says the text messaging system should have been used.

"Considering where the PCPC is, it's close to the library and residence,

so if they didn't use (the emergency text messaging system), it seems a little ridiculous," she says. "When would be a better time to use the emergency system than a man with a gun close to a lot of students?"

Claire Morley, a chemistry student at Dal, agrees with the decision to not use the emergency text messaging system.

"I think it was probably a good

one because the only thing they would have been able to do was inform everyone what had happened, but no one would have been able to do anything," she says.

Lauren Donnelly, a biology and international development studies student, says the system did not necessarily need to be used, but she thought the system was meant for situations such as a hold-up.

"If they don't use it for that, what else are they going to use it for?" she says.

As for post-robbery security, Crosby says everyone did exactly what they were supposed to do. He also says PCPC is not taking extra security measures as a result of the robbery, but that staff are more aware.

Hitchcock says campus security and police responded quickly to the robbery. He says the number of police officers that showed up was "very reassuring."

Halifax Regional Police spokesperson Const. Jeff Carr, says the General Investigative Unit is looking into the robbery.

"They interview all witnesses and we also take forensic evidence from the scene as we do with any robbery," he says.

PCPC has one security camera that captured the event and police are reviewing the tape.

A suspect has not yet been identified and police are asking anyone with more information to come forward.

The robber is described as a white or dark-complexioned white male with a stocky build. He was wearing dark sunglasses and a dark bandana over his face. His sweatpants were brown or burgundy-coloured. The stolen computers were carried away in an Adidas gym bag.

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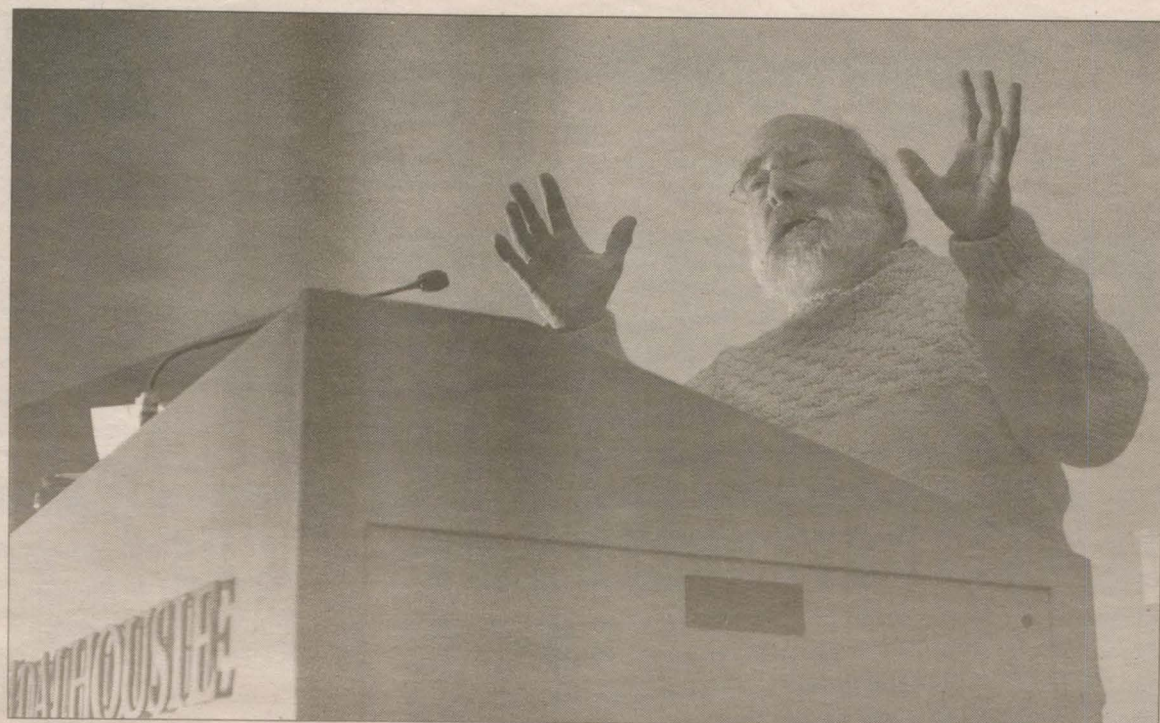
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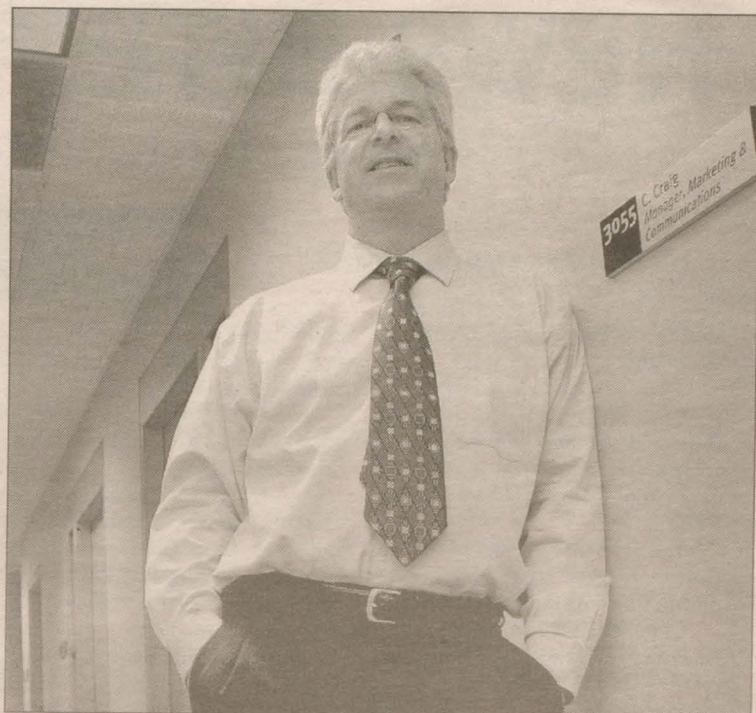
Write For the Gazette!

Contributors meeting every Monday 5:30pm Rm 312 S.U.B.



Jeff Halper said Israel must stop its offensive in Gaza.

JOSH BOYTER/DALHOUSIE GAZETTE



Colin Craig, manager of marketing and communications for the faculty, says the slogan's controversy shortened its lifespan.

PAUL BALITE/DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

American anthropologist draws crowd, debate

JASON MACGREGOR
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

Dozens of people who couldn't find a seat in the audience – or even in the aisle of the Potter Auditorium at Dalhousie University on Jan. 13 – had to crowd the stage around Jeff Halper as he delivered his views on the recent conflict and history between Israel and Gaza.

A crowd of about 500 people packed the room, leaving dozens turned away at the door.

Halper, a Jewish American-born anthropologist living in Israel, is the co-founder and co-ordinator of the Israel Committee Against House Demolition, a non-governmental organization committed to stopping the Israeli government from destroying homes in occupied territories.

Halper was in Halifax to speak about his findings against the Israeli government and his belief that Israel lacks commitment to finding peace with Palestine.

On Dec. 17, the Israeli military began a large offensive into the Gaza Strip, saying the attacks were a way of ousting the armed paramilitary organization and political party in the area, Hamas.

Working with an unco-operative slideshow, Halper spent the majority of his speech scrutinizing Israel's actions over the last six decades.

As recently as 2002, he said, the Arab League put forth a motion for a two-state solution as long as Israel was willing to return occupied lands to Palestine. A two-state solution would allow Arab inhabitants and refugees to gain citizenship in a new

Palestinian state, while Arabs in Israel would be allowed to gain citizenship in either Israel or Palestine.

Israel declined this motion and, since then, has been creating more and more obstacles for Palestinians, said Halper.

"The problem is Israeli governments all basically agree that the two-state solution cannot be and are pushing to make the occupation permanent," said Halper. "As far back as 1967, the two-state solution has been accepted by Palestinians and the international community."

Halper called Israel's recent actions against Gaza "a massacre," causing some to disagree.

"We find it very disturbing how the teachings of (the groups sponsoring Halper) are anti-Semitic," said Bill Chernin, advisor of the Israel Action Committee at Dal. "They're teaching about conspiracy theories and half-truths and how you can see these teachings getting mirrored in Canada, like in the lecture."

Halper said 70 per cent of Israelis would be happy to see a two-state solution with Palestine, but Israeli government officials act in the opposite manner. He then listed policies for which Israel has received negative attention over the past few decades, such as how the Israeli military has become the tester for the world's most advanced technology so other countries will buy from them.

Halper said Israeli soldiers are now wearing masks on their helmets which let them see body heat through walls, allowing the Israeli military to become the most advanced in urban warfare.

Not only do Western powers like the United States and Canada support this sort of advancement, said Halper, but even some of our own police forces in Canada, such as Toronto and Montreal, send officers to Palestine's occupied territories for training. The Halifax Regional Police force does not.

Throughout his speech Halper received several rounds of applause and then a standing ovation from the majority of the room when he finished.

Halifax MP Megan Leslie said she found Halper's speech very compelling.

"The majority of Canadians have our heads in the sand about this issue," she said. "Really, we have our head in the sand about a lot of issues because we're afraid of them."

Several audience members asked Leslie before she left to bring the ideas Halper pointed out to Parliament.

"In this case I think we are wilfully blind," she said. But, each political party has its "party lines" which can optimistically be opened through the power of dialogue, she added.

Kate Dewhurst, a second-year religious studies student, said she found Halper's speech moving.

"Very moving, very depressing but very important information that we are not getting from our media," she said after Halper's speech.

Despite his viewpoints toward Israel, Halper said he always will believe in the state of Israel.

"I'm cracking the idealized image of Israel that has been created," he said.

Management faculty pulls 'Straight to the Juicy' ads

TIM MITCHELL
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

Dalhousie's faculty of management retired its controversial advertising slogan "Straight to the Juicy" in October after realizing its sexual and drug-related connotations.

Colin Craig, the faculty's manager of marketing and communications, says the innuendo wasn't intentional.

"We honestly weren't aware of the double-entendre, but we were happy with how it worked out," says Craig.

In the first week of September, the management faculty launched an advertising campaign for its new Master of Business Administration (MBA) program. "Straight to the Juicy" was the initial tagline for posters sent to universities across Canada. The faculty became aware of the problem when students at Mount Allison University in Sackville, N.B. were taking down Dal's MBA posters and putting them up on dormitory room doors.

"People really wanted those posters for whatever reason," says Craig. "When they'd read 'Straight to the Juicy,' people would raise their eyebrows and giggle."

The faculty quickly switched to its other taglines "Where Self-Starters Start" and "Get What You Want, Faster," but not before "Straight to the Juicy" made its way into a September issue of *Maclean's* magazine – an issue that focused on "Canada's best professional schools." *Maclean's* has about 2.5 million readers, according to Rogers Publishing. The original taglines are still advertised on the Dal MBA website as well as on the MBA Facebook page.

The taglines all refer to the new MBA corporate residency, an eight-month paid internship where MBA students can work with corporate employers such as Shell Canada, IBM and BMO Financial Group. Craig says all 24 corporations saw "Straight to the Juicy" before its publication and none of the employers had any problems with it.

"Straight to the Juicy" means get straight to what you want," says Craig. "In the MBA context, that's the executive position."

"For some reason it makes everyone smile," he adds.

Adam Marsh, president of the Dal MBA society, says at first the "Straight to the Juicy" slogan was confusing, but it can be interpreted

in different ways.

"I personally did not find it offensive or inappropriate although I know that some students interpreted it this way," says Marsh. "Some students expressed concern that the slogan was somewhat inappropriate and after much discussion this is why the faculty decided to change it."

Craig says it was never the management faculty's intention to continue using "Straight to the Juicy" through the entire advertising campaign, but the controversy did shorten its life span.

Colour, a social media and marketing agency based in Atlantic Canada, created the advertising slogans. The company declined to comment on its work for the management faculty, but its website reads, "Colour is a company guided by a philosophy that gets closer to the customer. At its core, getting closer to the customer is about immersing ourselves in the minds of consumers."

Craig says David Wheeler, the dean of management, and JoAnne Akerboom, the executive director of external affairs, made the final decision to go ahead with the "Straight to the Juicy" campaign.

Craig wouldn't comment on how much Dal spent to promote the MBA program but he says it's more than the school plans to spend on next year's promotion because this was a launch campaign.

"You have to invest in a launch campaign," says Craig. "You can't just expect people to show up."

The management faculty has published print advertisements in all of the university newspapers across Canada, as well as in the *Graduate School Planning Guide*, *NOW Magazine* and the *Globe and Mail*. There are also billboards posted in four subway routes from Downsview to Finch stations in Toronto. Dal's management faculty caught on to the other ways "Straight to the Juicy" could be interpreted before posting the billboards and instead went with the "Get There Faster" ads.

"Some people say that any publicity is good publicity," says Craig. "But I don't think that's necessarily true. I'd call this one a wash. It was not a deliberate tactic, but we were happy with the degree of buzz it did cause. If we'd known about the double-entendre, we would never have used it."

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NEWS BITES

CANADIAN CAMPUS SHORTS:

McGill pro-life group could gain full status

A pro-life student club at McGill University, Choose Life, may try to achieve full club status by the end of the month, reported the *McGill Daily*.

The Students Society of McGill University gave the group three-month interim status in October.

Choose Life held an event in late November with displays of images

of fetuses and a voting booth asking students when a fetus should be considered a person.

President Natalie Fohl said the group wanted to encourage reflection on the question.

But Union for Gender Empowerment member Sarah Golightly said this is propaganda and Choose Life is portraying those who have had abortions as immoral.

Source: *McGill Daily*

More York students looking to transfer

York University students are flocking to Ryerson University admissions and recruitment offices hoping to transfer, reported *The Eyeopener*.

Charmaine Hack, Ryerson's associate registrar and director of admissions and recruitment, said the longer the strike at York goes on, the more phone calls the Ryerson admissions and recruitment office

gets.

Brandon Duncan, a third-year nursing student at York, said students are being ripped off by the university. He said he knew his program was offered at Ryerson, so he tried transferring.

York students can take courses through the Chang School of Continuing Education at Ryerson, but have missed registration for the current winter semester.

Source: *The Eyeopener*

NATIONAL HEADLINES:

N.S. releases climate change plan

The provincial government released a plan Jan. 16 to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

CBC reported the government's goal is to cut emissions by five mega-tonnes by 2020. That's comparable to getting one million cars off the road.

As part of the government's 2009 Energy Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan, the province

also promises to increase renewable electricity generation to at least 25 per cent by 2020 and reduce energy consumption by 30 per cent in government-owned buildings built before 2001 by 2020.

But NDP energy critic Frank Corbett said all the province has is "a bunch of promises" with no real assurances for Nova Scotians of whether the energy caps will be met.

Source: *CBC*

Harper promises emergency tax relief

Prime Minister Stephen Harper is promising more money for public works and emergency tax relief geared toward middle-class families, reported the *Toronto Star*.

Harper said middle-class families need to benefit from the upcoming Jan. 27 budget in order to rebuild their faith in the slumping economy. He also said the government is looking at tax reductions

and spending plans.

Harper made the announcements Jan. 16 in Toronto, following the end of a two-day conference with provincial and territorial leaders, where they discussed possible ways to curtail the consequences of the recession on Canadians.

Harper and many premiers called for more job training and infrastructure money at the conference.

Source: *The Toronto Star*

Recession urges policy change at credit card companies

With fewer consumers spending money and others facing bankruptcy, credit card companies are making some changes, reported *CTV*.

Companies could start setting higher interest rates and may start chasing those with unpaid debts more aggressively to cope with the effects of the recession.

Michael Kon, an analyst at Morningstar in Chicago, said banks are hesitant and cautious about readily giving out credit to consumers, due to increasing job losses and the poor U.S. economy.

The economy dropped 34,400 jobs in December, reported Statistics Canada. The unemployment rate is currently 6.6 per cent.

Source: *CTV*

INTERNATIONAL NEWS BY THE NUMBERS:

\$1.4 million (CDN): the selling price of a painting by Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, which sold at a charity auction in Saint Petersburg.

0.1 per cent: the overall inflation rate in the United States, due to falling energy prices.

298 million people: the number of Internet users in China, the largest number of users in the world.

\$406 million (USD): how much Kenya's president asked international donors to contribute toward emer-

gency food aid after he declared the country's food crisis a state of national disaster.

2.3 million people: the number of U.S. homeowners who faced foreclosures last year.

60 candidates: the number of contenders for the Jan. 31 provincial election Iraq's electoral commission is investigating because of claims they submitted fake certificates for their degrees.

Sources: *CTV, CBC, CBC, CBC, CBC, CTV*

Medical Musings

Gym-free fitness



RACHEL SUNTER
HEALTH COLUMNIST

Last week when I went to my downtown gym, it was so full I had to search to get a tiny locker that wasn't in my usual spot. I'm a Taurus; I don't like change. My normal locker's in a corner deep in the bay, where I don't have to flash every innocent woman passing by. Pointing to a row of unavailable treadmills, I asked a staff member what was going on. He smirked at the busy machines and assured me most New Year's dreamers fizzle out by mid-February.

In light of overcrowded gyms and aforementioned New Year's fizzlers (been there, done that), I thought this week I'd focus on the ways to keep fit without going to the gym.

The most important thing to remember when boosting your fitness levels is heart rate. And you can boost your heart rate in a multitude of ways, from walking home with heavy groceries to getting sexually aroused. It's true!

Canada's Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Living recommends 30 minutes of your Target Exercise Heart Rate every day. You can calculate your target rate on your own by following these simple steps.

Firstly, you must determine your body's resting heart rate. To find your pulse, feel around the front of your neck for the firm column that is your throat. Go to the top of your throat and press two fingers firmly into the soft part on either side. If you feel firm muscle, you're too far out from the throat, so feel around till you get it. Some people have very weak neck pulses; if you're having a lot of difficulty, you can try finding your brachial pulse. This is located on the inside flank of your upper arm, in the space between your bicep and tricep muscles.

Next, rest your body for at least five minutes to achieve a sedentary state. The best time to test this is

immediately upon waking up, but if you're like me this will usually be after several snoozers and "testing my body for five minutes" would be a luscious excuse to go back to sleep.

So when you're awake, sit or lie down, watch the clock for five minutes and don't move. (Relax.) Then, measuring seconds with a digital or analog clock, find your pulse, and measure how many times your heart beats in six seconds. A resting heart rate refers to how many times your heart beats in a minute, or 60 seconds, but to get the approximate version you only need six seconds.

You can try a couple times to be consistent. With this number, say eight heartbeats, move the decimal one place over (or add a zero) and you've got 80. Congratulations, this is your approximate resting heart rate.

The rest is all simple math. To find your Target Exercise Zone for those 30 daily minutes, calculate the following: your maximum heart rate is 220 minus your age. For example, a 20-year-old's max heart rate is 200. Next, subtract your resting heart rate (ie. 80) from your max heart rate (200) and voila! Your Target Exercise Heart Rate is 120.

It's worth noting that if you're already active on a regular basis, your resting heart rate will generally be lower than someone's who doesn't exercise as often. This is because your resting heart rate measures your heart's efficiency – fewer pumps to maintain the same bodily state.

Once you've got your numbers, you can test your heart rate after a variety of activities. The thing to remember is you've got to be doing an activity for at least five minutes before you test your corresponding heart rate.

Here are some easy ways to get your heart rate up this winter.

Dancing. Close your door, turn up music that gets you moving and dance away. Your heart rate will go up, you'll burn calories and you'll have a blast. After a few solo sessions, your dance-self-esteem might go up and you can invite friends for silly dance parties, or better yet hit some downtown dance floors without the booze.

Running. Be more careful with this one; proper gear is essential. Get your gait evaluated by an experienced staff member at an exercise store and buy the shoes that are

right for you. If you're a frequent runner, keep an eye on your shoes for wear and tear. It's better to pay up for new shoes now than to pay with shin splints, knee problems and physiotherapy sessions later. And keep warm!

Brisk walking. This one is underrated; with a couple textbooks and a brisk, late-for-class pace, you can easily get your heart rate up for the 15-minute walk from your front steps to your classroom door. Keep the pace up on the way home, and you've got 30 minutes.

Swimming. You'll need goggles, a swimsuit, a towel and a lock. The Dalplex pool opens early and closes late, making swimming an easy activity to fit into any student schedule. If you're not so confident about your strokes, sign up for a one-on-one lesson with a swim instructor, or ask around for any lifeguard-friends and get a few pointers in the water to learn (or re-learn) your front-crawl and breast-stroke. It's easy to relax in the pool, so test your heart rate after five minutes and push yourself a little harder for a better workout.

If you want to spice up your at-home fitness levels, resistance bands, jump ropes, light free weights and yoga mats are inexpensive and easy to store. Keep your gear lying around where you can pick it right up, even for five or 10 minutes of exercise. A couple sets of basic strength-building moves done a couple times a week will do wonders for toning your body and stirring your heart.

For easy moves and correct form, buy a fitness magazine, ask a gym-savvy friend or check online for step-by-step workout guides. Most fitness magazines have a well-developed online bank of fitness moves.

What I really like to remember is that "exercise," despite its growing significance in modern capitalism, is not a construction of the modern world, but a natural and very human thing. We were not made to sit in computer chairs. We were made to work and play in the real world, engaging with real things, using our minds and bodies together. So limit your computer time, limit your TV time and get out there and engage with your world, because you can.

E-mail Rachel your health questions at vega_of_the_lyra@hotmail.com.

Write For the Gazette!
Contributors meeting every Monday 5:30pm Rm 312 S.U.B.

Re-opening the dialogue: the Gaza crisis

JAKE SCHABAS
OPINIONS CONTRIBUTOR

Kudos to *The Gazette* for not joining the mainstream Canadian media's terrible coverage of the crisis in Gaza. How, you might ask, has our student newspaper avoided such damning criticism? By not covering Gaza at all. The nearly month-old conflict wasn't even mentioned within its pages before Israeli troops began to pull out of Gaza earlier this week.

This seems strange, considering that Dalhousie's ratified societies include the Jewish Students' Association, the Red Cross, War Child Dalhousie, the Amnesty International Society and Students for Peace in the Middle East. Why were these societies silent as the Israeli army indiscriminately attacked the Gazan population?

The overwhelming media coverage the crisis received within major outlets made it nearly impossible for any informed university to ignore, and yet Dal students seemed strangely silent on the issue, at least in public. Although Israel can be a sensitive subject, its actions against the Palestinian people in Gaza give us no choice but to acknowledge their overwhelming responsibility for the massacre that took place.

As many already know, about 1,300 Palestinians were killed, most of them civilians, compared to 13 Israelis. Such an overwhelming discrepancy was the result of one of the world's most powerful militaries fighting in a

tiny strip of land where, of the 1.5 million inhabitants, 1 million are United Nations-registered refugees.

The Gaza Strip, an area half the size of urban Halifax, is entirely surrounded by walls. It is also one of the most densely populated areas in the world, with an average fertility rate of five children per woman.

With all border crossings closed and many secret tunnels into Egypt destroyed by bombs, many considered the Gaza Strip an open-air prison.

Israel's crippling two-year economic blockade of the Gaza Strip was accompanied by debilitating psychological weapons such as sound bombs. To create a sound bomb, Israeli jets break the sound barrier as they fly low over Gaza. This shatters windows, cracks walls, causes panic attacks in children and leads to miscarriages and heart problems.

In a place where 65 per cent of young people suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, such actions reflect a policy of terror indiscriminately inflicted on the citizens in Gaza.

Penned in on all sides, Palestinians were not allowed in or out of the strip before the ceasefire.

As Naomi Klein recently pointed out in an article in *The Guardian*, an "architecture of apartheid" has been in place in Gaza since 2007. Colour-coded IDs and travel permits, bulldozed homes, forced displacement and settler-only roads have become a way of life for Palestinians in Gaza. During the onslaught, the Israeli

government kept all foreign journalists out of the warzone for "security purposes." The inhabitants of Gaza were completely cut off from the outside world.

Even United Nations buildings providing shelter to civilians were targeted, including the UN headquarters in the Gaza Strip. With nowhere to go, the thousands of Palestinians who fled their homes exposed the truth of the crisis: the Gaza Strip is a ghetto.

While acknowledging that Israelis have every right to fight for the peace and security that is absent in the face of Hamas rockets, their government's actions are both appalling and counter-productive.

Of all people, the Jews should be the most sensitive to the plight of stateless individuals who are walled-in and blockaded from the rest of the world by a hostile government. For Israel – a state founded in response to oppression – to terrorize the Palestinian population in such a deadly way is enough to upset even the most hardened historian.

Disproportionate military action and crimes against the civilian population call for disproportionate condemnation. Only by re-opening the dialogue and giving Palestine substantial concessions can Israel begin to redeem itself for the horrendous crimes committed in the Gaza Strip.

Jake Schabas is a fourth-year contemporary studies and English student.



JOSH BOYTER/DALHOUSIE GAZETTE
This sexual consent campaign accommodates fear instead of encouraging us to overcome it.

Only 'no' means 'no'

EMMA TEITEL
OPINIONS CONTRIBUTOR

Since I hit puberty, I have occasionally been whistled at, surveyed inappropriately or prodded by a passing stranger. One time my sister was walking down the street minding her own business when a man riding a bicycle grabbed her right breast. Fortunately, he failed to take it with him.

These things happen, and when they do, most women I know don't cower away or press charges. At these times, a simple "fuck you" or "bite me" will suffice. This is common sense. Interestingly, this common sense isn't expected to extend to our private lives.

If we, wicked women of the west, aren't prone to keep quiet in such routine encounters of rudeness like those just mentioned, why are we being given the OK to do so in situations of sexual intimacy? If we can express our disgust at a drive-by pervert, shouldn't we do so doubly at a pervert who wants to stay the night? Apparently our school's sexual consent campaign disagrees.

Walking past a bulletin board in the Killam Library recently, I noticed a familiar phrase printed on a poster: "No Means No". Well, I couldn't agree more. As far as I know, no has always meant no. And yes, when you are being propositioned sexually and you're uninterested, "no", among many other interesting obscenities, is a logical thing to say to the person breathing down your neck.

But printed below "No means No" on the poster, I noticed a slew of synonyms for a word I thought I understood perfectly. The poster read: Silence means No. Drunk means No. Not Now means No. I decided to pass on updating my lexicon. The Dal office of Human Rights, Equity and Harassment Prevention, by displaying these posters, is promoting a campaign that could turn anybody into a date rapist.

It would be delusional, however, to think that this brutal over-simplification of something as serious as rape is anything new.

Author and critic Camille Paglia took on the broad logic of the "No means No" campaign in 1991 when she argued in the *New York Times* that it championed victimhood and infantilism over empowerment.

But Paglia's problem was with the prevailing attitude of consensual ambiguity. My problem is with the new face, or facelessness, of the consent crusade: a dangerous double-speak that threatens not only the nature of sexual exchange, but the law. Therefore, I would like to revise the list of synonyms above, logically: "Silence" means "go", "drunk" means "drunk", "not now" means "later." The difference is, the second list is English, and the first is self-abasement. Isn't it ironic that so many fired up feminists would endorse what is probably

the only anti-feminist anti-rape campaign ever to appear on a university campus?

I heard someone justify the posters as a sort of sexual thesaurus for men. In other words, not only does the campaign present women with a weak arsenal of terms they can use as alternatives to turning "him" down, but it also suggests women have inferior decision-making abilities.

What we say does not reflect what we mean, and an authoritarian push in the form of a poster campaign is necessary to prevent the inevitable disaster that occurs whenever two people, or more, cut the consultation and engage in sex spontaneously. My understanding is that a thesaurus offers synonyms, not similes. The thesaurus in my library does not list "silence" as a synonym for "no".

And if by "silence means no" the authors of the consent campaign mean the state of being unconscious and therefore being unable to say no, rather than "silence means no", the poster should probably read "unconscious means rape", or "no recollection and a sore groin tomorrow means thoroughly investigate."

Excuses such as "not now," or "I'm tired," – some of the campaign's other obtuse options – should be used when force isn't. They may work on someone who fathoms you're not interested, but those terms would fail miserably on someone who could care less where your interests lie, so long as you lie beneath him.

An advance from a potential rapist doesn't warrant an excuse, or, unless you have a rape wish, a euphemism—it warrants a no.

I'm sick of arguing sexual semantics. If you're too modest or shy to say no, grow the balls to do so.

The "Get Consent" campaign is accommodating fear when it should be encouraging women to overcome it. Consent, after all, is not a one-way street. Why is the initiator of sex given all responsibility? Why is it his task to read his prospect's mind?

What's next? Posters that read: "Yes, when spoken without enthusiasm and a smile, means No." The new consent crusade, like the wrong it is trying to right, is actually old. Seventeen years ago Paglia's *New York Times* piece attacked the ancestor of the very movement that is still meddling in sexual affairs today.

The critical difference is this: whereas the "No means No" tirade of old gave women super-heightened rape sensors that obscured the perceived meaning of consent, the definition of rape remained fixed. Words, which bind the law, had not yet become obscured. No, and only no, meant no. It may have been shouted from a rooftop when it need only have been whispered but its message was synonymous with its meaning.

The danger of the current crusade lies in something far more insidious: its silence.

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JOSH BOYTER/GAZETTE FILE PHOTO

Students have a responsibility to speak out about the war in Gaza.

Dal's shameful silence on the Gaza crisis

JANE KIRBY
OPINIONS CONTRIBUTOR

As Israel calls a ceasefire after the siege of Gaza, it is worth reflecting on our role as students in Canada and our own connections to a military-industrial complex that is complicit in the brutal attack on the Palestinian people.

At one time, students were at the forefront of vocal movements against their governments' participation in unjust foreign wars of aggression. The passion that marked student activism in the 1960s, however, has been notably absent in recent years. Despite the local Palestinian community's efforts, few students seem overly concerned with the ongoing massacre in Gaza, and most remain unaware of how they, as Canadians, are implicated in the attacks.

Many students are aware of the \$2 million in research funding given by Lockheed Martin to Dalhousie under an agreement with the federal government last spring. Lockheed Martin is the company responsible for producing the Hellfire missiles that Israel has used for its air strikes on Gaza.

Other explicit connections between Dal and the military have been less publicized. The Dal department of political science is partially funded by the Canadian Armed Forces through the Centre for Foreign Policy Studies (CFPS). As part of this funding agreement, CFPS is mandated to influence Canadian public opinion - including ensuring that a minimum number of classes have at least 50 per cent military content. Last year Dal offered 22 such classes, including core undergraduate courses such

as "Introduction to World Politics."

One has to wonder if classes so heavily focused on military content can deal with issues like occupation and colonialism, the root causes of the current massacre in Gaza, in any meaningful way.

While one might argue that "military content" does not preclude critical analysis, does this remain true when there are intimate connections between our universities and the military arm of the Canadian government?

We know, for example, that the Canadian government has consistently defended Israeli war crimes, and Prime Minister Stephen Harper has openly justified Israeli attacks despite their clear violation of international law.

There is also ample evidence of collusion between the Canadian and Israeli military. In 2005, for example, the Canadian Armed Forces provided specialized training to the Israeli Air Force, which has since bombed Palestinian cities, through a project known as "Exercise Maple Leaf."

Canadian military contractors, often subsidized by the Canadian government and taxpayer monies, have also played a role in providing military equipment used in Israeli military offensives against Palestinians.

Bearing these connections in mind, it is no wonder my friends in political science tell me discussion on the ongoing siege in Gaza has been stifled in their classrooms.

As bombs fell on the Islamic University of Gaza, students at Dal were, and still are, encouraged to remain ignorant of Israeli state violence, and passive in the face of the Canadian government's deplorable stance on

the issue.

Universities have long been central in the battle for public opinion, and as such are considered essential sites in challenging injustice. Grass-roots Palestinian organizations have called on academics to speak out against Israeli military aggression. An academic boycott is also an essential part of the program encouraged by the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign, which mirrors tactics used against Apartheid in South Africa, in an attempt to force an end to Israeli occupation.

Students have a key role to play in influencing not only governments, but the academic institutions that are involved in legitimizing unjust attacks, such as the siege of Gaza.

There are clear opportunities for challenging military connections at our university, including those clearly implicated in the attacks on Palestinians.

The Association pour une Solidarité Syndicale Étudiante, the student union representing thousands of students in Quebec, recently signed on to the global BDS movement, and students at Ryerson University have been actively pressuring their administration to do the same.

Students need to take back their education - to investigate essential issues for themselves and to challenge corporate and military connections within universities. This is not only a necessary response to the situation in Gaza, but to a long-term deterioration of the university as a place for both critique and action.

Jane Kirby is a graduate student and a member of the Student Coalition Against War.

Students struggle under the weight of \$13B

KALEY KENNEDY
OPINIONS CONTRIBUTOR

We've all heard the horror stories about student debt. I have a friend who has \$90,000 of it and stays in school to avoid repayment, a colleague who screens her calls to avoid collection agencies and a former neighbour who spends twice as much on his loan payments than on his rent each month.

I am also aware of a substantial amount of debt accumulating as I try to complete my own degree.

Just how much student debt is out there? It's hard to say, because students owe several different institutions, including banks, governments and family. But why don't we start with this number: \$13 billion.

The National Student Loan Debt Clock is quickly approaching \$13 billion, as calculated by the Canadian Federation of Students lobby group. The clock means students in Canada owe nearly \$13 billion just in Canada Student Loans. That figure doesn't include the billions owed by students to their respective provincial governments, or to banks. Each day, student debt grows by more than \$1.5 million.

Not surprisingly, for more than a decade those of us in the Maritimes have faced the highest debt loads in the country. According to a report published by the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission titled "Five Years On: A Survey of 1999 Maritime University Graduates", student debt skyrocketed between 1999 and 2004, from \$21,177 to more than \$28,000 - an increase of more than 33 per cent in just five years.

No one can deny that students in Nova Scotia have faced some of the largest financial barriers to accessing post-secondary education.

Students in N.S. have been paying the highest tuition fees in the country for more than 15 years, with average tuition and ancillary fees totalling about \$6,500 this year, and until last year, this was one of only three provinces that did not have a needs-based grants program. The lack of affordable housing and child-care for students, or the inability for single parent students to access social assistance doesn't make the situation any easier.

These huge financial barriers mean that many low- and middle-income Nova Scotians are shut out of post-secondary education be-

cause they simply cannot afford it.

In a 2007 Decima Research poll of Nova Scotians, 40 per cent of respondents earning less than \$30,000 per year said someone in their family has not gone on to pursue a post-secondary education in the last two years because it would mean taking on too much debt.

As Canadians continue to lose their jobs and the recession continues, more and more Nova Scotians are likely to be in this position.

Admittedly, students are doing a bit better now than they were a few years ago. After years of pressure from students and their families, the N.S. government has finally begun to acknowledge that student debt is a serious issue. Students in this province will benefit from a tuition fee freeze through to 2010/2011. The government also announced an up-front grants program last year so 20 per cent of a student's N.S. provincial student loan will be offered as a grant.

These measures, though welcome, are simply not enough to undo the damage from years of rising tuition fees and inadequate financial assistance. The province's rebate program for N.S. students is unsustainable and does nothing to address the actual amount of tuition fees.

We wouldn't accept a food stamp approach to healthcare or K-12 education, and we shouldn't accept the government's food stamp approach to post-secondary education. Nova Scotia is the only province that uses this approach to tuition fees, and is only the second province, with Quebec, to introduce penalties for students who come from out of province.

If the government is serious about addressing student debt and trying to stimulate the economy, it needs to increase funding to universities to reduce tuition fees and undo some of the damage from the tuition fee increases students faced throughout the 1990s and early 21st century.

Without tuition fee reductions and more financial aid in the form of needs-based grants, students will continue to graduate with mortgage-size debts, and Nova Scotia will continue to struggle to retain young people to fill their university seats and to prosper.

Kaley Kennedy is president of the King's Students' Union and is the N.S. representative for the CFS.

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Letters to the editor

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Letters

The Gazette reserves the right to edit all letters for length and clarity. This publication will only print submissions that its editorial board deems to be in good taste and void of libellous and/or defamatory material. If the editorial board determines that a letter violates this policy, The Gazette may invite the author to revise the submission. Please submit to opinions@dalgazette.ca.

Articles

Submissions to The Gazette opinions section must be no longer than 650 words. Please submit a list of sources along with articles to opinions@dalgazette.ca. This publication only prints submissions its editorial board deems to be void of libellous and/or defamatory material. Submissions are due at noon on the Saturday prior to publication.

Re: The tale of the missing Metro (Jan. 8)

I was happy to see Ryan Boon's apparently humorous take on the Halifax Media Co-op. But I think readers would have appreciated the opportunity to form their own conclusions about the Media Co-op. They can do so by checking out for themselves at <http://halifax.media-coop.ca/>.

Contrary to Boon's first impressions, the Halifax Media Co-op will not only be online. We will be distributing the print edition of *The Dominion*, we will air programming on local campus-community radio CKDU 88.1 FM, and will be visiting Haligonians in person in the month of February. We're working to build grassroots and local media - not "citizen" media, as Boon writes.

Then again, maybe Boon was actually intending to write a serious article. In that case, I should clarify that the Media Co-op is not planning on "competing" with existing media, but rather reporting on stories that are normally ignored, and creating media that responds to the needs of its readers. We hope to publish articles that are based on interviews and research; we're not as excited about those whose only source is a Facebook group.

With no hint of sarcasm,
David Parker
Halifax Media Co-op Contributor



Re: Halifax's pesky drinking problem (Letter from the editor Jan. 8)

I understand that a number of Leonard Preyra's constituents are students and that they should be represented, but I would also note that a lot of them are not students, and he has to be responsible to them as well. I expect he thought banning dollar drinks was the best thing to do for the whole community even though it might upset some. You can't please all the people all the time.

Also, it is true that not all binge drinking is done downtown and that banning dollar drinks won't stamp it out completely. Even though something can't be stopped entirely, however, it doesn't make sense that the cause should be abandoned.

You were right to say that the students who binge drink and cause disturbances and problems downtown are the vast minority. I have little doubt that this is true and, I don't think any sensible person would disagree.

If it's true that dollar drinks cause "physical injuries, sexual assaults, unplanned pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases and alcohol poisoning," I think that we can all deal with an extra buck here or there.

Besides, if the rest of us are drinking moderately and infrequently, as you say, the change in price should only add up to a few extra dollars over the term, don't you think?

A moderately drinking student,
Bryan Heystee

Let's try harder to be green

MICHELLE HAMPSON
STAFF CONTRIBUTOR

Want to hear something ridiculous? The former federal environment minister, John Baird, said he would like to skip federal environment assessments for "green" infrastructure projects to speed up economy-stimulating infrastructure spending.

When a cabinet minister is assigned to a portfolio, he should at least care a little about that topic.

Baird's suggestion to delve into long-term infrastructure without considering environmental implications proves how little he really cares for the environment. And this guy was our environment minister for more than a year and a half!

It's a good thing he was shuffled out of the environment portfolio. I

find it insulting that he was ever in that position.

Streamlining environmental assessments would be a dangerous precedent to set, and another short term "solution" that, if implemented, only promises hundreds of long term complications and disasters more serious than the problem it was meant to fix.

But I cannot just criticize Baird. Almost every Canadian, including me, needs to be more concerned with the environmental impact of our actions.

We try to pass ourselves off as "green" and definitely give ourselves too much credit. The truth is, Canadians have done little to be environmentally friendly.

With the main focus on the economy right now, it is certainly hard to think about being green. But

if there was ever a time to start caring about the environment, it is now. The longer we take our sweet time smartening up, the harder our goals of sustainability will become.

And do you know what makes this all of this so much worse? After writing this piece on being more environmentally friendly, I will most likely continue to live exactly the way I did before.

I'm just like Baird!

Sure, I have written a letter to a politician expressing my concerns about the environment, I take public transit, I rode my bike everyday to work in the summer and I follow my roommates around the house, turning off the lights they left on.

But in the end, I do not try hard enough. And with the exception of a few committed people, who really does?

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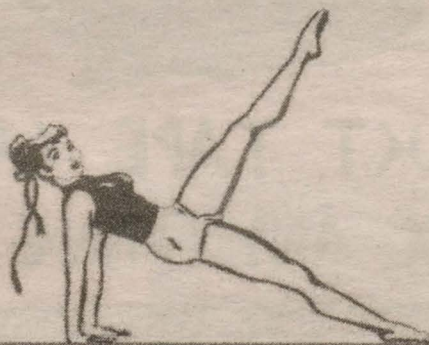
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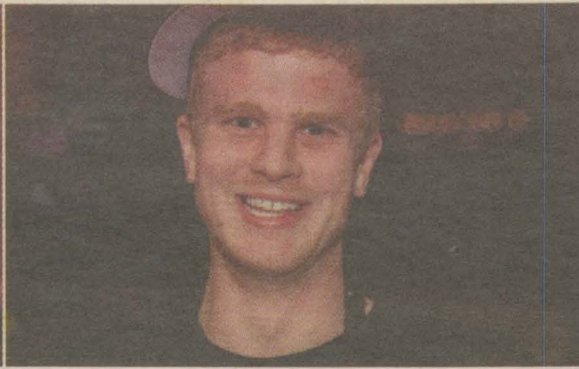
STREETER

Has the semester begun to brutalize you yet?



“Oh God, for the love of God, make it stop.”

Kevin Wilson, fourth-year psychology



“No, it's been pretty good to me so far.”

Rob McLean, fourth-year IDS



“Yes: three midterms in the fourth week of classes. What the fuck?”

Meaghan Waugh, fourth-year psychology



“Let's just say they need to extend the date for dropping without a W.”

Glenn Blake, fourth-year IDS



“I have a hangover of brutalization from last semester.”

Nabilah Chowdhury, fourth-year psychology



“So far, so good, but storm clouds loom.”

Lindsay Peters, fourth-year psychology



“Tough like a \$2 steak, but I'm a vegetarian.”

Maggie Lovett, second-year biology



“First day of class I got two black eyes and a bloody nose.”

John Packman, third-year self-defense

CARTOONS

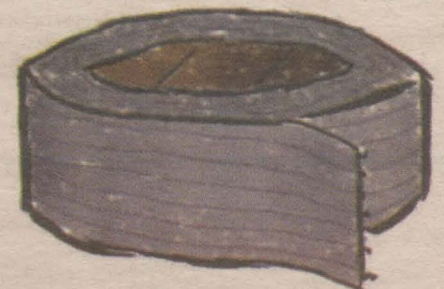
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WRITE FOR THE GAZETTE



PAUL BALITE/DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

Benefit concert organizers Steve Baur, Meredith Evans and William Horne plan to honour Faraday's memory.

Dal remembers music professor Jim Faraday

CHRISTIE CONWAY
ARTS EDITOR

Steve Baur smiles, affectionately remembering his first impression of his former colleague, Dalhousie percussion professor Jim Faraday.

"A short guy with a beard that was about as tall as he was," says Baur, a music professor. "My wife and I used to call him the percussion gnome."

Now, a year after Faraday's death, Baur is still taking lessons from a man he deeply admires as both a musician and teacher.

"He had this aura about him of friendliness and approachability and kindness. He was just a very giving person of himself. He gave to his students immeasurably," says Baur. "He was both a mentor and a friend."

Faraday, who died last January after a long illness, taught percussion in the Dal music program for more than 30 years.

"He was the kind of teacher who would take somebody with almost no formal training and very little background," says Baur. "He would inspire them to work really hard and develop prodigiously over their four years here."

To honour the first anniversary of Faraday's death, the Society of Dalhousie Music Students (SDMS) will be presenting its second benefit concert on Friday, Jan. 23 at the Grawood to continue the legacy of the well-loved music professor.

"It was a very close-to-home cause for us to contribute to in the music department," says William

Horne, the society's vice-president.

Faraday began teaching at Dal after moving to Nova Scotia in 1970. During his time in Halifax, he played percussion in the Atlantic Symphony Orchestra and later Symphony Nova Scotia.

In 1971, Faraday co-founded INNOVATIONS in Music, a society of musician and composers who focused on promoting new music. The group presented all its concerts at the Arts Centre of Dalhousie University and is credited with giving the first Halifax performances of Bartók, Kagel, Messiaen, Penderecki, Schoenberg, and Stravinsky among others.

Despite his commitments, Faraday always found time to get involved in some new pit band or studio session. He toured with everyone from Anne Murray to Lennie Gallant and once performed with legendary sitarist Ravi Shankar.

All proceeds from the benefit concert will be donated to the Jim Faraday Memorial Scholarship Fund.

The scholarship, created shortly after Faraday's death, was set up to help attract the best and brightest percussion students to Dal and to continue Faraday's legacy through his students, says Baur.

"The scholarship is a way to help sustain the program that he built here," he says.

The concert, publicized as a night of indie rock, is stark change from the formal concerts the society typically puts on, says SMSD president Meredith Evans.

"Our last concert was strictly classical stuff and new contemporary classical stuff but it wasn't rock stuff you could dance to," says Evans. "This (event) is more student oriented."

The Sorrys, a local indie rock band in which Baur plays the drums, will be headlining the concert. Drummers Matt Gallant of opening act Into The Fray and Katie Patterson of Alana Yorke & The New Oceanographers are former percussion students of Faraday.

Faraday, described by those who knew him as friendly and passionate, committed his life to his music and to his students' music until the very end.

Baur remembers Faraday continuing to come into teach his students despite his failing health.

"Pretty much up until the doctors told him you can't be out there, he was out there doing it," he says.

Though Faraday's death has left a void in the Halifax music community, the music society hopes to continue his legacy as he would have wanted it - through the education and performance of young musicians.

The Benefit Concert for The Jim Faraday Memorial Scholarship Fund is Jan. 23 at 9 p.m. at the Grawood in the Student Union Building. There is a minimum donation of \$5 at the door for this wet/dry event.

Faraday's biographical information: Dalhousie Department of Music



JOHN PACKMAN/DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

Can anyone really choose between The Beach Boys and The Beatles?

Brent Randall just wasn't made for these times

MARC Z. GRUB
STAFF CONTRIBUTOR

In 1966 The Beach Boys released *Pet Sounds*, Brian Wilson's masterpiece and one of the greatest pop records of all time. Just like that magical album, Haligonian Brent Randall's 2009 debut full-length, *We Were Strangers In Paddington Green*, is an album awash in the gorgeous sounds of pianos, strings, horns and walls of heavenly harmonies, all elevating his whimsical, hook-tastic pop songs to a place where Lucy is in the sky with diamonds and it's strawberry fields forever. But it's been a long and winding road that's led Randall to *Paddington Green*.

As a child, Randall would seek escape from "the sameness, the mundaneness" of suburban life in the classic pop of bands such as The Beatles and The Beach Boys as well as in fairy tales and fantasy.

"I like, y'know, other-worldly sorts of silly fantasy songs that take you to a different place and that just tells (sic) a story or gives you a feeling of a surreal, other world," Randall says. "Growing up I was always a fan of, like, medieval stuff and Robin Hood and Peter Pan ... I guess that's where a lot of my songs come from too You can create whatever you want; you can go somewhere else."

In 2004, Randall began writing his own material after he got tired of backing folk and country performers around town. The result was the *Quite Precisely* EP.

"It was just a really off the cuff thing," he says. "It was just like an exercise; my first real recording venture. And we did that and they put it out on Just Friends, which was like a new sort of Halifax musical label collective thing... it seemed to go out well - people seemed to like it and I got a lot of encouragement from that."

The next step, of course, was an album.

"I wanted to take it to the next step and do a full-length album with a little higher production values because the first one I just did in a day."

Randall set his sights high, aim-

ing to create an ornate, orchestral pop album in the style of his musical heroes. To get 'er done, he enlisted fellow Haligonian popster Jason MacLissac of The Heavy Blinkers to produce *Paddington Green*.

"Jason and David Christensen (also of The Heavy Blinkers) were well-versed to working with strings and steel drums and harps and I kind of wanted to try making a bigger production sort of thing."

The resulting album has been long awaited by those following Randall, and to celebrate its release, Brent Randall and His Pinecones (which features Jess Lewis, David Ewenson, Brian O'Reilly, Laura Peek, Joel Goguen, Caleb Langille) are staging an all-ages album release show at the North Street Church on Jan. 24. Randall says the show will be different from most of his other shows.

"We've only played just as a group (up until now), like piano, guitar, bass, drums and the vocals, but - this being the release of this album, which has an orchestral sort of feel - we'll be playing with the string section and the horn section, so we're gonna try and recreate the album live."

While a performance with a full orchestra section would be the ultimate dream gig of most Halifax performers, it seems like only a natural fit for a daydream believer like Randall. Just don't ask him to make up his mind about which band's catalogue he'd take if he were stranded on a desert island: Beatles or Beach Boys.

"I'd probably in the end say The Beatles but I think I would rather take The Beach Boys' catalogue just because there's so much more variety there and the catalogue is more extensive. I mean, I just love them both so much. I don't know if I could ever really choose between them."

In the middle of an international economic crisis we've all got to make sacrifices and be decisive.

"Decisive? No, I can't make any decision," says Randall.

Oh well, I guess Randall just wasn't made for these times. Luckily for him, he can just download both for free.

Write For the Gazette!
Contributors meeting every Monday 5:30pm Rm 312 SUB.



Touring and playing festivals is like "rock and roll summer camp" to El Torpedo bassist.

SUPPLIED

Matt Mays & El Torpedo return to their favourites

LAURA WALTON
ARTS CONTRIBUTOR

With the Marquee Club's official closure creeping closer and closer, Matt Mays and El Torpedo are grateful to have the opportunity to perform there again Friday, Jan. 23.

"We love coming back to play there now, because it's where we got our first start. I don't even remember what we were called back then," says bassist Andy Patil.

Celebrating their seventh year together, the band members have plenty of memories to reflect on.

With a strong reputation and fan base in Canada, several East Coast Music Awards and more recognition in the United States, the band has achieved a lot since those first performances.

One of the keys to the group's success is the pursuit of their individual interests. Mays has received Juno nominations for his solo work, and members of El Torpedo consistently use down time to work on songwriting and recording.

For each member, the solo work builds confidence in singing and playing and contributes to what the band does as a whole.

"The experience and knowledge gained only adds to what we do together. If we didn't pursue our own creative outlets, things as a band might start to stagnate," says Patil.

Stagnation is a far cry from the band's current activity. Recently, the band spent time in Los Angeles, Calif. performing with Mike Ness of Social Distortion. Working alongside a member of one of the leading punk rock bands was an exciting experience for the group, as well as a humbling one. The crowds were a mix of old Social Distortion fans and new school Mike Ness fans, with some of their own fans thrown in.

While they do not yet have a big name connection in the U.S., each tour gets better for the group.

"(It's) just what a Canadian band is up against," Patil says. "It's important to keep at it, because we don't want to pigeonhole ourselves."

Patil also credits the Internet age with helping bands like theirs spread music internationally.

Doors opened for the band in 2006 after winning four East Coast Music Awards. Since then, they have been enjoying warm receptions across the country, especially last summer at festival shows from Cal-

gary, Alta. to Antigonish, N.S.

"We love the festival scene. It's great being outdoors, meeting other bands, developing friendships - it's like rock and roll summer camp," jokes Patil.

With their relentless spirit and enthusiasm, the festival audiences are also a large part of the attraction. Even in pouring rain, people turn up wearing garbage bags and rubber boots, ready to rock out.

"Atlantic Canada gets big props for how they operate in rain and storms," Patil says.

But Atlantic Canadian crowds hold a special place in the band members' hearts for more than just their hardy attitudes.

"Coming back as headliners to perform for the first crowds you ever played for is definitely the most rewarding," Patil says.

The Marquee is one of the band members' favourite venues when they perform in the Maritimes. From acoustic to rock shows, members of El Torpedo all formerly belonged to groups that performed at the Marquee in its pre-Matt Mays days.

"Any chance to play there again is very special," Patil says.

MUSIC REVIEWS

Ruby Jean and the Thoughtful Bees: Self-titled

MATT RITCHIE
STAFF CONTRIBUTOR

On the back cover of each of these records is a number scribbled in gold, signifying which of the 1,000 copies of this album the listener owns.

If Ruby Jean and the Thoughtful Bees had a dance party, I would attend, because if this record is any indication, the band certainly know how to get the party started. Broken down into its base elements, *Ruby Jean and the Thoughtful Bees* is an electronic pop record filled with simple yet intricate songwriting.

This album grooves straight through and for good reason. It references other distinct electronic styles, yet it sticks to a simple formula that makes every song easy to dance to.

This is basically a record by the East Coast's response to Montreal electro duo Chromeo. The resemblance is apparent on the vocoder mayhem inflicted on the opening track "You Don't Miss Me." It's nice to hear a vocoder again after autotuned hip hop songs swamped the music industry this year.

The singing has a Björk coo to it, courtesy of Rebekah Higgs. Because of this, a few music critics may say this record was influenced by Björk's *Post*, which it certainly is. The songs groove equally as well as any Rapture or Soulwax track and even though you can hear a bit of the Björk influence, that doesn't mean this record isn't astounding.

Like any good party, this record is short and sweet, hitting its climax later on. The first three tracks are definitely strong examples of the influence Daft Punk's simplistic do-it-yourself electronic sound has



had over the previous generation. As the album progresses the listener experiences a range of styles from the Radiohead grime electronic of "Trustfund" to the trip heavy/Portishead-esque "Not About To."

The centerpieces of this electronic romp are the tracks "How to Win Friends & Influence People" and "Danse Danse Resolution." The former shows off Higgs' beautiful timbre amidst vocal layering and break beats that sound like a Beastie Boys throw away from the *Ill Communication* days. It has a jammy groove that will keep the dance floor moving. The latter track is almost seven minutes of glitch pop beats that rival Crystal Castles. Where Crystal Castles assaults the ears with rampant nonsensical glitching, *Ruby Jean and the Thoughtful Bees* throws in a MicroKorg synthesizer beat with refracted sounds, creating a coherent yet chaotic song.

Not only is this record short and sweet - and great on your iPod while you're running at the Dalplex - the album artwork is the strongest I've seen in a long time. I'm almost finished gushing about this album. The band is good. The CD is good. Buy this record or regret not being one of the lucky few to own one of the thousand.

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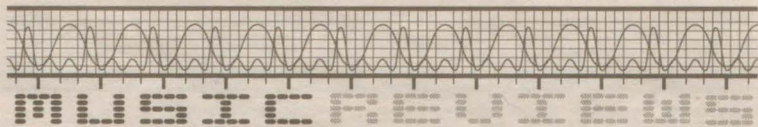
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I LOVE IT!
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Brent Randall and his Pinecones:
We Were Strangers in Paddington Green

MATT RITCHIE
STAFF CONTRIBUTOR

Awww, shucks. This album is so cute it makes me want to puke my heart out.

Besides that, Brent Randall and his Pinecones' new disc, *We Were Strangers in Paddington Green*, is a pretty delightful record.

I bet Randall was raised on Leonard Cohen. Perhaps in his later years he traded his interest in Cohen's secret gravelly whispers for Devendra Banhart's re-interpretations of folk. Even if he isn't interested in those artists, he certainly sounds like the perfect cross between Cohen's timbre and Banhart's enunciation. Along with strong songwriting, Randall's voice is his strongest weapon on this record. Try listening to opening track "Strang Love (Don't Be Lazy)." You won't be able to ignore the power in his voice.

We Were Strangers in Paddington Green isn't just an album filled with embarrassingly cute song titles, although "A Sunbeam Song" and "Slumberjack" are absolutely adorable. This is a pop record that directly references strong pop structures of the past. On track three, "Bluebirds, Flowers and Other Things," the man and his pinecones evoke the image of ELO's "Mr. Blue Sky". Track four, "Snowdrops", allows Randall to show off his soulful croon while the fifth tune, "The Nightingale and the Rose", sounds like Billy Joel after being abducted by a UFO. Randall even experiments with some jazzier tex-



tures on "Sweet Thames", which recalls the late 1960s version of French singer Serge Gainsbourg's work.

Randall's website describes him as one of the strongest songwriters since the conception of hitmakers The Brill Building at the heart of New York City. But I wouldn't go that far in a songwriting comparison. Randall's are certainly intricate pop songs, but he lacks the power of Brill Building writers. The songs are great but awfully delicate. Randall is obviously a fan of the toy piano because it's draped over this record like a warm blanket. Sadly, it's not that enjoyable. *We Were Strangers in Paddington Green* can be tedious at times, as is the constant wall of sound from the chamber pop orchestra.

Randall is a strong songwriter and it would be nice to see how these songs hold up in an acoustic setting with less over-production. Either way, if you're a fan of Canadian songwriters, and if you can't wait for the new Rich Aucoin record, this is probably the next best thing.

Ryan MacGrath courts the Seahorse

ERICA NEWMAN
ARTS CONTRIBUTOR

Decorated with Chinese paper lanterns, hanging lights and disco balls, The Seahorse looked more like a karaoke hotspot than one of Halifax's oldest bars last Friday night. But the artists performing were anything but amateurs. The Seahorse housed Nova Scotia's own Ryan MacGrath's EP release show for *In My Own Company* on Jan. 16, featuring Caledonia and The Harmony Barbershop Quartet. The poster for the event displays a gloomy looking Ryan MacGrath standing outside the Seahorse Tavern in the all too familiar Halifax rain. The weather may be an accurate depiction, but the dismal sentiment is entirely contrary to the lively event.

Caledonia approached the stage unassumingly and started the off the night with wonderfully elegant and thoughtful music - a set to which the audience could either unwind or dance. A few people moved on the dance floor while others were content to sway in their seats.

Caledonia's instrumentals and vocals echoed Coldplay and Keane, but with a distinctly indie feel. One guitarist looked so joyful while playing, one couldn't help but be swept away by the sound. The pianist unpredictably merged lounge-like riffs into fairly generic guitar solos, producing a brilliant sound unheard of in most live bands, and left everyone wanting more.

After a short break, MacGrath finally emerged and jumped into "Bell Boy," from his new album, *In My Own Company*. The Harmony Barbershop Quartet provided back-up vocals.



JOSH BOYTER/DALHOUSIE GAZETTE
Haligonian singer/songwriter Ryan MacGrath is a cool mix of Coldplay and Keane.

With a pink peony pinned to his chest, MacGrath faintly resembled Vincent Van Gogh, with ears intact, of course. His MySpace page compares him to Rufus Wainwright, a challenging individual to parallel. Yet as he sang his first few notes, the power and simultaneous warble of his voice was every bit comparable to Wainwright's unique vocals, but with a style that was all his own.

MacGrath has also been compared to Hawksley Workman, and it seems as though he is to Halifax what Workman is to Muskoka, Ont. - a creative host of talent that makes a city proud to claim him as its own.

MacGrath switched up his instruments during the show, playing tambourines, an accordion and even a bizarre electronic Hawaiian guitar, making each song from his new album diverse and memorable.

During his mellow song "Cinderella," those on the floor paired off to slow dance as MacGrath and The Quartet resurrected the 1950s.

The time warp continued as The Quartet began its set. The Quartet, a small group of smartly dressed elderly men, truly stole the show. The men generously granted the cheering crowd an encore after their set.

After a swift costume change from all black to all white, MacGrath took to the stage once more to finish his performance. The colour change was perhaps symbolic of the dawning of a new era in his musical career. Symbolic or not, his sound is certainly something new. He finished the show with a slow song accompanied with a strong drum beat. One last time, he displayed his powerful vocals.

MacGrath is great local talent who already has a following. He is definitely a musician to keep an eye on. His music is fresh, uncomplicated and entirely memorable. In one of his songs he sings forlornly into the microphone, "All I ever wanted was to be wanted by you."

And Halifax certainly wants him.

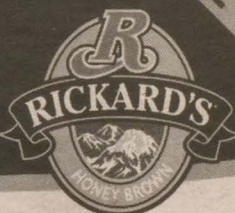
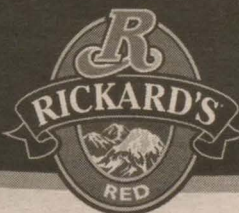
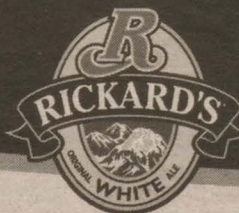
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Don't be a stranger

The Strangeboys lay down their first disc

RACHEL ROSENFELD
ARTS CONTRIBUTOR

Local bluegrass sensation The Strangeboys played to a full house at their CD release party on Jan. 17 at Bearly's House of Blues and Ribs.

The group is composed of musicians Adam Shier (guitar), Dan Latner (fiddle), Neil Wiancko (banjo), Jeff Rothwell (mandolin), and Vincent Pettipas (bass), who recently released their debut CD of eight original songs, *Shoot First*.

The album was very much a collective effort. Four of the five band members wrote the songs, while guitarist and vocalist Shier acted as producer.

Latner says the album was a do-it-yourself project. The band made an in-house booth where they did all of their recording. Later, Shier mixed and mastered the EP.

"(It was) a big learning experience, and we're glad we did it that way," says Latner.

The audience at Bearly's seemed pretty glad the boys did it too. The sweaty crowd responded by jumping, swaying, step-dancing and boogying to the sounds of bluegrass, Strangeboys style.

The band members seemed to be enjoying themselves and connected with the crowd as they showcased their songs and played long instrumental jam-style interludes. The audience applauded heavily and pressed for two encore songs, and The Strangeboys gladly obliged. The tired, thirsty yet ever-smiling band members eventually had to decline to play a third.

The boys describe their sound as "grassfusion." Shier explains it as an



PAUL BALITE/DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

This "grassfusion" Toronto band makes a mean musical soup.

attempt to use bluegrass as a foundation to explore rock music.

"(It's) a musical genre soup and bluegrass is like our chicken broth," he says.

Although bluegrass traditionally conjures images of the American Deep South, with old weathered men talking about love and home in the countryside, the boys realize they cannot claim this identity for themselves.

"We know that we are Canadian kids from Toronto. We have to take the genre and put our own spin on it - (give it) a city approach," says Latner. "It's really contemporary - taking a genre and putting a spin on it," he adds, referring to the recent trend of party DJs remixing and "mashing-up" old favourites.

With a debut CD now released and a recent successful show at the Horseshoe Tavern in Toronto still fresh in fans' minds, the Strangeboys are on the road to somewhere. They already have plans to work with producer Ryan Roberts, from Wolfville, N.S., on their second album, which they are hoping to have released by next year. The band is also booked to perform at many festivals this summer.

The boys plan to start their own festival that they hope will feature a collection of young acoustic bands from Halifax. The album, *Shoot First* will be sold at shows and be available on iTunes in the coming months.

"There's so much more coming," says Shier. "We all have a lot of energy and we are in this for the long haul."

Trevenge:

Demands sympathy as it draws blood

FIONA HUBERT-DROZ
ARTS CONTRIBUTOR

We rarely show sympathy for coniferous pine trees during the holidays, but watching the short film *Trevenge* might make you re-think the Christmas tree tradition. The short local film is all about Christmas trees taking revenge on Christmas celebrators.

In this bizarre and gory, yet hilarious film, you'll find a story of pine trees forced out of their habitat only to be dressed in tinsel and ornaments. The trees are fed up with the masquerade and unforgiving in their retaliation.

Those with weak stomachs, beware. This film may cast a dark shadow over your beloved holiday season. If you can handle an overload of fake blood and, god forbid, evil Christmas trees, you will enjoy every minute of this film.

Trevenge falls perfectly under the Grindhouse genre as people are strangled, decapitated and even sexually exploited by the vicious trees. All the while, the audience at the Monday night screening couldn't help but laugh as the holiday cheer dwindled with blood spewing and eyeballs dangling. A manic tree annihilated a crying baby, and laughter continued to erupt from the audience as the tree dragged away what was clearly a doll.

Halifax filmmakers Jason Eisner

and Rob Cotterill teamed up to create *Trevenge*. The film is part of the Official Selection at the Sundance Film Festival, happening this week in Park City, Utah, and has already won a variety of film festival awards since its completion in June 2008.

The buildup to Sundance has thrilled all those who took part in making the film. Last week, director/writer Eisner, a Dartmouth native and former student at the Nova Scotia Community College, wrote to all members of the *Trevenge* Facebook group.

"There were people who didn't think we could make the movie, but it happened and it's all because of the awesome support we got from everyone," he wrote. "This isn't some Studio movie, this is a movie made from the heart of people from this town. We hope to make an impression on people down there and represent our town very well. I hope this story will inspire folks."

There is no doubt that it will. The film's quirky theme is hilarious. But there is a valuable lesson to be learned from *Trevenge*. Christmas trees attacking people is not as bizarre as it may sound; what is bizarre is when people chop them down and dress them up once a year for the pure joy of it. Even through the crude humour, one can't help but feel sorry for the trees, each with their own adorable high-pitched voice. When they finally get their frightening "trevenge", it almost feels fair.

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Slumdog Millionaire will put a smile on your face

NOAH MITTON
STAFF CONTRIBUTOR

Let me start off with a question: what is Danny Boyle's obsession with disgusting toilets? In the first few minutes of the director's latest, *Slumdog Millionaire*, a child dives into the depths of an Indian outhouse. The image of the boy climbing out, covered in brown sludge, only to run up to his film star idol to request a shit-covered autograph, surpasses Boyle's previous winner for most disgusting bathroom escapade: *Train-spotting's* "worst toilet in Scotland." I didn't think it was possible. I almost drowned my popcorn in vomit.

That scene aside, *Slumdog Millionaire* is a great movie. It tries to demonstrate how events in the life of Jamal, a kid from the slums, lead him to be a contestant on the game show *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*. And Jamal's childhood is no picnic. He and his brother, Salim, make Oliver Twist look like a silver-spoon-fed cry baby.

Despite the squalor, *Slumdog* never descends into a self pity session like so many other movies with the same subject matter. Boyle doesn't show any scenes of children crying over their terrible childhood - no slow-motion weeping. Boyle keeps the focus of the film on Jamal's quest to find Latika (Freida Pinto), a girl he's pined for since they were



kids.

Unfortunately, the acting is not as strong as the script. The actor portraying adult Jamal, Dev Patel, frequently gets out-acted by supporting characters, even minor ones. The police who are interrogating him throughout the movie are more compelling than he is. But this could be because almost all of the supporting actors who have speaking roles are terrific. Few characters seem like two-dimensional cut-outs. That's an accomplishment, considering we know very little about these characters.

Actually, the adult actors portraying Jamal and Latika are the weakest players in the cast. In a strange twist, the child actors playing these characters are more capable of acting than their adult counterparts. In a movie, child versions of characters tend to be a weak link - the actors are sometimes chosen just because they're cute or for physical resem-

blance. That's not the case in *Slumdog*. Without strong performances by the child actors, the movie wouldn't be nearly as good.

Despite all its strengths, there is one thing about *Slumdog* that bothers me: Jamal's obsession with Latika is very close to stalker behaviour. Maybe I'm just too cynical, but he's just a step removed from shooting Ronald Reagan to get her attention and prove his love. Luckily, the music managed to quell these thoughts.

M.I.A.'s "Paper Planes" is a better fit here than in *Pineapple Express*. The music accompanies the movie so well that you'd assume all the songs were written specifically for *Slumdog Millionaire*.

If you take everything into account, the good massively outweighs the bad in *Slumdog*. It's a well-directed original movie that will probably end up putting a smile on your face. It's well worth the time and money you'll spend watching it.

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DEIRDRE AYRE, Studio Head, Other Ocean Interactive of Charlottetown, PEI, says,

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MELISSA CERNIGOY/DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

I went on this trip because I feared something like the Holocaust could happen again. It has.

Student remembers the Holocaust by travelling to Germany and Poland

MELISSA CERNIGOY
ARTS CONTRIBUTOR

"We Learn By Repetition," someone had scrawled in red paint across a grey wall. I read this line my first morning in Berlin as part of the March of Remembrance and Hope (MRH). As I walked down the busy Berlin street with other MRH students from across Canada and the United States, I stopped to read the graffiti. In many places in the world, this slogan would not have stopped us. But here, where immense tragedies of intolerance and failures of humanity, have taken place, these words invoked a fear that slowed my step.

The march is organized annually by the Canadian Centre for Diversity and is a weeklong study and leadership mission in Germany and Poland, where students from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds can grow together and learn about the consequences of intolerance. Last year, 60 students from universities across Canada participated in the program.

After seeing that foreboding wall, I became a witness to stories of survival. I visited Auschwitz, Majdanek and Treblinka concentration camps and walked in quiet beside the mass graves near the small town

of Tykochen.

Various moments touched MRH participants in different ways. Some remembered the details of a victim's face, a name on a suitcase or a child's dress. Each of us came away with a distinct living memory to repeat, and to learn from.

At Auschwitz-Birkenau we marched where thousands had marched to their deaths, where we could breathe new life by becoming living witnesses.

During the program, I was overwhelmed by the immensity of the Holocaust and other human tragedies. Although we journeyed through the histories of Germany and Poland, we also encountered philosophical struggles. I asked myself questions about evil and tolerance. When I first saw the graffiti I was afraid that being exposed to the horrors of the Holocaust would make me think less of humankind. But by listening to survivors, I realized I was constantly surrounded by genuine human spirit.

Now I feel challenged to share their stories and my experience with others. By spreading my arms, I can show them the dimensions of a sewer through which people escaped into the Gesia cemetery in Warsaw and returned with food for their families. I can tell them one woman's story of

survival when she encountered six German soldiers in her childhood. One of the greatest lessons I learned is that I have to help others to learn by repeating these stories.

I went on the MRH trip because I feared something like the Holocaust could happen again. Unfortunately, it has.

Canadian writer and philosopher John Ralston Saul argued that during the turmoil in Rwanda, a smaller genocide than the Holocaust, the West sat very still. We were unable or unwilling to use the memory of the Holocaust to catalyze action. During MRH, I discovered to remember isn't simply to know. It also means to give voice to human injustices so that we can avoid these tragedies in the future.

Now that I'm back in Canada, I continue to bear living witness. I now volunteer with SHOUT Halifax, an organization that was established by MRH alumni who wanted the legacy of their trip to continue throughout their university experience. SHOUT's primary mission is to raise awareness and facilitate education and dialogue about past and current genocides.

SHOUT is hosting Remember Dachau to Defend Darfur on Jan. 27 at 7 p.m. in room 307 of the Student Union Building.

Halifax's curtain falls on *The Veil*

ROSIE JACOBS
STAFF CONTRIBUTOR

OneLight Theatre's latest production, *The Veil*, offers audiences an intimate and innovative look into the fictional life of one Persian woman who, through unique twists of fate, bears witness to many of the defining moments of the 20th century.

Adapted from Masoud Behnoud's novel, *Khanoom*, *The Veil* recounts the life of Khanoom, an Iranian woman whose experiences overlap the Persian Constitutional Revolution and the Second World War. In a narrative, Khanoom recollects her childhood memories as a Persian princess, her early adventures in Russia and France and those of her granddaughter, Nanaz, as she faces the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s. Brian Buckle, the production's

sound co-ordinator, sets a solemn yet mystical tone that resonates throughout the show. As the lights rise over the almost-bare stage, the audience is immediately hushed by Iranian music that slowly rises and falls. Soon after Marty Burt, who portrays Abdullah, Father Wilfred, Michel and Ezoldin, silently enters center stage and fills the entire auditorium with a simple yet rich rendition of another Iranian tune.

The Veil uses a simple stage setup that depends on its screen backdrop to convey numerous settings varying from an Iranian palace to a Paris burlesque house. The unique stage production, with its changing mixture of music and lighting, allows the audience to feel each cultural shift. In one moment, audience members are in a sombre, dark, isolated basement in the early 1980s, then sud-

denly find themselves in an elegant Iranian bathhouse filled with pink hue lighting and lively chatter.

The show's props are kept simple to balance the production's complex use of the projection screen. Long strips of deep red and vibrant green cloth are used to symbolize various objects – a technique that works well with the production's surreal quality.

Each actor plays multiple roles, a directorial decision that can be a bit confusing at times – such as when Ari Milen switches from playing Khanoom's father to her husband. Overall, however, all the actors were able to convincingly fall into their various characters.

The Veil was in Halifax for only four shows last week before moving on to Tehran, Iran, from Jan. 21 – 24, where the production will represent Canada in the Fajr International Theatre Festival.

The Light Brights keep on burning

REBECCA SPENCE
ARTS CONTRIBUTOR

Three-piece band The Light Brights performed Jan. 14 at Tribeca Bistro & Bar along with Dartmouth's Dancing with Knives and newcomers Eight of Cups. The show was rich with soulful tunes, and singer/guitarist Bethany Victoria delivered consuming, heartfelt vocals.

"We take simple aspects of music and add a fresh twist to it," says drummer Andrew Dahms. "It's good, clean, funky, danceable music that's hard to compare with anything else."

The Light Brights came into formation almost a year ago after meeting at the Nova Scotia Community College school of music. Their band name was born after a day of rehearsal, when the three were lying onstage, staring up at the bright lights.

"The name brought back fond memories of playing with illuminated toys," jokes bassist Chad Harrington, a former mechanic.

All three have been in several bands before and continue to take part in what Harrington calls an "open-band relationship."

Connecting with other musicians through school, 26-year-old Dahms is currently in three bands and 30-year-old Harrington is in two.

"Working with other people brings new elements to the table," says Victoria, who, on occasion, sings backup vocals for a reggae band.

Victoria, 22, writes all of the lyrics, but she says everybody brings something original to the songs, whether it be a groovy bass line or unique drum beat.

While dedicated to delivering new songs to their audience, the band members aren't opposed to playing covers so long as they can offer their own unique twist.

"Ideally we'd only play our own music," says Harrington. "But cov-

ers are an easy way to connect with fans and get them on their feet."

The trio is doing well on the long road to success, thanks to their patience, endurance and, above all, their unwavering passion to their music.

"(Music) is embedded in us," says Victoria, who has been taking voice lessons for the past eight years. "It's in our daily lives. Not having it around would just be depressing."

"We're realistic about the highs and lows," says Dahms. "Some days won't be immediately gratifying, but we're starting to see progress already."

With their five-song EP almost finished, the month of February will bring a release party, band T-shirts, and networking at the East Coast Music Awards.

"It's important to remain realistic (about success)," says Victoria. "We know we're not gonna make it in six months."

"We're willing to go through the stages," Dahms interjects.

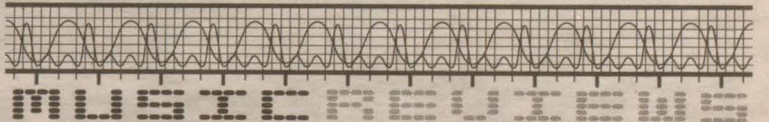
By spring, the band hopes to have a music video in the works. Summer will send The Light Brights on a tour in P.E.I. and New Brunswick, hitting Ontario in the fall. Naturally, their mode of transportation will be Harrington's blue Volkswagen van.

The Light Brights' dedication to music is nothing short of wholehearted. Victoria admits that even if they don't end up performing for a living, music will remain in their profession, whether it be teaching or working as session musicians.

Despite their deep-rooted pragmatism, the Light Brights are confident that in a few years time the band will be well established in the Maritimes.

"If you don't love the process, you'll burn out," says Harrington.

At the risk of sounding overly trite, here's hoping that the Light Brights don't burn out anytime soon.



Ryan MacGrath: *In My Own Company*

MARC Z. GRUB
STAFF CONTRIBUTOR

Ah, singer-songwriters: sensitive, literate, sophisticated poets with their acoustic guitars and delicate melodies. Who would women love and men hate without you? Well, I guess we have the Jonas Brothers, so you're off the hook for now, singer-songwriters. But I've got my eye on you.

I kid, I kid. Luckily, Ryan MacGrath doesn't subscribe to the ridiculous John Mayer school of singer-songwriter. Instead, MacGrath is more along the lines of a more personal, less Balkan Beirut, or a less "out" Rufus Wainwright. MacGrath's precious, somewhat theatrical vocal style bears a strong resemblance to Beirut a.k.a. Zach Condon's stylized tenor, while MacGrath's dandy-like qualities ("Is it really Louis Vuitton? / Or is it a knockoff instead?" he inquires during the tune "Bell Boy") bear resemblance to none so fabulous as the inimitable Wainwright.

His debut EP, *In My Own Company*, is a strong collection of ornate pop songs written with a wonderful literate flair, which magnificently conjures up images of New York's Fifth Avenue ("Bell Boy"), fairy tales (which he sort of debunks on "Cinderella") and MacGrath's home province of Nova Scotia ("Way West", in



which he dreams of running off to Alberta).

On most songs, MacGrath sticks to his brand of theatrical, piano-based melodramatic pop, though he does throw in some nice modern day Can-indie rock in "Featherweight", which, with a different mix, could have been the single.

Unfortunately, the album lacks any real outstanding songs or qualities to make it a smashing entrance for the talented MacGrath. Then again, none of the big indie bands of the last couple years blew the doors open with their first EP; that all came with the full-length. Regardless, *In My Own Company* marks a classy entrance for a talented, young singer-songwriter who, I'm sure, will be quickly embraced by his home province.

Dal hockey fans set to score for war victims

ZACK WILSON
STAFF CONTRIBUTOR

Road hockey is undoubtedly one of Canada's favourite pastimes. The words "weather permitting" don't mean a thing to countless hardcore players who brave our nation's climate on a regular basis for the love of the game. This weekend, a group of Dalhousie students will combine this passion with charity in an effort to make a difference in the world.

Every Saturday morning since mid-November, hockey fanatics have congregated in the parking lot behind the

Phi Delta Theta fraternity house on Seymour Street to engage in recreational games of scrimmage. The contests are mostly just for fun and blood has been drawn on only two occasions. What started as nothing more than a few guys getting together on the weekends to take a few shots on net has expanded to a 100-plus Facebook invite list, and, in any given week, it is not uncommon for more than 40 to attend a match of the "Seymour Street Hockey League."

One of the fellows who works hard to retrieve loose balls every weekend is Tim Disher, an events co-ordinator for WarChild Dalhousie. WarChild, a non-

profit organization, aims to raise funds to protect thousands of women and children affected by conflict around the world, while simultaneously providing them with vocational training.

Disher and the Seymour Street league decided to use their hockey games to help out people in parts of the world who don't even have the liberty of thinking about recreational sports.

Jan. 24 will mark the first annual WarChild Road Hockey Winter Classic. If the Facebook group numbers are any indication, more than 20 teams of five are likely to turn out. Tournament organizers hope to raise more than \$500 and

all proceeds will go directly to WarChild Canada.

Adam McCauley, vice-president of WarChild Dalhousie, says fundraisers such as this one are "essential to the continuation of WarChild's international programs and domestic advocacy campaigns."

"We can't think of a better fundraiser for WarChild in Halifax - hockey and a good cause. That's the Canadian spirit," says McCauley.

McCauley and WarChild president Beth Jean Evans acknowledge that given the current economic crisis it is difficult for some to come up with dis-

posable funds for charity. McCauley contends that just getting informed can help the cause.

"Before any international action can be taken to address larger global issues, such as the use of child soldiers, we first have to create a community of concerned citizens through events like this, which not only raise money, but more importantly raise awareness," he says.

Games will run from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. on Jan. 24 and spectators are welcome. Donations can be made in person at the tournament or through the WarChild Dalhousie society.

Women's basketball team sits at first in AUS

TYLER BROWN
SPORTS EDITOR

The Tiger women won both of their games last weekend, walking all over University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI) 71-58 and Cape Breton University 79-70. The wins move the team into sole possession of first place in the Atlantic University Sport (AUS) league.

In last Friday's 71-58 win over UPEI, guard Jenna Kaye picked up 17 points, continuing a string of good games. The player of the game, forward Cailin Crosby, put up 9 in 22 minutes of play. Forward Laurie Girdwood was dominant in Saturday's 79-70 win, putting up 26 points and picking up 11 rebounds. Forward Alex Legge also had a hot hand, going 7-12 from the floor and 3-3 from the line for 17 points.

Dalhousie's men's basketball team split the weekend of Jan. 17-18, beating UPEI and losing to CBU. After a well-fought 77-61 win over UPEI, the men fell 65-57 in a defensive battle with CBU.

Stephen Lopez was the player of the game in Dal's win over UPEI, with 13 points in the effort. AUS lead scorer Simon Farine was held to 17 points and 8 assists. Andrew Black of UPEI had a game high of 19 points.

In Saturday's 65-57 loss, the Tigers put up a solid defensive effort but came up short against a tough CBU Capers defence. Farine put up 21 points in the loss. The Capers' Tremaine Fraser was the player of the game, picking up 13 points in the win.

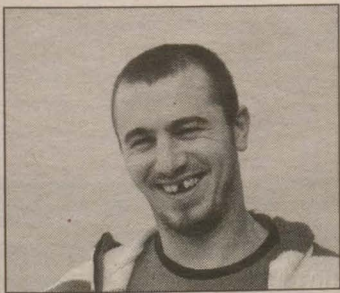


SAGAR JHA/DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

Dal's Simon Farine goes up for two points in the Tigers' 77-61 win against UPEI on Jan. 16.

Sport retort

Skating the way to Superbowl Sunday



TYLER BROWN
SPORTS EDITOR

With February fast approaching, two things have been foremost in my winter-addled mind - football and pond hockey. Two entirely different concepts, I know, but with these absurdly cold days and the fast approach of Superbowl Sunday, it's been hard to think of anything else.

By the time you read this, the National Football League (NFL) will have knocked itself down to the final two teams and heroes will have been made in the divisional final games. This year's final four is a welcome change from the New England-dominated years past, but maybe I'm just saying that because I'm a Baltimore Ravens fan. I come from a football-obsessed family, making this time of year that much more tense. What's worse, I know if I run my mouth too much in favour of my team, I could end up owing my mom, a serious Philadelphia Eagles fan, half my rent when she hustles me on the spread. Sad, I

know.

So I'll be watching the games intently on Sunday, Feb. 1, hoping against hope that my beloved Ravens somehow find a way past those damn Pittsburgh Steelers. These next two weekends are a glimpse at a proverbial heaven for real football fans, when we get to sit around for hours at a time doing nothing but drinking, swearing and eating fatty foods. It's just about as blatantly manly as we'll ever get the chance to be. But that doesn't mean it's just for men, of course. I have to say there is nothing I enjoy more on Superbowl Sunday than the company of a pretty girl who could quote me Ray Lewis' stats. That's way hotter than Ugg boots, trust me.

So what to do while I wait to watch the game on my annoyingly small and cable deficient TV? Well, this ridiculous cold weather we've had to endure in the first few weeks of 2009 does come with one benefit - there's likely not a lake, stream, river or pond that's not safe for skating by now. I'd even bet the harbour has a thick enough skin of ice on it, though with the recent temporary failure of the harbour wastewater treatment plant, I wouldn't recommend testing my hypothesis on that one. The cold brings Halifax's rarely used outdoor skating rinks to life. The mild winters of recent memory haven't allowed many chances to really get outdoors and skate, so we're about

due for this cold snap. There are an abundance of outdoor rinks to be found in the HRM, spread nicely throughout the city. The most central, and probably most popular, is undoubtedly at the Halifax Commons, where the city floods the swimming pool to make way for skaters.

If you live in the North End, there's the rink in Isleville Community Park on the corner of Agricola Street and Lady Hammond Road. With 22,000 square feet of ice there, you should be able to find space to do whatever you want, whether it's just a casual skate, or full-out pond hockey. Further south, the Ardmore Park rink is on the corner of Oxford and Almon streets, or, if you feel like a bit of an adventure, the #15 bus to Purcell's Cove goes directly past the ever-popular Duck pond, and you can get there in a half hour from almost anywhere in the city.

It's been years since it's been cold enough to skate without worrying about every crack and groan of the ice. I, for one, will be lacing up my much-neglected skates in the near future and putting some serious lumber on any pre-teen who gets between me and the net. With so few skating days to be had, I have to get in my yearly quota of goals - which, fortunately for me, is only one. So until next week, Dal: stay healthy, stay happy and don't make bets with your mom. She will show no mercy.



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Tigers Scoreboard

As of Jan. 17, 2008

MEN'S HOCKEY (AUS)

	GP	4W	2W	L	PF	PA	+/-	PTS
UNB	16	12	2	2	79	42	37	26
SAINT MARY'S	18	12	6	0	85	53	32	24
STFX	17	10	5	2	65	50	15	22
MONCTON	16	9	5	2	56	51	5	20
UPEI	17	9	6	2	55	57	-2	20
ACADIA	15	8	6	1	48	46	2	17
DALHOUSIE	16	4	12	0	51	91	-40	8
ST. THOMAS	17	2	12	3	52	101	-49	7

WOMEN'S HOCKEY (AUS)

	GP	4W	2W	L	PF	PA	+/-	PTS
MONCTON	13	12	0	1	55	22	33	25
STFX	12	8	3	1	40	23	17	17
ST. THOMAS	13	7	4	2	37	33	4	16
DALHOUSIE	13	8	5	0	41	33	8	16
MOUNT ALLISON	11	3	7	1	24	42	-18	7
SAINT MARY'S	11	2	8	1	31	46	-15	5
UPEI	11	2	9	0	30	59	-29	4
UPEI	9	0	0	9	566	670	-104	0

MEN'S BASKETBALL (AUS)

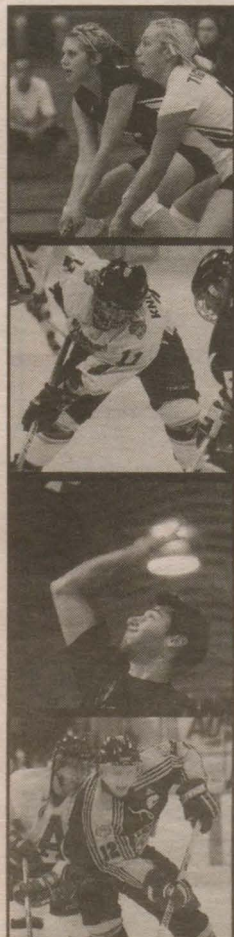
	GP	4W	2W	L	PF	PA	+/-	PTS
STFX	8	3	4	1	683	591	92	20
DALHOUSIE	8	3	3	2	616	497	119	18
CAPE BRETON	8	2	4	2	609	534	75	16
SAINT MARY'S	8	1	4	3	610	592	18	12
UPEI	9	2	2	5	663	712	-49	12
ACADIA	9	1	2	6	767	731	36	8
MEMORIAL	8	1	1	6	548	679	-131	6
UNB	8	0	0	8	513	673	-160	0

4W = 4-POINT WINS; 2W = 2-POINT WINS

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL (AUS)

	GP	4W	2W	L	PF	PA	+/-	PTS
MEMORIAL	8	2	6	0	607	532	75	20
CAPE BRETON	8	3	3	2	603	483	120	18
STFX	8	2	5	1	594	492	102	18
DALHOUSIE	8	4	1	3	584	539	45	18
UNB	8	1	3	4	523	553	-30	10
SAINT MARY'S	8	1	1	6	458	539	-81	6
ACADIA	9	0	1	8	549	676	-127	2
UPEI	9	0	0	9	566	670	-104	0

4W = 4-POINT WINS; 2W = 2-POINT WINS



TIGERS ACTION!

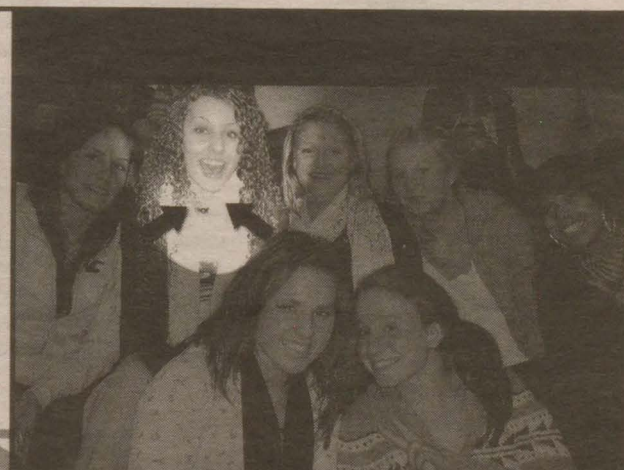
FRI., JAN. 23 VOLLEYBALL vs UNB, W 6PM, M 8PM
MEN'S HOCKEY vs UPEI, 7PM

SAT., JAN. 24 WOMEN'S HOCKEY vs UdeM, 3PM
MEN'S VOLLEYBALL vs UNB, 3PM
WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL vs UdeM, 6PM
MEN'S HOCKEY vs UNB, 7PM

SUN., JAN. 25 WOMEN'S HOCKEY vs STU, 3PM



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THE SEXTANT

DALHOUSIE'S OFFICIAL ENGINEERING NEWSPAPER

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Anna West
Editor

First off, I would like to apologize. As you probably noticed, there was no issue of *The Sextant* for the first two issues of *The Gazette*. There were some mitigating circumstances which prevented me from being able to access the needed information to prepare a newspaper. But, things are up and

running now, so there should be no further problems.

Welcome back to Dalhousie for another semester – whether it be your first, somewhere along the journey or your last. Although you are probably all settled in by now, I wish the best for the following semester and I truly hope that everything goes smoothly.

As of now, I am the new editor of

the *Sextant*. Let me introduce myself. I am third year materials engineering student, and the only girl in my class. Oddly enough, even though I'm in engineering, I enjoy reading and writing. I am highly involved in my school life because I like to have a voice; I like to have an opinion and a chance to express it in regards to the goings on of my academic community.

I hope that I meet your standards, but if I don't, before you complain, write me an article. I don't believe one has the right to throw stones until they have been in the others' shoes. So, if you have done nothing to contribute, don't tell me how I'm doing it wrong. After all, engineering is about problem solving just as much as it is about recognizing the problem.

WRITERS WANTED

Anna West
Editor

Being relatively new to *Sexton* and particularly the newspaper crew, I am looking for help. I am asking any students who are interested in writing, or looking for a little weekend cash, to send me articles. The whole point of a student newspaper is to have students write for their enjoyment and to

provide enjoyment and information for those who like to read. Falling in both of those categories, I am determined to get a variety of articles from a variety of people. The articles don't have to be school related, but can be about anything. They could be about politics, an exciting intramural game, just plain comical, a poem you wrote, something you want advertised, a student on co-op or

out working in the 'real world', etc.

Knowing that all students on this campus are very busy and often times need a little more incentive than pure 'enjoyment', here are a few others to add to the list: a great resume filler (contributor to *The Sextant*), something to send home to Mom and/or Dad, and a little extra cash. The writer of

every published article will receive payment for their work. Published is the operative word there, as you will not get paid for every submitted article. This is to ensure quality articles, rather than just one-liners for some cash. So, please send me articles! The more you send, chances are, the more money you will make. All articles can be emailed to sextant@dal.ca.

GOOD EXAMS

Moustafa Youssef

Exams make up a critical part of teaching, and as students we care about the quality of our examinations because it directly affects how well we do in our courses. I went to a British school and our 'high school' final exams, the IGCSEs, were not produced by our teachers. Instead they are delivered from Cambridge, England to test hundreds of thousands of students in hundreds of subjects twice a year, around the world. Of course, these exams are produced and reviewed by their respective experts, and are supported by other things like marking schemes, anonymity, proper timing consideration, and a range of student subject and question selectivity. An IGCSE exam is my best example of a *good exam*: a well-timed, balanced and fair exam.

In university, I realized that testing is a totally different story: it is now the single responsibility of the instructor – who has complete flexibility over its content, and that most university instructors have different priorities: research comes before teaching and university professors aren't obliged to take any formal teaching training. None of this worried me until I started having to write long

exams.

Long exams are horrible: a faithful student's worst nightmare. There are not many, if only two reasons an exam would be long: it is either deliberate of the instructor or it is just out of carelessness. Most of the time it's not a big deal and everybody still does as expected.

As mentioned above, most university instructors are not required to undertake any formal teaching training. But inevitably, they acquire teaching skills. They build a sensitivity to their students' frame of mind: they understand their level of knowledge, common mistakes, pace at solving questions, the curriculum's difficulty, the tricky concepts, etc. They evolve into *better* teachers. Therefore we should expect that professors – who by title should have sufficient practice writing and marking exams – to know full well how their students are going to do on a given test and how long it will take them to solve it. It should be expected that with enough practice the quality of latter examinations to improve and more closely resemble previous student results, rather than persisting to write long examinations that are guaranteed to require more time, produce poor

results, cause possible need for a supplementary exam, and having to resort to a statistical readjustment of the entire array of results. Creating a good exam requires a lot of practice, and with enough practice every instructor must be eventually capable of producing realistic and stable exam results. It is just unrealistic and counterproductive to continuously write long exams that are guaranteed to rush students and produce poor results.

On *Sexton* Campus engineering exams might have to sometimes test the understanding of a huge curriculum that, I confess, is sometimes not only going to require more than the maximum allowable exam time, but an overwhelming amount of mental energy that can never be supported by any ingested amounts of caffeine or sugar. It is just physically and mentally impossible. Does it make any sense to make a long exam that is guaranteed to leave the students with insufficient time to think about and solve all questions? Let alone the student's stress and anxiety during an exam when they realize they won't have enough time left, and how that affects their written performance.

Making a good exam takes a lot of time, effort and requires an appre-

ciation of common student misconceptions, difficulties and weaknesses. By identifying these elements an instructor could write a more oriented exam, difficult or easy, that focuses *only* on these elements. A difficult exam is one that can literally make you scratch your head, or make you daze off into the ceiling's depths for some considerable amount of time. It is one that is nevertheless simple for the students to understand, and has allowed them sufficient time to express themselves in writing. A long exam, on the other hand, will make you panic, rush your work and therefore lose a lot of marks. It is one that actually takes 4 hours to solve rather than the allowed 3 – not necessarily difficult – only exhausting, and by all standards, impossible for the given amount of time (let alone the argument that 3 hour tests are really ineffective themselves).

Again, most of the time we come across these long exams – it's not really a big deal, but in general they really don't help the instructor understand how much a student knows, nor does it allow the student to do his/her best on an exam.

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Friday January 23 • Trivia

Thursday January 29 • Floodland

Friday January 30 • Trivia

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