

FREE

139-12 / November 23 - November 30

Dalhousie Student Newspaper Since 1868

Gazette



International Students

Overcoming adversity to bring diversity

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Night busing
in Halifax**

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nature in the
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WEEKLY DISPATCH

DalhousieStudentUnion.blogspot.com

We did it! The DSU executive has jumped on the blog band wagon. This was a big step for us. Why a blog? Well, they are obviously the thing to do these days on line. Seriously, I think this could actually be a great communications resource for the DSU. Since I began working for the DSU I have avidly followed the Studentunion.ca blog. A part of that could be that it often has pretty controversial information that us student political geeks love to follow, but I hope that we will be able to provide a blog that is just as interesting to you. Check out Dalhousiestudentunion.blogspot.ca for commentary and analysis of current events as well as information about what the DSU is up to.

Tiger Society Launched

Society ratification is now online! Visit Tiger Society on my.dsu.ca to submit your society's application for ratification. This new system was developed by the Dalhousie Student Chapter of the ACM and will now host the contact information for all DSU societies. Societies currently ratified are responsible for uploading all of their ratification information onto new system NO LATER than the new year. All new societies are now required to ratify online. No more paper! Students can now browse the listings and request to become a member of the societies that peak their interest. In the future, an automatic list-serve of student members will be created for the society executives so that members can stay informed about society happenings. Check it out at my.dsu.ca.

The Academic and External Committee's next meeting is on November 29th at 4:30. This committee meets every second Wednesday and is open to anyone who is interested in helping to develop the DSU's academic and external policies.

At Our Bars

As the end of term is rapidly approaching we have a couple of "Last Class Parties" coming up. At the Grawood we have Signal Hill playing on November 29th at 9:00 pm. Cover is \$5. The next night we have a last class party at the T-Room. Cover is \$3.

On December 5th, Mobile will be playing at the Grawood. Tickets are \$10 and are available at the SUB Info Desk. These tickets are going fast, so if you want to see the last great show of the year make sure you pick up your tickets soon. Show starts at 9:00 pm.

See you around campus. Stop by, or call anytime,
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Volunteer Meetings
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Gazette

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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.

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.

Views expressed in the Hot or Not feature, Top 10 listing, 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. All quotes attributed to Joey Ryba in the Streeter feature of this paper are written, in good humour, by staff, and do not necessarily represent the views of Joey Ryba. 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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Contributor meetings take place every Monday at 5:30 p.m. in Room 312 of the Dalhousie SUB starting the first week of the academic year. We need writers, photographers, illustrators, readers and ideas. If you can contribute any of these, please drop us a line or come by the office.



Illustration: Aaron MacLean

Poverty & Homelessness in Halifax: What you can do to help

RAFAL ANDRONOWSKI
Editor-in-Chief

Every week at The Gazette, we expectantly check our e-mail inboxes for replies to the stories and editorials we publish. All mail is welcome, be it kind comment or harsh criticism. We love to hear from you, our readers, and mail we get is excitedly circulated around the office.

And out of all the issues raised in Gazette articles and editorials this year thus far, none has generated more attention than my editorial in issue 139-07 entitled "No seed ever grew from the outside in..."

In that piece, I argued that while worldwide efforts to eradicate poverty are important, we should not forget about local communities. There are thousands of people in dire need right here in Halifax. Helping them may not be as glamorous as the media-friendly movie-star image of trekking to rural Africa, but it is just as vital.

Since that issue came out on Oct. 19, I have been continuously receiving comments, suggestions and, of course, criticisms. The most notable question to arise is "what can I do to help?"

With temperatures dropping and winter fast approaching, those who live on the streets and in poverty need our help with one more everyday task we take for granted — keeping warm.

Hot food and a warm place to stay can make all the difference between making it through yet another Halifax winter or suffering long nights shivering in the cold. Warm clothing is another vital item that is always in need.

Donations of your unneeded winter wear — coats, hats, scarves, mittens, boots — are always welcome by such shelters as Metro Turning Point Shelter or the Phoenix Youth Shelter. Winter clothing from centres such as these is distributed to those who need it most.

You can also drop-off unused clothing to services like The Salvation Army and Phoenix Youth Programs.

Phoenix Youth Programs runs such facilities as the Phoenix Youth Shelter, Phoenix Centre for Youth and Phoenix House, all of which provide food and clothing, along with other essential services.

To aid services such as these, usually the best way is to volunteer. There are plenty of facilities in Halifax that often need volunteers — from soup kitchens and shelters to organizations such as The Canadian Red Cross, which has many community development and aid projects that can always use an extra pair of hands.

Whatever you are interested in doing to help, there is a place for you somewhere. All it really takes is some time and energy, the first of which you would normally need

to devote to finding where all these resources are located. To help you out, here's a handy list of some of the services Halifax has to offer in terms of helping out the impoverished and homeless:

Shelters

- Barry House, for women, 2704 Gottingen Street, 422-8324
- Metro Turning Point, for men, 2170 Barrington Street, 420-3282
- Phoenix Youth Shelter, for youth, 1094 Tower Road, 446-4663
- Salvation Army, for men, 2044 Gottingen Street, 422-2363

Food banks and soup kitchens

- Brunswick Street United Church, 2107 Brunswick Street, 423-4605
- Hope Cottage, 2435 Brunswick Street, 429-7968
- Parker Street Food and Furniture Bank, 2415 Maynard Street, 425-2125
- Phoenix Centre for Youth, 6035 Coburg Road, 420-0676
- Saint Matthew's United Church, 1479 Barrington Street, 423-9209
- Saint George's Anglican Church, 2222 Brunswick Street, 423-1059
- Saint Andrew's United Church, 6036 Coburg Road, 492-1454

For more detailed information and links to resource websites, visit www.dalgazette.ca and head towards Letter from the Editor.

Gazette

Are you a writer? Photographer? Illustrator? A reader?

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'Whatever it takes'

International students face hardship at Dal

KATIE MAY
Associate News Editor

Seung-Min Yang just wants to be like everybody else. He calls himself Andy because he thinks it will help him fit in. He doesn't say much when he's with groups of people — he just listens to people talk and tries to understand their jokes. Sometimes, the 19-year-old laughs — even if he doesn't understand.

He doesn't want to get teased like he did in high school when he first moved to Canada from South Korea.

"When I was in high school it was very hard for me to socialize, since I didn't speak [English very well]," he says.

Yang studied English for three years with a Canadian tutor in his home country. Then he left his family and moved to New Brunswick for his last two years of high school so he could learn more of the language before going to university.

But not everyone feels Yang's anxiety.

Imhokhai Ogah stretches out on a couch in Dalhousie's Student Union Building. He puts his feet up on a table and sips from a Tim Hortons coffee cup, looking completely at home in his surroundings. He's been speaking English since he was five years old, and he's finally used to the cold, rainy weather that he first encountered when he arrived in Halifax from Nigeria four years ago.

"I wanted a study abroad experience," he says. "I chose to come to Canada because I felt, from an international standpoint, Canada was practical in terms of political climate [and] in terms of general quality of life. It's quite an attractive option."

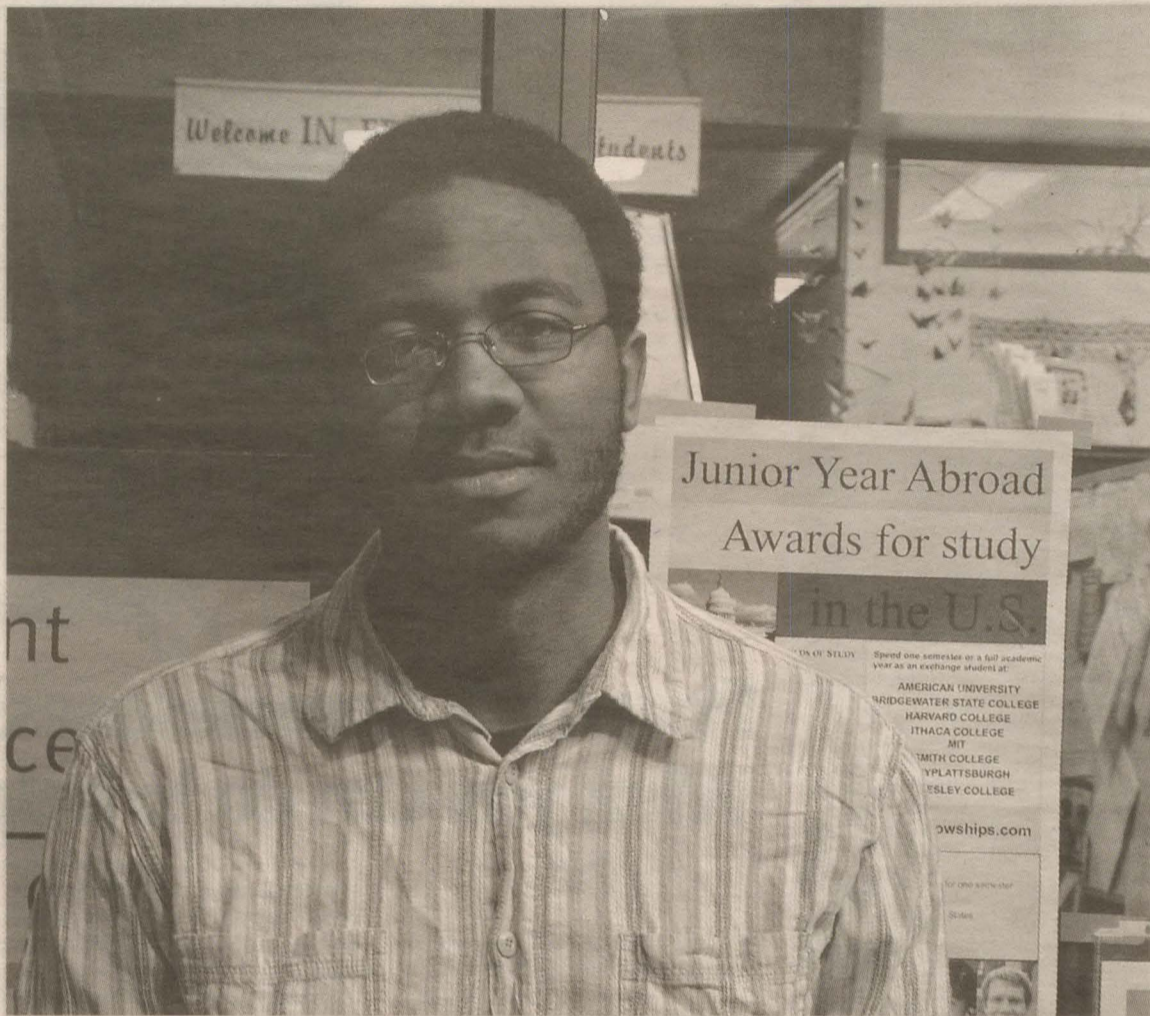
Nov. 17 marked International Students Day, which is meant to celebrate the multiculturalism that international students bring to their universities.

But for many of those students, it's a struggle to study outside their countries.

Yang and Ogah are just two of more than 1,200 international students at Dal who come from 100 different countries, all with different backgrounds. Just like Canadian students, they sit in crowded lecture halls, write essays, stay up late, wake up early and make new friends.

RISING COSTS

But many international students do it all while trying to master a new language and adjust to a foreign culture.



Imhokhai Ogah says international student tuition increases are unfair. / Photo: John Packman

Dal offers some programs designed to help international students adjust, such as International Students and Exchange Services (ISES) and English as a Second Language courses at the Writing Centre. But the university also continues to raise international student fees, while tuition increases for Canadian undergraduate students are capped at 3.9 per cent.

Ogah, a fourth-year biology major, says it's unfair to raise tuition for international students while limiting fee increases for Canadian students in non-professional programs.

"As an international student, I understand the differential fees, but I don't feel like the tuition should rise substantially," Ogah, 21, says.

Dal raised international student differential fees nearly 17 per cent between the 2004 and 2005 academic years, and fees went up another 14.4 per cent — or \$810 — for fall 2006.

The Budget Advisory Committee's 2006/2007 report says international student tuition will keep

rising for at least three more years. By September 2009, international students will be expected to pay \$8,850 in differential fees per year — nearly double the \$4,830 they paid in 2004.

"It's very expensive for me to stay here," says Yang, a first-year science student. "It's kind of a burden. My parents are thinking of having me [return to] Korea after I finish two years here because they pay so much money."

But despite the cost, Yang says his education is worth it.

"Whatever it takes," he says, wearing a black hoodie with Dalhousie University printed across the front in bold block letters.

"Everybody is crazy about learning English in Korea," he says, pausing to find the right words.

"Economically, Korea is dependent on English-speaking countries like the U.S. and Canada, so it's pretty mandatory to learn English, like Canadian people learn French. That's my major goal by studying at Dalhousie University, to improve my English."

MORE HELP NEEDED

Writing Centre coordinator Margie Clow Bohan says the university isn't well equipped to teach English as a second language. The Centre offers a 10-week ESL course, but since enrollment is limited to 25 people, it can't meet the needs of every student.

"We really just haven't positioned ourselves as people who teach English as a second language," she says. "If we can identify that [students] have a huge challenge with the language as opposed to the writing, or in addition to the writing, that's hard. It's something we really can't help them a lot with because language acquisition is partly through instruction, but it's partly through living the language."

Students who are new to Canada need to get involved in the university's social activities, says Kim Mason, the international program and projects coordinator at ISES. Mason says a lot of international students suffer strong bouts of homesickness and often have trouble understanding school policies because of lan-

guage barriers.

ISES sees 15 to 30 students every day for counselling on personal and educational issues. The office also organizes social events such as hockey games and special dinners to help students integrate into Canadian society.

"We definitely get an opportunity to get to know a lot of the students that come in," says Mason. "They're here to experience some of the cultural events."

Yang and Ogah say socializing with other students helps them understand Canadian culture. Ogah says he adjusted to life here fairly quickly because he saw a lot of little societal differences between Canada and Nigeria, rather than one big cultural gap.

"We treat each other the same, we chat the same, and we act in class the same way," he says. "There was no one thing that was immensely a world apart. So everything was just a little different in its own way, and the sum of all that ended up being something big."

Ogah says he's never had problems finding help when he needs it. But he thinks the university could do more to accommodate international students, such as providing more scholarships and bursaries to balance the tuition increases.

The Budget Advisory Committee recommends \$50,000 of the revenue from this year's differential fee be used for bursaries and better services for international students.

And changes in Canadian laws have helped international students' financial situations. A pilot program that allows foreign students to work off campus was launched this year, greatly increasing those students' ability to earn money while studying.

Yang sees the permit program as a positive and necessary change, but he says he doesn't know much about other opportunities for international students. He says the lack of awareness among students about Writing Centre and ISES events and services is a problem.

"I don't think many people know about those kinds of programs," he says. But Yang says he doesn't think it's necessary to create groups solely for international students. He doesn't want to associate only with other international students because he wants a genuine experience of Canadian culture. And he doesn't want special treatment.

"I wouldn't have felt [more] welcome even if they had offered [more] international programs," he says.

"I just want to be treated as equal, like other guys."



Student Employment Centre

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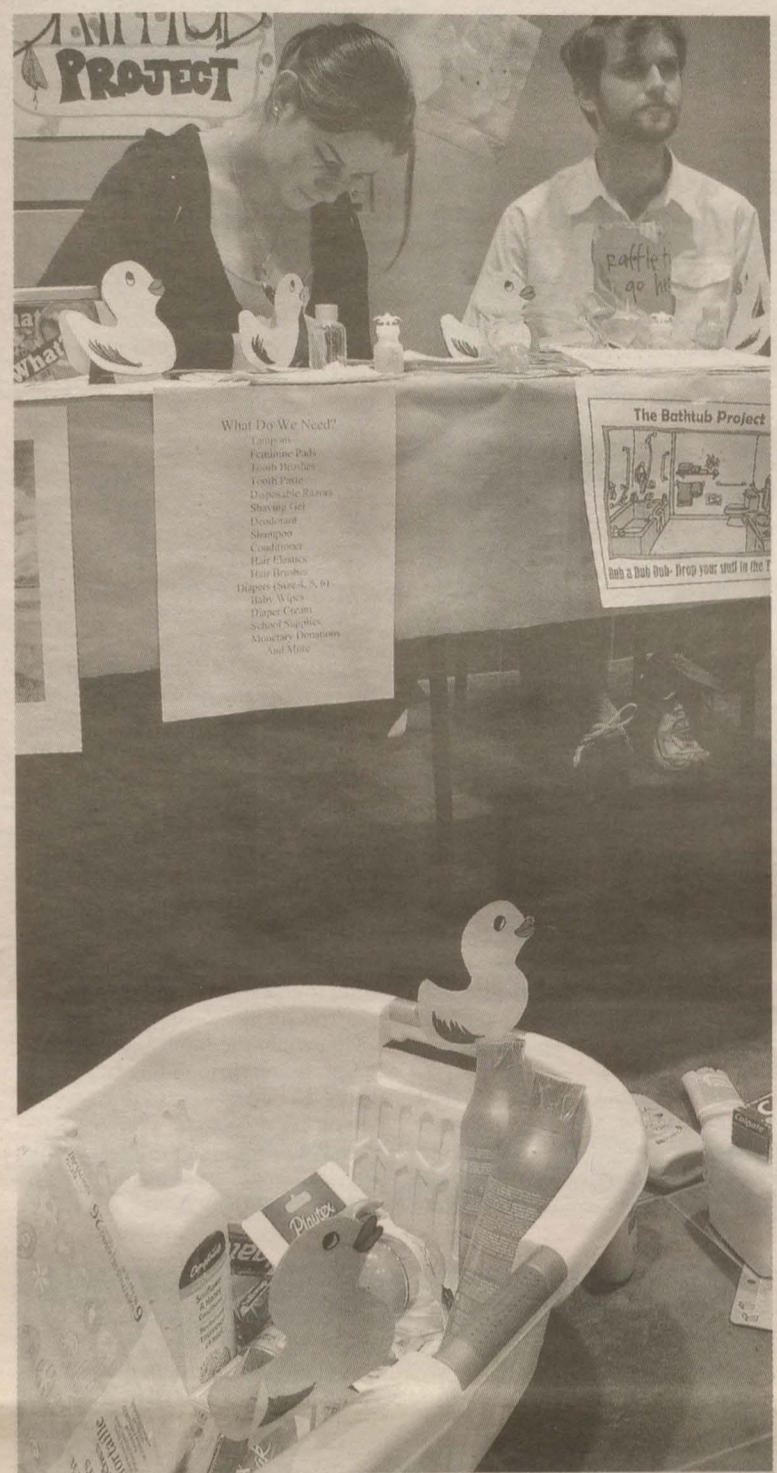
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Information Sessions

StatCan
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SUB, Room 224

Butterfield Bank Evening Reception
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6:00 - 8:30 pm
SUB, Room 307

Martin Marietta
Nov 29
5:00 - 6:30 pm
Sexton Campus, Common Room



Students donated toiletries for women's shelters as part of The Bathtub Project from Nov. 20 to 24. / Photo: John Packman

Students fight to give voice to immigrants

DAWN MACPHEE
Assistant News Editor

Dalhousie students and community members are campaigning for the rights of immigrants, migrants and people without status in Canada.

"We represent people who don't have a voice otherwise, who are afraid of persecution because they're in a new country," says Alia Saied, second-year student and founding member of No One Is Illegal (NOII) Halifax. "There's a huge immigrant population constantly coming in here, and I just feel like they're not getting enough support."

NOII marked International Students Day on Nov. 17 by screening a series of films called *Measuring Security Measures* that explore the ways public security interests can undermine the rights of immigrants and refugees in Canada.

Saied says International Students Day is a good time to voice political concerns because it's intended to raise awareness of the oppression that students face in Canada and around the world.

Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver are already home to NOII coalitions. Saied launched the Halifax group with help from members of two local social justice groups. NOII is now a Nova Scotia Public Interest Research Group campaign and includes members from the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association, the Halifax Refugee Clinic, and the Metropolis Project.

NOII opposes discriminating immigration and border policies and aims to build support networks for immigrants, refugees and migrants. Coalition efforts are directed at ending racial profiling and deportations, as well as defining universal standards for non-status people in Canada.

"Canada is multicultural. That's what this country is based on," says Saied. "For us to be rejecting people randomly is invalid and has to be changed. That's why I feel it's really important to do this."



Alia Saied launched the group No One Is Illegal to raise awareness about immigrant discrimination. / Photo: John Packman

Chris Murphy, chair of Dal's sociology department, says security measures surrounding migration

Murphy says he would like to concentrate on making immigration authorities and policies more ac-

"While we are restrictive, we are still perhaps the most open and generous country in the world when it comes to immigrants and refugees per capita."

and immigration have intensified since the events of September 11, 2001.

"It's not necessarily that there's a great many more illegal actions against immigrants," says Murphy, who worked as part of Metropolis Project, a group of researchers who look at migration, immigration, and cultural diversity in Atlantic Canada and abroad.

"We've increased the power and capacity of governments and bureaucracies to discriminate, in a sense legally and legitimately, on the basis of security grounds."

countable and accessible. Although there are reasons to be concerned, Canada is still perceived as a welcoming environment, says Murphy.

"While we are restrictive, we are still perhaps the most open and generous country in the world when it comes to immigrants and refugees per capita," he says.

For now, Saied hopes NOII Halifax can promote ruling out arbitrary immigration policies and replacing them with fair criteria for everyone.

"I'm a Canadian citizen born and raised, so I feel that everyone should have the same opportunities."

Dal group to ease burden on women's shelters

MEGHAN LOW
Staff Contributor

A student-led project at Dalhousie aims to counter violence against women — one toothbrush at a time.

The Bathtub Project raises funds and collects toiletries to donate to battered women's shelters in metro. From Nov. 20 to 24, the group ran a booth in the Student Union Building to collect donations, which it gave to Bryony House, a shelter for abused women, and Adsum House, an emergency shelter for homeless and transient women. Students were encouraged to drop off necessities such as toothbrushes, shampoo, diapers and soap.

"The project, in a sense, is a bandage solution. We are not stopping domestic violence," says Haley Fisher, a fourth-year Dal student and co-organizer of the Bathtub Project. "Our aim is to provide a basic need for women who have been a victim of domestic violence."

When the Bathtub Project was launched at McMaster University in 2003, organizers set up a kiddie pool to collect donations — that's how the project got its name.

At Dal, a number of religious groups, societies, and academics came together to make the project a reality, including the Dalhousie's Women's Centre, the Jewish Students Association and the psychology department.

"In university, students are coming to terms with the world, but people overlook what is happening on the street," says Fisher, referring to women who are left homeless because they can no longer cope with

domestic abuse.

Fisher says she hopes the donations will ease financial burdens and free up funding for counselling and support programs.

Debbie MacIntosh, director of fund development for Adsum House, says funding is limited and they can't afford to constantly restock bathroom items.

"We see a large number of women, 500 clients annually, and we can't always provide the toiletries they very much need and deserve," says MacIntosh. The shelter goes through a lot of toothbrushes, deodorant and feminine hygiene products because the items can't be shared, she says.

Adsum House provides support to many young women. In 2005, 41 per cent of the shelter's clients were between the ages of 16 and 24. They often arrive at the shelter with few possessions because they leave home in a hurry, and in the case of homeless women, most don't have space in their bag to carry necessary hygiene products around.

Women's Centre Coordinator Elizabeth McCormack says people aren't open to discussing the reality of violence against women.

"The Bathtub Project is not about shampoo, it's about breaking taboos," she says.

She says any project that brings people together to address violence against women is a step in the right direction.

McCormack says female students seek refuge from violence at the Women's Centre on a daily basis.

"These women are everywhere," she says. "They are in lineups, they are in your class. You have probably asked them for a pen."

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Volunteer Meetings
Every Monday at 5:30, Room 312, Dal SUB

Dal lease deal not transparent enough for some

JAMIE MUNSON
Staff Contributor

Dalhousie University has secured the lease of a prime downtown real estate location, but members of the Halifax community say they should have been consulted first.

The university plans to build a parking lot on a portion of the leased area at the corner of Queen St. and Morris St. where the Halifax Infirmary used to stand — an area previously considered first-rate for downtown development.

"That area is the heart and soul of [the Halifax Regional Municipality], and should be a showcase of the province," says Dawn Sloane, city councillor for District 12, downtown Halifax. Many residents don't think a Dal property falls in line with the commercial and residential potential of the neighbourhood, says Sloane.

The District 12 Planning Advisory Committee found that the community would prefer a mixed residential and commercial building at the location.

The committee has looked at various options for the land around the lot that Dal now controls, including a new courthouse and a new library. And while HRM organized public consultation hearings for the community to express its views, Dal's plan to sign the lease was never mentioned.

"At no time in those discussions or in any public consultations did Dal



Dalhousie plans to build a parking lot on vacant land at the corner of Queen St. and Morris St., picture here. / Photo: John Packman

mention it was working on a lease," says Rebecca Jamieson, earth sciences professor and member of the Dalhousie University Community Committee. Some community mem-

bers say the hearings should have included discussion on the possibility of Dal's lease deal, says Jamieson.

"Any public consultation process, to be credible, should be trans-

parent," she says.

Dal President Tom Traves called a neighbourhood meeting on Nov. 8 to talk about issues between the university and the community. He said Dal kept its real estate negotiations with the province low key so it wouldn't jeopardize the outcome.

But Dal's right to build in the area isn't the issue, says Jamieson, but rather that the public advisory committee was left in the dark.

sity arranged to trade control of the Spring Garden Rd. and Queen St. property in exchange for the lease on the former infirmary land.

Sloane says the community is upset that the province seemingly ignored the public consultation process — and that the community might "breathe a little easier" if there was a timeline to indicate what Dal plans to do over the next couple years.

Dal's right to build in the area isn't the issue, says Rebecca Jamieson (member of the Dalhousie University Community Committee), but rather that the public advisory committee was left in the dark.

"To me, that changes the whole colour of the debate ... I don't understand why [the possibility of Dal's lease] wasn't included. They're taking a lot of flak in public opinion now because of this."

Dal has tried to acquire a share of the property since an amalgamation with the Technical University of Nova Scotia in 1997 extended the university campus to downtown. At that time, the province promised the land then occupied by the Halifax Infirmary to Dal, as well as property at the corner of Spring Garden Rd. and Queen St.

But the verbal agreement wasn't legally binding and was followed by several stages of negotiations between Dal and the provincial government. In the end, the univer-

"There is no real firm commitment to any construction that would benefit the surrounding community, and that's the boon of contention," she says.

Jeff Lamb, Dal's director of facilities management, says the university has no specific funds or plans for the property, but wants to have the ability to expand as enrolment grows. No construction will take place on the former hospital site until the "distant future."

The public consultation hearing gave people the impression that the property and surrounding area would be developed soon, and that was the wrong impression, says Lamb.

"Why should our interests suffer because people want something to happen quickly?"

From The Gazette archives

10 YEARS AGO

Dalhousie's men's hockey ended the semester on a high note with a 4-2 win over the St. Francis Xavier X-men.

"It was an all-around team effort because everyone went in their and played their strengths," said forward Jason Pellerin.

Despite several players out due to injury or in the penalty box, the Tigers kept pace with the X-men in an intensely physical game. At one point, even the referee was stuck accidentally.

"There were a lot of guys out of the line-up," said blue-liner Rick Findlay. "We dug deeper and got some extra courage."

20 YEARS AGO

The president of Nova Scotia College of Art and Design's (now NSCAD University) student union, Ken Robinson, was ousted from office after he destroyed another student's artwork while drunk.

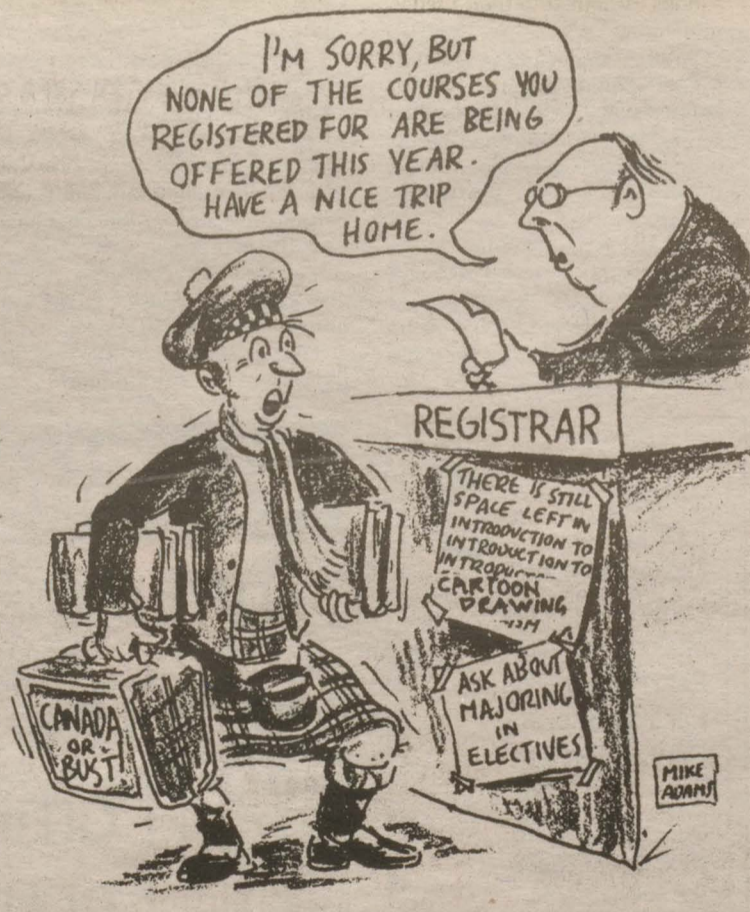
Robinson reportedly discharged a fire extinguisher into the studio of Catherine Gruetzke on the evening of Nov. 6, damaging her artwork. Other students present at the scene report Robinson had been drinking that night. Robinson said he "wasn't acting in his capacity as president when he discharged the fire extinguisher."

This, and other "irregularities" in the president's administration, led to a 10 to 3 vote in favor of the motion to remove Robinson from office. Two previous attempts had failed.

Among other charges of misbehaviour brought against Robinson included his handling of the faculty strike, methods used to appoint the vice-president internal and abuse of administrative procedure in order to maintain his position.

30 YEARS AGO

The university grounds and



cleaning crew union continued its dispute with Dalhousie's administration over budget cuts and downsizing. The latest issue to arise was "contracting out."

"With our new contract coming up, we might be out on strike yet," said local union president Bill Kelly. "The university is trying to put us up against the wall by not hiring enough people."

The number of union members had dropped from 295 to 221 over one year. This led to overwork, shifting around of workers and general job insecurity, said Kelly.

"We know we had to cut the budget this year by something in the neighbourhood of one million dollars," said Louie Vagianos, vice president of university services.

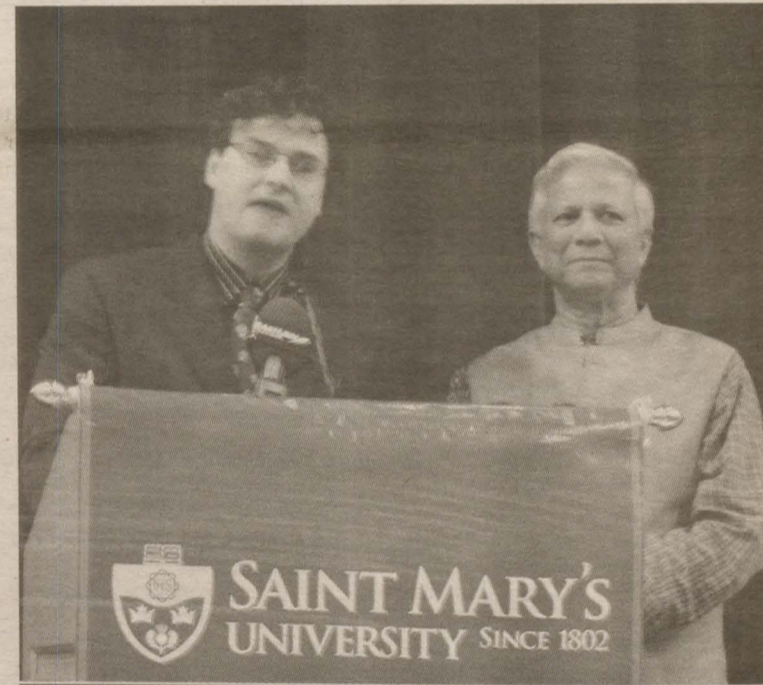
"If you had any experience in this sort of thing, you must realize the major savings always comes from people."

But the grounds crew was not convinced.

"That bastard Vagianos is trying to break the union," an anonymous member of the grounds crew said. "Last year we stood up and fought for our rights. This year we are penalized."

"We're not trying to be harsh," said Vagianos. "But there's no question some people are unhappy — they have to be. They had a much better deal before."

At the time *The Gazette* went to press, no agreements had been reached between the union and the administration.



Words: Oliver Anderson / Photo: Hugh Switzer

Economist turns banking upside-down

A Nobel Peace Prize winner spoke at St. Mary's University on Nov. 14 about increasing financial access for the world's poorest families.

"One day we can make poverty something that you will find in a museum," said Muhammad Yunus, economist and father of microcredit, while addressing the crowd of more than 500.

Microcredit is the extension of small loans to impoverished people who cannot qualify for traditional bank loans. Yunus was named co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize on Oct. 13 alongside the Grameen Bank, the microcredit institution he founded in Bangladesh. He was in Halifax to take part in the Global Microcredit Summit from Nov. 12 to 15.

"There is a terrible face of money lending," said Yunus. "We are turning the banking system upside down."

The Grameen Bank approach to loan approval represents the reversal of traditional banking principles. The system is based on accountability, participation and mutual trust without any need for

collateral. The bank has loaned small amounts of money to almost seven million people, 97 per cent of whom are women. The loan repayment rate is roughly 99 per cent.

One Dalhousie economist is concerned about the reality of using microcredit as a development tool, however.

"It can be a working solution to poverty if it is applied in combination with other measures that can eradicate poverty," says Wimal Rankaduwa, professor of development economics. "Microcredit will do little to working towards literacy rates, health standards, education levels, and bring down other types of tension such as war."

Stephan Cote, a third-year Dalhousie economics major, volunteered at the Microcredit Summit and attended the lecture at St. Mary's.

"It was an extremely provocative speech that Yunus gave," said Cote, who added that he feels excited to be a part of something that's on the forefront of economic thinking.

"I am impressed at the amount of people who are paying attention to these problems that are happening a world away."

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict: is peaceful dialogue possible?

MIRA ETLIN-STEIN
Opinions Contributor

I recently watched *Raised to be Heroes*, a film-length documentary about Israeli soldiers who refuse to serve time in the occupied territories and are sent to jail as a result.

The documentary has had nothing short of a controversial response, evidence that the issues it presents have struck a deeply personal chord for many people.

I am no exception.

As a pro-peace Jewish university student, I have found it difficult to find an open forum in which to discuss my pro-Israel, anti-occupation viewpoint. It seems to me that, on the whole, most university students just want to point fingers at one group or the other — even those students who claim that they are pro-peace.

It is not hypocritical to love Israel with all your heart, believe passionately in its existence, and yet be extremely critical of many of the Israeli government's decisions. During my two visits to Israel, for example, I found that the majority of Israelis and Palestinians I met were much more open to discussion and debate than many students here, Jewish and Arab.

This openness is not surprising. Israel is a democratic country with an independent and progressive judiciary, one which has upheld human rights for both Arab-Israelis and Palestinians.

Yet at Canadian universities we tend to reduce our views to simple arguments. This issue is far too complex for that; how can one be simply pro-Israel or pro-Palestinian when, in reality, the situation is so multi-layered?

I have had many discussions with pro-Palestinian university students on campus, and one problem I have encountered is that my fellow



During my two visits to Israel, I found that the majority of Israelis and Palestinians I met were much more open to discussion and debate than many students here, Jewish and Arab.

discussants tend to want to personalize the actions of the Israeli Government. I openly admit that I am critical of the occupation, as well as many of the actions of this government. But, because I am Jewish, I find that pro-Palestinian students often want to point fingers at me. One even went so far as to accuse me of personally committing atrocities against the Palestinian people.

Jewish people have been persecuted for thousands and thousands of years; perhaps drawing from this history, I become defensive whenever people assume something about me based on the fact that I am Jewish. Part of the reason that Israel's existence is so important is because it is the only nation on the face of the earth where Jewish people are a majority, where we don't have to feel isolated, and where we know the government will protect us from anti-Semitism.

I have seen the concentration camps in Poland and I know how comfortable many Jews in Europe felt before the Holocaust. They believed, just as we do now, that they were an accepted and integrated

part of society. Many of them did not leave Europe before it was too late because they felt so sure that they lived in an equal society that would not persecute them based on race or religion.

Today, the knowledge that the State of Israel exists makes me feel safer as a Jewish Canadian. But I feel stereotyped when people tell me that I am in some way responsible for happens in Palestine. There is a very slippery slope between this sort of stereotyping and anti-Semitism. And accusations like these doom, from the very start, any attempts at meaningful Jewish-Palestinian dialogue.

Jewish students, when accused of being responsible for the occupation, become aggressive, heated, accusatory, and depressing. Students on both sides can therefore do nothing but resort to baseless accusations, or retreat to their predetermined opinions.

An open dialogue between Jewish and Arab students can only happen when everybody begins to put less emphasis on who has done what to whom in the past, and truly commits to looking to the future.

Abortion: unmasking choice

JOSIP VACI
Opinions Contributor

Last week a speaker named Stephanie Gray from the Canadian Centre for Bio-Ethical Reform gave a presentation entitled "Abortion: Unmasking Choice." Because of this presentation, I felt compelled to present the pro-life position in *The Gazette*.

As Gray pointed out, everyone is for choice. Choice is good — but only when it does not infringe upon the rights of another. No one would argue that slavery is a "good," and therefore it isn't an acceptable choice to make.

Likewise, if unborn fetuses are human beings, abortion would not be an acceptable choice.

This begs the question, "are the unborn human beings?" Gray gave evidence for the fact that the unborn are human beings by citing standard textbooks on embryology, used across Canada, that state that human life begins at conception. The foetus, by extension, can be nothing other than a human being.

Some "hard cases" state that circumstances such as rape, finance, or inconvenience warrant an abortion. All of these "hard cases" presuppose that the unborn are not human beings. And just as these circumstances would not justify the killing of a born person, no matter how difficult, so also would abortion be equally disallowed under their moral pretences — that is, if the unborn are considered human beings.

If the unborn are indeed human

beings, which science supports, can they be non-persons as some pro-choice activist may argue?

In her presentation, Gray stated that personhood is a legal term, not a scientific term.

One might argue that the unborn aren't persons because they are different from us. Their size as well as their level of development (awareness of themselves, organs, overall mental functions...) is not the same as ours.

But no one would argue that smaller people are any less worthy of personhood; a newborn would not be any less of a person because of his or her size.

Similarly, people who are less mentally or physically developed — are equally worthy of personhood. Newborn babies are not aware of themselves, but they are human beings.

Another argument against the personhood of the unborn would state that because the fetus is in a womb and it is dependant upon someone else for survival, it is not a person.

Gray used the example of her prematurely born nephew, and how he was in an environment he wasn't supposed to be in. Had this baby been in another environment, the pro-choice argument would say that it was acceptable to terminate his life.

When this baby was out of the womb, he was still highly dependant on external actors for his survival (incubator). No one would argue that, because of this dependence,

he was not a person, deigned to become one only after being taken out of the incubator.

Similarly, it is illogical to say that this baby's dependency on a womb makes him a non-person.

In the past, laws have denied personhood to other groups of people. In Nazi Germany, personhood was denied to the Jewish people. Less than 200 years ago, personhood was denied to slaves in North America. These laws did not change the inherent dignity of these people, however; they were still persons, whether the law stated it or not.

It is not the intention of this article to judge women who are considering an abortion; it would be foolish for me to say that they suffer from easy circumstances.

Just as we spared those who procured slavery from our judgement, instead focusing on the act of enslaving itself, I do not pass judgement on those who seek abortion. It is abortion proper, not its participants, which I aim to deal with here.

Choice is unacceptable where and if it harms another. Unborn fetuses are human beings; it is wrong to deny them life. Likewise, difficult circumstances do not justify the taking of a life. A person is not defined by his or her attributes, but by the very fact they belong to the human race.

For more information on abortion, contact the Metro Pregnancy & Family Support Centre at 902-422-8539.

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New respect for Margaret Somerville

Is bio-technology in contention with the natural world?

SARAH JONES
Opinions Contributor

The Massey lectures have a long history of prestigious speakers presenting weighty topics. Two years ago, Richard Wright presented "A Short History of Progress," a warning to modern-day civilization filtered through stories of the rise and fall of past societies. Last year, Stephen Lewis' in, "A Race Against Time," vilified the West's often lazy approach to the desperate situation in Africa. It is very telling that such a distinguished series would see fit to include a talk on ethics and new biotechnologies; this year's lecture was by Margaret Somerville.

Somerville, among other distinctions, is known for stirring up polarized debates. While she was awarded an honorary doctorate at Ryerson University last June, several professors on stage turned their backs to Somerville in protest of her views on same-sex marriage (she is decidedly *against*). And although Somerville composed her Massey lecture for a secular audience, her well-established views would make even the most righteous fundamentalist proud. Somerville is against new reproductive technologies; anything



If I was unsure of what to think, I turned to Somerville, knowing my opinion would simply be the opposite.

but a "natural" death; and any genetic alterations in between, especially if that involves stem cells. In her talk, she cautioned against prescribing to a "have technology, must use" slogan — lest the human spirit be irrevocably damaged.

Of course, in a world where one is hard pressed to find anything "natural," even in a grocery store, it's hard to accept the arbitrary lines Somerville seems to be drawing. Sure, IVF screening for birth defects (which she opposes) are unnatural, but so are most medicines and drugs, which Somerville readily supports.

(She rebuts the pro-euthanasia crowd, for example, by suggesting we simply keep suffering patients in drug-induced comas.)

She also claimed in her speech that we disproportionately honour reason, and she worries that we have lost the ability to accept mystery and contradiction. With our search for simple, rational answers that distill the world into empirical data, we are losing our spirit, our humanness, she argued — take euthanasia, for example, which she sees as a rationalization of the mystery of death.

Before listening to her lecture, I had only thought Somerville useful for helping confirm my own ethical and political views. If I was unsure of what to think, I turned to her, knowing my opinion would simply be the opposite. After her lecture, however, I found myself respecting her decision to stick with an unpop-

ular stance and reach out in search of common ground — or a "shared ethic," as she called it.

Such an ethic, forcing us to question our cozy relationship with new technologies, is not an unreasonable idea. Somerville cited chimerical humans as an effective scare-tactic; 50 years ago we may have laughed the notion, but today techno-humans seem possible. We design mice with human genes so that we can study the effects of obesity and hair loss. In Quebec, researchers have implanted spider genes into goats, hoping they'll produce webs — when will we start to design humans?

Still, Somerville's proposed cure seems a bit much. We should return to the natural? We should embrace a

mysterious faith that seems to be little more than a veiled deity? Somerville's entire argument hearkens back to an age when the only option was heterosexual parents lovingly raising their children in a safe, rural landscape, joining them in wooden pews every Sunday.

But weren't those same farmers using plows, the most technologically advanced tools of the day? Were they not grafting the largest tomato plants together so they could win the blue ribbon at the local fair? Sure, their fertilizers came from inside the farm. But the practice of trying to harness nature, to maximize yield, is familiar.

Not all bio-technology is inherently bad, though the use of terms such as "good" and "bad" is perhaps not the best way to describe any tools that have the potential to change our lives and our conceptions of self and identity. Similarly, outright banning euthanasia, reproductive aids and stem cell research is too simplistic an answer. The return to natural technology, whether by Somerville's definition or someone else's, is, at worst, a step backwards. At best, it is treating water, merely a temporary solution while we continue to look for an acceptable shared ethic.

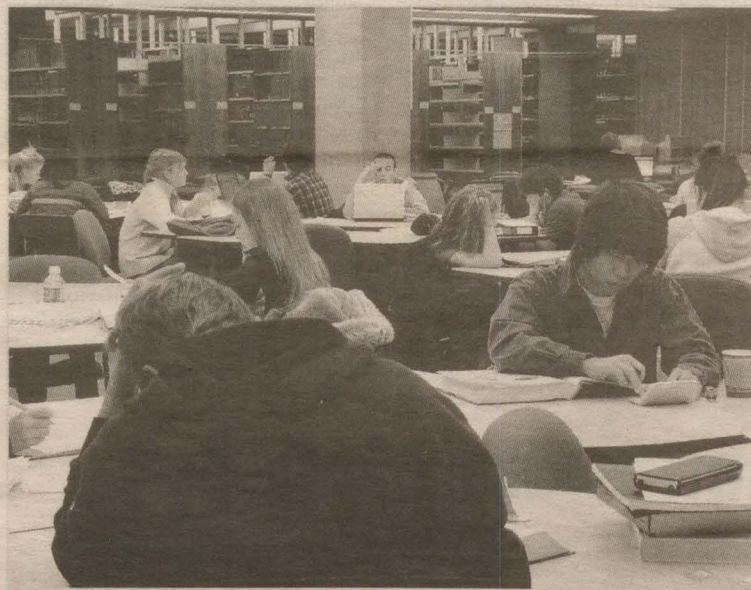
Libraries: fortresses of rights

CATHERINE HOLLOWAY
Staff Contributor

The so-called "Patriot Act" is a 62,000-word government document that suffers from an overly enthusiastic acronymic title — its full name is Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate

Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001 — not kidding: USA PATRIOT Act. It was passed through both U.S. houses a little over a month after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, far too short a time period for most politicians to read into what the bill really meant.

Aside from its jingoistic title, the



Who's looking over your shoulder? / Photo: John Packman

Patriot Act is also one of the reasons some Canadian University libraries are moving off of their U.S.-based research servers and over to less monitored grounds. With the Patriot Act in place, U.S. authorities have the potential authority to observe search records; libraries across Canada, including Dalhousie's, believe that students and professors could

therefore be targeted for looking up topics such as North Korea and Al Qaeda. As a remedy, search information and user-saved citations compiled at Dalhousie will now be stored on a server in Ontario, out of U.S. jurisdiction.

Should we be afraid of the Patriot Act? Not necessarily. Though the FBI may have the legal author-

ity to keep tabs on what someone has borrowed from a library without actually informing that someone, it can only do so if that person is already being investigated on terrorism charges — requiring a warrant and a whole lot of bureaucracy.

It is highly improbable that any ordinary person would be suspected of being a terrorist simply for seeking out information on terrorism. Even if U.S. authorities could prove that you entered "North Korea" into a search query, doing so is not a crime. And it's a far cry from the Orwellian scenario oft-cited by Patriot Act critics. The U.S. government has neither the time nor the resources to persecute or hassle people who borrow books that are critical of the U.S. system.

Still, it is difficult to take a strong position for or against the Patriot Act's library invasion. On a pragmatic level, I agree with the Act's precepts; the only effective method of combating terrorism is to do so within one's own borders.

Philosophically, however, I am against it. As a citizen of a democratic nation, I should not be content to give up any of my constitutionally-enshrined rights, no matter how minute they may be.



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Alternative Bus Routes

Dear Dalhousie Gazette,

Although I agree with the basic premise that the No. 1 route to Spring Garden Rd. needs to be run every eight minutes (*Gazette 139-10*), as I myself have been, I see another option of which some may be unaware.

A simple walk down to the corner of Summer St. brings many possibilities for students. I myself take the link to Sackville unless the 84 to Glendale is running. On the corner of Summer St., routes 81, 80, 20, and 1 all go to Scotia Square.

A good portion of the public transportation crowd would be better to receive a lesson in bus-taking than to simply follow the crowd. Halifax has an amazing public transportation system; it is being wasted. Instead of complaining about the

No. 1 route, read your bus schedule and find an alternate route — you may be amazed to find that your new route arrangements are actually faster!

Sincerely,
Adam C. Wambolt

Beating Around the Bush

Re: "No beating around the bush: pubic hair hygiene" (*Gazette 139-10*)

If the topic of pubic hair shaving and trimming is going to be discussed, perhaps a little history lesson might be in order.

Hugh mentions that the onus to shave or trim generally falls upon women, and it's true. Why? Because 100-some-odd years ago, when people realized that 40-year-old men shouldn't be marrying 13-year-old

girls, men found themselves missing out on something: that smooth, hair-free aesthetic that can only be achieved by prepubescence. Oh, yeah, that's real sexy, isn't it?

As for hygiene: if you're clean, you shouldn't have to worry about odd odours emanating from your nether regions, or even your underarms. Maybe you're one of those people who don't shower every day.

(Even then, two minutes with a washcloth is not that difficult an undertaking.)

I couldn't care less if other women or men trim, shave, or pluck their pubic coifs. But if the topic is going to be discussed, at least provide all the information so the rest of us can form informed opinions on the topic—whatever they may be.

Ayla-Monic McKay

Butterfly Down

No Bullets Here

SAMAN JAFARIAN
Arts Editor

"Yeah, we might have to get a bucket," says Down With The Butterfly's drummer, Jason Burns.

Guitarist Kris Pope, it seems, is afraid of a tape recorder.

Well, not really. But when you put four good friends together in a band, you're bound to get banter like that. After all, Pope pointed out, they're essentially family.

Down With The Butterfly, rounded out by vocalist David Scholten and bassist Ian Sherwood, was named after a series of skits crafted by Pope in which a farmer shoots a butterfly (trust us; the band's music makes more sense).

And not unlike a skit, the group began its career unceremoniously — Butterfly's first demos were recorded in a friend's basement two years ago.

After three months of playing shows in Halifax, the group got serious. The band toured without an official album, setting up burnt demo CDs on a merchandise table. With only a few songs on them, the CDs were sold by donation; the strategy was an overwhelming success.

"We probably made more money that way than we would have by selling it," says Burns.

After making their first mark on the Halifax indie circuit, the band got really serious — its debut album, *Rise*, was recorded in five studios across the East Coast.

"It was almost like the idea of creating a sonic landscape," says Burns of the varied recording studios and their styles. "A lot of people don't like the production on the record, because it is so different. But at the same time, that was the idea. We went in to each studio not trying to recreate what we did before."

The album itself is a gem. Reminiscent of an obscure blend between Modest Mouse, Pavement, the Flaming Lips and early Sonic Youth, the band dabbles between genres,



Darkness is spreading.

blending styles.

The lyrics on the album are clever and meaningful, paired with carefully crafted riffs and beats. The standout track, "Blue and Green," does this best. The band thinks so too; a play on the song's lyrics appears in Down With The Butterfly's website biography, reading "[The band] is a family of idealists trying to make sense of a beautiful world that often tears us apart."

"I really like all of the lyrics in that song," says Pope. "When I think of any line from that song, I really love it. It's kind of thought provoking."

"The world is so fucked," agrees Burns. "Look at marriage statistics and stuff like that. An old man has been with his wife for fifty years, I mean, that's what I want in life, to be married to someone. I don't care who it is. I'm not fussy."

"But now it's like the mom's working and the dad's working and

they're having affairs and watching their own television programs.

"Maybe I'm generalizing too much, but I think it's pretty realistic."

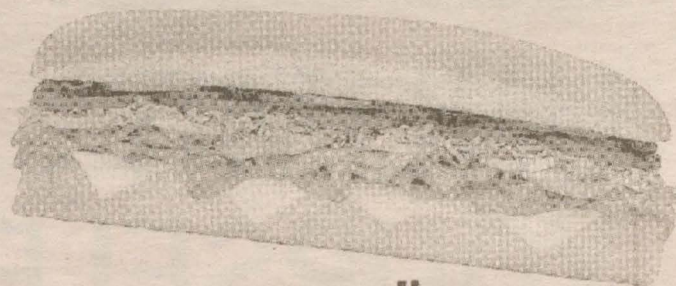
Idealistic, pessimistic or realistic, the band can always count on each other, like a family going through hard times.

Or, for the moment, good times. "You would definitely be like the fun uncle," Burns says to Pope. "Dave would be the grandfather, but he'd be totally a bit senile. Ian would be the teenager, going through adolescence."

Pope replies: "You would make a good wife."

Burns, Pop, Scholten and Sherwood as a traditional nuclear family? Perhaps not. Good friends in a great band? Absolutely. Down With The Butterfly plays with Hey Rosetta! On Saturday, Nov. 25 @ the Attic. The show starts at 10:30 p.m.

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Local Crop

Anu Jindal / Staff Contributor



The Just Barelys
Top

One of the difficulties of making pop music is making it matter. Not necessarily in a socially or politically-minded way, but in the way that Superchunk's Mac McCaughan pleads for when he sings, "The heart's a muscle, I pull it constantly! Pull my muscles, pull my muscles, please." Pop music, when it matters, does exactly that.

It might appear like a step in the wrong direction when The Just Barelys' EP, *Top*, opens with "Raising Kids," a song about the plight of ex-Metallica bassist Jason Newsted. The seeming irrelevance of a moan-

ing and possibly teary-eyed Newsted ("They don't need a bass in the band! They mixed me right out of ... *And Justice for All* ... I've got a side project, but James Hetfield says, 'No side projects.'") threatens to spin it away into obscurity.

Instead, the song manages the same sort of unlikely emotional depth that Neutral Milk Hotel and Of Montreal muster with their surrealistic lyrics. Both bands know how inane situations can shape and express complex feelings that blurted-out sentiments simply can't. Stephen Kelly and Eleanor King, the duo behind The Just Barelys, know this too.

"Raising Kids" passes beyond the irony of an imagined Newsted singing, "I'm gonna leave this metal band" over a sweetly-picked banjo and boy-girl harmonies, to hit on something deeper. As the central line sinks in ("All the things that I'm afraid to do are doing me wrong"), the song's themes of moving past failure, being betrayed by your idols and debilitating fear become clear. The song proves that even the pecu-

liar emotions of a 43 year-old metal bassist can matter to anyone.

"Slum Lord," perhaps the album's best track, rings with a similar secret, emotional tenor as Kelly and King moralise revenge against an oppressive landlord. "It's not easy to be honest when you're wrapped with hate! Don't let your conscience participate," they harmonise with calm sweetness and enough syrup to drown out the bitterness.

Musically, The Just Barelys closest points of comparison are with The Owls' equally fantastic EP, *Our Hopes and Dreams*, or another local group, Dog Day. Kelly's reed-like voice is perfectly buoyed by King's round and warm harmonies, and both are extremely talented and inventive songwriters. The single misstep is the overuse of the banjo, which, because of its thinness, at times can't match the otherwise excellent production.

Top shows a band starting to make music that pulls muscles. The Just Barelys' new album is set for release in 2007, and with luck the band will continue to make the best

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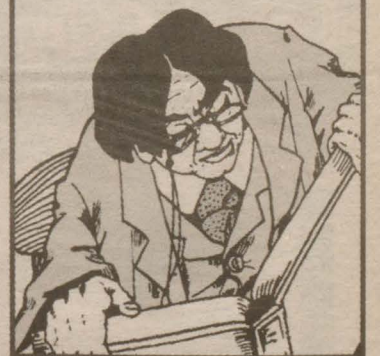
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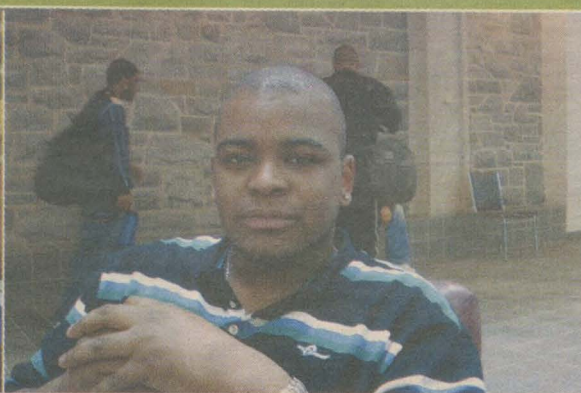
STREETER

IN A GLOBAL WAR, WHO WOULD WIN: PIRATES, NINJAS OR COWBOYS?



“Ninjas for sure, you can't attack what you can't see.

Gyasi Symonds, first-year law



“Cowboys, low-tech always trumps high-tech.

Otis Daye, first-year law



“Pirates, because I want them to win.

Laura McCulloch, third-year arts



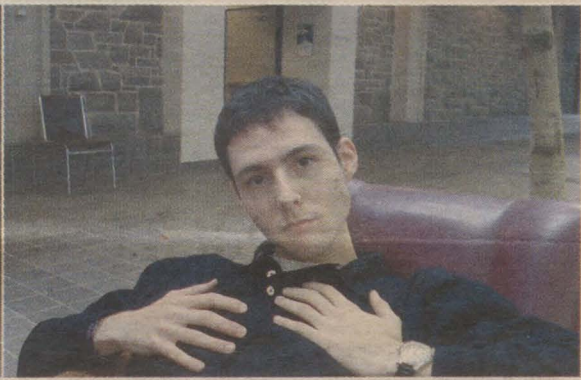
“Pirates, because they know how to fight dirty, and have no morals, and they get laid a lot so they're not stressed.

Tara Carpenter, third-year psychology
Ashley LeCroy, fourth-year psychology (L-R)



“Pirates because I envision them to look like Johnny Depp, and they will hypnotize the world with their sexiness.

Delaine Pawlowski, first-year law



“Cowboys, because everything's bigger in Texas.

Matt Thompson, first-year law



“Pirates, because most of the world is water.

Sheliza Ladha, first-year law



“Definitely Ninjas... because they're silent but deadly.

Joey Ryba, sixth-year mud-wrestling

Got a question you want to see answered by students? streeter@dalgazette.ca

TOP 10

- 1 **DAVID BLAINE SPINNING IN A GYROSCOPE FOR TWO DAYS**
He will appear to the crowd and miraculously... still be wet.
- 2 **DELETING YOUR EX-BOYFRIEND FROM YOUR MYSPACE PAGE**
I wonder if Britney's facebook mini-feed showed a little broken heart too?
- 3 **THAT GUY WHO PLAYS VAN WILDER NAMED SEXIEST CANADIAN MAN ALIVE** "All Canadian men" demand a recount.
- 4 **SCIENTISTS FINALLY FIGURE OUT A WAY TO THROW OUT THE TRASH WHILE IN SPACE** No one can see you litter.
- 5 **THE LAMENESS OF THE POKER SCENES IN THE NEW JAMES BOND MOVIE** *Casino Royale* with Cheese
- 6 **THE GREY CUP!** Does anyone even know what this thing looks like?
- 7 **HIRING MIKE TYSON AS A MALE ESCORT** Really packs a punch.
- 8 **FERGIE CLAIMING THAT HER SINGING IS A GIFT FROM GOD**
Along with blow, booze and the non-existent willpower of the Black Eyed Peas.
- 9 **JAY-Z DOES SEVEN CONCERTS IN 24 HOURS**
Groupies were kindly asked to "change clothes, and go."
- 10 **SSHRC SSHUCKS.**

HOT / NOT

- HOT:** Marriage proposals / **NOT:** SSHRC proposals
- HOT:** Ryan Reynolds / **NOT:** Owen Wilson
- HOT:** Rogue's Roost draft / **NOT:** Your first draft (of anything)
- HOT:** Badonkadonk / **NOT:** "Bootylicious"
- HOT:** The new James Bond! / **NOT:** Hype
- HOT:** *Happy Feet* / **NOT:** Having your foot in your mouth
- HOT:** Roman Castles / **NOT:** Having your foot in your mouth
- HOT:** Facebook friends / **NOT:** Britney's Peers
- HOT:** "Fit" / **NOT:** "Hot"
- HOT:** A.C. Slater getting saved by the bell / **NOT:** Mario Lopez dancing with the stars

Suggestions? hotornot@dalgazette.ca

DISCLAIMER

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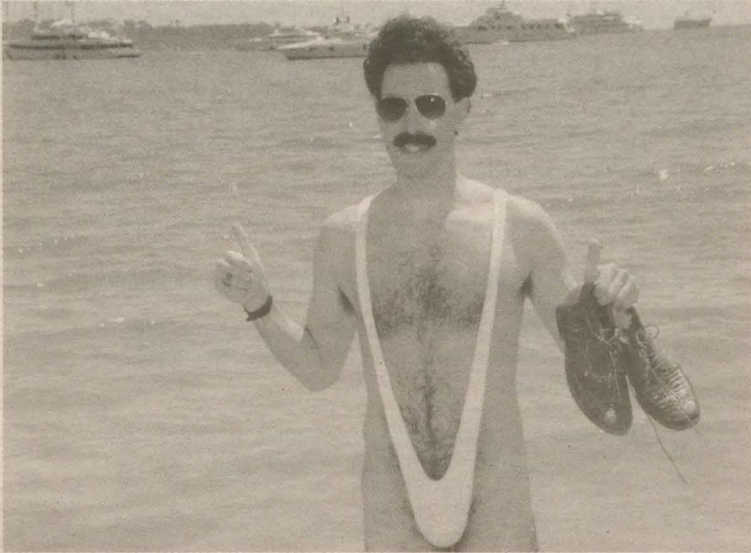
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Review

Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan



CHRISTINA STEFANSKI
Staff Contributor

Borat is a box office hit that has generated both excitement and outrage. In the film, the main character, Borat, goes to the U.S. to learn about American culture, hoping to fix the perceived economic, social and Jewish problems in his home country, Kazakhstan, with this newfound knowledge.

As *Borat* explores the U.S., he commits crude "Kazakh" acts, among them washing his underwear in the New York waterfront, using the Trump tower as an out-house, and masturbating in front of a lingerie display window.

Apart from *Borat's* somewhat indecent behaviour, the film has subject to a chorus of criticism. Creator and comedian Sacha Baron Cohen has been sued by many of the Americans that appeared in the film, and he has been accused of exploiting locals from Glod, a Romanian village, that is portrayed as *Borat's* Kazakh home in the opening scenes of his film.

Glod's villagers, who agreed to participate in the *Borat* movie when they were told it was a documentary, were infuriated when they discovered that Cohen's film represents them as a backward group of incestuous rapists, abortionists

and prostitutes.

The Romanians are not the only group portrayed in an exaggerated and false manner; the film focuses on a number of stereotyped groups such as feminists, Jews, gypsies, homosexuals, American politicians, Texans, African Americans, male college students and Christians.

Although some may find Cohen's sense of humour unsophisticated or offensive, his film nonetheless shows how stereotyping perpetuates ignorance.

In one scene set in Kazakhstan, for instance, a broken car is shown as having been turned into a horse cart.

On the surface, this ridiculous depiction of transportation in foreign countries would seem only to contribute to the inaccurate portrayal of Kazakhs is rife throughout *Borat* — but it also emphasizes Americans' ignorance towards foreign cultures.

It is debatable whether a comedic portrayal of mass stereotyping actually encourages people to reconsider these same stereotypes, or merely perpetuates ignorance itself. Whether or not audiences find *Borat* hilarious it's possible that the film's comedic value is been lost in its own supposed ignorance, exploitation of Romanian villagers included.

Never had I ever...

Gone to a burlesque show

ALY COY
Arts Contributor

I walked into the Seahorse Tavern and didn't really know what to expect. I pictured the *Moulin Rouge* — without Nicole Kidman of course.

Instead, I found a range of people (i.e. university students to men) dressed in 1940's attire. I originally thought three guys with suspenders and caps were part of the show, but it turned out they just dressed up for support. They sat down at the table beside me and provided company and good insight on the show.

Adding to the lively décor, a few naughty nurses had come over from a local burlesque house, their get-ups including boas, pink wigs and garter belts.

The atmosphere was perfect — dim lighting and candles. The Seahorse Tavern really suits the burlesque feel; tables and chairs had been put in front of the stage, making me feel like I was back in the 1940's.

The show had a late start, but the sleazy host 'Frankie the Fox' finally came out, cracked a few jokes in a New York accent and began the show.

Miss Mitzy Cream and her entourage, the star act that waltzed out on stage, are a Toronto-based traveling burlesque show.

The group consists of Miss Mitzy Cream, Evangeline Demone, Miss B. Haven and Mistress Molotov. The four lovely ladies were wonderfully curvaceous and had tattoos scattered over their bodies. Their costumes ranged from a naughty devil to bursting balloons and breast tassels.

The women were gutsy; some acts invited crowd participation, and the group dazzled the audience with dance moves and twirling umbrellas.

During intermission I got a chance to talk to the lovely Miss B. Haven — "misbehaving," for the slow folk. I asked her how she got into this type of work; she said that she watched a biography of *Tempest Storm* when she was twelve years old and wanted to be eighteen and



Miss Mitzy Cream and her Kittens' burlesque show shocked and amazed the crowd at the Seahorse. / Photo: John Packman

in burlesque even since.

Talk about influential programming.

In a past life, Haven was probably born in the 1940s, she tells me, since she loves acting and dressing — or should I say undressing — in 1940's attire.

Miss Mitzy Cream, the star of the show, got into burlesque by winning a contest at a "fetish party." It was her Jessica Rabbit dance that won over the judges.

I was really surprised to see people my age at the bar — I thought I

would be amongst only old creepy men. We need more traveling groups like Miss Mitzy Cream and her Kittens: the ladies put on a great show. Sadly, burlesque is a somewhat forgotten art, the world now full of desensitizing strip clubs that take away any semblance of "show" in favour of nudity.

But the modern age isn't all bad: in the 1940s, a show such as the one I saw would have been very controversial — and only for men. Today, you need only to show your ID and pay \$8.

Sex with Hugh

Confidence is sexy... and free!

HUGH WALLACE
Sex Contributor

"Leave your house knowing you are attractive," one of my friends told me the other day while I sat on my porch contemplating my ignorance on dating. According to my friend, the key ingredient I was missing in my seductive allure was none other than my worst enemy — confidence.

A lot of people have confidence in one form or another; situational confidence, overconfidence and general confidence are just a couple of examples, but ones that merit clearer definition.

Situational confidence is your best friend. It happens when you feel you need to stick up for yourself in a certain situation.

In other words, it's that thrust of energy you get when you need to communicate your thoughts — with gusto.

Overconfidence, for its part, is often referred to as "cockiness." Overconfidence can be based on a perceived lack of confidence and a person's attempts to overcompensate for that fact.

Last, general confidence is usually something possessed by those who are more or less comfortable with themselves. It is the most attractive variety of confidence — but

perhaps the hardest to obtain quickly and consistently.

Confidence is a very important part of a healthy sexual life. Whether you're a dominant person, submissive person, or somewhere in between, confidence facilitates comfort. And comfort, as I explored in last week's column, is crucial to a relationship, be it short-term or long.

It's also something that enables a person to act in his or her element. It facilitates comfort with self, comfort with others and, to a degree, comfort with the unknown.

So why, I ask, do I frequently meet and hear about people who lack this important characteristic? There are, I'm almost certain, many reasons.

A person may have bad luck in the love and relationships department — maybe they were turned down a couple of times and now they feel completely helpless.

(PS: I hear you!)

Perhaps these unconfident souls were betrayed in the past, or their abilities have slowly deteriorated over time.

There are many questions one could ask, and probably even more abundant number of answers.

My intent is not to provide you with these answers, nor is it to berate those of you without confidence

— myself included. I simply wish to stress the important contribution confidence makes to the love and relationship face of the multi-sided human sexuality.

Confidence is sexy.

It allows expression without fear of consequence. It allows the exploration of one's desires. And it is the key to most sexual interactions. Without confidence, sex could be bland or boring. Worse, we might just all settle for what's most "easy" for us to achieve.

Don't settle. Grab your pants, skirt (or whatever), and hike it up. Put on your game face. Be confident in who you are and in what you believe. Go out and find that boy, girl (or whatever...), and approach them.

Ask them out on a date.

Ask them for a one night stand.

Ask them their name.

Just promise yourself that from now on you will only ask with the strongest conviction, and with one of most important social characteristics — confidence.

Guys and girls! Listen up! I'm dying here. I need your questions and comments. Otherwise I don't sleep at night. E-mail me at sex@dalgazette.ca and I promise you there will be no regrets the morning after.

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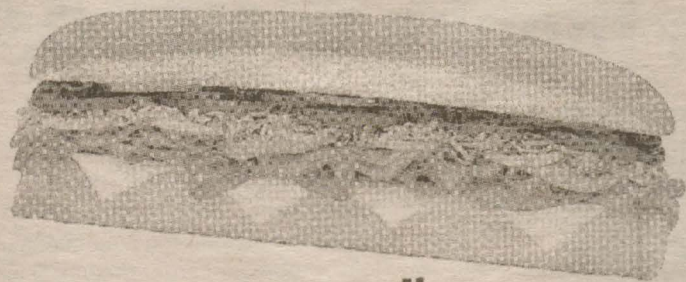
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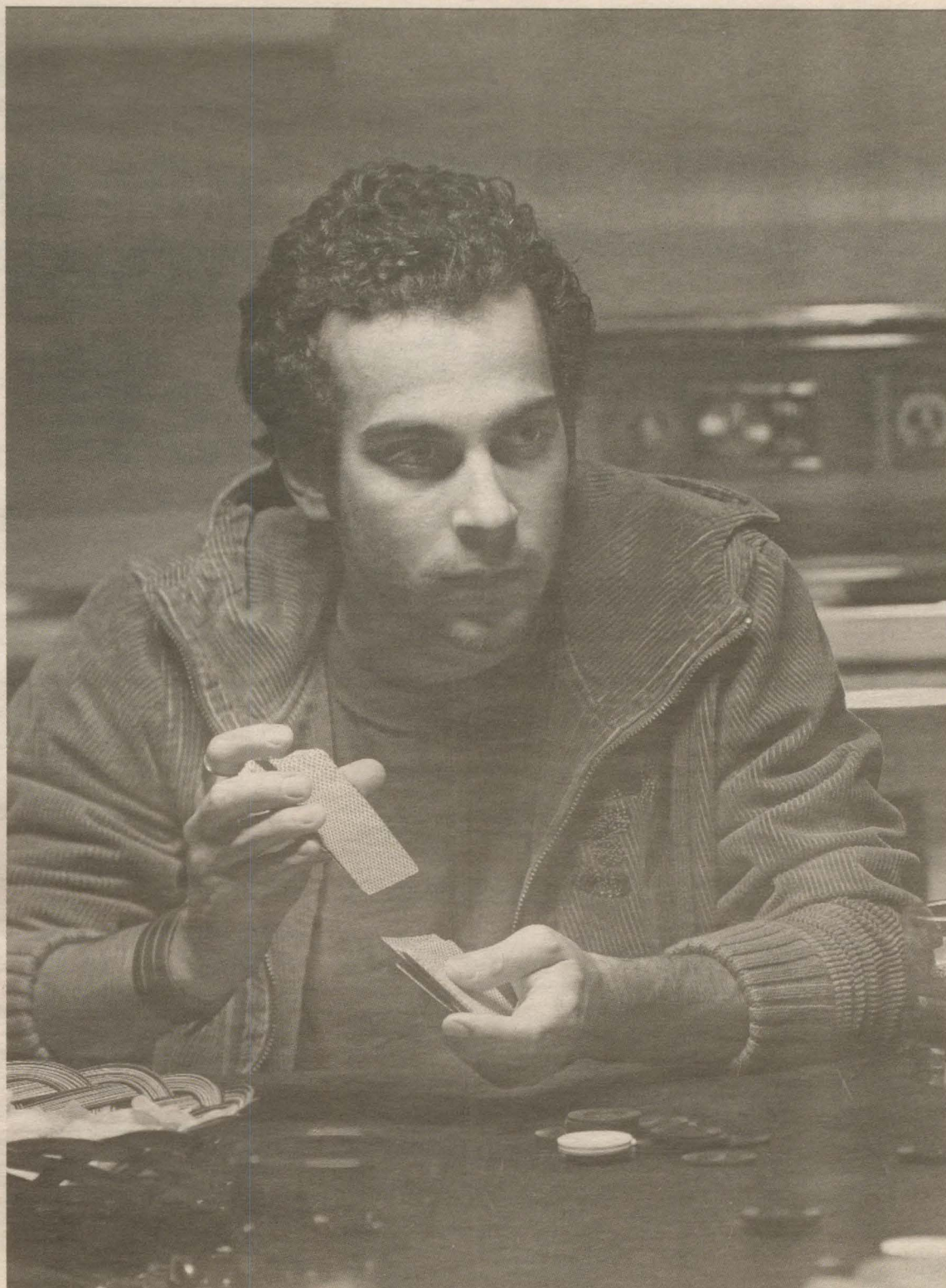
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SIDE A: Kate Robertson / Staff Contributor

Kanye West's recent outburst at the MTV Europe Music Awards (google "Kanye West sore loser") made me reconsider how much credit this guy gets for being a good role model for hip hop fans and how much flak "gangsta" rap still gets for its reputation as transparently bad-ass and awesome.

For this week's BBB, I've chosen the punk-rock of rap. These guys (and girls) may not guide you down the path of righteousness, but they're believers, in their own way.

(Plus, these beats could kill.)

- Ghostface Killah - "The Champ"
- Young Jeezy - "Thug Motivation 101"
- Three 6 Mafia - "Let's Plan a Robbery"
- N.W.A. - "Fuck tha Police"
- Lil' Kim - "No Matter What They Say"
- Onyx - "Bacdafucup"
- Clipse - "Grindin'"
- The Diplomats - "Purple Haze"
- Chamillionaire featuring Lil' Flip - "Turn it Up"
- 50 Cent - "P.I.M.P."

SIDE B: Kate McKenna / Arts Contributor

This isn't about good guys and bad guys. It's about hip hop being diverse and dynamic.

"I ain't mad at Snoop. I'm not mad at Master P. I ain't mad at the Hot Boyz. I'm mad when that's all I see," says Mos Def. "I would be mad if I looked up and all I saw on TV was me or Common or the Roots, because I know that ain't the whole deal. The real joy is when you can kick it with everyone. That's what hip hop is all about."

Chuck D from Public Enemy once said that "Rap is like CNN for black people." Hip hop is the news, bitches — tune in and turn it up.

- The Roots - "WAOK (Ay) Roll Call"
- Black Star - "Definition"
- Gil Scott Heron - "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised"
- A Tribe Called Quest - "Show Business"
- Common - "The Corner"
- Queen Latifah - "The Evil That Men Do"
- Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five - "The Message"
- Nas - "One Love"
- Public Enemy - "Don't Believe the Hype"
- Kanye West - "Spaceship"

For the Epicurious Student...

10 Great Wines for \$20 or Less

ANDREW BERNARDO
Culinary Connoisseur

A frequent inquiry I get from friends and family members can be summed up in one simple question — "what's a good wine that won't cost me an arm and a leg?"

After years of empirical research, a tough job as you can imagine, I have prepared a list of the top 10 red wines that are available at the NSLC for under \$20. This is conditional on the vintages available at the time of purchase, as years of production can vary greatly in quality (most of these wines should be fairly consistent from year to year, however).

Since all of these wines fall in the "\$20 and under" category, they're all of good value. But I also judge each wine on overall quality, value (per dollar spent) and the famous wine geek "X-Factor" — excitement generated from drinking the wine.

These wines are in no specific order of preference. Without further ado, here they are!

Hogue Columbia Valley Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot 2002 — WA, USA. (\$13.82)

This fruit-forward wine features lush berry flavours, anise and some smoky, tobacco notes. Food pairing: great on its own, or with medium bodied cheeses, seasoned meat dishes and tomato-based pastas.

Hawthorne Mountain Vineyards Pinot Noir 2003 — BC, Canada. (\$17.14)

Lush red and dark berry notes, with a lasting note of anise on the finish. Food pairing: great with a roast of beef or cedar planked salmon.

Ironstone "Old Vines" Zinfandel 2003 — CA, USA. (\$18.49)

Classic California Zin. Lush berries, pepper, full of oak notes and a touch of vanilla. Food pairing: The ultimate steak wine.

Parés Baltà Mas Elena 2003 — Spain. (\$15.10)

Spanish impression of a traditional Bordeaux blend featuring strong, dry tannins and concentrated fruit. Organic. Food pairing: great with pastas, full-bodied cheeses or light beef dishes.



Wincing and wine-drinking no longer have to go hand in hand on a university student's budget.

McGuigan Black Label Shiraz — Australia. (\$13.47)

Easy drinking, fruit forward, playful Shiraz, well balanced, not too jammy. A fine example of an Aussie Shiraz done right! Food pairing: grilled meats, strong cheeses, wild game.

St. Clair Vineyards "Vicar's Choice" Pinot Noir 2005 — New Zealand. (\$19.99)

Medium bodied Pinot featuring an earthy nose and floods the palate with ripe red and dark berry fruit with a sophisticated oaky finish. Food pairing: better on its own, but do not hesitate to pair it with a roasted leg of New Zealand lamb.

Rosemount Grenache-Shiraz — Australia. (\$15.99)

Fruit forward, featuring lush red fruit, with the traditional peppery, spiciness of a Shiraz.

Anakena Single Vineyard Carmenère — Rapel Valley, Chile. (\$17.62)

Loaded with blackberry, plum, and spice on the palate, with distinctly soft, silky tannins. Food pairing: red meat, especially lamb and

various game.

R.H. Phillips "Toasted Head" Cabernet Sauvignon 2003 — CA, USA. (\$18.99)

A rich, smoky wine on the nose leading to flavours of coffee and concentrated berry fruit with a touch of vanilla on the finish. Food pairing: grilled striploin or beef tenderloin.

Graham Beck "Pinno" Pinotage — South Africa. (\$16.47)

Soft earthy aromas with juicy dark berry fruit and tobacco flavours. Food pairing: on its own, or with well-spiced meats and full-bodied cheeses.

Honourable Mentions

Masi Campofiorin — Verona, Italy. (\$19.99)

Michel Torino Don David Reserve Malbec — Mendoza, Argentina. (\$15.99)

KWV Roodeberg Red (Shiraz blend) — South Africa. (\$15.99)

Masi Tupungato Passo Roble — Argentina. (\$18.99)

Heritage du Caves des Papes 2004 — Côtes-du-Rhône, France. (\$18.20)

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Wanderlust

Night (Bus) Rider

JOHN HILLMAN
Staff Contributor

I missed the last direct bus home tonight, which means that I have a lot of free time on my hands. Rather than spend it devising new and diabolical curses to cast on the transit system, I've decided to take the higher road and devote my time to the enlightenment of my fellow students by delving into the shadowy world of the standard bus line — after regular service hours.

Presently, I am on the second of three buses on the evening schedule, the notorious No. 1. There's a man back here with a tall bottle of Smirnoff Ice — it's taking up the whole seat next to him.

Classy.

Another two gentlemen are holding a conversation from opposite ends of the bus, a treat most common to nocturnal bus trips. Whether these two are either drunk or simply assholes, one thing is certain: both are far too important to take five seconds out of their busy shouting schedules to move closer to each other.

Much as those two seem to think they are the only people on the bus, there are other interesting characters here as well. Take, for example, the



Wondering where your remains will end up tomorrow is only half the fun of the night bus. / Photo: John Packman

fellow across from me. Apparently, he works at a nightclub. I gather this by the fact that he's mentioned it 83 times to the guy next to him. Look, he has business cards. Sure, why wouldn't the guy next to him want five? I'm jealous — I wish I had cards to pass out to my friends so I could prove that I'd spoken with the promotions guy at a bar I've never heard of!

I'm at my stop, so I'll only be able to imagine what intriguing new directions the bus drama will take ("HEY BILL, THIS GUY OVER HERE WORKS AT A NIGHT CLUB!"). My loss, I'm sure.

Ah, and now, the 50 minute wait for a connecting bus, another classic feature of the late night journey. All the excitement of standing around

for an hour with the added twist of wondering which dumpster the authorities will find your remains in the next morning. What fun!

This part of the trip is unavoidable since Metro Transit spends millions of dollars a year maintaining vast supercomputers that ensure that none of the routes in service after 10 p.m. ever, under any circumstances, connect with one another (I'm pretty sure these are the same computers that make sure at least one of your finals is on the last day of exam period).

Excuse me, I must stop writing for the moment, as I suddenly consider how tempting a target I must look, typing away on my great big "mug me" sign.

-brief reprieve-

OK, it seems I've survived and have made it to the next and final stage of the journey. The new bus, if this is possible, smells even more like beer and piss than the last. You really can't appreciate the general bus smell until you're front and centre when it's freshly applied. The guy ahead of me is fishing for something in his ear. How delightful.

(It's kind of disturbing actually, he's really going after it, like he's trying to screw in a bolt or something.)

OK, the finger is out now, and... my god, look at it! He has the claw of a Velociraptor! How did he not puncture his brain? Perhaps he did; the nail looks quite off colour.

Oh no, for the love of all that is holy, he is letting his hand flop about

right in front of me! Why won't these seats recline?!

Ah, he's wiped it off on his jacket. I must focus on something besides that orange stain though — perhaps the conversation going between the two hooded men across the aisle.

I just distinctly heard the word "grams," and one of them keeps looking back at me as I type, so I think I'm going to pretend to go to sleep for awhile.

-longer reprieve-

The better part of an hour has elapsed since my last entry, and my bus stop is but a mere five minutes ahead.

I realize that I've dedicated this article to the atmosphere and cast, neglecting the flow of the ride. In brief, it was actually a smooth, uninterrupted trip once I boarded the final bus home — infinitely better than taking the same route home during rush hour.

My late-night bus trip taught me one thing: the so-called "lucky" commuters who have a car miss out on an experience that's unique, to say the least.

To all those stuck on the other side of town without cab fare, or even to those who haven't found the right dealer, give the late-night Metro Transit a shot.

Unless you live in Sackville, that is, in which case you need to drop me a line. We need to work something out, I don't know how much more of this "chariot of the people" shit I can take. Seriously.

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Review

House of Sugar Graphic Novel



JACK CARR
Arts Contributor

You may know Rebecca Kraatz's comics from their recent feature in the back of *The Coast* — regardless, these same comics were released on Nov. 16 as the brilliantly printed collection *House of Sugar*, the first offering from Tulip Tree Press, local artist Hope Larson's independent publishing company.

Format-wise, the stories within *House of Sugar* are divided into short, four-panel comics that describe Kraatz's upbringing in Saskatchewan. Often dealing with odd and sentimental stories from her childhood, each comic is presented with a quaint hand-drawn feeling. What really stands out is

Kraatz's writing and use of the comic medium itself. Each comic stands on its own, but with a few continuing stories throughout, she also gives insight into the general feeling of growing up.

In some ways I feel Kraatz stresses the alienation she felt as an eccentric young girl. She also shows, however, how loner teens are encouraged by atypical non-conformists who can help shape and guide someone into a creative adult, and how each person can be an oddball creature with extreme tastes.

Although *House of Sugar* can be read on the internet at www.tuliptreepress.net, it's worth the \$12 — owning the actual artwork really contributes to the experience.

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Report Card

FINAL FANTASY / St. Matthew's United Church / Saturday, Nov. 18 / Reporter: Laura Trethewey



Stage Presence: A
Audience Reaction: A
Sound: A
Visual Aids: A
Self-Deprecating Banter: A

Final Fantasy's mesmeric show at St. Matthew's Church was the best Halifax will see all year.

This chaste, all-ages show offered the perfect opportunity for the uninterrupted appreciation of Owen Pallett's music — sans the stumbling teenagers who usually scream for their favourite songs between loud slurps of beer. The hallowed venue was instead filled with ardent admirers who sat in silent beatitude throughout each of the musician's songs, erupting with unmitigated applause each time he finished. Even Pale was taken aback with the applause; after one song, he reminded himself, aloud, to stay professional under the gaze of such unconditional love.

Rarely have I seen a performer charm an audience so completely, and with such dryly-delivered banter. Pallett, for better or worse, is genuinely the sardonic, critical, blasé, terrifying and talented man he presents himself as.

Each of Pallett's songs were formed in a similar manner: the artist would first set up a sonic foundation, record it with his looping pedal, and then continue to build layers on top of it. Delay processing of this kind is not a commonplace musical feat; even the most musically inept of onlookers could understand the tremendous effort it took to perfectly time and then relay recorded pieces overtop live performance.

Before going to the show, I already knew that Pallett's performance would consist of a lone violin and a looping pedal. I was a little apprehensive, but by the end, the only song I was disappointed with was "This is the Dream of Win and Regine." Without the horn backing at the song's climax, as appears on Pallett's CD, the live version lacked its uproarious finish.

Even without the four-piece string quartet from his album, however, Final Fantasy still managed to transcend limitations and most songs sounded better than their recorded counterparts.

With the help of a projectionist, who performed short sequences in synch with the music, Final Fantasy earned my vote for best Halifax show this year.

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Peer Employment Coach Information Session

Tuesday Nov 28, 12:30 pm at SEC

For complete details visit the SEC website www.dal.ca/sec and go to the Volunteer Postings.

4th Floor • Student Union Building • 446-6136 University Avenue • Tel: (902) 494-3537
www.dal.ca/sec

Information Sessions

StatCan

Nov 23
4:00 - 5:00 pm
SUB, Room 224

Butterfield Bank Evening Reception

Nov 28
6:00 - 8:30 pm
SUB, Room 307

Martin Marietta

Nov 29
5:00 - 6:30 pm
Sexton Campus, Common Room



Gazette

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Every Monday at 5:30, Room 312, Dal SUB

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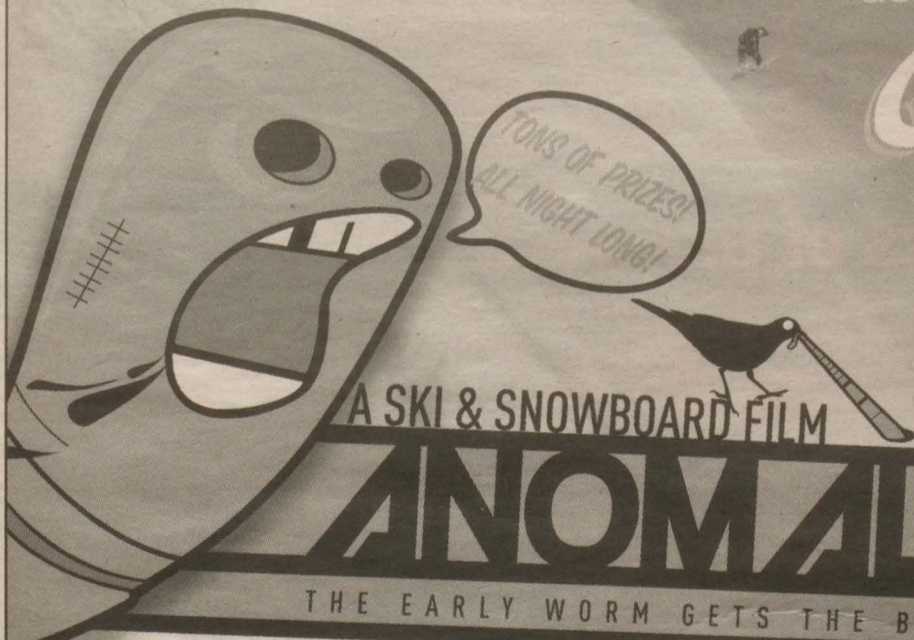
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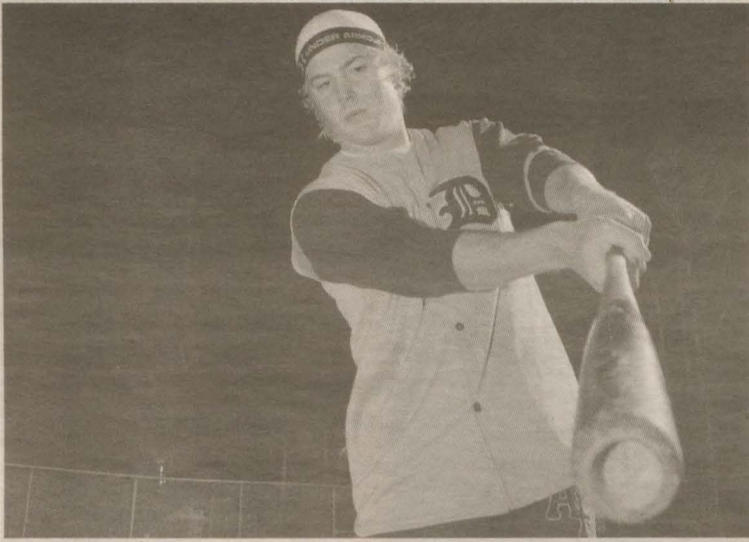
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Ryan Jacks says he would trade in his batting title for a championship ring in a "heartbeat". / Photo: Rafal Andronowski

Dal slugger leads Canada in batting

SARAH BRIDGE
Staff Contributor

Dal computer science student Ryan Jacks is the best swinger in the country — on the diamond, that is.

On Oct. 24 the Canadian Intercollegiate Baseball Association awarded Jacks the 2006 Canadian Batting Title. This top hitter award is the first to be won by a Dal student since the formation of the association in 1996.

Dal baseball coach Ian Bower isn't surprised by Jacks' win.

"His numbers speak for themselves," says Bower.

Jacks' impressive stats consist of a slugging percentage of .591, and a .432 batting average.

That translates into 26 total bases and 16 runs scored.

Jacks also managed to end the season having struck out only four times.

"He had one of the most critical batting spots [in the line-up] and he did the job all year... I'm very happy for him," says Bower.

The award is just one more notch on the team's belt of success this season.

In October, Dal made it all the way to nationals in Ottawa, where the Tigers eliminated the home

team in the semis and were defeated in the last round by McGill.

It was there, in his hometown, that Jacks was awarded with the batting title.

"It was really nice for him to have [the award] presented it to him in the park where he plays every summer," says Bower.

While Jacks is pleased with his award, the fourth-year computer science student says he would trade in his batting title for a national championship ring "in a heartbeat."

It's this passion for winning that has encouraged him to stick with the sport for the past 15 years.

Inspired by the former U.S. Olympic track star Steve Prefontaine, Jacks says that "guts" and the desire to succeed are more important to a player than talent. He also deeply admires the winning attitudes of baseball players Pete Rose and George Brett.

"Essentially, I'm a sore loser, which I think is a good thing," says Jacks.

Luckily, this season has given him little to be sore about.

"There is a great bunch of guys on that team," says Bower, who is sad to see the older players go. "This team will be hard to replicate and [Jacks] was a big part of that."

Tiger moves from limited role to assistant captain

JOEY RYBA
Sports Editor

Dalhousie Tigers men's hockey team forward Rob Dunphy has taken on a new leadership role for the 2006/2007 season.

The four-year winger was voted assistant captain and now plays in all situations.

Prior to joining the Tigers in 2003/2004, the Halifax native played three seasons for the Halifax Jr. A Oland Exports. While there, Dunphy, a psychology student, initially took classes at St. Mary's University, but says he transferred to Dal after one year because Dal offered more of a challenge.

"I was getting all A's [at St. Mary's] and it was too easy," says Dunphy. "I'm not getting all A's at Dal, but it's going great."

At the end of his junior hockey career, Dunphy knew he wanted to play Atlantic University hockey, he says.

"I knew Dal had a really good program... I watched Dal [during my final year of junior] and knew a lot of the guys on the team. I met with Fabian Joseph and [Dal] seemed like a good fit."

In 2003/2004 Dunphy joined the Tigers and saw limited ice time — but after he paid his dues, he earned a regular spot on the roster.

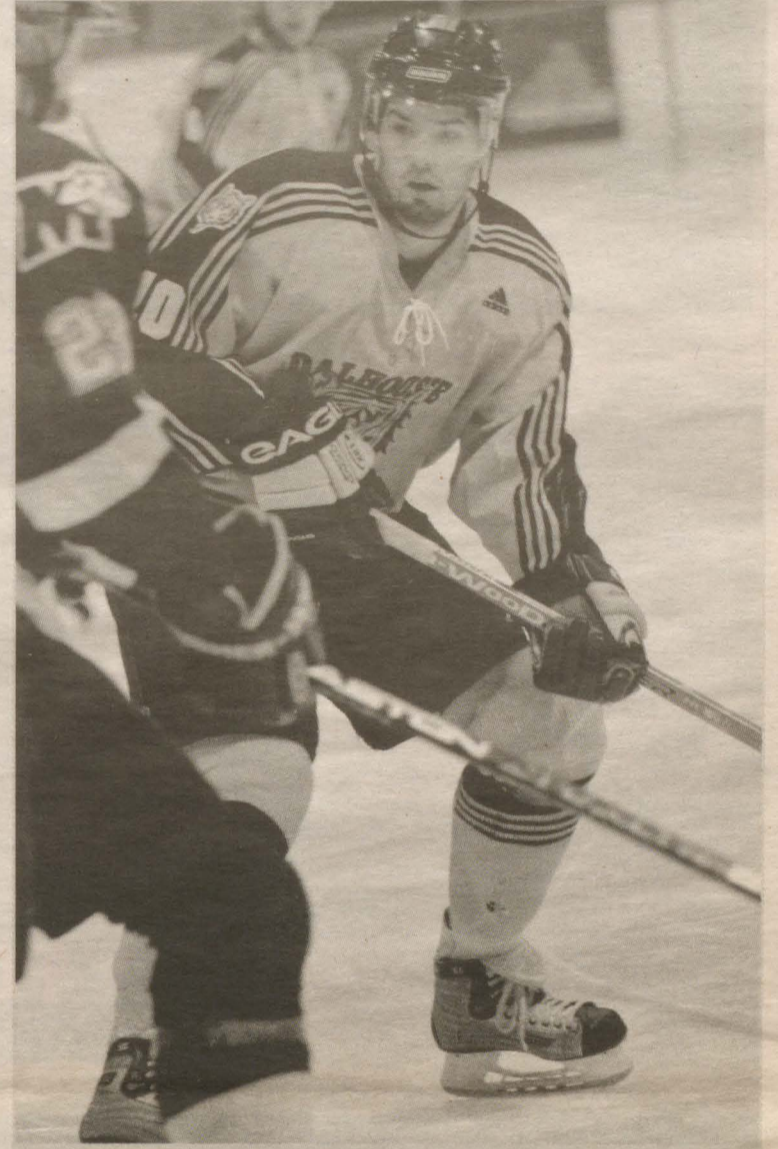
"It was a battle every week in practice to get in the line-up," he says. "I just took it in stride. It's a process and you have to work hard from day one to earn your spot, that's what I kept telling myself."

Dunphy had some great teammates over the years who helped him on and off the ice — including Tigers Chris Stanley and Patty Berrigan.

Stanley influenced Dunphy because of the way he carried himself on the ice and around campus, says Dunphy; Berrigan was an influence because of his pseudo celebrity status at the bars.

"[Berrigan] is somebody I really look up to when it comes to the downtown scene," says Dunphy. "He's pretty well known and he'll get you through the lines there. He's known as a rock star around town."

Dunphy says he was also influenced by Brad Pierce. He says Pierce is a "very physical" and "consistent"



Rob Dunphy has a passion for Dal and hockey and it shows on and off the ice," says teammate Noel Coultice. / Photo: Nick Pearce

player.

"[Pierce] is usually at the back of the lines at the bars," says Dunphy. "He's usually not allowed into the VIP sections when he tries to get in there. We still respect him because he can do things others can't do like eat nine and half Big Macs in 40 minutes."

This season, Dunphy is inspiring and influencing his teammates. Teammate Noel Coultice says Dunphy is a good captain because he communicates well with the team.

"[Dunphy] has a passion for Dal and hockey and it shows on and off the ice," says Coultice. "He chips in whenever he's needed and is there

for the guys. Whether it's standing in front of the net and taking a beating... he's a big player with a big heart and a good set of hands."

And, like Berrigan, Coultice says Dunphy is a VIP at the bars and gets through the lines quickly.

Partying aside, the Tigers have been struggling to win games over the past few years. Dunphy says it's important, although difficult, to stay positive for the younger players.

"I know that there's a lot of skill with the younger guys," says Dunphy. "In a few years they'll have a really strong team and when I watch them winning games, I'd like to know I was a part of it."

TIGERS

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NOVEMBER 25, WOMEN'S HOCKEY vs. StFX, 7PM



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Athletes of the week

FEMALE ATHLETE

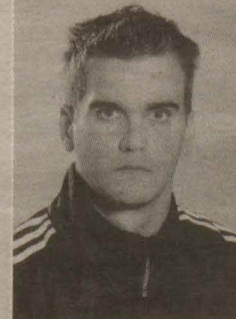


MAGGIE JONES
SWIMMING

Maggie Jones contributed four podium finishes and helped lead the Tigers to an overwhelming win by 224 points during the AUS Invitational held at Dalplex on Nov. 18 and Nov. 19. The veteran claimed a third-place finish in the women's 50-m breaststroke and swept the backstroke events claiming first place in the 50, 100 and 200-m distances. Besides her contribution in the individual events, Jones earned her first CIS qualification in the 100-m backstroke and will be joining her teammates at the CIS championship held at Dalplex in February. Jones is a second-year science student from Corner Brook, Nfld.



MALE ATHLETE



DOUG YOUNG
SWIMMING

Doug Young made his presence known both on deck and in the water, posting a max of four first-place individual event finishes during the AUS Invitational held at Dalplex. The veteran posted top times in both the 100 and 200-m breaststroke along with the 50 and 100-m freestyle events, leading his team to a dominating 238-point victory over the competition. His contributions in the water paid off, earning a spot on the CIS championship team for his time in the 200-m breaststroke. Young is a fourth-year sociology student from Grand Lake, N.S.



Gazette

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The SEXTANT

DALHOUSIE'S OFFICIAL ENGINEERING NEWSPAPER

Five things I hate

SLEY

There are many things in this world that really annoy me. To vent some of this built-up rage, I have decided to put it to productive use, instead of breaking something like I usually do. This is an article that outlines some of the things in this broad world I believe we can either do without or with a lot less of. I hope these sentiments are shared by many.

1. OEON

You have all seen this mysterious person's writings downtown, scrawling messages made out to be deep and thought-provoking. Often there's a tinge of social justice or a tiny picture associated with it. The truth is that no one cares and this person is just making another ugly thing in the world for me to look at.

2. People who think they know about science but really don't

I'm not an expert in any scientific field or area and I don't claim to be. I have, however, had many scientifically based classes and believe I have a firm base on which to stand when it comes to discussing them. When someone starts preaching to me about things they know nothing about — such as humans being the be all and end all cause of global warming — with no proof to back it up, I want to give them a shot right in the baby maker.

3. Poodle hair cuts

This one has aggravated me for

a long time. Who the hell was the genius that came up with the idea to shave a dog with random patches strewn about the body and then say it was fashionable?

The only good way I can see of how this got started is that a six-year-old child got hold of a dog and a razor and went to town. The parents were so embarrassed by it, they told all their friends that it was the new style from Europe.

4. People who have way too many garden gnomes

I know that having two of them can be sort of fun because you can put them in provocative positions and watch people walk by and stare, but why does someone feel the need to arrange 50 on their front lawn? These overly exuberant figurines are undoubtedly positioned around an algae-encrusted pond, and one of them is peeing in it. Some day I'm going to throw road salt all over that yard so the gnomes have nothing to be smiling about and look like idiots.

5. Spirit squads (not to be confused with cheerleaders)

Peppy people in general are annoying to deal with, but why has society given them an outlet to express it? By someone saying it's acceptable, spirit squad members will never learn to stop approaching me to say, "Cheer up scowly pants, there is nothing that a little smile can't fix." I like to tell them there's nothing that my friend Jack and Captain M. can't fix.

Banking on technology

A report from the Global Microcredit Summit

DALLAS CARD

If there's one thing that brings the international development community together, it's dancing.

The second day of the Global Microcredit Summit in Halifax ended with an open source software launch party, with entertainment provided by an African drum and dance collective. Conference attendees were witness to a true cross-cultural exchange as two very brave — if slightly overweight — middle-aged business men from different parts of the world were drawn onto the dance floor. Together with the performers, they shifted seamlessly between African dance, swing and salsa with a bit of Russian Barynya thrown in for good measure.

The Global Microcredit Summit, which took place last week from Nov. 12 to 15, was a sprawling, truly international event. The conference brought together approximately 2,000 delegates from 107 countries around the world to discuss the progress of microcredit in helping to alleviate poverty in some of the world's poorest countries.

Over the four days, more than 100 workshops, panels and courses were held, covering virtually every related topic imaginable from "Innovations in Information Technology for Microfinance" to "How Microcredit Contributes to Gender Equality."

According to the conference organizers, microcredit institutions are reaching 100 million of the world's poor. Organizers hope to expand that number to 175 million by 2016. Despite, or perhaps because of, the simplicity of the idea, microcredit has become a key weapon in the fight against poverty. The purpose of this conference was to expand on and refine the tools that are used, the services that are offered, and to bring people together in sharing best practices.

As Vanessa Norris described in last week's column, microfinance is more than just small loans to the poor.

It's a new way of doing banking that helps overcome structural barriers of economic inequality. It's also an investment in social capital that can help marginalized citizens take greater control over their lives. As the diversity of panels at the conference illustrated, there is no single model of microcredit that works everywhere, but rather a growing global movement of people united around the idea that everyone deserves access to financial services.

Ironically, the one voice that seemed most conspicuously absent from the conference was that of the poor themselves.

Although most of the delegates came from significantly impoverished countries, the fact is that virtually every speaker was a president, director, chairperson or consultant to some sort of microfinance business or organization.

Perhaps reflecting that, much of the discussion at the conference centred around technology. A recurring question was how microcredit can be expanded to reach the poorest of the poor, especially those living in remote rural areas. Mobile phones in particular were a hot topic as microfinance institutions venture into the telecom business and mobile phone companies slowly become banks.

Consider this: around the world there are approximately 500,000 physical banks, one million ATMs and an astronomical 2.3 billion mobile phones! Clearly there's been incredible proliferation of what we might consider high technology to over a third of the world's population.

In addition to connecting people in rural areas and providing them with up-to-date market information, mobile phones are increasingly used as both an interface to do one's personal banking and a device to conduct business transactions. Just as wireless devices are allowing developing countries to bypass a lot of our expensive telecommunications infrastructure, they may eventually lead to a revolution in banking, possibly

precipitating a movement toward a cashless society.

While no one is suggesting that microcredit is a silver bullet, it does seem to be an effective tool in trying to overcome the complexities of poverty and inequality.

By providing the poorest of the poor access to credit — something that many of us take for granted — microcredit institutions are enabling millions of people to take advantage of economic opportunities and make enough money to improve their standard of living. The achievement feeds positively back into the system, further increasing the supply of money available for loans to others.

The one objection that's inevitably raised is the undeniable position of microcredit institutions within the capitalist system.

While some people may object to this on ideological ground, research shows that as long as capitalism continues to expand globally, those outside of the system inevitably pay severe "poverty penalties" for not being connected.

Microcredit is a tool for those with an entrepreneurial spirit, but entrepreneurialism often brings with it increased self-respect, dignity and empowerment. While there are undoubtedly major problems with the excesses of today's global capitalism, it would be truly unjust to deny the tool of microcredit to those who can benefit from it.

Looking to 2016, the global microcredit community has set realistic, perhaps even modest, goals of expanding access to credit. Its potential to improve people's lives depends on many factors, both technological and social, but as long as people can dance together, then there's the possibility of communication. Sounds like progress to me.

Dallas Card is a graduate student in International Development Studies at Dalhousie University, and served as a volunteer at the Global Microcredit Summit.

DAL ENG Dalhousie University Engineering Student Societies

Motorcycle Auction

Nov. 24, T-Room Sexton Campus 10:30 PM
Bidding starts at \$.50, all proceeds to benefit Pulling for the Kids

T-Room this Friday

Just a little reminder that EVERYONE should be at the T-Room this Friday for the first-ever motorcycle auction to raise money for Pulling for the Kids!

And don't you worry, there will still be trivia hosted by Brennan as usual. The auction will take place between the first and second rounds.

Hope to see you all there.

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Dalendar

Send your Dalhousie related events to:
dalendar@dalgazette.ca (FREE)

Thursday, Nov. 23

Quenching the Fire OR Fanning the Flames Panel Discussion

7 p.m. @ Spring Garden Rd. Library
Panel discussion on the Canadian media's response to the Israeli mission in Lebanon and Gaza. Featuring Stefan Christoff.
Free

DalOUT: Coffee and a Board Game

7 p.m. @ Dal SUB Rm 302
Take a break from studying and writing papers this Thursday and join us for some free coffee and snacks, and engage in some fun competition. We will be bringing some board games and cards.
Free

Friday, Nov. 24

Recent Advances in the Chemistry of Catenated Nitrogen and Phosphorus

12:15 p.m. @ Chemistry Room 226
The seminar will be presented by Dr. Jan Weigang, Department of Chemistry Dalhousie University
Free

Saturday, Nov. 25

Dalhousie Green Party AGM

6:30 p.m. @ TBA
This is your opportunity learn more about the Dalhousie Green Party Student Society. Food and refreshments will be served.
Info: <http://dal.greenparty.ns.ca/>
Free

Monday, Nov. 27

World AIDS Week Event: Guest speakers

6 p.m. @ Henry Hicks Room 201
A sexual health nurse and a CANFAR representative will speak about youth awareness.
Free

Tuesday, Nov. 28

World AIDS Day "3 Needles" Film Screening

7 p.m. @ Empire Theatres, Park Lane
Three continents, three stories, one unforgettable experience. Come check out the very special screening presentation of 3 Needles the International/Directors Cut and support HIV/AIDS Awareness.
\$8

Wednesday, Nov. 29

World AIDS Week Event: A Closer Walk

7 p.m. @ Potter Family Auditorium, Rowe Building
A documentary narrated by Will Smith about HIV/AIDS across three continents.
\$5 suggested donation

Thursday, Nov. 30

Playing it Safe: Children's Health and the Environment Public Forum

7 p.m. @ Dal Law School, RM 104
A free public forum on the environmental links to children's health. Speaker Myriam Beaulne, Health Promotion Coordinator for the Canadian Partnership for Children's Health and Environment.
Free

Autumn Survey Results Night

4 p.m. @ Dal SUB, McInnes Room
Join Dr. Bonnie Neuman, Dalhousie University Vice President, Student Services, for a presentation of the results of the Dalhousie Athletics, Recreation and Wellness Services Survey. Be on hand for the participant prize draws, where we will be giving away one Macbook Pro Notebook, ten iPod Nanos and thirty \$30 gift certificates to the Adidas Shop at Dalplex.
Free

Friday, Dec. 1

The Complete Works of Gilbert & Sullivan - Abridged

8 p.m. @ St. George's Round Church (2222 Brunswick St)
We've woven many of your favorite tunes into The Complete Works of Gilbert & Sullivan - Abridged! And we've assembled an all-star cast to sing them. We've got comic characters, silly situations and improbably plot twists.
\$15 (adult) / \$10 (student/senior) / \$5 children

World AIDS Day

All day event
There will be an awareness table and bake sale set up in the Dal SUB from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. That evening there will be a fundraiser at Bubble's Mansion with Party for the Cause.
Fundraiser cost n/a

Playing it Safe: Service Provider Strategies to Reduce Environmental Risks to Child Health Workshop

8:30 a.m. @ Canadian Centre for Ethics in Public Affairs, 630 Francklyn St.
A one-day, interactive workshop on children's health and environment - Strategies for Action Workshop facilitator Myriam Beaulne, Health

Promotion Coordinator for the Canadian Partnership for Children's Health and Environment.
\$60 registration fee

Classifieds

Send your classifieds to classifieds@dalgazette.ca

WANT TO BE A SINGING PIRATE?

The Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Nova Scotia is looking for performers for our spring production of The Pirates of Penzance. We are looking for a chorus of pirates, Keystone cops and flappers. We need principal roles in all vocal ranges.

Leave your name and number on the G&S message line - 429-1287 - and we'll get back to you about auditions on Dec 6th and 10th.

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