

Dalhousie's Student Newspaper since 1945

# GAZETTE

## Making the grades

Would Dal Students learn more if grades didn't exist? P 7



Collage: Laura Dawe





# WEEKLY DISPATCH

Hello, Dalhousie students!

## Health Plan Opt-In

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

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

## Speakers Series

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

**Sex Talk with Sue Johanson:** January 22nd - 7 PM at the Ondaatje Hall, Marion McCain Arts and Social Science Building. Tickets are available in advance for \$5 at the SUB Infodesk or \$7 at the door. Come hear late night talk show host Sue Johanson on her national tour as she gives frank and honest sexual education to Dalhousie Students and answers your questions about sex.

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

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

## Teaching Awards

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

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

## Winter Society Fair

On January 21 from 10:30am - 2:30 pm, the DSU will be hosting the Winter term Society Fair in the McInnes room of the SUB. This event will showcase about 70 of the DSU's societies, and is a great way to find out how to get involved with groups that share your interests.

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

Sincerely,  
Your DSU Executive



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## GAZETTE STAFF

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## CORRECTIONS POLICY

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

## THE FINE PRINT

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



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Collage created by Laura Dawe

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# Does my city have room for me?

KATIE MAY  
COPY EDITOR

One question still nags at me, years after I started pondering it myself. A question of love, of loyalty and, ultimately, of faith.

It's a question I repeatedly tried to answer recently, just to appease rarely seen relatives in Ontario who didn't know what else to discuss as we sat digesting our holiday turkey.

"Will you stay out East to work after graduation?"

My immediate reaction was to laugh cynically at the prospect of turning my impending King's journalism / Dalhousie Canadian studies degree into a decent career with a livable salary anywhere in the dark disappearing act that is the current North American job market, much less in the relatively

tiny Maritime market.

But as my thoughts turned to the life I've built here over the past four years – the personal and professional connections I've made, the geographical and political landscapes I've grown to love even when they don't love me back – my answer evolved into a sombre-sighed "I would if I could."

But I don't think I can. Like a sizeable portion of Dal students, I am a "come-from-away". The university's Ontario-focused recruitment drive convinced me to enroll and the content of my courses inspired me to stick it out, but the city itself compelled me to stay. How long will it let me?

Students are crucial imports to this province, as federal Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff acknowledged when he visited Halifax last week. We spend a lot of money to be here, to learn and

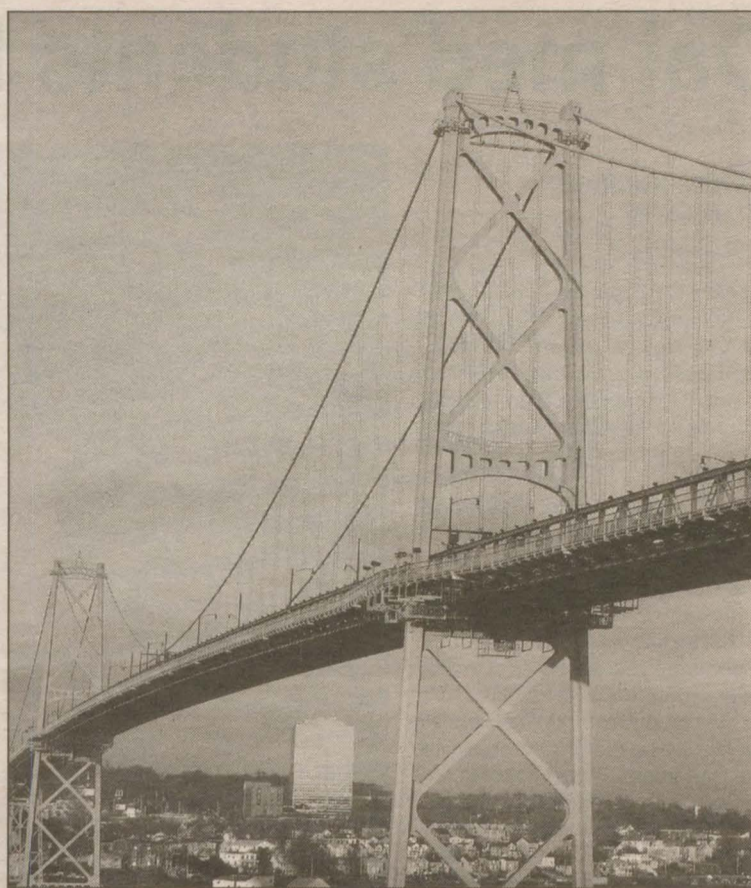
to live. But so many of us, it seems, simply learn and leave. Even those of us who grew up here often feel forced to fly away on the promise of a paycheque.

While our politicians talk about priorities, coalitions and crises, we become exports faster than they can say "affordable housing."

After all the education we've received, we should be able to create our own opportunities anywhere – especially in the city that taught us how. But we need a little wiggle room, a space between import and export, to find our own place.

In many ways, I can't afford to leave my second home. But in many more soul-crushingly practical ways, I can't afford to stay.

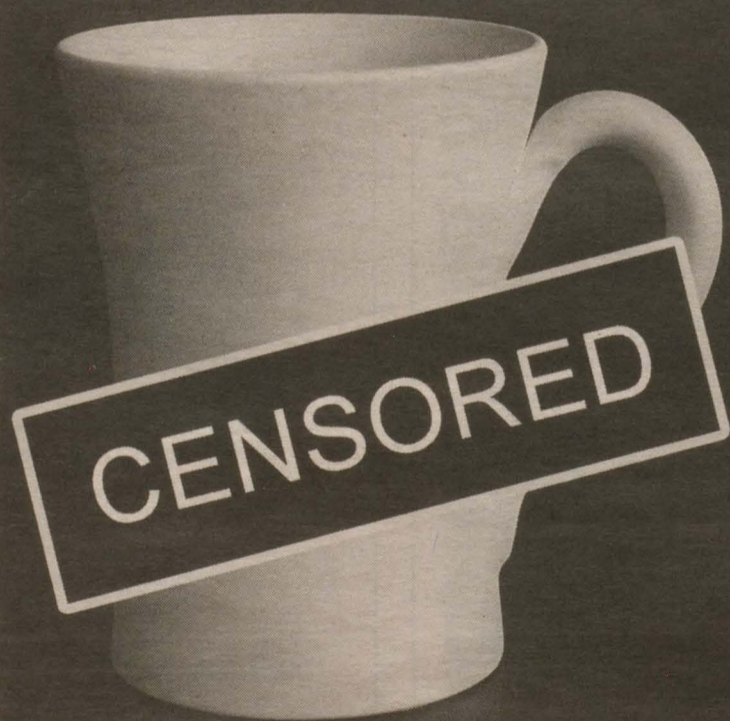
I don't have a solution. Maybe all it takes is a little faith.



JOHN PACKMAN/DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

Students may be crucial imports for Nova Scotia, but they shouldn't be forced exports.

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# Dal med students launch safe drinking group

ANDREW ROBINSON  
DSU REPORTER

A new student group promoting safe drinking practices is looking for the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) and other student government bodies in Halifax to get on board.

Tim Holland, a Dal medical school student, gave a presentation to council at its Jan. 7 meeting, outlining the intentions of the Committee for Safe Student Drinking (CSSD). Holland and other medical school students founded the committee because they were concerned about the lack of real solutions from the provincial government regarding the potential consequences of excessive consumption of alcohol.

"When (government) does things like blanket raise drinks prices to \$2.50 minimum, it isn't actually addressing the root problem," Holland says. "Saying they're going to throw 10 extra students in the drunk tank this weekend, it just isn't conducive to solving the root problem, and it's counterproductive to student life as well as student health."

Premier Rodney MacDonald and his Progressive Conservative government set a minimum price of \$2.50 last month for alcoholic drinks - 12 ounces of beer, five ounces of wine, or a single shot of liquor.

The move came after public concern for the issue of out-of-control drinking intensified following a large brawl outside the Dome in downtown Halifax in December 2007. Thirty-eight people were arrested in the incident, and the Alcohol and Gaming Authority suspended the Dome's liquor licence until it agreed to stop serving dollar drinks. But other bars around the city, such as the Palace, were still offering the same drink special.

In an April 2008 research report completed for the city titled *Violence and Public Safety in the Halifax Regional Municipality*, 50 per cent of students said they felt safe going downtown in the evening, while 33 per cent of students felt it was dan-



JOHN PACKMAN / DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

Dal med school student Tim Holland says raising the minimum drink price isn't addressing the problem of dangerous drinking.

gerous to go downtown in the evening. Slightly more than 50 per cent of female students said they had a negative attitude about downtown Halifax, compared to 37 per cent of males.

The report's author, Donald Clairmont, a Dal professor and director of the Atlantic Institute of Criminology, will also serve as an advisor for the student committee.

The CSSD has set three goals - to collect research, develop a list of solutions and to advocate for implementation of those solutions by community leaders - so students can play a role in an issue that directly affects them.

"A lot of these researchers can't advocate for their own research and

students are very good at getting their voices heard, both by media and government. A lot of us have inroads for lobbying with the government," Holland said in his presentation to council.

Holland says the committee will look to avoid having members with specific titles, opting instead for a collaborative approach. Subcommittees will tackle specific work relating to research and advocacy, while a higher committee with representation from all Halifax student councils will oversee the CSSD.

"What we want is a committee that has representation from all these student bodies such that when we create a document and put forth our solutions and research, we have

the members who are representing these different student unions to look it over and say 'Yeah, we accept this,'" says Holland. "Or if there's something that's questionable, they can bring it back for discussion."

One solution the group may promote is the concept of using restorative justice on campus. This would take matters often dealt with by the police into the hands the students themselves. The option is mentioned in Clairmont's report, and Holland says St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, N.S. is already doing it.

"That's good because a residence advisor can then watch over and see that (for example) this guy has four drunk and (disorderly charges) this semester; maybe we should

talk to his parents. Whereas, the police don't keep track of that and the student continues to have drinking problems," says Holland.

DSU chair Mat Brechtel expressed concerns at council about whether the group's efforts could lead to a ban of alcohol on campus under the auspices of safety. Holland was quick to appease the audience.

"The few people who know me here definitely know I like to drink," Holland said to the laughter of those in attendance. "That's a part of the reason why I think this has to be a student-led thing. What's going to end up happening if the public concern keeps rising like it is, there's just going to be an outright ban. So if it's a student concern that's why we want to have student representation on this matter."

First-year commerce student Jordan March thinks an approach like this is the right one.

"It's good that they're avoiding promoting not drinking, because it's unrealistic. It's more realistic to promote safe drinking instead of not drinking at all," he says.

First-semester Dal student Katie Radchuck said the group sounds like a worthwhile idea but she isn't concerned about her own safety when she goes out for drinks.

"I feel pretty safe. It's a pretty small town and people here are generally looking out for each other," she said. "I don't think it's that unsafe. But I think if they want to do something that will make it even safer, why not?"

A motion for council to express its support of the CSSD will be voted on at its Jan. 21 meeting. Speaking after the presentation, DSU president Courtney Larkin expressed her approval for the group's formation.

"We always want our students to be safe. So I'm very intrigued by what this group will do," said Larkin.

She added she liked how the group wasn't looking for a blanket solution to the issue, like setting a minimum drink price.

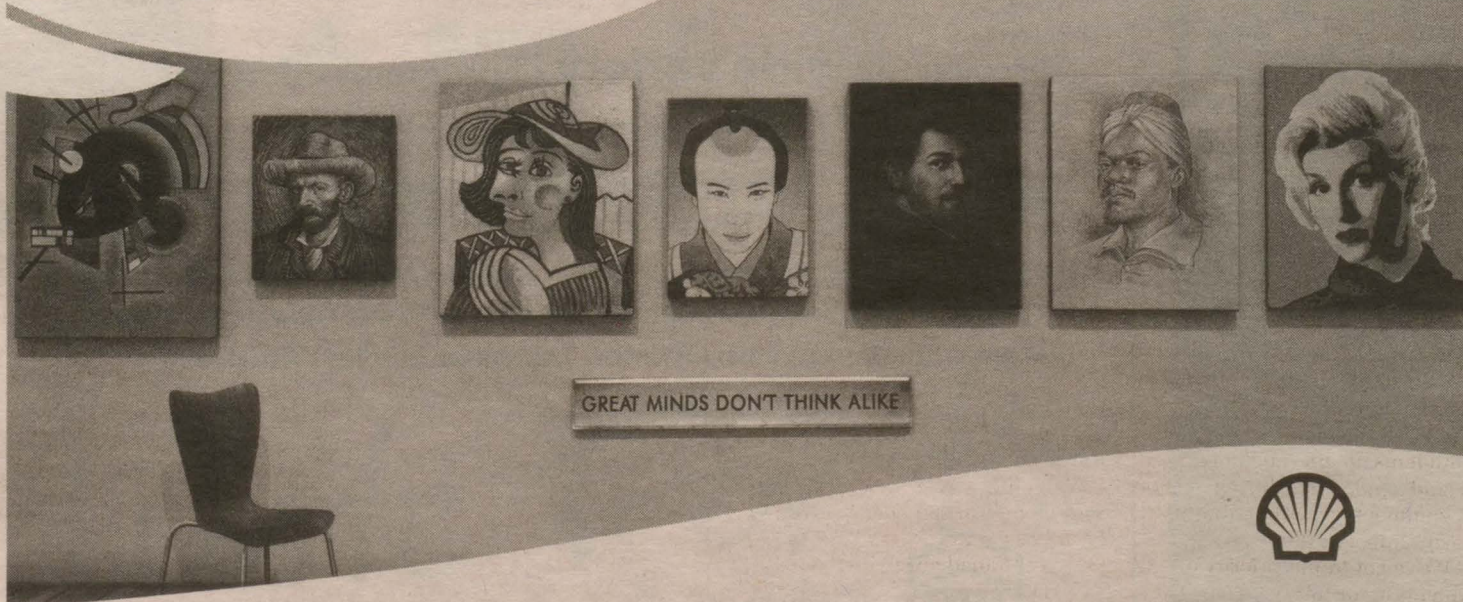
"Because we all know that won't do it," she said.

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JOSH BOYTER/DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

Liberal Party leader Michael Ignatieff stressed investment in infrastructure and the future of the Atlantic provinces at his Jan. 9 town hall meeting in Halifax.

## Ignatieff steps up as an 'inspirational leader' for Haligonians

### But town hall visit leaves some with more questions

LAURA PARLEE  
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

Michael Ignatieff's town hall meeting in Halifax on Jan. 9 left local Liberals buzzing about the new federal Liberal party leader. Anita Singh was one of them, and she's waiting to see what happens next.

"I'm interested in seeing how the Liberal party is planning on renewing itself, especially since we have a new leader," said Singh, a Dalhousie political science PhD candidate.

The Liberal party's national executive named Ignatieff its federal leader in early December. He begins his ascension to leadership with a tour around the country discussing with Canadians important issues that will affect the upcoming Jan. 27 federal budget in cities such as Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto and Montreal.

Ignatieff started his tour in Halifax at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, where he stressed investment in infrastructure and the future of the Atlantic provinces.

"My business is to inspire you, but you have to know how much your presence today inspires me," said Ignatieff to an audience of roughly 400 people.

Recent Dal graduate, Keith Torrie, was a mic runner for the event. Torrie has worked on both of Ignatieff's previous leadership bids.

"There was a great turn out," said Torrie. "There's a lot of curiosity about Michael, and a lot of excitement."

People of all ages were flowing in from Lower Water Street to squeeze between television cameras and stand in the balconies when provincial Liberal leader Stephen McNeil took the stage to introduce Ignatieff.

Robert Patzelt, a businessman and lawyer in Halifax, didn't know a lot about the new Liberal leader when he arrived.

"I wanted to hear him speak and provide support for fellow Liberals in the community," said Patzelt. "The town hall atmosphere is very informal... it's a good vibe."

Many local Liberal leaders and supporters attended the event, including Sen. Jim Cowan, MLA Diana Whalen (Halifax Clayton Park) and MP Scott Brison (Kings Hants).

Ignatieff shared the stage with

local MPs Mike Savage (Dartmouth) and Geoff Regan (Bedford). Regan, a supporter in both of Ignatieff's previous leadership bids, was moved to tears by comments from concerned citizens and Ignatieff's responses to issues of equality on several occasions during the event.

After short introductions, the audience was encouraged to ask questions and make suggestions about the upcoming federal budget.

Ignatieff addressed issues concerning the environment, childcare and the Gaza conflict.

He recognized former Liberal leader Stéphane Dion's contribution to the party's sustainability awareness campaign and discussed the possibility of utilizing opportunities for more renewable energy in Nova Scotia.

Ignatieff also stressed the importance of early childhood education and promised it was a key priority that differentiated the Liberal Party from the Conservatives.

Ignatieff's position on the Gaza crisis was met with mixed applause and frowns.

"A democratic society like Canada cannot stand aside and fail to support a country when it is subjected to continuous rocket attack. Nobody claims Israel is a perfect society, nobody claims Canada is a perfect society. But when a society is continuously under attack they have a right to take military action," said Ignatieff. "We have always been there when there was humanitarian needs needed to be met... the question the international community needs to think about is what happens when this is over.... How do we rebuild Gaza?"

Students in the audience nodded and applauded during Ignatieff's comments regarding university infrastructure and grants.

"We've got to put priority on investments in the future.... One of the things I keep being told every time I come to Atlantic Canada is that you import a lot of students, because you have great universities," said Ignatieff. "We've got to change the financing formula because you're not getting rewarded for being as good as you are."

Ignatieff said funding should follow the student rather than be determined per capita. This formula would make a difference for out-of-

province students and reward N.S. for its post-secondary institutions by bringing more students to the province.

The audience was receptive to Ignatieff's leadership, which was evident by the many standing ovations and booming applause Ignatieff received from his responses and comments.

An hour and a half went quickly and some wished they had more time to talk about issues with Ignatieff.

Jerome Downey, an account executive from HSBC Finance, said affordable housing should have been more prominent in the discussion.

"Affordable housing is not available," said Downey. "It's happening in this city and no one is talking about it."

Singh, from Calgary, wanted more attention paid to immigration issues and western alienation.

"The Liberal Party doesn't seem to want to recognize that a problem exists," she said after the event. "How is the Liberal party going to get involved in Albertan and British Columbian politics?"

Dion visited the same venue in September during the federal election. Torrie attended both events.

"(Dion's) was more of a rally than a town hall," he said. "More speeches, less of an exchange."

Dion resigned as leader of the federal Liberal Party in early December when Ignatieff was named leader of the party. The Liberals received its lowest percentage of votes, 26.24 per cent, in many years under Dion's leadership in the 2008 general election.

Louise Carbert, associate professor and graduate co-ordinator in Dal's political science department, says some of Ignatieff's writings have been standard readings in her first-year Canadian studies courses.

"His communication skills are so superb that he is an inspirational leader," Carbert said. "The essence of politics is rhetoric - that's the heart and core of leadership... This is what separates him from Dion."

Torrie agreed. "People want to hear leadership that is competent, confident and coherent... people heard that today," he said. "That's what makes a good leader - ideas. The town hall was a great start to his leadership in 2009."

## Profs and students wary of answer-sharing network

SAMANTHA DURNFORD  
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

University students in Eastern Canada have another online option available to them when looking for help with assignments.

The recently launched StudyPipe.com allows students to search for the university they attend, find their course and then post answers and discuss assignments anonymously.

Joel Wenzel, creator of StudyPipe, says his site is meant to help students with their schoolwork and change the way students complete assignments.

"The whole idea of the site is to change the concept of using assignments as a grading tool and to make it more of a teaching tool," says Wenzel.

The site currently involves universities in Eastern Canada. Wenzel plans to use input from Dalhousie and potentially the University of Toronto to improve the site before opening it up to other Canadian schools.

Wenzel says he wants to encourage the idea of discussion when it comes to assignments. He says students should use StudyPipe as a learning tool at their own risk because the answers and help posted are not monitored and may not be correct.

Wenzel also addresses the issue of plagiarism, saying it's present in any school course.

"My feeling towards the issue is that students who aren't in university to learn shouldn't be there in the first place," he says.

StudyPipe.com isn't the first website which allows students to discuss assignments online.

Last year, first-year Ryerson University student, Chris Avenir, was slammed with 147 charges of academic misconduct after creating a Facebook group for his classmates to discuss homework questions worth 10 per cent of their marks. According to the *Toronto Star*, nobody posted a final solution to any of the questions, but Avenir was still charged and threatened with expulsion.

Dal chemistry professor Alan Doucette says a "backdoor" discussion board is not how students should go about getting help. He has set up Blackboard Learning System (BLS) for his classes, and believes students benefit much more from using BLS because he can monitor posts and ensure students are discussing the question properly.

"With each and every posting, I monitor the questions and answers. I personally make very regular contributions to the postings," says Doucette. "I feel it is extremely important to encourage student participation in this format. My classes are difficult, and the students need such an opportunity to enhance their learning."

Doucette says he has taught his students how to post properly on BLS to help other classmates, rather than providing "recipes" for figuring out a solution. By being able to monitor his class discussions, he says he can ensure plagiarism and cheating won't occur.

"If (StudyPipe) becomes active, I will have to take action to clearly define what is considered an act of academic plagiarism," says Doucette.

Matthew Campbell, a third-year kinesiology student at Dal, says he would have no need for a site such as StudyPipe because he uses BLS and the Undergraduate Chemistry Resource Centre, staffed by chemistry graduate students and advanced undergraduate students to help first- and second-year students with questions.

"When I have a question, BLS is great," says Campbell. "You can get help with anything, it even draws stuff out for you and teachers can record lessons."

He says he has enough resources at Dal and doesn't need another site.

Dal physics professor Jordan Kyriakidis says a website like StudyPipe could be a useful tool for students, but says it shouldn't be used too often.

"Anything that helps students learn more is good," says Kyriakidis. "However, there are better ways and more efficient ways for students to receive help."

Kyriakidis echoes Campbell, saying Dal offers a wide range of resources to help students with assignments. Kyriakidis thinks the best way for students to discuss answers is in group discussions.

"I encourage students to get into group discussions," he says. "It's more efficient than online because you get the interaction and are able to draw things out and discuss face-to-face."

Kyriakidis says he would rather spend time teaching than preventing cheaters.

"In the end, there is an exam," says Kyriakidis. "If you want to cheat your way through school, what are you even doing here?"

# PRESS

UN-OFFICIAL GAZETTE PRESS PASS\*

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\*This won't get you into any concerts or events, and won't get you any special privileges. But come to a contributors meeting and maybe you can get a real one and write a show review.



## NEWS BITES

## CANADIAN CAMPUS SHORTS:

## York proposes new offer to end strike

York University administration has presented a new bargaining offer to help negotiate the end of the strike, which has been ongoing since Nov. 5, reported *Excalibur*.

The offer includes a 9.25 per cent wage increase over three years, as well as "significant benefits and other improvements."

University administration is encouraging CUPE 3903 to put it to

a vote.

CUPE 3903 spokesperson Tyler Shipley said the proposed offer surprised the union, following five days of successful bargaining.

Alex Bilyk, director of media relations at York University, said the offer was meant to help continue the bargaining between both parties.

Talks were slated to continue Jan. 10, when the union was expected to present its counter-proposal.

Source: *Excalibur*

## Charges dropped against most U of T protesters

The Crown has dropped criminal charges against nine of the 14 students who took part at the University of Toronto Fight Fees 14 protest last March, reported *The Varsity*.

The protest took place in Simcoe Hall, where students occupied the building to land an instant

meeting with U of T president David Naylor.

The nine students entered a year-long "peace bond" to have their charges dropped. This agreement is similar to a restraining order and those students are unable to set foot in Simcoe Hall without 24-hour notice and aren't permitted to demonstrate in U of T buildings.

Source: *the Varsity*

## NATIONAL HEADLINES:

## Obama makes Canada his first stop as president

During his first international trip as president, President-elect Barack Obama has planned to make Canada his first stop, reported *CBC*.

The office of Prime Minister Stephen Harper confirmed Jan. 10 that Obama has accepted Harper's invite to visit Canada after Obama's inauguration.

U.S. transition aides said they

could not yet discuss the date or agenda of the trip. They also said Obama chose Canada as the destination of his first trip.

After President George Bush was sworn in for his first term of office in 2001, he made his first stop in Mexico.

The inauguration date for the next president of the U.S. is set for Jan. 20.

Source: *CBC*

## Harper planning for big budget

Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced Jan. 9 in Montreal the next federal budget will be one of the biggest in a long time, reported *CBC*.

Harper also said that over the next three to five years the government will have to take "comprehensive action" in order to deal with the current recession.

A recent Statistics Canada re-

port stated Canadians lost 34,400 jobs during December.

Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff said on Jan. 9 in Halifax he will analyze the budget based on its ability to provide tax relief to Canadians with low-income, infrastructure projects and whether it invests in productivity and competitiveness.

Source: *CBC*

## Canadian firm to lead dam repair in Afghanistan

SNC Lavalin, a Quebec-based engineering and construction group, will head a \$50 million project in Afghanistan.

CTV reported it will repair a dam in Kandahar City to create thousands of jobs for residents and supply irrigation for the land. After decades of war, the dam had

fallen into disrepair.

Minister of International Cooperation Bev Oda said there will be 10,000 hectares of agricultural land brought back to life as a result of the cleanup.

The project, partly funded by the Canadian government, is slated for completion in 2011.

Source: *CTV*

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS BY THE NUMBERS:

\$1 trillion: set to be the U.S. budget deficit.

388 people are sick with salmonella in the U.S.

\$3M: the amount Chinese officials from Guangdong province have gambled away in the past few years.

4,300 years: the age of mummy remains belonging to an Egyptian queen, recently discovered by Egyptologists.

524,000 jobs were lost in the U.S. in December.

\$4M: the amount of money Canada is giving to the United Nations and Red Cross for assistance in the Palestinian territories.

Sources: *BBC, BBC, CBC, CBC, CBC, BBC*

## Medical Musings

## Fighting the winter flab



RACHEL SUNTER  
HEALTH COLUMNIST

Over the past holiday break, I ate five turkey dinners. I also slept in a lot, sampled wines and champagnes and snacked on the enormous box of Ferrero Rocher chocolates my French grandfather gave me. And I didn't work out once.

It was amazing for my inner child, who relishes in immediate sensual satisfaction all day every day, with minimal effort. But if I were to keep this up all the way until summer, my inner child would be the last kid hitting the beach. Alas, my real young-adult body too soon carries the weight of such a hedonistic lifestyle.

Keeping fit in the winter can be challenging. But finding your own ways to keep fit, all-year-around, will give you short- and long-term health benefits you'll relish.

Purchasing a gym membership is an easy route to daily exercise. Though it can be costly, the \$200 you'll spend is an investment in daily mental and physical health. Keeping fit boosts productivity, upping your success at school and work.

To find a gym that works for you and won't be a waste of money or a short-lived New Year's resolution, consider the following.

Proximity: Do not undervalue how easy it is to get to your gym; this can make a huge difference if you procrastinate. Pick somewhere close over somewhere slightly cheaper; a shorter commute means a shorter overall workout-time, making a workout easier to fit in between school, work and social

activities.

People: The class, age and fitness levels of fellow exercisers around you can heavily impact your overall gym experience, especially if you're just starting out, or returning after some serious time off. If you're motivated by competition, being somewhere with others your age can be inspiring and keep you focussed. But if you find better bodies discouraging and intimidating, finding a gym with an older crowd or fewer people might ensure you enjoy your workout without scrutinizing your neighbour's absent butt-jiggle.

Amenities: Different gyms provide different amenities to their customers. After trying a couple gyms you'll quickly figure out which services you prefer. If the time surrounding your workout is important to you, pay attention to the cleanliness of the change rooms, the saunas, the shower rooms, lockers and soap-dispensers. If you're easily distracted, take note of the music station and volume, the temperature and cooling systems, free-weights and mirrors. If you're one for extras, maybe the power bars they sell at the front counter and an upcoming customer appreciation party will get your heart pumping.

Most gyms offer trial memberships and orientation sessions. Talk to gym staff to find a plan that works for you. You want your gym membership to be a healthy addition to your lifestyle, not a personal guilt-trip.

If you're not the machine type, don't forget gyms include in their memberships access to all weekly classes - yoga, spinning and strength-training - so you can add variety to solo routines and meet new people.

Here's a quick overview of major gyms with student rates in Halifax.

Dalhousie students pay for basic gym membership with annual tuition fees. This includes access

to Dalplex's badminton, volleyball, basketball and squash courts, as well as lane-swimming, an indoor track and two weight rooms.

Cardio room access at Dalplex (complete with treadmills, elliptical machines, stair-climbers and rowers), locker-rental and towel-service are available for various extra fees. Three months of these extra services totals to \$110.00, or \$372.50 for the year.

Non-student memberships at Dalplex are sold for one-, three- and 12-month rates.

Nobody's gyms are in the downtown Halifax area, with locations at the Park Lane mall, Scotia Square and a women-only gym at the Park Victoria apartment complex. They offer various student promotions throughout the year, and they usually offer a four-month summer membership for students. Nobody's gyms have dance studios, multiple levels of exercise machines and smaller, quieter studios for stretching and floor-exercises.

Fitness FX on Quinpool Road offers student memberships for various durations, starting at \$139.99 plus tax for four months. Their basic memberships include towel-service and one or two free personal training sessions, depending on the length of your membership. You can sign up online on their website, though I would strongly advise against signing up to any gym without trying it out first, and consulting staff to find the payment plan that works best for you.

Keeping fit when it's cold and snowy outside can be an intimidating endeavour. Find the activities that work best for you - indoor or outdoor - and come sunny summer, you, and your popsicle-loving inner child, can enjoy the heat without winter's festive flab.

E-mail Rachel your health questions at [vega\\_of\\_the\\_lyra@hotmail.com](mailto:vega_of_the_lyra@hotmail.com).

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# Pass or fail

Students subservient to grades for too long

BETHANY HORNE  
OPINIONS EDITOR

University students share a common obsession: The A+.

We may argue endlessly about what deserves a high grade and what deserves a failing one, but few students would question the whole concept of receiving grades for our work at the university level.

After all, the habit of hunting for high grades was inherited from high school days, although we perceive higher stakes at the post-secondary level.

Top marks can translate into scholarship or fellowship offers, more prestigious co-op placements or internships, and eventually, better career options.

But grades are not the only way to judge work. The grading system frequently enables students to worry about how to get the best mark rather than about how to absorb the best information, which takes away from the educational experience universities could and should provide.

We all know students who claim they don't care about grades. Some of these dissidents are simply lying, and even those genuinely uninterested in their grade point averages need to work hard enough so as not to fail every subject. They obviously care enough about university that they prefer being here over wherever they would be if they flunked out.

Students are completely subservient to the grade system. We have no choice, on the whole, but to take what is given. We can challenge individual grades, either informally by meeting with the professor, or by making an official reassessment request through the registrar's office, but there are few avenues to dispute the whole concept of graded evaluation.

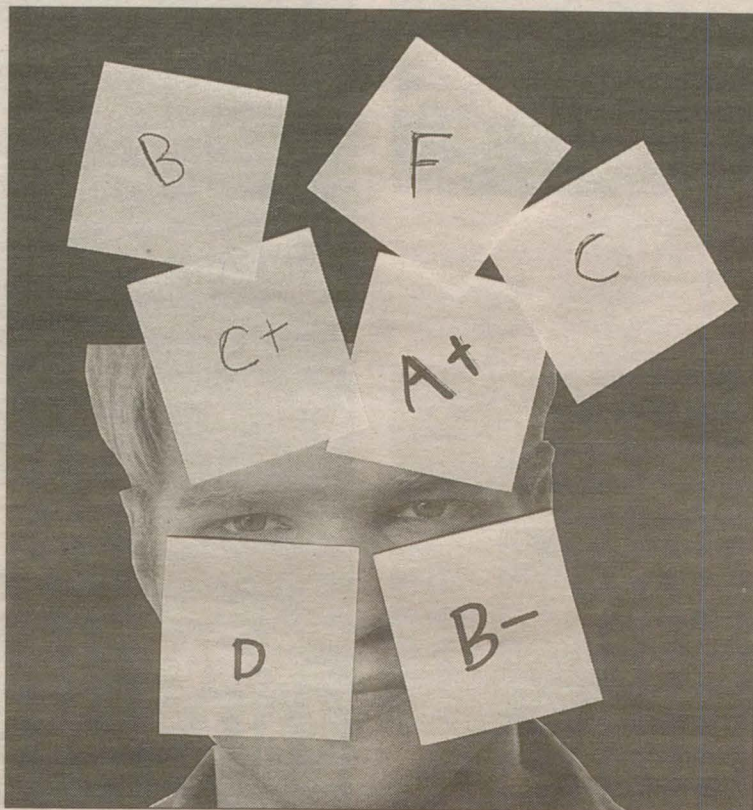
A tenured physics professor at the University of Ottawa made the decision to eliminate grades in his courses, and he was strictly punished by university administrators.

Last year Denis Rancourt applied to have his first-year Science in Society class graded on a pass/fail system. When school administration denied his request, he gave all his students an A+.

The administration banned him from campus, cancelled his classes, and in December 2008, applied to the Board of Governors to have him fired.

The Canadian Association of University Teachers, Canada's main faculty association, is now investigating his case. He claims his academic freedom has been breached.

At the heart of Rancourt's rebellion was his desire to re-purpose university education so students can achieve something even better than an A+: a



LAURA DAWE COLLAGE

Learning at a university level should be about self-motivation and inquiry, not "publicly subsidized pre-employment screening."

learning experience that allows for personal engagement and growth.

U of O administrators objected to his methods, saying he was undermining academic standards. Their definition of academic excellence is obviously different from Rancourt's, and from what students' definitions could be if we weren't forced to comply with graded evaluation of our efforts.

Educational standards should not be defined by the degree of student compliance to pre-established patterns. This is a perversion of what education is meant to accomplish.

David Noble is a professor of history at York University. He also had a habit of freely giving out As to protest the grading system. As a result, York officials designated his courses as ungraded in 2006, "establishing a promising academic precedent," according to a May 2007 article Noble wrote for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives called Giving Up the Grade.

"The primary reason for the existence of grades - publicly-subsidized pre-employment screening - is rarely acknowledged," he wrote.

When grades are recorded and submitted to employers in the labour force, Noble explained, they fulfill their true purpose. The corporate identities that want to know how their prospective employees stack up against each other are a silent elephant in the halls

of academia.

"Eliminating grades," he wrote, "eliminates the elephant from the room, emancipates academia and reintroduces education."

First- and second-year Dalhousie medical school students understand the benefit of a non-GPA subverted system.

"For each unit, students are assessed to have passed or failed," says the Dal med school website. Students have opportunities to re-take exams if they fail on the first try and the strength of this learning method is one of the strengths of the medical school.

These students learn by personal exploration of the subjects they're studying. The ownership they take over their own learning processes leads them to creative, interesting solutions they can easily remember, not because they memorized them, but because they came up with those solutions themselves.

If we can trust our med students to be motivated by the thrill of education and not the threat of lowered academic standing, why do we rob students in other disciplines of that opportunity?

In most jobs, free thought and creativity are the marks of a leader.

Tasking universities to create armies of drones cripples the leaders of our society before they even get out the gate. Enforcing a grading system enforces this mass massacre of potential.

# Drop out now

University is no place to be in times of financial crisis

PAUL ARTSON  
OPINIONS CONTRIBUTOR

There's a crisis a-brewing off the port bow. What the hell are you doing sitting around reading this newspaper? Drop out of school now and get to work on building alternatives to a system that has left so many people sinking into a swampy mess of debt and misery.

Why aren't you moving yet? Seriously, drop out now. You can do it online or at the registrar's office, located in room 133 of the Henry Hicks building. You've already gotten all the formal education you need to make the world a freer, more equitable and just place. Now, do like Mark Twain suggested: get off your ass and stop letting school get in the way of your education.

Stop reading! Haven't you been paying attention to what's been going on? Here's a recap: 34,400 jobs were lost in Canada in December. About 524,000 were lost in the United States, bringing the total number of jobs lost in that country to 2.6 million in 2008.

The overall value of world stocks fell by 38 per cent last year.

The symbolic S.S. American Predatory Capitalist has run aground. One of the purposes of this university is to provide dutiful drone deckhands to keep that privateer moving through its own sludge. But the ship needs to lighten its load so it can stay afloat, and if the job losses, bailouts and foreclosures are any indication, a hell of a lot of people are going to be forced to walk the plank.

Day in and day out we've been hearing about golden parachutes and billion-dollar bailouts, housing bubbles, market troubles and massive socializations of private corporations, all on a scale the likes of which the world has never seen.

Politicians are going crazy, flipping and flopping like a water-drained barrel of fish.

In Canada, our sweater vest-wearing prime minister once told us there'd be no deficits. Now he's saying there may well be a whole crapload of them in years to come.

These days even the slick, butter-voiced defenders of the free market are sounding like Chicken Little. I guess a lot of overly confident rich white folks finally got a taste of what it's like to eat Spam for Christmas dinner. It must be tough to trim your tree while your hedge fund is getting a mortal pruning.

Friends, we are adrift in a leaky boat that's lost in dark, stinking waters. Ahead of us, by all accounts, is a

festering bog named Depression.

These are wild times, and we need to get the hell out of school and take an active role in building some alternatives. Sequestered in university is no place to be while the world is going to shit.

Don't be afraid. You've already gotten more than enough education to do a barrelful of potentially world-changing things. Don't believe me? Thomas Edison had three months of formal schooling in his whole life. Three months, and look what he accomplished.

Nobel Prize-winning author Doris Lessing left school when she was 14. Author George Orwell dropped out at 18.

Rosa Parks, Abraham Lincoln, Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, William Shakespeare, Bob Dylan, Odetta, Leo Tolstoy, David Bowie, Winston Churchill, Mark Twain - none of them had as much education as you have.

The Wright Brothers dropped out of high school and went on to invent the airplane. Flight! They invented flight with less than a high school education, and you're worried about missing a sociology quiz? Damn you!

Or maybe you're worried you won't be able to get that dream job you'd planned on getting with your Dalhousie degree? No need to worry. Your degree doesn't make nearly the difference you've been told it does.

In 2008, Statistics Canada reported 6.8 per cent of people with a high school diploma were unemployed. The national unemployment rate right now is 6.6 per cent. Do you really feel like paying \$12,000 a year to go to school in order to improve your employment chances by 0.2 per cent? Come on, really?

Besides, that job you hope to get probably won't exist by the time you're done getting your education.

Let's face the facts: if the U.S. is screwed, so is Canada. Economists and politicians can tickle us in our nationalistic places, but the U.S. economy is in trouble, and Canada is just one of many legs jutting out of the body of that sick spider.

Historically, after a financial crisis like this one, there comes a period during which competing ideas jockey for position in society. Put another way, once the shit hits the fan, the people have the opportunity to decide for themselves the colour with which they'd like to paint over the shit.

Drop out now if you want to help choose the paint.

Paul Artson is a first-year master's student. He'll be dropping out online to avoid the lineup.

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# STREETER

What's your most recent favourite album?



“Nightfall in Middle Earth by Blind Guardian.”

Jason Fawcett, third-year psychology



“Icky Thump by The White Stripes.”

Adam Aleksis, fourth-year pharmacology



“#1 Singles by The Chemical Brothers.”

Sinziana Balaban, fourth-year psychology and English



“Feels by Animal Collective.”

Shane Simms, third-year management



“Beethoven.”

Andrea Botea, third-year nursing



“American Gangster by Jay-Z.”

Tian Feridooni, third-year biochemistry



“Idler's Corner by the Idlers.”

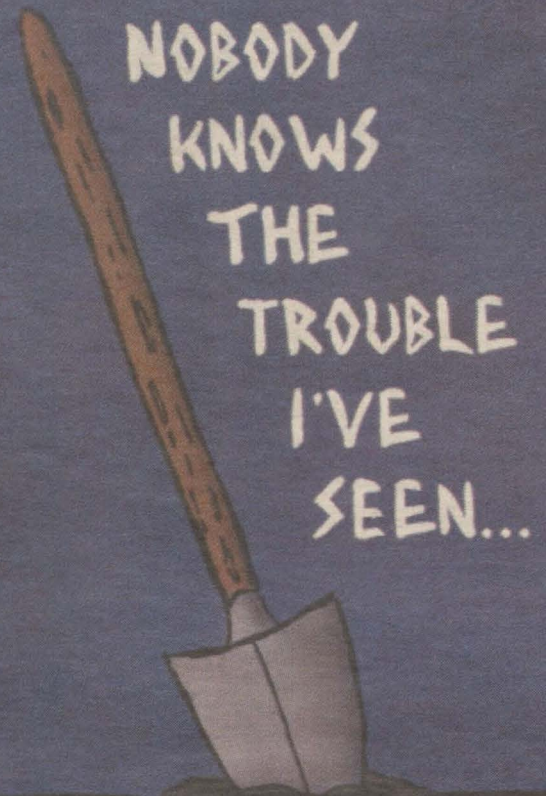
Melanie Noel, second-year psychology PhD



“The Family Jams by The Manson family.”

John Packman, fourth-year cult enthusiast

# CARTOONS



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Sat - Matinee	Barnacle
Sat - Jan 17 <sup>th</sup>	Barnacle
Sun - Jan 18 <sup>th</sup>	House Party Guys
Mon - Jan 19 <sup>th</sup>	House Party Guys
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Wed - Jan 21 <sup>th</sup>	House Party Guys

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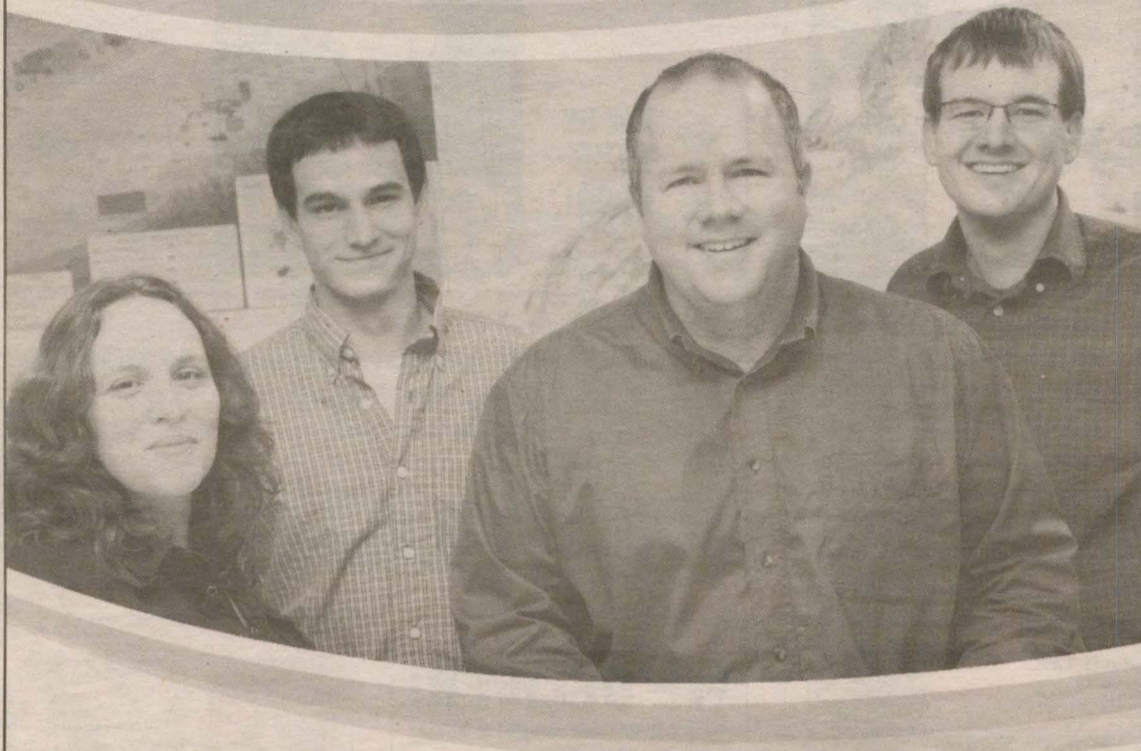
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# Developing Leaders in Energy

The Pengrowth-Nova Scotia Petroleum Innovation Grant can help you achieve your research goals



Winners of the 2008 Pengrowth-Nova Scotia Innovation Grant, shown from left to right: Shannon Ledger-Piercey, Eric Negulic, Calvin Campbell, Stephen Rankin

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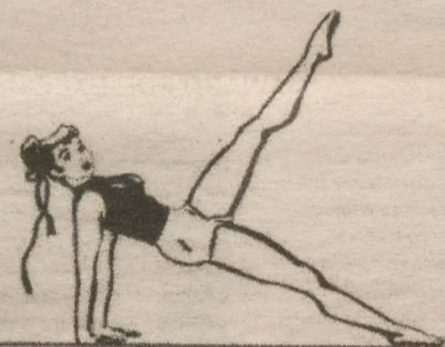
**DEIRDRE AYRE**, Studio Head, Other Ocean Interactive of Charlottetown, PEI, says,



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# Designer turned tattoo artist makes her mark

LAURA DAWE  
ARTS BEAT REPORTER

At Utility Tattoos and Piercings on Blowers street, Lydia K. Stalingrad promises clients she'll come in on Sunday, her day off. When they pry, asking if she will have a long way to travel to forever mark them with some important sentiment, she brushes it off, insisting that it is no biggie. Her accommodating smile gives no hint that she will have to take the ferry in from Dartmouth on what will likely be a cruel as hell winter day.

Stalingrad says her specialties, magical drawings of nests, gypsy-looking women and forks digging into heart cakes, are inspired by old-style tattoos and flash - the sheets from which patrons choose pre-drawn tattoos. She points to a laminated example, one of many decorations in the black and white room in which she tattoos.

"They're gorgeous," she says. "They're beautiful pieces of art, just to have on the wall."

Utility does strictly custom work, so Stalingrad's colourful amalgams of blue birds and witches explore an aspect of tattooing that is a little to the right of what she does during office hours: design tattoos unique to the customer.

Evocative, colour-infused tattoos are only one of Stalingrad's artistic endeavours. If you run right now to Utility Gallery, which is what the

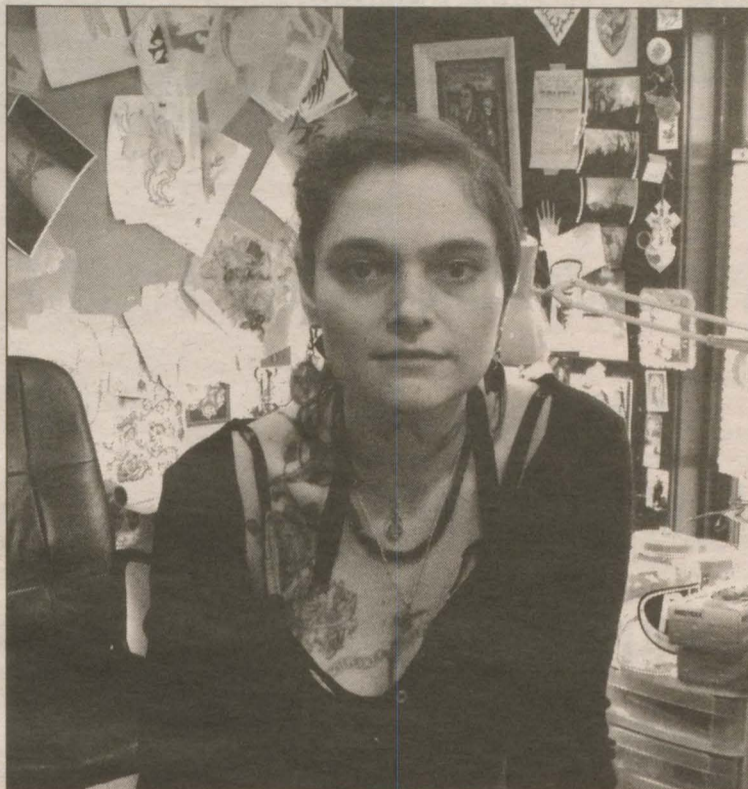
Utility Tattoos and Piercing waiting room is called when it displays art, you can see Stalingrad's drawing/paintings before they are replaced by the work of illustrator Peter Diamond on Jan. 17.

If you miss her show at Utility, fear not. Just be sure to remember the name. But don't remember it too closely, because Stalingrad cycles through names as casually as she does media. When asked why she doesn't go by her given moniker, Lydia Klenck, her tone implies that the answer is totally obvious.

"Because I don't feel like it."

Though she's only been tattooing for two years and didn't do a typical apprenticeship, which often involves studying under an established artist for two years, Stalingrad spent the last year working at the spot that's repeatedly been voted best tattoo shop in the city in *The Coast's* Best Of Halifax annual issue. Stalingrad says when Utility's owner, an old friend of hers, heard she was inking flesh and not just paper, he jumped at the chance to employ her. He had faith that she would, as she puts it, "you know, do good."

Before she started tattooing, Stalingrad typically did her good through conceptual fashion. Her collections, such as *Colonial*, blur the line between art and clothing. Try to picture a Victorian hoop skirt made out of sugar, flour and rice sacks. Add some aprons, which are worn by women in many cultures and are therefore a



LAURA DAWE/DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

Stalingrad doesn't take her talent for granted.

symbolically loaded article of clothing. Then add Indian braidwork and some American folk embroidery. It sounds overwhelming, but to look at it makes sense. Westerners, espe-

cially as colonizers, appropriate the food and clothing style of other cultures as second nature. Stalingrad's wearable art highlights the cultural mishmash that is fashion.

Stalingrad recently lived in Toronto, where she made a living for two years selling her clothing to a local shop. She also worked doing costumes and puppets for shows on Disney and the CBC. Her sculptural work brings to mind Mexican Day of the Dead shrines. She seems happy to leave it all behind for this happy, clean-but-cluttered room, all her own, where she is building a name for herself through ink. She says she is still really inspired by tattooing.

Stalingrad has no idea how many tattoos she herself has. She started getting them when she was 15, when a friend with a homemade gun permanently etched onto her back a doodle she had drawn while on acid. Unlike a sleeve or one massive piece, her tattoos are all individual, like stickers in a kid's book of collection, but they all somehow seem to work together, the same way her drawings, tattoos, clothing and sculptures all seem to comprise one massive body of work.

To look at her and to hear her speak calmly about her incredible creations, it seems as though art must just pour out of her as easily as beer from a tap. But her advice to other artists is practical.

"Work really hard. Don't just take your talent for granted."

She thinks for a second, her eyes resting on a shelf of enticingly bright inks.

"Don't just be half-assed. Do a really good job."

## FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

### AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

#### CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences is committed to excellence in teaching. It has established a teaching award that honors, each year, a faculty member who has made an outstanding contribution to teaching and serving the students of the Faculty. This award is intended above all to underline the fundamental importance of first-rate and innovative pedagogy.

Candidates nominated for the award must be on-going Arts and Social Sciences members of the Dalhousie University teaching staff. Sessional and part-time lecturers will be considered but must have taught at least two consecutive years. Faculty nominated for the University Alumni Award for Teaching Excellence are also eligible for nomination for the Arts and Social Sciences Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Nominations should be signed by at least three students or staff members, and should include evidence of teaching excellence. This will vary, but might include letters from sponsors summarizing the evidence justifying the nomination, results of student evaluation questionnaires, pedagogical publications of the candidate, confidential letters of support from colleagues and/or former students, evidence of innovative pedagogy and of service to the Faculty or the outside community. Nomination forms are available at the office of the Dean of Arts and Social Sciences. Please contact 494-1439 for more information.

The recipient will be recognized by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

Nominations and documents supporting them should be sent to the Selection Committee for the Excellence in Teaching Award, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS B3H 4P9.

Nominations and all supporting documents should reach the Committee no later than **MARCH 31, 2009.**

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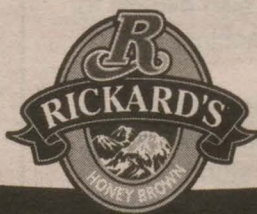
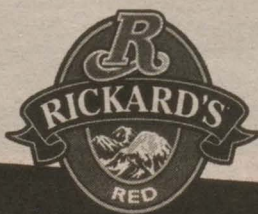
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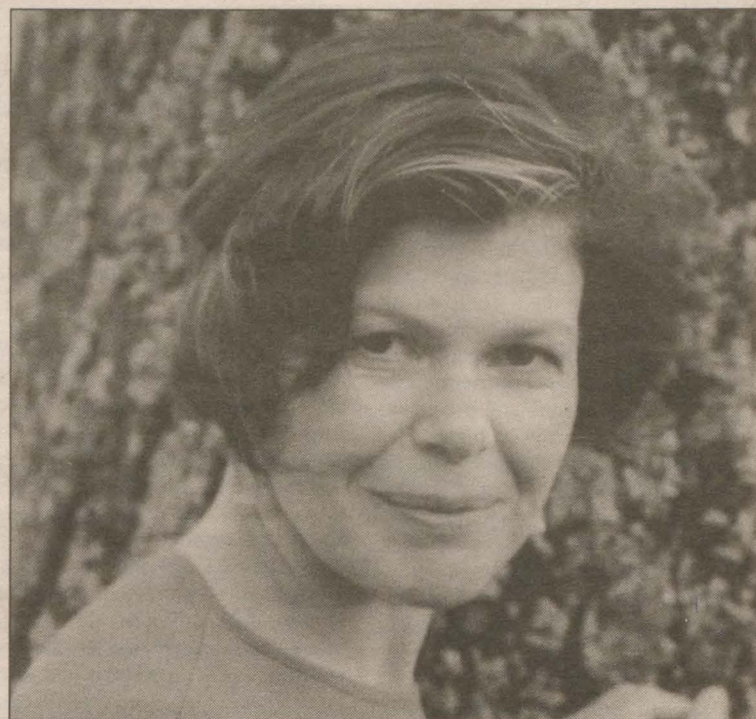
The Grad House is open to Dalhousie students, faculty, alumni & friends. ID is required for entry.



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BRUCE ERSKINE PHOTO

"They need to have faith in their story and that what they have to say is important," Carol Bruneau advises aspiring writers.

## Local author inspired by students

ANNA DEMELLO  
STAFF CONTRIBUTOR

Carol Bruneau wants to help students find their voices.

The accomplished Halifax author is Dalhousie's current Writer in Residence.

"There's a joy in writing, and the empowerment of being able to voice your own ideas. When young people discover that, it's a blast," says Bruneau.

Bruneau says her primary role at Dal is to draw out anyone on campus that has an interest in writing, whether fiction or nonfiction.

"(I'll be) hearing their stories, and doing what I can to encourage them," she says. "Not just English students, but people from all disciplines. I'm really excited about being here and it's wonderful to be here in this capacity."

While Bruneau is now available to writing enthusiasts at Dal who are seeking advice or direction concerning their written works, campus life in Halifax is nothing new to her. She earned her undergraduate and graduate degrees in English at Dal and currently teaches part time at NSCAD. She has also served in the position of Writer in Residence at Acadia University.

She says working with university students helps her grow as a writer.

"I just love the energy of young people. It's always inspiring to hear their ideas," says Bruneau. "It's lovely having that contact. Working as a writer can be isolating and you're sort

of stuck in your head. Being in a creative environment is so fabulous."

She has two main tips when it comes to creative writing – reading and believing in oneself.

"Reading helps you empathize with other people. A really good book will let us know that our own perspective isn't the only one that counts," says Bruneau.

Young writers also need to believe in the importance of their own work says Bruneau.

"They need to have faith in their story and that what they have to say is important," she says. "If it's important to them, chances it will be important to somebody else. The flip side is that it does involve a lot of work and discipline."

She's written two highly praised collections of short fiction: *After the Angel Mill* (1995) and *Depth Rapture* (1998), as well as three novels: *Berth*, *Purple for Sky* (2000) – for which she won the 2001 Thomas Head Raddall Atlantic Fiction Prize and the Dartmouth Book Award – and *Glass Voices* (2007).

Bruneau says Nova Scotia itself greatly influences her writing.

"We're a bit removed – on the edge a little bit," she says. "There is less pressure to seek out stories that are trendy; it's more about the stories that are important to us as a community. I would still be writing Nova Scotian stories if I weren't living here."

Students may find Carol Bruneau in her office on the third floor of the English Department from Jan. 12 to March 20 in the McCain Building.

# PRESS

UN-OFFICIAL GAZETTE PRESS PASS\*

- Step 1 - Cut This Out
- Step 2 - Stick In Hat
- Step 3 - Write Story
- Step 4 - Submit Story To Gazette

\*This won't get you into any concerts or events, and won't get you any special privileges. But come to a contributors meeting and maybe you can get a real one and write a show review.





## A captivating case of adaptation

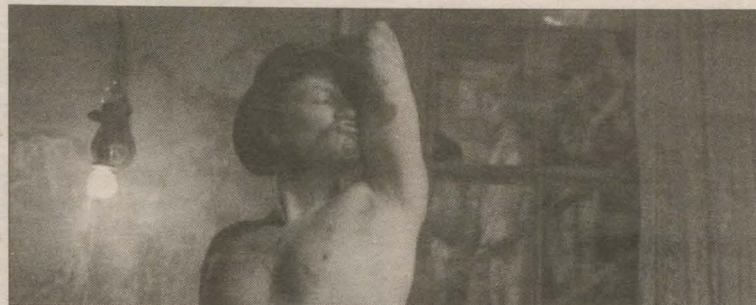
ALEX BRUVELS  
ARTS CONTRIBUTOR

*The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* is a captivating fairytale starring Brad Pitt as Benjamin Button, a man born into the twilight of his years apparently in an act of higher cruelty, subject to aging in reverse. Based loosely upon F. Scott's Fitzgerald's 1921 short story of the same name, this adaptation follows the tale of Benjamin Button, a man "born under unusual circumstances."

Born at the end of the First World War in New Orleans, Benjamin is abandoned by his father at birth due to the horrific nature of his aged appearance and other extenuating circumstances. Left at the doorstep of Queenie, a proprietor of a local home for the elderly, Benjamin is adopted into a family of aging patrons where death is a common visitor. As he grows older in mind but younger in body, Benjamin is forced to negotiate the unique difficulties and wonders of his world.

Director David Fincher flawlessly weaves many elements and characters into a seamless three hours that feels much shorter. Capturing the romance and mystery of New Orleans, Fincher makes use of the bayous, brothels and vibrant culture to encapsulate its grimy intrigue and appeal. He turns simple events such as a boat on water, a kiss or a casual conversation into a majestic happenstance ripe with deeper meaning.

Pitt embraces the role, first playing



an elderly man with all of the physical maladies of age while capturing the wonderment and joy of discovery associated with youth. Later, as he continues to age backward, he shifts gears and presents the physical prowess and exuberance of youth while offering the burdened contenance of a man with knowledge seemingly beyond his years.

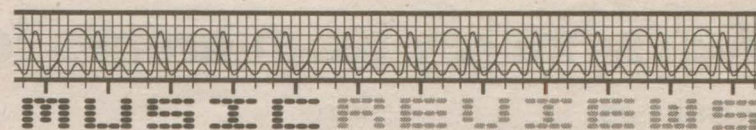
Cate Blanchett plays Daisy, Benjamin's love interest, who flits in and out of his life while remaining an omnipresent influence. While Blanchett graces the screen with timeless elegance and easily captures the role of Daisy, an aspiring ballet dancer, it is not until late in the film, after her character sheds the shallow aloofness of her youth and lays bare her true compassion, that the audience is able to warm up to her.

Taraji P. Henson gives a strong supporting portrayal of Queenie, Benjamin's circumstantial mother. Henson does a superb job of exemplifying the tenderness of a maternal figure with a constant saucy wit that lends humour to a film that is often laden with loneliness.

The film is thoughtfully assisted with narrative both by Daisy on her deathbed and Benjamin reflecting on his life through his journal. The technique humanizes both characters, exposing the imperfections of the human condition while creating an anchor of realism in an inherently fantastical film.

Although slightly slow in its initial sequences, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* quickly evolves into a piece about the magic of every day life, the precious nature of time spent with loved ones and the lessons learned from those lost. While the film does lack identifiable turning points, save the increasingly serious tone as Benjamin ages and continuously suffers the losses of those around him, it is not a film that warrants much negative criticism. Rather, it offers a unique perspective on mortality, wisdom, the evolution of the self and the timelessness of love.

Overall, it is a haunting yet beautiful film, supported by pure performance that is sure to please all hopeless romantics and dreamers alike.



## Animal Collective: *Merriweather Post Pavilion*

MATT RITCHIE  
STAFF CONTRIBUTOR

It's generally surprising when an album is released in the first month of the year and sounds like the top contender for album of the year on first listen. Then again, not every band is Animal Collective.

Animal Collective is a group of four friends who grew up together in Maryland and just happen to make the kind of freak folk-tinged pop jams that rival any psychedelic band of the past. Emerging in early 2000 as the godfathers of the New Weird America movement, Animal Collective released a string of records that range from psychedelic acoustic guitars to tribal beats to 1960s pop songs, sounding equally their own with every genre.

*Merriweather Post Pavilion* is a record that sounds totally new yet encompasses all the strong features of previous recordings by the band. The positive side of this record is the use of samplers. Where on previous recordings and performances the band members played guitars, drums and synthesizer, the band now strictly uses samplers and microphones to craft its psychedelic soundscapes. In doing so, the members have created arguably the best psychedelic pop record of the past 40 years and one of the most creative electronic recordings of the decade.

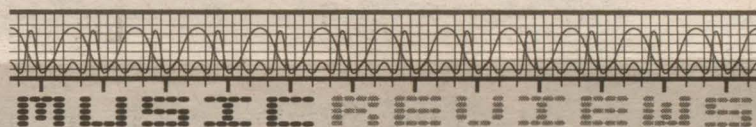
This album is ultimately a pop record. "Summertime Clothes" is a song with one of the most beautiful choruses about love since The Beat-



les were around. Panda Bear and Avey Tare repeat the lyrics "I want to walk around with you" against a surging beat. End track "Brother Sport" will undoubtedly get song of the year with its emphasis on African tribal rhythms amidst sunny keyboard textures and Panda Bear screaming at you to "open up your throat" and sing along. Every track on the record uses a call and response method, making it nearly impossible for listeners not to stomp their lower limbs to the beat.

*Merriweather Post Pavilion* is also an album in which the songwriting and singing of Avey Tare and Panda Bear are fully immersed together in their sonic soundscapes. Gone are the days of incessant screaming on Avey Tare's part and Panda Bear's whisper quiet introverted songs. Their styles mesh together to make a pounding electronic record that showcases their personal flavours while staying cohesive.

*Merriweather Post Pavilion* is the Sgt. Pepper of the 21st century.



## The Deep Dark Woods: *Winter Hours*

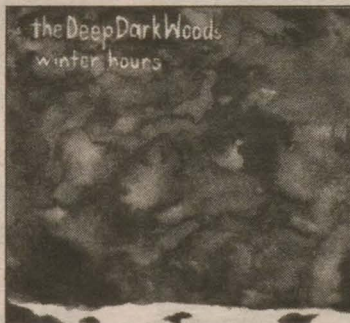
MARC Z. GRUB  
STAFF CONTRIBUTOR

A reporter once asked Lou Reed what he thought of The Band. His reply was something along the lines of "they're great, if you want to sit on your porch and pretend it's 1832."

In some ways, that statement could apply to The Deep Dark Woods. Unlike bands My Morning Jacket, Wilco and Fleet Foxes, The Deep Dark Woods members make no effort to bring their brand of Appalachian folk music into the present. The melodies, instrumentation and lyrics all do their best to hold up the illusion that it's still 200 years ago. Only it isn't.

If I were judging the album as someone living in the 19th century, I might think differently. In terms of construction and song composition, *Winter Hours* is as solid as the evergreen wood the album's rustic sound evokes. Most songs on the album are gifted with a classic and sad backwoods beauty, but at times a pop element buried within the songwriting bubbles to the surface. This occurs most notably in the strikingly Banesque "Polly", with its sticky 1970s bar band guitars and woozy melancholy.

Like The Band did on its classic 1969 self-titled album, The Deep Dark Woods is able to make music from the past by writing from the



perspective of a person living in that time. The most memorable example of this from The Band is "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down", the story of a Southern general watching as his side lost the civil war. The equivalent on *Winter Hours* is "The Gallows", a song about a young man hanged for murder.

The Deep Dark Woods' principal songwriter, Ryan Boldt, has a novel-like ability to tell a story lyrically, with a knack for creating poignant characters and situations.

The way *Winter Hours* holds together stylistically, in addition to its highly literate lyrics, makes listening to it an almost conceptual experience. While the album lacks the charm of The Band, or the majesty of the Fleet Foxes that's vital for 2009, *Winter Hours* is still a thorough and engaging listen. At least from the perspective of someone from 1832.

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## Men's hockey team breaks losing streak

TYLER BROWN  
SPORTS EDITOR

Dalhousie's men's hockey team picked up an all-important road win on Jan. 9, defeating the University of Prince Edward Island Panthers 4-2 in Charlottetown, PEI. The Tigers' road win was the team's first of the season. The victory snapped a seven-game losing streak and moved the Tigers

out of last place.

Dal's Kenzie Sheppard opened scoring in the first period by striking on an early power play. The teams traded goals in the second period before a third period breakout saw Dal pull away for the win. The line of Chad McCaffrey, Trevor Mackenzie and Patrick Sweeney struck twice in the third, moving the game out of UPEI's reach. Dal goaltender Josh Disher was stellar

in the win, stopping 28 shots.

Coach Pete Belliveau said he was happy with the team's performance.

"It was a good road win," he said. "The team stuck with the game plan and came out with a win. It's always nice to get that first road win."

The win moves Dal's record to 4-11, one point over St. Thomas University for seventh place in the Atlantic University Sport league.

## Women's Tigers control the puck against SMU

TYLER BROWN  
SPORTS EDITOR

Dalhousie came away with a 5-3 win against the Saint Mary's University Huskies in the Jan. 7 women's hockey game. A pair of third period breakaway goals clinched the game, played at SMU's Memorial arena.

Both teams traded early goals before forward Jocelyn LeBlanc put Dal ahead with her first of the night, sending Dal into the first intermission with a 2-1 lead.

The Huskies' Amanda Boulegon answered early in the second, before Dal captain Kim Carcary set up a Kaitlyn McNutt powerplay point blast with a great display of puck control.

SMU answered back late in second period, sending the teams to the locker room knotted at three goals each.

The teams traded chances in the third before a flurry of saves by Dal goalie Emelie Ederfors led to a Carcary breakaway and a 4-3 Dal lead.

SMU pressed to score, but the



JOSH BOYTER/DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

SMU pressed to score, but the team was unable to generate much offense against Dal's defense.

team was unable to generate much offense against a tough Dal defense.

Dal players Carcary and LeBlanc

were great in the win, leading the way with three and two points respectively.



RYAN HEISE/DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

Dal's Andrew Sullivan tries to get a shot past the Varsity Reds' Colton Wilson on Jan. 10.



# TIGERS ACTION!

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16

BASKETBALL vs UPEI, W 6PM, M 8PM

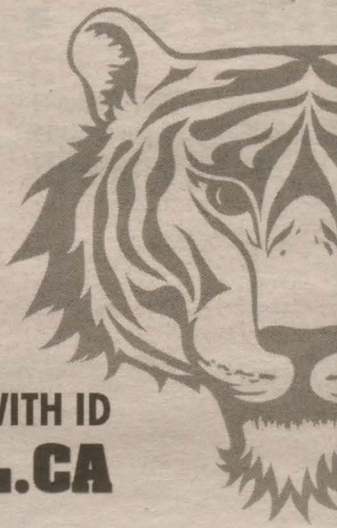
MEN'S HOCKEY vs StFX, 7PM

SATURDAY, JANUARY 17

BASKETBALL vs CBU, W 6PM, M 8PM

SUNDAY, JANUARY 18

TRACK & FIELD MEET, 6PM



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## Sport retort

### The wild and wacky world of intramurals



**TYLER BROWN**  
SPORTS EDITOR

We've all made our resolutions, and some of us are even sticking to them. I, for one, have decided to try some new sports. With the abundance of weird and wild intramural sports at Dal, it's just a matter of finding one that fits with how crazy I'm feeling on any particular night.

Let's say I feel like getting a little wet – the Dal inner tube water polo club starts up this month. This is the lazy student's alterna-

tive to real deal water polo. There's no need to swim around spending valuable energy; instead, just paddle around on a tube, tossing a ball. It's like a day in the backyard pool, only someone is keeping score. It could be worth checking out, if nothing else, strictly because it's co-ed, and requires bathing suits. Now there's an incentive. The league plays every Thursday night from 8:10-9:40 p.m., so grab your swimsuit and jump in.

When you get sick of tossing people out of inner tubes, maybe you want to toss some rocks? I've heard rumours that curling is one of those sports where the more you drink, the better you get. I'm not sure what it is about these type of games, but it seems that a drunken rhythm leads to better results. Canada's other ice sport just might be for you if you're in the mood for some extreme shuffleboard, or maybe, like the rest of us, you just

want to get drunk.

Are those sports a little too tame for you? Maybe you should try the second "other" ice sport. Broomball is pure craziness to me. No skates required, it's pretty much hockey on foot. The idea of running all out on ice seems like a recipe for disaster, but I'm sure avid players would wholeheartedly disagree. The club meets on Sundays at 9:45.

So there you have it, an abundance of new things for me to try. With all these on my plate, I should be entertained until at least next month. And hey, entertainment is what it's all about, right? So feel free to join me at any of these events, especially curling – I'll be that guy who looks out of place, wandering around with the slightly inebriated look on my face.

## This show may contain nudity and adult situations.

*Parental attendance is advised.*



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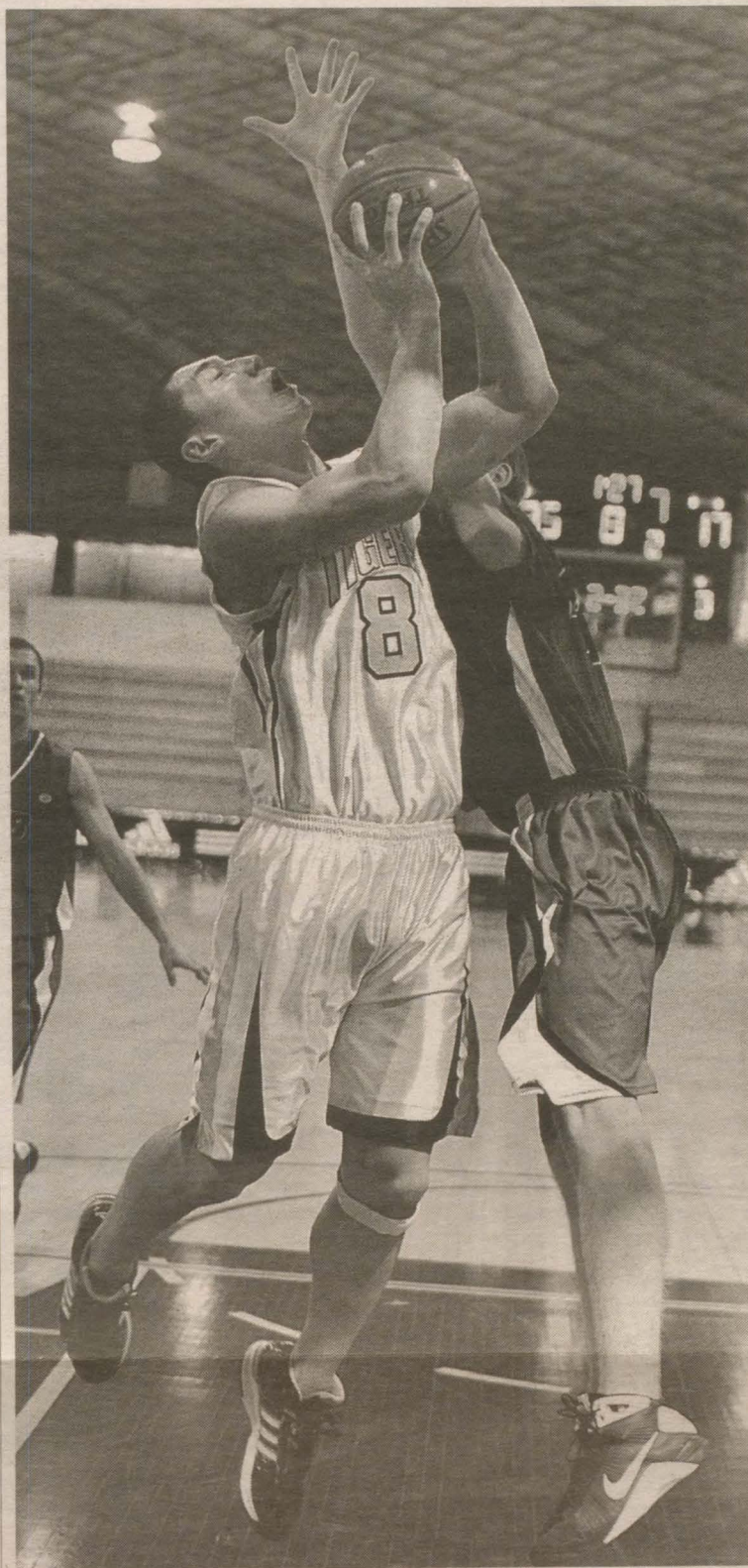
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RYAN HEISE/DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

Tiger Jason Wang goes for a jump shot while being blocked by UNB's David Dolan at the Dalplex on Jan. 10.

### Tigers eye basketball playoffs

**DYLAN MATTHIAS**  
STAFF CONTRIBUTOR

The Halifax Rainmen won't be the only team to watch this spring, as both Dalhousie basketball teams are in good positions to make the Atlantic University Sport (AUS) playoffs.

The men's Tigers sit at second place in the AUS, and won on Jan. 10 at home against the University of New Brunswick Reds. UNB is hardly the toughest opposition, though, sitting winless through seven games. The Reds have given up a whopping 116 more points than they have scored and were easy fodder for the Tigers, who beat them 66-48.

Dal led handily for much of the game, with most of UNB's points coming too late in the game.

Guard Simon Farine was a stand-out for Dal, putting up 31 points. The third-year commerce student averages 20.5 points per game this season. That tally puts him third in AUS, although he is second in points scored throughout his 18 games this year. The Tigers' defense can't be over-

looked, either. Dal's defense players have given up the fewest three-point field goals (baskets) and trail only Cape Breton University in the fewest 2-point field goals conceded.

\*\*\*

The women are in the top four in AUS, and their 73-63 win over UNB on Jan. 10 was a crucial one, since the UNB Reds were tied with them in the standings. The game was worth four points in the standings, and the win moves them well clear of UNB and within striking distance of top teams St. Francis Xavier University and Memorial University, although both schools have games in hand.

Dal trailed in the first two quarters of the Jan. 10 game before taking it to UNB in the third period to get the win.

Dal now has four wins, totalling 18 points.

This year's playoffs are in Halifax for both Tiger teams, with the men set to play in the Metro Centre between March 5 and 7, while the women finish their season at the Dalplex.

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