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pg 18

News > 3   Dalendar > 7   Feedback > 9   Lifestyles > 10  
Streeter > 12   Arts > 13   Focus > 18   Sciences > 20   Sports > 22



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# A lasting peace in the Middle East

"Israel has to give Palestinians a viable homeland"

by jay nathwani

the gazette

The Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories and Israel's attempts to prevent the emergence of a cohesive Palestinian homeland threaten the possibility of a just and lasting peace, Jeff Halper, an Israeli Jew and head of the Israeli Coalition Against Home Demolition told an audience at Dalhousie on Thursday, Jan. 25.

Halper is currently touring Canada with Salim Shawamreh, a Palestinian from the West Bank, in an effort to spread his message about the Middle East peace process and Israel's actions on the ground, which he says are ignored for the most part by the media.

Halper, who is also a professor at Ben Gurion University, detailed an Israeli plan that is not reported, but that he says renders a peace agreement on the terms currently being discussed unworkable. He brought a message of co-operation and

understanding between Israelis and Palestinians, but also one of harsh criticism of Israel.

"Both peoples are destined to live together. It's not a matter of if you're pro-Israeli you're anti-Palestinian or if you're pro-Palestinian you're anti-Israeli and everything is in a dichotomous relationship. It has to be a win-win situation or a lose-lose situation. One side or the other is simply not going to win. And in today's situation in fact both sides are losing."

Halper criticized Israel for its action in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"My criticism comes because Israel is the occupying power. It occupies Palestine, and particularly the area that would become a Palestinian state."

He said the criticism was necessary to bring about a lasting peace.

"It's crucial that we criticize Israel's actions constructively."

Halper also said that Israel is at a point where true peace is possible, but pointed out that Israel's system of proportional

representation results in a very fragmented parliament and thus complex political maneuvering when forming a government and discussing peace.

"The Israeli public is much more willing to make the concessions that have to be made to the Palestinians than the Israeli government. Israelis want peace, but the political process does not allow it."

Israelis feel too insulated from the Palestinians and from international pressure, said Halper.

"One of the problems that Israel faces is that it lives in a bubble. It's created partly by the United States, and that is that Israel has almost complete immunity from United Nations resolutions, from international law, from criticism from the European Union, from Arab countries."

He pointed out that Israel's military needs are met by the U.S., which supplied it with an additional \$450 million in the last days of the Clinton administration for military use, and which has permitted advanced sale of the F-22 fighter jet to Israel alone. The alleged reason it gets so much support from the United States is not the Jewish population there, but "Christian Zionists," fundamentalist Christians who support Israel, and use a well-funded lobby to get what they want.

Halper was critical of Israel's



"...peace is not going to come from within Israel. And therefore active international support for the peace process is necessary. The international community has to be tough on Israel. This isn't only an Israeli-Palestinian issue; it's a global issue." — Jeff Halper

actions in the West Bank, and said that it is important to understand what Israel has offered to the Palestinians in recent negotiations. Israel said that it would cede control of 95 percent of the West Bank, by far the largest Palestinian territory.

"But if you look at what's happening on the ground," Halper said, "it's not the 95 percent that Israel offered, but the other five percent. That five percent is all that Israel really needs to control the Palestinians. It's an issue of viability, not of land."

Israel "has laid a matrix of control over the West Bank," said Halper.

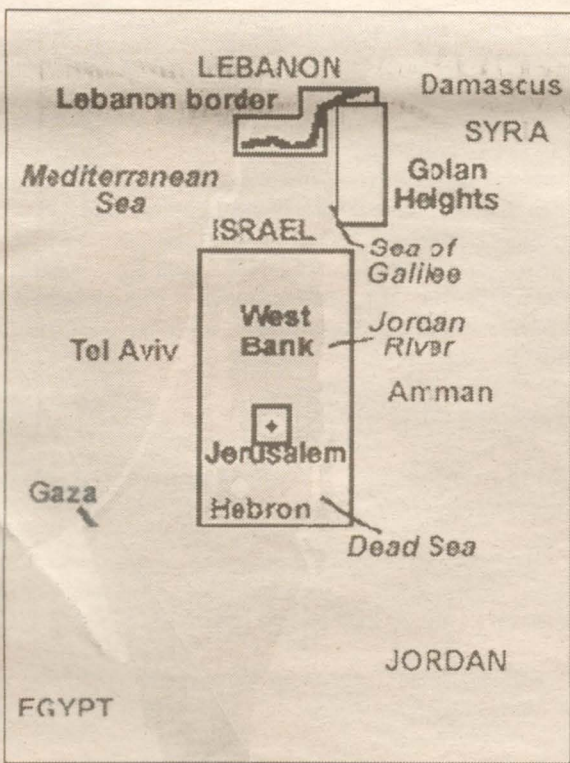
Since the signing of the first Oslo peace agreement in 1993, the number of settlers in the West Bank has doubled to 200,000.

Each settlement is surrounded by what is called a Master Plan — an area of land to which there is no public access. Israel has linked together isolated settlements into three large settlement blocs that divide the West Bank from east to

west. This has occurred since the second Oslo accord was signed in Cairo in 1995. The blocs are designed to prevent the linkage of the North and South of the West Bank, Halper said. Israel insists on "contiguity" between the blocs, and has thus begun turning 250 miles of dirt roads that crisscross the West Bank into large highways, using \$3 billion from the U.S. government.

Around each highway is a "sanitary margin" in which there can be no agriculture or development. These margins are 300 or 400 metres across. The roads amount to about one percent of the land in the West Bank, and can be included in the five percent that Israel proposes to keep. Thus "the Palestinians are really confined to dozens of little tiny islands in which they can't move freely without going through Israeli territory. That's the problem." Palestinians do not, in fact, know exactly what five

continued on page 6



## Palestinians seek home and peace

Native Palestinian wants home for family, even if it is illegal

by sofia kalormakis

the gazette

In the midst of violence, a series of demonstrations and riots led by Palestinians who stand against the rule of Israel in the Gaza strip and the West Bank, two men, one Israeli and one Palestinian, have set out to work together in a cross Canada tour that started Jan. 25 at Dalhousie University.

Jeff Halper is the co-ordinator of the Israeli Coalition Against Home Demolition (ICAHD). Salim Shawamreh is a Palestinian engineer whose house has been torn down twice by the Israeli government for allegedly building his house without a permit. Together, they represent a "Third Voice" in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict happening on the ground and their message is one of peace. And we are critical in our own ways of our own societies," said Halper.

One of ICAHD's main activities is to resist house demolitions performed by the Israeli army. Together with other human rights and Palestinian organizations, ICAHD helps rebuild "illegal" houses and has become an effective vehicle of

peace making. That is how Halper and Shawamreh met and decided to show another point of view.

Shawamreh is a Palestinian who like many others was forced out of Israel in 1967 when he was a young boy. He graduated from a vocational training centre and then moved to Saudi Arabia. After ten years, he decided to return to his homeland. When he arrived, he realized he would need a house for his wife and six children, since his former home had become an overcrowded apartment. He applied for a housing permit.

"Three times I applied to get a permit," Shawamreh said. "First time, they told me it was outside of village zoning, where they don't allow us to expand our land."

The second time Shawamreh applied, he was told that his land had a big slope, which made it unsuitable for construction.

"Everybody knows that Jerusalem is located on mountains and that everyone should have a slope," Shawamreh said.

He insisted that was another reason not to let him build on that land.

Shawamreh applied a third

time and after a year, he was told he had missed two signatures in the ownership of the land and he was turned down again. He said the Israeli government wants to build more bypass roads in those lands and that's why he will not be granted a permit to build a home.

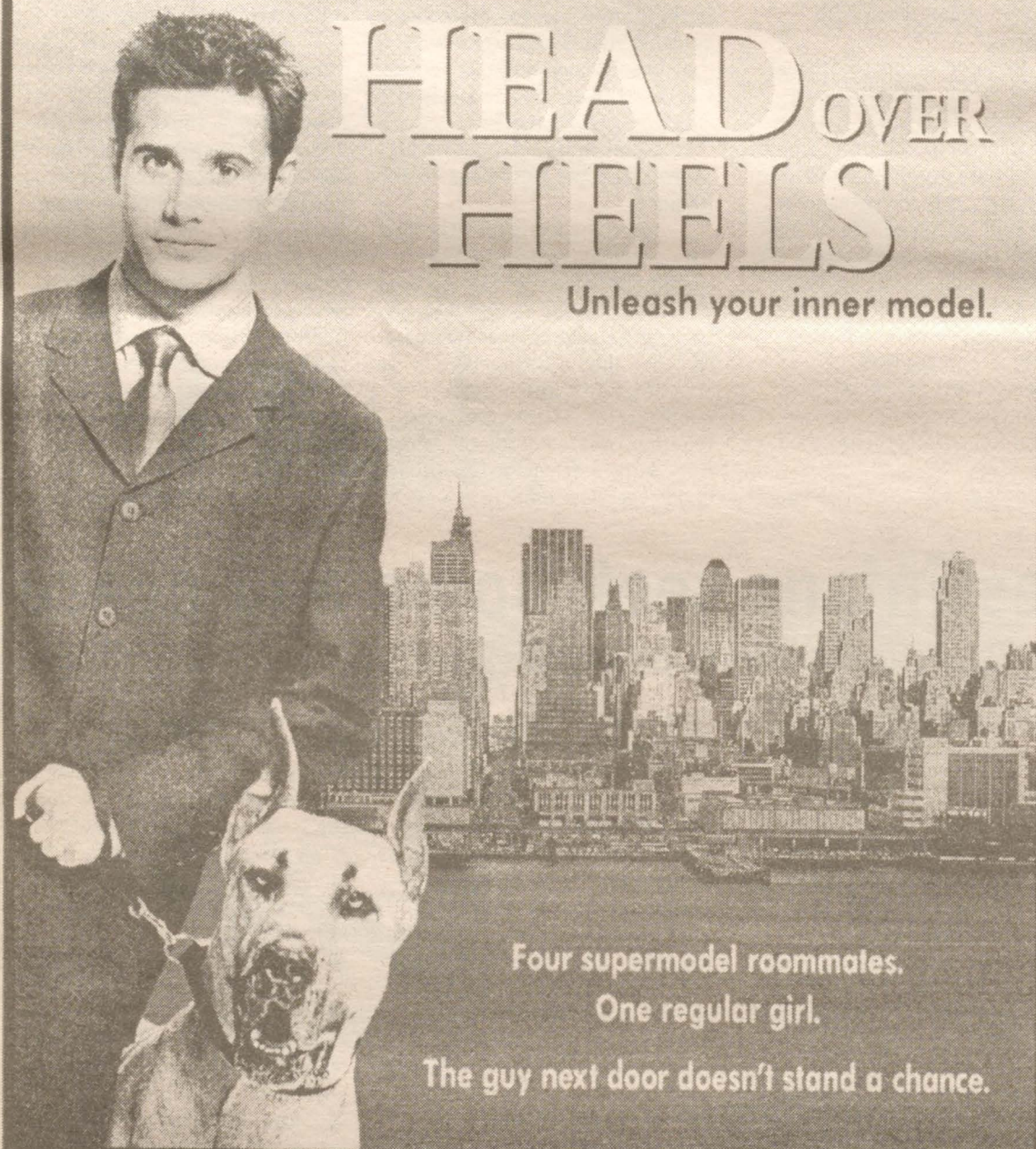
Shawamreh started building a home without a permit, which made his house an illegal construction. He lived with his family in that house for four years, until July 1998, a date he calls the "black date" in his family life when the army destroyed it.

"I saw that we were surrounded by soldiers and a bulldozer coming up," Shawamreh explained. "The leader of the soldiers told me 'this is not your home, this is our home. You have fifteen minutes to take your belongings and family out and we have to destroy it.'"

When Shawamreh refused, the soldiers kicked him and arrested him, while his wife tried to close the door on them. They broke the windows, threw tear-gas in and brought in the bulldozer. As his wife and children

continued on page 6

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## National News

from the Canadian University Press newswire  
by Wendy Sawatzky

### Acadia University refuses to release administration salaries for free

WOLFVILLE, N.S. (CUP) — The Halifax *Chronicle Herald* is appealing Acadia University's decision not to release, free of charge, a book detailing the top 15 salaries of its officials.

The *Chronicle Herald* has turned to the province's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act review officer because Acadia told the newspaper the information is only available in a \$400 book.

"It's more than the \$400. It's the principle," said *Herald* deputy managing editor Frank de Palma. "We went through the same procedures as with other schools. We went through the proper channels and specifically narrowed our requests."

In the fall, the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act that allows the public to access provincial government documents was extended to all Nova Scotia campuses. Of the 11 degree-granting institutions in Nova Scotia, Acadia is the only one that did not comply with the *Herald's* requests for salary information.

However, Acadia University administrators say the university is acting within its rights and cite an exemption within the act that says the legislation does not apply to "published material or material that is available for purchase by the public."

Acadia's freedom of information administrator said the \$400 cost of Acadia's book was intended to cover production expenses and to generate profit. "It's basically a cost recovery plus a fair market value."

Nova Scotia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act review officer Darce Fardy said after an appeal is made, both parties go through a 30-day mediation period. He said a member from his office had mediated "several discussions with both parties." If common ground isn't found, Fardy will consider the arguments made by both sides and issue a decision. Although Fardy's judgement is not binding, the majority of disputing parties typically abide by his verdict.

### Canadian universities consider deal with Thomson Corporation

MONTREAL (CUP) — Multi-media giant Thomson Corporation could soon market courses online bearing the names of 18 universities worldwide, including McGill University, the University of Toronto and the University of British Columbia.

Thomson is close to signing a deal with Universitas 21 — a consortium of universities that have banded together to forge private-sector links and market their prestigious names.

If the deal is accepted, Thomson will market a new line of web-based university courses bearing the names of participating universities. In return for the use of their names, universities will receive royalties on all profits made by Thomson from the initiative.

However, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) is worried a deal with Thomson paves the way for an increasingly corporate and low-quality education system.

"Universities are moving towards a corporate model, where education becomes a commodity which can be sold," said a CAUT spokesperson.

But a Universitas 21 spokesperson argued that if existing educational institutions want to maintain their quality in the face of cutbacks, they must strive to meet the rising demand by signing on to initiatives like the one proposed with Thomson.

The Universitas 21 consortium was formed in 1998 with the aim to "leverage the reputation, resources and experience of its members on behalf of corporate partners." The consortium includes the University of British Columbia, University of Toronto, McGill University, the University of Glasgow, and Peking University.

### Alberta pumps new money into education

EDMONTON (CUP) — After months of pleas from student representatives and administrators, the Alberta government has begun to put money back into post-secondary education.

Colleges and universities will be getting \$25 million from the government thanks to ten recommendations made by the provincial funding review committee, which has been mulling over funding for post-secondary education since it was established in March 2000.

Of the \$25 million for the province's post-secondary institutions, approximately \$13 million is earmarked for faculty retention and attraction. The remaining \$12 million will go towards establishing more equitable funding across the board. A portion of that cash could be used to reduce tuition — which has risen by 209.8 percent in ten years — but the decision of how much remains up to the institutions.

The funding boost accompanies a recent government announcement of 1,245 new full-time spaces in high priority programs like nursing, teaching, business, and information and communications technologies.

### York university denies students space to promote law suit

TORONTO (CUP) — A group of students suing York University for financial losses suffered during an 11-week strike were denied the use of a table on campus to muster support for their cause.

The class action lawsuit was launched against York on Jan. 12. Students went to the university's office of student affairs to rent a table to inform students about the legal suit and collect donations. The group received a table on Monday, but on Tuesday the university refused to help the group.

"Student affairs became aware of what the table was being used for and they thought it was not at best for the school," said legal counsel for the university.

The university's refusal to allow the students to set up a table on campus has angered some students.

"I have no problem if the administration sets up a table next to ours, but not giving us a voice is a slap in the face," says one of the student plaintiffs.

The Ontario government announced last week that York students will see up to six million dollars in extra provincial student loan funding. The money is meant to cover additional expenses as a result of the school year being extended by four weeks.

The group of students who are suing the university are still waiting for a response from York administration, which has 90 days to do so.

IN THEATRES FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2<sup>ND</sup>! SUBJECT TO CLASSIFICATION

# Global temperatures quickly rising

by sofia kalormakis

the gazette

Global temperatures could rise by almost six degrees Celsius over the next century, a new UN report warned Jan. 22.

Hundreds of the world's top scientists gathered on Sunday at a summit in Shanghai and concluded that the average temperatures, at least in the Northern Hemisphere, are rising more than predicted five years ago.

The report, issued by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, (IPCC), is by far the strongest warning ever issued on climate change by an international body. It is considered a scientific standard that seeks to advise government policies around the globe.

For years, the question behind the global warming issue was to determine whether warming was natural or man-made.

Dr. Andrew Weaver, a climate modelling and analyst at the University of Victoria said that after observing the increase of global warming in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the balance of evidence concludes that the blame lies with humans.

"The fact that hundreds of members of the scientific community can now agree that most of the global warming can be attributed to human activity is very powerful," said Weaver. "It's powerful too because scientists can hardly ever agree on anything."

There is evidence that the rising temperatures are triggering droughts, floods and other disasters from shifts in weather patterns. Yet few countries are meeting the commitments to cut emissions of greenhouse gases. Scientist agree that attitudes need to change.

Controls in fossil fuel consumption and alternative energy conservation technologies are some of the answers suggested by Weaver.

"As far as the fossil fuel industry goes, we shouldn't see this as a problem but as a chance to develop alternative technologies," Weaver said. "The Europeans are very progressive, they're light years ahead of North America because they have different attitudes about it."

Some scientists like Dr. Weaver are positive about the outcome of the report, which is the first in a series of key meetings scheduled for this year.

Others like Dr. Mike Risk, a geologist at McMaster University, doubt that the document will

encourage great changes.

"This sort of meeting never accomplishes anything," Risk said. "We were one of the first nations to break the promises we made in Rio ten years ago and we embarrassed North America by refusing to cut gas emissions as we promised in Kyoto in 1997."

Energy consumption attitudes in both industry and government are the biggest problem, Risk said. In a country that ranks as the highest energy user per capita in the world, it is difficult to encourage others to do what we ourselves don't want to compromise. He said that when it comes to energy, Canada's position is a disgrace.

"The government is not leading us out of this and they're not listening to the scientific advice they themselves pay for," Risk said.

He emphasized that if the government had listened to scientific advice years ago, Canadian fisheries would not have collapsed.

The next step in the review process, now that the document is approved and publicly available is to study the socio-economic effects and mitigation strategies of global warming.

Although industrialized nations are the leading producers of greenhouse gases, it is the developing world that will be affected the most, the report said.

"The problem was caused by the developed world," Weaver said. "The reality is that a developing nation has an insignificant amount of carbon dioxide in comparison to the industrialized world."

He said that since the developed countries have the technological and monetary capacity to clean up our mess, we should help others clean theirs up as well.

The report is intended to add urgency to world climate negotiations that ended last November when countries couldn't agree on how to reduce greenhouse gases under a commitment by industrialized

countries made in Kyoto, Japan in 1997. If the new predictions come to pass, the Earth will be thrown into a climate change so drastic that it could bring about another Ice Age.

A key point in the discussions is the U.S.-led effort to reduce the cost of emission cuts. Washington and its allies, including Canada, want to subtract carbon dioxide absorbed by old forests and farmland from a country's reduction quota, a stance that many governments oppose.

"I strongly disagree with Canadian policy based on gas credits," Weaver said. "If we are creating a problem, we must assist in a solution in leading by example."

Weaver and Risk both agreed that there is an element of hypocrisy in the search for some solutions. They said that imposing a solution to those who don't have the capacity like the developing world leaves a lot to be said of the developed world.

"Canadians aren't leading the

pack," Risk said. "If the will of Canadians was there, we would be solving the problem."

While melting Arctic ice threatens to raise sea levels and high temperatures disrupt fishing, farming and forestry and kill much of the globe's coral reefs, the biggest threat is a lack of education in the general public.

The media plays an essential role in presenting the arguments for and against global warming, Weaver said.

"I think generally the single biggest issue is the reporting of both sides," he said. "You must weight a descending opinion by checking how credible it is."

The Shanghai conference was the start of a series of meetings under UN auspices to gather evidence for climate negotiators. Other gatherings will focus on the social and economic costs of global warming and how to reduce it. The series ends in April with the release of a climate report in Nairobi, Kenya.

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## Defend your rights

by jay nathwani

the gazette

The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission held an open house in their new offices on Jan. 26, reminding the public of the role they play — one that is relevant to students in many aspects of their lives.

The Commission investigates complaints lodged under the Human Rights Act and administers affirmative action education programs.

"About 80 percent of complaints arise from the employment setting," said Commission Chair James Dewar.

These complaints can be in relation to discrimination based on race, sexual orientation, or any of the grounds laid out in the Human Rights Act. The Commission is currently handling around 300 cases.

Viki Samuels, the Co-ordinator for Race Relations and Affirmative Action at the Commission, said that many of the complaints from young people and students have to do with harassment.

"We get a number of calls from university students who are

experiencing harassment, particularly sexual harassment."

She says that youth are often more reluctant to bring forward complaints.

"Youth are usually dependent on their parents, who will come forward and lay the complaint for them. But certainly university students are more likely to come forward."

The internet provides a forum for harassment that the Commission acknowledges is a problem it cannot currently deal with.

"It's very, very tricky ground," said Samuels. "The provincial Human Rights Commission has no jurisdiction. There are no specific laws as of now, but certainly the police and the Canadian Human Rights Commission are very concerned about it."

Michael Baker, the Minister of Justice and Attorney General for Nova Scotia, responsible for the administration of the Human Rights Act, spoke at the open house.

"We have a very clear commitment to human rights and the importance of the Human Rights Commission in advancing diversity for all Nova Scotians," he said.

He cited a recently launched policy "which is designed to promote employment of black and Mi'kmaq graduates of Dalhousie law school."

Mr. Baker also hinted that the offices of the provincial Ombudsman and the Human Rights Commission might be combined sometime in the future, though he emphasized that no decisions had been made and that any action taken would be to enhance human rights. He did, however, speak of the "synergies that might come as a result of new partnerships."

The current Executive Director of the Commission, Mayann Francis, is also the Ombudsman.

## Palestinians seek home

continued from page 3

stood outside watching their home being destroyed, some of them lost consciousness. After the demolition was completed, many of their neighbours came to help Shawamreh's family. ICAHD also joined them to rebuild their homes and repair the damage.

"Seven people were injured that day, including a 16-year-old who lost his kidney and part of his stomach," Shawamreh said. "We lost our homes, we lost our lives."

The next day, Palestinian Committee for general land defence and ICAHD set out to build the house again. Hundreds of Israelis and Palestinians joined forces to rebuild Shawamreh's house. They finished it 22 days later.

The following morning, Shawamreh and his family relived the horror they had felt 23 days earlier when they woke up and found machine guns being pointed at them. Once again, military operations took over and 200 soldiers bulldozed the area, over the fresh concrete just, one after it had been laid.

"We need to live in a home," Shawamreh said. "We need to live in a city like everybody else in a home."

Shawamreh pointed out that when the world media covered his story, he was blamed for the destruction of his home and one Israeli newspaper said that if he had brought the two missing signatures, he would be given the housing permit.

For three months Halper and Shawamreh along with ICAHD, worked with the municipalities to get the missing signatures but the signatures were not granted. In a desperate attempt to build a

home, Shawamreh bought land in the small village of Annata.

"Everybody owns land in Annata," Shawamreh said. "I asked him [the Israeli deputy] to sign on a paper that if I got two signatures, he has no problem if I build on that piece of land."

He collected 400 hundred signatures and brought them back to the municipality.

"I said to them, 'here are the signatures from the Annata people, choose whichever one you want,'" Shawamreh said, as he shrugged and waved his hands.

But he stopped smiling when he recounted how days later, he was told that his file had been lost and that he could not build his house in Annata either. Shawamreh started to build his house along with ICAHD for the third time and until now, everything has gone well but he fears that because it is considered an illegal construction, it will be destroyed again.

Shawamreh's is one of thousands of Palestinians who are suffering the consequences of the occupation on the ground. In this year's Intifada, more than 500 Palestinian houses have been destroyed and more are expected to be torn down. Furthermore, Halper

and Shawamreh both agreed that the indifference shown by the media to report what goes happens on the ground plays a major role in the conflict.

Halper noted in his presentation that the motivation for demolishing these Palestinian homes is purely political and that it violates all human rights covenants, although an elaborate system of planning regulations and a complicated government set up gives it a legal façade. ICAHD's activities includes resisting the expropriation of Palestinian lands for Israeli settlements, bypass highways and industrial parks, forms of economic warfare such as the government's uprooting of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian fruit and olive trees and environmental degradation, among others.

"I don't know what peace process we are talking about," Shawamreh said. "We are not in peace, we are in a war, on the ground we are in a war."

Halper and Shawamreh showed that if certain elements of control on the Israeli government's side are dismantled, the Palestinians can have a state. They believe they are living proof of the things that can be accomplished when people work together in peace.

## Lasting peace

continued from page 3

percent Israel wants to keep, because, said Halper, "Israel has never presented a map to the Palestinians."

Halper spoke of a "huge project going on in Israel today that's called the trans-Israel highway. It's also called a real estate highway because part of its purpose is to open areas to real estate development that are today rural and isolated and Palestinian."

The highway splits in the north, part of it running to the Sea of Galilee, where many Israeli Palestinians live. Part of the purpose of the highway, said Halper, was to "Judaïse the Galilee. In other words, the 1948 war is still being fought. The entire project has an amazing purpose, and that is to move the entire population centre of Israel eastwards, this was hugging the West Bank, and that way completely and de facto

incorporating the West Bank into Israel proper."

In spite of the differences that exist between Palestinians and Israelis, Halper believes that it is possible to build a lasting, and thus necessarily a just, peace. His purpose in bringing his message to Canada is to remind us that "peace is not going to come from within Israel. And therefore active international support for the peace process is necessary. The international community has to be tough on Israel. This isn't only an Israeli-Palestinian issue; it's a global issue. The world has a responsibility for resolving the conflict, and has a right to tell Israel: 'We have other expectations. We expect you to end the occupation. We will not support the settlements. We won't support repression of the Palestinians. And in that situation I think that Canada and other western countries will play a really important role in pushing it to do what it has to make peace, which is why we came.'"

## Know your rights!

You may not be discriminated against on account of: age; race; colour; religion; creed; sex; sexual orientation; physical or mental disability; ethnic, national or aboriginal origin; family status; marital status; source of income; political belief, affirmation or activity; or an irrational fear of contracting illness or disease.

Speak to a human rights officer to find out more about the protections in Nova Scotia's Human Rights Act. Call toll-free 1-877-269-7699 for more information or 424-4139, or visit [www.gov.ns.ca/humanrights](http://www.gov.ns.ca/humanrights)

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## In defence of journalism

In this era of high speed internet connections, space exploration and scientific evolution, it seems almost unnecessary to question what constitutes the truth about anything when you know that you can only trust your senses when it comes to any truth. At the same time, it makes us more aware that we should question everything we hear or see and evaluate what it means in reality, especially when we belong to that reality. This is the dilemma that many encounter when they think of the media, which represents "the eye" of the general public in our every day lives.

In the last few weeks, I've noticed that many people are sceptical about journalists and the media in general. I suppose it shouldn't surprise me since I hear people bashing newspapers and TV stations on a regular basis. And yet I found myself listening to what people I have interviewed, and to others who simply commented on random subjects, were saying. They all seemed to agree that while the media is supposed to be objective about the stories it presents, it sometimes misses the point of informing people about the important issues in its

**Where should the media go from here on in? Who dictates what should be told and what should not? Should there be some limits as to what the general public can know or should everything be told?**

quest for objectivity. In other words, the fact that "we" as the media don't pick up causes is keeping us from doing a better job.

In North America, journalism schools aim to teach their students

how to be objective so they can successfully tell a story without placing their own opinions and distorting the news. But this isn't the case in other places around the world. In Europe, it's normal to read a newspaper or watch a television station where they clearly state what political parties and views they support and use the media to promote them. In other places, the amount of control over the media limits the journalist's rights to enjoy his or her freedom of expression and present the full story, not to mention endangering their lives.

What role should the media play? In the case of the Middle East, the conflict between Palestine and Israel, the media has been accused repeatedly of taking sides, not showing the real problems that happen on the ground and manipulating the peace-process.

While it's true that most media networks are privately owned and they each follow their own agenda, journalists do go out to report what they see and what they live through while they're on location.

When violence broke out in the former Yugoslavia, many Western channels showed different versions of the story that weren't always impartial or fair. There were many people who risked their lives for the search of the truth, so many injured, not just journalists but other members of international humanitarian organisations, whose only goal was to help their fellow human beings. And in the midst of all these tragedies, it occasionally happened that a real story, unbound by personal conviction, came through and a person's life was saved because someone took a stand and decided report what they saw, to show what they lived and send a message to the world of the many atrocities that were taking place, not just on one side of the conflict, but on all fronts and to all kinds of people.

So my question remains: where should the media go from here on in? Who dictates what should be told and what should not? Should there be some limits as to what the general public can know or should everything be told? Just to echo Jack Nicholson's words in *A Few Good Men*, "You can't handle the truth."

If "the eye" shows everything that happens in the world as it allegedly does, massive catastrophes, war and famine, it's accused of being depressing, and of never focusing on the more positive news. But then, people usually don't want to hear about someone who's had a nice day or someone whose baby was born unless there was some complication involved in the birth. In other words, unless there is some drama involved, people aren't interested in learning about 'good news,' because it's human nature. I think that networks understand that too and so they present what they believe the public wants.

So I ask you, as the reader and the one who's ultimately in charge of what will be read, hear or seen, what should "we" as young members of the press present to you and how should we do it? To present both sides of an argument or to take sides? That is my question for you. Please, feel free to write back and let me know what you think so that I too can understand my place in the world.

Sofia Kalormakis

### SUBMISSIONS INVITED FOR COMMENTARY



Email submissions to [commentary@Xweb1.com](mailto:commentary@Xweb1.com) or swing by The Gazette office.



Room 312 SUB. Call 494 2507 for info.

## As the plot thickens

Dear Editor:

As I read the article "Snow can't cool the gardening spirit" (*the Gazette* Jan. 25/01), my department's motto, "No good deed goes unpunished" immediately sprang to mind.

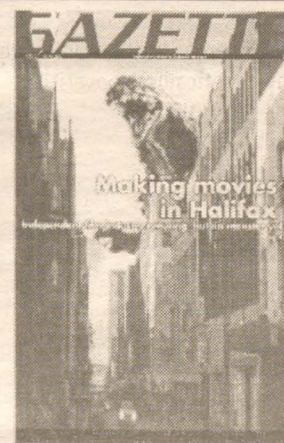
In the article, a Ms Burt-Gerrans is quoted as saying that the Community Garden has faced many challenges since its establishment in 1996 but, in fact, only one is mentioned — the garden's displacement in 1998. What she apparently failed to say, and what your readers should know, is that when the University was approached by NSPIRG in March 1996 with the request for a plot of land for an organic garden — we responded positively — not only providing the land but tools, top-soil, fencing and a source of water. However, knowing that the land might be needed at some point in the future, the University reserved the right to terminate the agreement at any time. These terms, which were contained in a letter I wrote to Ms Satya Ramen (April 8, 1996), were agreed to without hesitation by NSPIRG.

Thirty months later, in October 1998, I wrote to NSPIRG, informing them that the lot would now be required to accommodate a house which, to avoid its demolition, was being relocated there from the site of the new academic building. However, I also stated that, if at all possible, we would provide NSPIRG with another plot of land under the same or similar conditions. In fact, not only did we find a plot very close to the previous one but we roto-tilled it and provided top-soil, all free of charge.

The University assisted NSPIRG with time and resources, not with any expectation of being thanked but because we believed the Community Garden to be a good idea and an initiative worthy of support. It is unfortunate, however, that the only example of the University's goodwill that Ms Burt-Gerrans could apparently think of was that we "threw in a dilapidated shed ...".

Sincerely,

Bill Lord,  
Director, Facilities Management



Bite me.

A rare photo of Godzilla during a visit to Halifax.

## THE DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

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All submissions must be e-mailed, or on a Mac or IBM 3 1/2 inch disk, in a "text" format. The deadline is Mondays at 4:30 p.m.

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## COMMENTARY

# Humanity's crude view of our relationship with Nature

by kathryn elmer

the gazette

The environment is an incredibly complex web of interrelationships. Everything in ecology can be reduced to spheres — we can focus on genes, an individual, a population, a species. And each step back from the focal area reveals that what was our focus is actually part of a larger whole. With each step back we see that, in reality, these spheres encompass the entire globe. Large scale or long-term upsets in any of those parts will be reflected in its constituent parts and will echo throughout the whole. Humans of the past, present, and future, in every aspect of our lives and economies, are inextricably linked to the environment. Because the complexities of this environment still are not completely known, the potential repercussions of the environmental degradation we commit are also largely unknown. What we do know is that a crumbling environment brings a crumbling quality of life for its inhabitants and an exhausted or spoilt environment cannot support complex life.

Genetic variability, species, ecosystems and traditional knowledge are being lost at an alarming rate. This loss represents an impoverishment of nature's dynamic ability to adapt, to change, to survive challenges, and to continue functioning healthily. Global climate change is a decisive example of an environmental fluctuation to which many genetically impoverished populations, having lost a significant amount of their diversity, may not survive.

Although species extinction has been occurring since the beginning of life, present rates of extinction dwarf those of recent evolutionary history and exceed even the largest historical natural mass extinctions. It is estimated that from 8000 BCE to 1000 BCE one species was lost to extinction per 1000 years; from 1600 to 1900 this increased to one species per four years; from 1900 to 1975 we have lost more than a species per year and that number is rising. Further, species loss refers to *known* species. Of the estimated 13 to 25 million species on Earth, only 1.8 million have been scientifically described, so the actual present extinction rates could in fact be

tenfold this estimated rate.

But extinction represents only the final RIP of a species. Actual loss of biodiversity is much greater, though its loss largely passes without a funeral. Biodiversity encompasses the diversity of life: the variety of living organisms considered at all levels of organization, including the genetic, species, and higher taxonomic levels, and the variety of habitats and ecosystems. Genetic diversity allows local populations and individuals to adapt to their environment. The loss of this variability threatens the ability of species and populations to evolve and meet the demands and stresses of a changing environment. Yet, this diversity is what is lost with each forest cut and each large-scale poisoning. Habitat loss continues to be the greatest threat to biodiversity.

The globalization of unsustainable consumption patterns in the name of trade liberalization and the desire to maximize profits is toying dangerously with the environment. It is often a large, often multinational, company who makes the first expensive headway into a previously pristine area. In search of one commodity - oil, gold, valuable woodlands - they open up the floodgates for exponential habitat loss.

Careless and disrespectful environmental destruction from North American-based multinationals such as Shell, exploit oil in the Amazon, leave spills, sludge, deforestation, paved roads, and increased cancer rates in the local population in its wake. Offshore oil drilling by Shell in Nigeria silts the delta of rivers effectively halting the flow and killing the aquatic life and people's access to fresh water. Roads and destruction blazed deep into the tropical jungles in search of rare tropical woods open the area up for poaching, forest-fires, and further human colonization while inhibiting the migrations of the native animal populations. Tropical forests are slashed and burned to make room for short-lived grazing and farming for North American fast-food chains livestock upon the thin and barren clay soils of these rapidly disappearing forests.

The recent near-catastrophic diesel spill in the Galapagos highlights the irreparable harm to biodiversity which can occur in the time it takes to dash a tanker's hull.

The Galapagos are home to flightless cormorants, sea lions, marine iguanas, and a plethora of unique species found nowhere else on Earth (42 percent of the flora, 80 percent of the birds, 90 percent of the mammals, and 90 percent of the reptiles of Galapagos are endemic to the archipelago). Currents are carrying the spill away from the accident site of San Cristobal Island but towards neighbouring islands in the archipelago. By Jan. 21, six days after the ship's accident, oil had contaminated a 500-yard stretch of beach on Santa Fe Island and the spill had an overall open-water area of over 390 square miles. Almost two weeks after the accident, apparent damage to wildlife was limited but the local environmental watchdog, *Fundacion Natura*, said the spill will have "irreparable" consequences to the local ecology. More than 600,000 litres of fuel have leaked into the ocean and rescue crews have been unable to contain the spill. Diesel fuel is highly toxic and, rather than coating the animals and plants it comes into contact with as crude does, it is easily absorbed into the tissues of living things, effectively poisoning them.

The Galapagos ecosystems are already weakened. Some Galapagos populations are suffering from food shortages caused by the recent extreme weather event of El Nino when warming ocean temperatures devastated fish stocks and storms obliterated many shorelines. Further, the human settlement in Galapagos grows by 10 percent per year and introduces foreign species which threaten the local, endemic populations (in 1994 more than 300 new plant species invaded Galapagos). Vulnerable populations likely will not survive if food sources are further contaminated. The Ecuadorean government struggles to deal with the accident; biologists world-wide bemoan the imminent damage to a fragile, unparalleled habitat.

What was a tanker doing transporting diesel into the bays of a threatened ecosystem? Refueling high-end tourist boats, of course.

Considering environmental degradation and damage to biodiversity quickly forces us to make value judgments. But it is dangerous to make such judgments without thought to what is valuable and to the potential repercussions. Does the

uniqueness of the Galapagos Islands more valuable than many other ecosystems? Why are visitors willing to spend so much money to see these infamous islands?

There is more to "value" than may first appear and there are differences between extrinsic and intrinsic values. These lines are hard to draw. Something can be said to have extrinsic value, or instrumental value, if it can be used as a means to another's - in this case a human - ends. An inherent or intrinsic value is attributed to a thing for which its value is an end in itself; it needs no use to justify its existence. We could say that a human life has intrinsic value. Natural resources are said to have extrinsic value. What values, if any, can we attribute to biodiversity?

The extrinsic, "useful" values of biodiversity are far-reaching. The biological world provides people with food, shelter, firewood, industrial materials, and ecological services. Pharmaceutically, biodiversity holds a secret medicinal wealth within its fronds. As a small example: of the 69,000 *known* species of fungi (a mere fraction of all fungi) only 7 percent have been screened for pharmaceutically useful properties. Of these 7 percent, four antibiotics appropriate for treating human illness were discovered by modern medicine. However, many indigenous cultures have already 'screened' their local biota and have millennia of accumulated medicinal knowledge.

The loss of biodiversity is known to be closely linked to the loss of indigenous cultures and wisdom — both fall prey to a rapidly-globalizing world - and in the particular instance of medicines, these simultaneous losses are felt tenfold. The ecological services the living world and its networks provide us degrade wastes, cleanse the air and water, pollinate trees and plants, and replenish the renewable resources we extract. Biodiversity has immeasurable extrinsic worth in the future in its role in ecosystem and biosphere integrity and support of all life. But surely we could all agree that the rich and complex life around us is worth something, has some value, aside from its utility.

The Galapagos Islands have great utility to the Ecuadorean government and the local island inhabitants. Tourism from the

Galapagos produces more than \$US100 million for Ecuador each year. Clearly, the tourists' willingness to pay for high-priced tours indicates that they enjoy the islands for their beauty and uniqueness: an intangible experience from which the tourists gain no material benefit. Yet this is counterbalanced by the government's and the locals' extrinsic financial payoff for exposing the islands to the hazards of tourism. Dangers such as an ever-increasing human settlement spurred on by tourism-based demand for employment, accidentally and purposely introduced non-Galapagos species, and a petroleum station run by PetroEcuador on delicate lands to refuel the tourist boats and supply local demand.

When the environment and its plenty are only viewed as means to our ends, we lose sight of the deeper values of some facets of our environment; values that exist whether or not they give us something tangible. According to the United Nations Environmental Programme, UNEP, a biodiversity ethic respects the rights of other species and gives them space to flourish and multiply; biodiversity should be conserved as a matter of principle and all forms of life warrant respect regardless of economic worth. When something is accredited intrinsic value its destruction cannot be careless or wanton and without great consideration of the repercussions. It is prudent 'hat the environment be preserved for both its intrinsic value and its extrinsic value to life itself. We can't underestimate that what is protected for its intrinsic value presently can also hold extrinsic value in the future. The extrinsic value of Galapagos tourism will soon expire if the intrinsic value of the ecosystem is not preserved.

Stepping back from the sphere of the Galapagos, we can see that these lessons are of global importance. The effects of environmental degradation clearly go far beyond a diesel spill or the loss of a unique ecosystem. The loss of a wide sphere: a ruined habitat, extinguishes the smaller sphere: genetic diversity. The UNESCO definition of human rights states that a healthy environment is a human right. We can only continue to eliminate spheres for so long before they impinge on the ability of humans to survive justly let alone the marine iguanas.

## CFL?

Editor,

For two years now, I have watched this country swell up in excitement at the prospect of a coming Superbowl. I regard this phenomenon as strange because Canada's football championship has already taken place with only a fraction of this excitement.

As an Australian studying in Canada, I sought to discover the distinct appetite of the Canadian sport fan. Hockey was an easy favourite. But I also learned that Canada boasts its own distinct version of football. I consider myself now a fan of the CFL but I wonder why there are not many more. During a trip to western Canada I had the chance to attend two games and I was surprised at the large number of vacant seats. And when the Grey Cup rolled around in November, there was not a pub in Halifax that advertised the match.

I am curious as to why Canadians ignore a league that has existed in various forms for over 130 years and a championship game played 88 times. I have heard that it is an inferior game compared to the NFL. This is certainly the case in terms of talent. But the CFL's characteristic rules lend its brand of football enough distinction in order to be considered a different game.

It is unfortunate that the only exclusively Canadian sport is shadowed by the image of the Budweiser swilling American football fan. I am not convinced that the excitement I witness at the end of January is genuine interest in the Superbowl. Rather, I regard it as excitement fulfilling a need created by the flashy image of the American NFL.

Saul Burch

## RANT OR RAVE

I threw up on my computer, but I'm better now

I would like to rant about germs. It seems that just about every form of life that exists on the planet serves one useful purpose or another. Except illness-causing bacteria. Everything from common bread mold up to most top carnivores seems to in some way benefit the ecosystem as a whole. For the life of me, I can't understand the purpose served by germs. The only imaginable purpose is that illness-causing bacteria serves to kill off weak or malnourished organisms, thus freeing up resources for stronger ones. Seriously though, I'm not going to die from this mild flu. The worst that is going to happen is that I'll lose a few hours sleep due to coughing and experience discomfort through the day as my body makes adjustments in order to combat whatever has invaded. So it would seem that this illness-causing bug that is trying to make a life for itself in my body is nothing more than a pain in the neck, serving no ecological purpose whatsoever. God must have been a little ahead of schedule when he finished making the world.

Jeremy Sears

## An ode to Super Survivor Bowl Sunday



by chris sullivan

the gazette

North America was blessed by the heavens on Jan. 28. As all those bleary eyed souls arose from their prior night of slumber, the adrenaline started pumping immediately, for today was Super Survivor Bowl day.

Leaping out of their beds, their feet seemed to float across floors as minds raced over the scheduled nacho indulgence and the Americanized piss beer influence of which they were all surely to be subjected. Budweiser. Coors Light. Michelob. The puritans here in Nova Scotia anticipated their Keiths while the more conscious dreamed of the creamy head on a Keiths Light.

"Super Bowl and a new Survivor series", the masses yelled, arms held skyward as if the creator itself — Is god asexual? — had blessed them with something so wondrous that surely a day like today couldn't be created by the simple minds of

humanity. Could it be any better?

In fact, it could. As any real football fan could tell you, the world was just hours away from two of the NFL's best defensive lines facing one another (not literally). The New York Giants and the Baltimore Ravens had proved their worth all season and were now ready to do battle in Tampa, Florida for the really shiny Vince Lombardi Trophy which is inevitably given to the true winners of the league, the store bought NFL champions.

In this day and age it seems that any team can be bought, molded and formed into 'true' champions just like the multi-million dollar spirit of the New York Yankees, but that's beside the point on Super Survivor Bowl Sunday.

Super Survivor Bowl Sunday is in fact all about the dollars. We witness million-dollar athletes play at a billion dollar event and after that we watch ordinary (think about that for a second) people folk connive each other

out of a million dollar prize.

That's why the world is sooooo excited. They can almost watch the money itself, playing games in which the winning money will get even more money and the losing money, well they even get a bit more money.

So after numerous pick up football games the world over, and the bets being placed on true champions that will almost certainly beat the spread, the world took cold showers to prepare for five hours of true television excitement.

Is everything in place? Beer. Check. Nachos. Check. The television is in good working order and the reclining mechanism is on the chair is working to a tee. If only everyday were like today, there would be no war, starvation, anger... as the mind fades into the recycled waves of the television.

**Here we go. Fasten your seat belts — you're in for the ride of your life.**

We'll start you off on a quick snack of Ray Charles, singing America the Beautiful. Let's follow that up with a fly by of a B2 Bomber and a salute to the man who sent Saddam packing, Mr. Military Might himself, General Stormin' Norman Schwarzkopf. Have you had enough? Well, let's see how you like the Backstreet Boys in all their masculine glory singing the Star Spangled Banner. "God Bless America," the world said as they stood precariously on the tops of their chairs, emulating the great balancing act that is the old stars and stripes.

We now return you to your regularly scheduled football game.

The Giants, well they won the toss and got the ball first. They had to punt it to the Ravens who had to punt it to the Ravens who had to...you get the picture. The first half of the game had a total of 13 punts in fact. Somewhere in there, the Ravens scored ten points.

Halftime: There is a joke to be told here. What do you get when you cross Aerosmith, N'sync, Brittany Spears, Nelly and Mary J. Blige? A big fat hairy ass.

Run DMC should have thrown on some steel toed Adidas sneaks and gone to the game just to kick the crap out of Aerosmith for trying to get away with a 'fresh new' version of "Walk this way."

So after that incredibly horrendous showing of crappy entertainment, we are returned to the game. The game. The game. The Ravens score a bunch and the Giants score a few. The most exciting part of the whole three hours is when there are back to back punt returns for touchdowns. Other than that....

So guess who got the game's MVP trophy? Ray Lewis. He's the same man who, in the past year, got off murder

charges after two men were killed at a bar after last years Super Bowl Sunday. Mr. Lewis was at that bar, and somewhere near the men that were killed in some kind of brawl. So instead of being charged with murder, Ray got off with obstruction of justice and a \$250,000 fine from the NFL. Let's all chant MVP really loud so that Ray can here about just how good he really is.

So the Ravens won the game, New York City fell incredibly silent, and the world got out of their chairs to go pee before the new Survivor series started.

Australia, the unforgiving outback: this is the story of 16 'real' people and their voyage to

talk behind each others backs, to show the world just how great they really are, to conquer nature like true conquistadors, all for the single prize of one million dollars.

Survivor ends and the world suddenly stops breathing. "What happens now," the people asked in unison. Finally, the creator of it all spoke down to them from the heavens.

"It's time for bed," the voice boomed. "But what about the halftime show next year," one small child asked. "Don't worry little one. By then Eminem and Christine Aguilera will be dating and they will sing a rosy rendition of 'I Got You Babe.'"

The young child squealed with delight.

## Vanessa's Closet

advice from someone completely unqualified by vanessa owen

Dear Vanessa,

I have a little problem, I have six or seven girls after me and I don't like any of them including my ex...she really gets on my nerves for some reason probably because she broke up with me. My friends really don't like her so they bugged her to death by saying shit like I don't like her anymore and that I was going to break up with her...which I was. Anyways, but now that she broke up with me and I must admit I am very happy, but wait that's not the end, she really wants to go out with me and it's pissing me off. Please help me!

Amazing Adam

Dear Double A,

Wow. Six or seven girls after you, huh? I've got some problems too, you know. Yes. My breasts are very large and I just can't keep the men away. All they want from me is sex. Or maybe it's my money. I'm very rich. Did I mention that? I guess we all have our crosses to bear.

Dear Vanessa,

I have been married to a great guy for over two years. Everything is great except for one small (but becoming large) issue: he goes to strip bars with his friends usually once a week. I would really like to understand why men who are in relationships find a need to go to strip bars. I feel it is degrading to the women they are in a relationship with. Why do they do this?

Baffled

Dear Baffled,

Do you find it degrading or disrespectful? I'd think the women who have to shake their tits for a couple bucks would find it degrading, and I'd think you would find it disrespectful in light of the commitment you and your man have, presumably, made. Several weeks back I had a question from a woman who felt having naughty chat over the Internet was breaking marriage vows. Visiting strip bars, in my mind, would fall into a similar category. Exactly where is the line drawn? Is it unfaithful to have sexual contact with another person? What about looking at naked people? Is it less of a betrayal if it's photos of naked people? I'm not going to answer that question for you because it's something that needs to be worked out between the two making the commitment. And if you haven't discussed this yet, you'd best get to it soon.

As to why men go to these places? They enjoy having erections in public, I suppose

Dear Vanessa,

I am 19 and I go to Dal. I wanted to open a new business this summer. How do I go about getting financial backing for this type of project?

Working Hard

Dear Hardly Working,

You're in luck my friend. I've just stumbled upon a money-making scheme of a lifetime: selling crack to school kids. The money is great, you get to help out the youth of this nation and the bonus: sex for drugs. Sure those open sores all over their bodies are gross but you'll get used to it. All kidding aside I'd think the bookstore would have books on starting a business. Or try the registrar's office and ask about summer grants. The whole thing is long and drawn out and frankly me nor the readers of this column have the attention span to... oh hey, the Dukes of Hazard are on TNN. Boy, them Duke brothers sure get themselves into a lot of trouble, don't they?

Send your questions to: [vanessascloset@hotmail.com](mailto:vanessascloset@hotmail.com)

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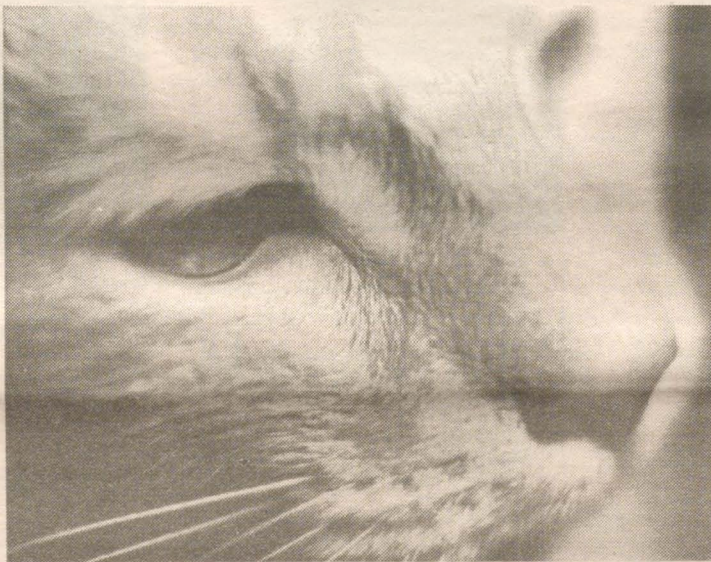


First Wives Club



High key girl

Mark Bennett, photos.



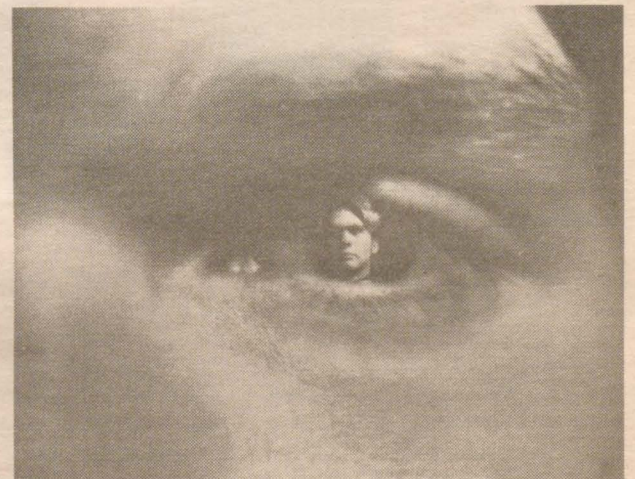
Angus



The Crow



Hell froze over



Body and soul

Streeter plays an important, even crucial role in our society by pushing at the barriers until it hurts. Then we stop. Usually. Or when asked.

This week Streeter asks: **what would it take for you to punch someone's lights out?**



If they ask a stupid question — like you!

April MacQueen  
7th year  
undecided



A blinding rage caused by the death of George Dubya Bush.

Chris Sullivan  
1st year  
Oceanography



You'd probably have to hurt my heart.

Nicholas "Uniquitous" McInnis  
2nd year undecided.  
Also celebrating his about 20th Streeter appearance.



Very little. Mind control and sheer stupidity.

Alicia Polonsky  
1st year  
Theatre

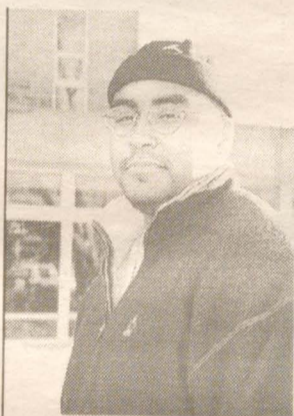


They'd have to 'dis' my homies.

Eric Myatt  
1st year  
Engineering.

They'd have to punch me first.

Seamus MacNeil  
1st year  
Engineering.



A racial slur.

Mike Francis  
5th year  
Economics.



They'd have to be endangering my life, safety or someone else.

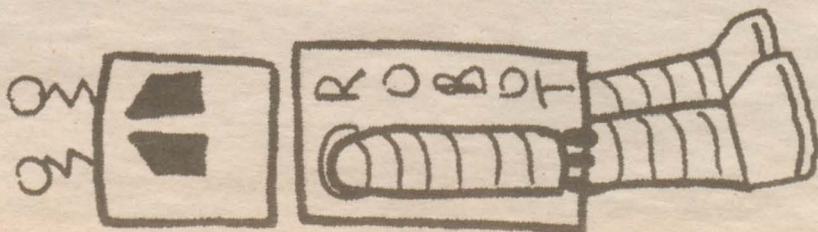
Sarah Mullen  
3rd year  
Biology.



Messin' wit da Commerce Society.

Phil Wilkinson  
1st year  
Commerce

Help me.  
I've fallen & I can't get up.



# Black Diamond heats up the Palace

Kiss tribute, with help from Ma

by amanda risser

the gazette

Did somebody turn up the heat at the Palace last weekend? That place was 'hotter than hell!'

Black Diamond put on quite the performance at the Palace last weekend. For those of you who didn't make it out, Black Diamond is a band made up of four hardcore Kiss fans.

Kurt Frohlich plays Ace Frehley, Darren Smith plays Paul Stanley, Darren Harkema plays Gene Simmons and Claud Efron plays Peter Criss in the tribute to the rock-legends. The group dresses, looks and sounds just like Kiss — but aren't. Or as Smith puts it, "we are just like Kiss — as close as you can get to Kiss, but without any money."

Black Diamond went on a little past midnight and played for two hours straight. That's a lot of entertainment for a six dollar cover charge.

Friday night brought out an older crowd, a lot of the hardcore Kiss fans. Some came sporting their favorite Kiss T-shirt, a few even had their faces painted like their idols.

Saturday night was definitely the better night of the two in terms of both performance and number. Both Jerry's and the

Palace were pretty packed, but there was still room to move around. Saturday night definitely brought out a younger crowd than Friday. All the same, they seemed to enjoy the show just as much.

The band managed to keep the crowd on their toes all night long, as blazes of fire illuminated the stage and large bangs from explosives were set off on cue. Everybody watched in awe as the Demon spit up blood and Star Child blew a ball of flame from his mouth. The show that Black Diamond put on was truly a theatrical experience. Everything was choreographed perfectly, from start to finish, as much flash as rock.

It takes the band members an hour and a half to put on their make-up before a show. The costumes that they wear are designed by Frohlich's mom.

"She studied pictures and videos. We would be pausing a video going ok, he's got three rhinestones across the...yeah, OK," said Frolich, explaining how his mother made the costumes.

The first time they ever put their make-up on and performed together was eight years ago for an experimental Kiss lip-synch video called 'Detroit Rock City', choreographed by a university

student in Vancouver. Not long after, the group Black Diamond was formed.

Performing together as Black Diamond lets them take a break from their other jobs and get together to have some fun.

"The band is sort of an escape from our hard-working bands — the bands that we struggle in and bitch and whine about. So it's sort of a release. We already have a fan base, we basically just step in the shoe," said Smith.

Smith is currently part of the band Juice, at home in Toronto. The other members who reside in Las Vegas and Vancouver, play together in another band called The Loving Dead.

All four seem to have enjoyed their stay in Halifax. Frohlich even managed to take in a Moosehead's game before Saturday night's show. Smith says that he feels at home when performing in Halifax.

"I really like Halifax, it's very much like Toronto. I mean, it's got all kinds of people, it's got quite a bit of culture, lots of students, it's got a good night life, it's cool."

What's really impressive is how well these guys know their



stuff — They never practice.

"We're just Kiss fans, we just know how the shit goes," explains Efron.

the band is suddenly reminded of a funny occurrence that occurred while they were playing at the Athabee in Jasper. Apparently the bar had really low ceilings, and there was an old water main that ran overhead the stage area. The water main was so rotten, that the heat from the pyro used during the last song caused it to break, flooding the entire bar. But the crowd loved it. They all thought that it was part of the act. Luckily there was no

fecal matter present.

Last weekend's performance at the Palace ran smoothly — no strippers or flying shit. They ended their two hour set with no other than Black Diamond. After a much deserved standing ovation, they returned to the stage, ending the night with everyone's favorite, "Rock and Roll all Nite."

To read more about the band you can log on to their website at <http://www.blackdiamondonline.com>.

# Neptune's latest work of Art

by ian macintyre

the gazette

You've been in this situation before. Your best friend is proudly showing off their new shirt/car/significant other. Your friend is ecstatic, but you keep searching for a nice way to say 'are you out of your mind?!'

This is the set up for *Art*, Yasmina Reza's 1994 comedy hit. *Art* quickly establishes itself as a smart and witty examination of why one of its characters, Serge (played by Nigel Bennett) purchases a painting for the insane price of 200,000 francs. But not just any painting. This painting is entirely white, with white diagonal stripes. After his friends Marc (Bill Carr) and Yvan (Gordon Gammie) respond far less enthusiastically than Serge had hoped the play shifts direction entirely, choosing instead to focus on its three characters, and exactly what makes their collective friendship tick.

As the play opens, Serge is proudly showing his newly acquired masterpiece to Marc, one

of his oldest friends. Though Reza could easily have written this situation as a satiric look at the world of modern art, she instead quickly turned the examination inward at the characters themselves. Serge thinks the painting is 'art.' Marc thinks the painting is 'shit.' Caught in the middle is Yvan, who is more concerned with his impending wedding than his friends' argument over a white painting.



As the characters begin to argue, hidden feelings and opinions are revealed, and eventually they are forced to give serious thought to why they are even friends in the

first place.

Nigel Bennett delivers a solid and amusing performance as Serge. You may remember Bennett as Claudius in Neptune's recent production of *Hamlet*. However, you probably remember him as the "but it's not oatmeal!" guy.

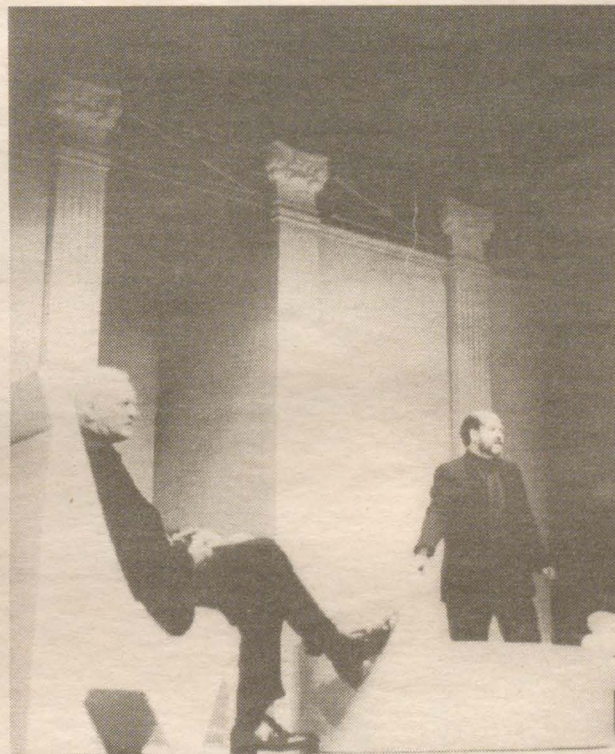
Bennett's Serge is played with a subdued, yet nervous energy. He speaks condescendingly to his friends when they don't understand his new painting, yet he obviously craves their approval.

The complete opposite to this character is Marc, who is given a whimsical yet restrained sarcastic edge by Bill Carr. His comebacks and evaluations of Serge's painting (and eventually of Serge himself) are incisive and clever, and Carr delivers them with impeccable timing. Carr is truly the lynchpin of this production, not only giving the funniest and most believable performance, but also bringing out excellent reactions from his cast mates.

Though Carr holds the play together, the person who truly runs away with this production has to be Gordon Gammie as Yvan. He plays this character with a good nature and naivete, which seems over the top at first, but eventually makes sense after several hilarious outbursts. During these monologues Gammie

presents a more natural and neurotic character, with a genuine character development evident by the end of the play.

*Art* starts out as a very



comical argument between friends, but the script runs into problems in the third act. Several key details about the characters are hastily revealed, and a fairly jarring change of tone takes the story from comedy to slightly troubling and bitter. This switching back and forth from humour to more intense dialogue caught the audience off-guard, causing them to laugh at several inappropriate moments.

The true appeal of this play

lies in its discussion of the relationship between its male characters, as well as friends everywhere. What attracts guys to become friends? Do we take on specific roles in the relationship? Why do guys remain friends? *Art* is remarkably truthful and accurate portrayal of male relationships. This means that either these aspects of male friendship are universal, or we're a lot more transparent than we'd probably like to believe. Either way, you're definitely going to end up thinking about your own friends after seeing this play (Which is hopefully a good thing.)

In all, Yasmina Reza's *Art* is a great character study, sure to keep you laughing along the way. The

performances are top notch, and the dialogue is delivered perfectly. Watching this play, I was in awe that the actors managed to bring such amazing energy and insight to these subtle, qui ky characters.

Despite the awkward ending, it is the performances that really drive this play. They give *Art* a vigor and sharpness that'll make you laugh, make you think, and definitely make you enjoy yourself.

# A cinematic kick in the head for six bucks

by **william roberts**

*the gazette*

I saw a trailer for *The Pledge* a few weeks ago and it looked like another suspense-filled detective thriller. It's not. It's much more.

It is directed by Sean Penn and stars Jack Nicholson. The supporting cast includes several more strong talents, including brief appearances by Vanessa Redgrave and Benicio del Toro.

I like Nicholson because of *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* and *The Shinning*. He's had a few bad dogs since, but that usually has more to do with the scripts — Nicholson is a great actor. *The Pledge* is one of his best, and it's a great script.

Penn proves he's made his bones as a director. This is a potential quiet classic film, and it has all the hallmarks of a director who has great respect for the

strengths of this medium, making no compromises to be merely entertaining. Characters and setting ring true without being glamorized to make them palatable for the audience's comfort.

Love it or hate it, the people and their lives are what they are.

*The Pledge* is also one of the most psychologically brutal films I've seen in a long time. The ordinary nature of the characters is gently offset by slow victories of finding joy in predictable or simple life themes. Bear in mind though, all of our lives are boringly predictable when seen by a dispassionate outsider. Penn doesn't try to reassure us at all on this point — no glorious fate or noble destiny is offered for his protagonists, or allegorically for we, the audience.

There are several tragedies in *The Pledge*. Murder, betrayed trust,

and the gradual betrayal of life by time.

Nicholson plays a retiring, twice-divorced detective at the end of a successful career. An eight-year-old girl is murdered on the day of his retirement. Abandoning his retirement party, he insists on spending his last six hours on duty at the crime scene. That evening he pledges to the girl's mother that he will find the killer, and so begins the desperate obsession of a man who has nothing left in his life but his career, which is over.

With nothing to do but go fishing and work on the case, he buys a gas station and waits and watches. Inevitably he becomes involved in the lives around him, finding a sort of last-chance, at his age, love of convenience with a local waitress. Hollywood would usually work in some danger and suspense, bad guys get nailed, and the main characters live more-or-

less happily ever after. Even without the danger, what more do any of us hope for, or get.

Penn, however, is ruthless, offering us instead a horrifying glimpse of how quickly lives can be destroyed, loves lost, and hopes betrayed. Sometimes the difference between a life fulfilled, or crushed, is in an accident of timing we cannot control, and its effect on decisions or actions already made, those which we cannot undo.

The commonplace nature of Penn's characters — they could be any of us — drives the devastation home.

We will all believe this kind of tragedy could never happen to us, whatever the context of our lives. Penn's success is in making it gut-wrenchingly clear, it can and does happen to people who perhaps deserved better. Ultimately, this tragedy is more frightening than the murder that begins the film.

This is not the usual cop story. I saw it with a friend who compared aspects to the movie *Seven*. Overall, I feel *The Pledge* is a better film, and less moody-for-mood's-sake. Where *Seven* filled in with stylistic treatment, *The Pledge* is simply convincing. It has more in common with Hitchcock's darker ironies.

If nothing else, Penn reminds us to take real joy where we find it, and not gamble on our Hollywood dreams of romance or success. What we have can be gone tomorrow, and real love is rare enough that leaving it on the shelf while we shop for a better deal, or to humour our obsessions, is a mistake.

## Classics, I says...

Each week we ask a different person to share their idea on a classic book, movie, and CD.

by **krishna parmar**

*the gazette*

**Album — Bon Jovi, *Crossroads***

For me my favorite CD, maybe it's not the greatest of all time, is defiantly *Crossroads*. It's a best-of album by Bon Jovi and it's right up there with all my other favorites. It's got songs for everything, chilling, making-out, and getting psyched. I've got great memories sitting in a packed car of my boys just nailing *Living on a prayer* together, or dancing with the girl I fancied to *Bed of Roses*. Definitely worth the effort I took to steal this from HMV (kidding, or am I?). I'd say burn this — 'cause there's no need to buy CD's anymore — and check out what I'm talking about.

**Book — Gordan Korman, *I want to go home***

Holy shit! This was the most influential book I ever read. It's about this sarcastic, trouble-making joker named Rudy who is forced to go to camp. The entire book is about Rudy, his giggling friend Mike, and their hilariously antics at camp, as they desperately try to escape. No word of a lie, I've done this book for book reports every year since grade four (when I really stole it from my junior high's library). I've even done it two or three times some years. Anyone who's read this novel and knows me can tell you why I am the way I am. People always comment how I'm a shit-disturber and this novel is why I am. I always tell my friends to read it because it'll make you remember how great it was to be a kid again.

**Movie — *Last of the Mohicans***

The greatest movie I've ever seen. Simple. I've fallen in love with this movie — drama, love scenes, blood action, and all the rest. It's pictography is breathtaking, its soundtrack amazing and its plot and characters awesome. I'm not going to tell you anything about the movie except rent it, steal it, whatever! Just see it. It's one of those movies that can't be explained, just marveled. Get it!

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# Six Guthries -two tequila shots = four Rheostatics

by melanie hawkins and sarah matchett

the gazette

Fresh from a blow-out party night in Fredricton, the Rheostatics prepared Halifax for a night of pure ecstasy starting with the complementary tunes of Dartmouth's The Guthries. And what a performance it was. Honestly, no words can explain the plethora of satisfying rock and roll heard that blistering cold night.

The packed Marquee was its usual smoky, beer guzzling party with a hefty \$15 cover that starving students and Halifax's hardcore working public could not ignore. Tired from a prior two-night binge of Treble Charger, the club would have to withstand the party that was about to get underway.

The Guthries, a six-piece band with three guitars, drums and an accordion to increase the umph of the hard-folk/rocky-country brew that the Marquee endured starting off the never-ending night. With Matt Mays lead voice, the several Guthries followers were once again pleased as the band played songs such as "Want to change the season," "Deep blue" and "Windmill" from their new album. Their sounds were a definite compliment to the Rheostatics, but we aren't all that sure about the accordion. But that's just a standard three-piece band bias.

The Guthries are building up a nice little fanbase here in Halifax, with other new or not-so-new musicians. Who knows, maybe we will see another Pop Explosion if we are lucky.

From their latest release, *Harmelodia*, as well as new songs from their album that is "a third done," to be released in the Spring that is said to be more "straight ahead rock" rather than the orchestrated sounds of *Harmelodia* that took two years to make.

A special guest from the 'Polish Consulate,' Julie, was asked up on stage to deliver a special treat of singing the song, *Aliens*, in Polish. Decked out in her bright red Rheostatics t-shirt she really did an amazing job.

After several instrument

switches from acoustic guitars to a double headed triple Canadian-flaged monster owned by Tielli to a six-stringed bass, the Rheos sang about killer pike and other hot Canadian topics.

Prior to the show, Kerr discussed the tour, Napster and the various background of the Rheos members.

"The members have been moving around, inspired by all types of music" said Kerr. For example, The Rheostatics toured with *Music Inspired by the Group of Seven* in Europe in April, 2000, with Veda Hille and the *Whale Music* soundtrack was done in 1992.

This band, unlike the usual mainstream lot of single-boss-songwriters that produce a boring string of similar albums with monotonous hit songs, "where you spot the lead guy on the cover of all the rock magazines," Rheos have many songwriters and you as the listener get an all-in-one wonderful mix of really good music.

There is no room for bullshit here kids, these guys mean musical business.

"Music is becoming more monotonous these days, and I don't want to name names or anything, but new artist's stuff sound the same as the last album and risk the loss of their audience if they indeed want to change and even label if they don't produce."

The Rheos are able to express themselves and have been doing it for 21 years when Tielli and Bidini started as teenagers.

Bidini, himself has some books out there on the topic of hockey, artist Tielli did the art for the *Harmelodia* CD and Vesely does the *Sex-Files* soundtrack.

As for the view of infamous Napster, Don agrees it has value.

"It opens up boarders and really cleans the palate, there is no damage done to the quality of music unlike what radio and MTV has already scarred".

People get a chance to screen the music that they want to hear.

"It's like you hear this song at a party and you're drunk and only name out and it won't stop people from buying albums. Its like your own personal radio."

The band played into the night and did a second set — never mind calling it an encore! Song after different song from soft, gentle and complicated to spit in your face kick the bouncer and jump around the stage like your pants are on fire music.

And bonus points for generously donating several Tequila shots to the audience.

'Tis a shame that these hard-working musicians still have not made it to the majority of Canada's CD players. Maybe it is good this way as we can get up close and personal without a huge evil barricade stopping us from enjoying the show.

Fans from all around the world understand the value of the music, as Kerr had a rather large German fellow come up to him in a bar in Hamburg and say "I am da gratest Reostatic faan, evahh."

This of course can be fought out with various Canadian fans that will prove they are tops when it comes to loving the Rheostatics. They will be heading back to the Maritimes in the summer highlighting their new release due out this Spring



photos by maya williams



TEQUILA

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# Underground initiations

by ryan delehanty

the gazette

From the good people at Mr. Lady Records comes **Le Tigre's** new EP *From the Desk of Mr. Lady*. The EP features seven tracks, including four new songs, a remix of "The The Empty" from **Le Tigre's** debut album titled "All That Glitters (remix)," and two

songs from the *Hot Topic* single "Yr Critique" and "They want us to make a symphony out of the sound of women swallowing their own tongues." The new songs are fantastic, although more lo-fi than the those on their debut album.

On this EP **Le Tigre** continues their tradition of political dance songs, "Get off the

Internet" urges everyone to get off the internet, out into the street to destroy the right wing, while "Bang! Bang!" is a scathing attack on the NYPD for their killing several unarmed citizens and going unpunished. The song contains audio clips of news reports on the subject and ends with **Le Tigre** counting off the number of times police shot unarmed African immigrant Amadou Diallo, all the way up to 41.

"They want us to make a symphony out of the sound of women swallowing their own tongues" is a collage of sound clips and actually quite well described by the title. "Yr Critique" uses a sampled guitar riff from the now defunct **Peechees** and "Gone B4 Yr Home" uses what sounds like Casio Synthesizers Rumba number two for a soft song, then turn up the distortion for an attack on pop culture with "Mediocrity Rules". The song contains a very catchy chorus with some very mediocre lyrics "yabba dabba dabba doo man, yabba dabba dabba dude" subtly parodying the meaningless music that they're making fun of. While this disc might fail to get most people dancing it certainly gives us a lot to think about.

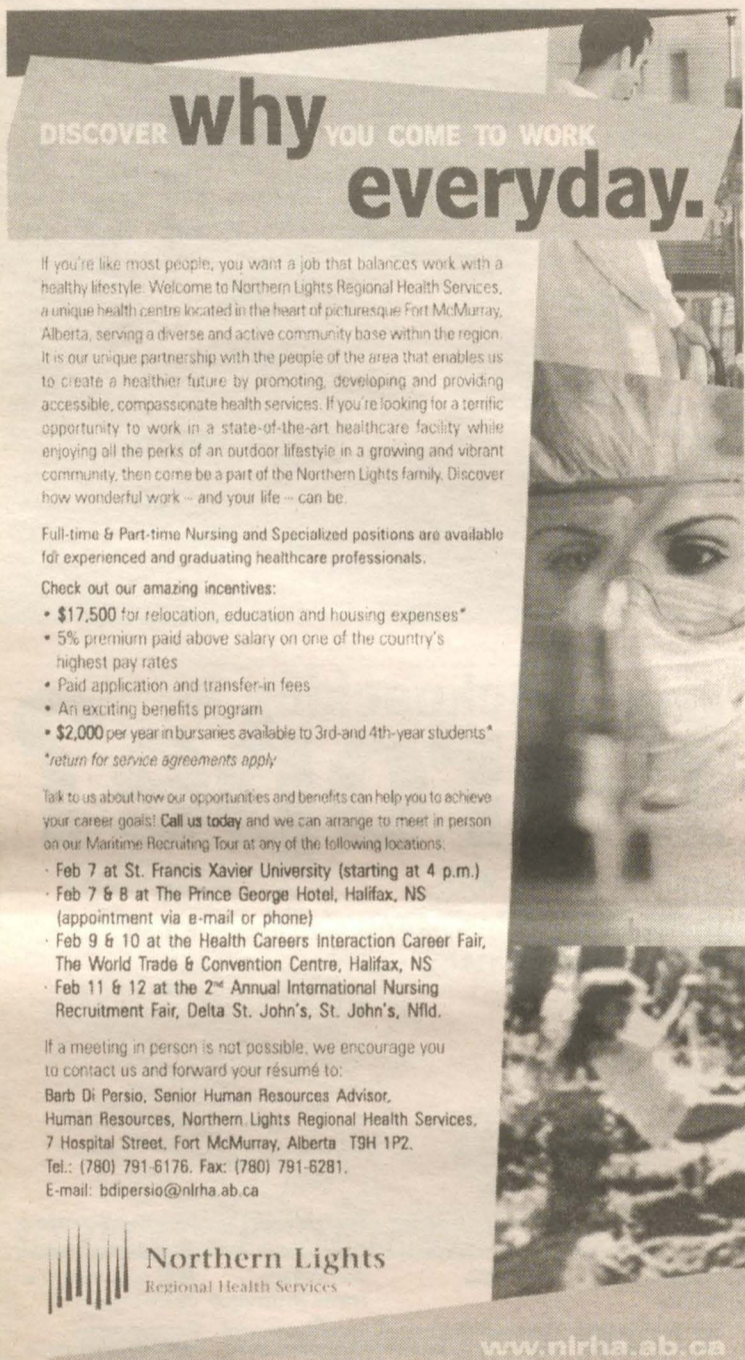
**Le Tigre's** Kathleen Hanna has often been referred to as the American incarnation of Poly Styrene, which is an apt description if you know who Poly Styrene is. Poly was lead singer of British punk band **X-Ray Spex**

who sadly released only one official record during their original incarnation, 1978's *Germ Free Adolescents*. Instead of the anger and nihilism of their peers at the time, such as the **Sex Pistols**, **X-Ray Spex** used wit and mockery to take on their subjects, most often attacking the increasing commercialism and artificiality of the modern world. What really set their music apart from other bands was 17-year-old saxophonist Lora Logic. The combination of Styrene's energetic vocals and Logic's blazing sax made their songs original, intense and still fresh today. Their song "Oh Bondage, Up Yours" a reply to the saying that little girls should be seen and not heard, became a feminist punk rallying cry, with Logic's off-key sax and Styrene's vocals careening wildly back and forth. **X-Ray Spex** broke up in 1979 shortly before Poly Styrene completely renounced the material world and joined the Hare Krishnas. She remained elusive until reuniting in 1991 to play a surprise concert at Brixton Academy, then releasing the album *Conscious Consumer* in 1995. Their plans for a tour never came to fruition, and little has been heard of them since. Aside from *Germ Free Adolescents* and *Conscious Consumer* there are a few live albums and collections of unreleased recordings that are still available.

**The Slits** formed a few years before **X-Ray Spex's**, when in 1976 14 year old Ari Upp ran into

her friend Palmolive at a **Patti Smith** concert in London. Palmolive had previously been in a very short-lived band called **The Flowers of Romance** with the notorious **Sid Vicious**. Although initially possessing little musical ability they formed a band, and following some crude recordings they got a spot opening for **the Clash** on their 1977 "White Riot" tour of England. Their first album, *Cut*, was recorded in 1979 with reggae producer Dennis Bovell, and the formerly raging guitars were replaced with subtle reggae rhythms and combined with Ari Upp's unique vocal style made for one of the most interesting debut albums in punk history. *Cut* was followed by 1981's *Return of the Giant Slits* was even further removed from the punk sounds of their origin, and quite good, but failed to live up to its predecessor and they disbanded shortly after its release. **The Slits** also recorded a number of singles during their time including an amazing version of **Marvin Gaye's** "I Heard it Through the Grapevine" which is now available on the re-release of *Cut*. A lot of their early recordings can be heard on the Peel Sessions EP from 1977 and *In the Beginning*, a recently release collection of recordings from 1977 through their split in 1981.

If you have any comments, questions, insults or recipes you'd like to share with me, send them to [undergroundinitiations@hotmail.com](mailto:undergroundinitiations@hotmail.com).



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# Reel Life

## Shadow of the Vampire

by mark evans

the gazette

In 1922 the movie *Nosferatu* was released and it has been said to be the best vampire film of all time. The dark and disturbing portrayal of the feral vampire Count Orlock by German actor Max Schreck is not as well known as say, Bela Lugosi's portrayal of Dracula, but it's considered by many to be much better. Schreck had an intensity and appearance that lent themselves to the creation of a horror classic.

Supposedly. Like most of you, I've never seen *Nosferatu*, but I have seen *Shadow of the Vampire*, Elias Merhige's tribute to the film which follows its production and creation at the hands of director F.W. Murnau (John Malkovich). Thankfully even without having seen *Nosferatu* it's easy to get a grasp of what's happening on screen both behind the scenes and in front of the

camera.

One interesting twist the film proposes, which is at the crux of its plot, is that Max Schreck, the actor who played Count Orlock, played here by Willem Defoe in one of the year's most superlative performances, was in fact a real vampire named Count Orlock who played actor Max Schreck for purposes of the film.

Once Orlock begins licking his lips at the sight of blood and cast members start becoming mysteriously weak and ill those suspicions are rapidly confirmed.

Murnau, however, has known this all along and has a contract with Orlock to get his movie made at all costs. This gives way to a lot of black comedy and a bizarre look at the directing process. Murnau blusters and fumes at

Orlock because he's eating the more important members of his production team, though he himself hardly cares anything about them.

Later, when Cary Elwes arrives as Murnau's new photographer he immediately creates havoc, throwing off a string of hysterical one-liners and then preparing one shot by scaring his extras half to death. Elwes has the best comedic scenes in the film, although he seems to be given less and less to do as the film progresses. Another sore spot is that Elwes' British guy doing a German guy's accent comes across as so unbelievably obvious that it's surprising he was cast for the role in the first place.

Malkovich makes a lot of this movie work. When he stands there with his film crew all dressed in lab coats and delivers

speeches about the importance of film and its science you get a feeling for a man who is obviously not all there and will do absolutely anything to see that he gets the movie he wants made. This point is driven home during the startlingly vicious ending and one throwaway line that Murnau makes as things play out that basically sums up his character's philosophy in a single sentence.



The visual style this movie takes is very artistically done and it makes a lot of sense given its silent movie origins. The film opens with an art deco-style mural of bizarre imagery, then begins its opening narration with placards in the style of a silent movie. During scenes of the filming of *Nosferatu* we see things through the camera lens, which is critical for the way things play out in the denouement.

The approach taken to this material is reminiscent of Tim Burton's *Ed Wood*, except that *Nosferatu* is actually a bona fide classic rather than a bona fide turkey of Grade A proportions like any of Ed Wood's supposed flicks.

But both are semi-biographical in nature and place the emphasis strongly on the directors, which is really the point of these films. *Ed Wood*, however, is the closer to real life of the two, and is the better of the two films.

Bottom Line: To give *Shadow of the Vampire* credit it manages to achieve all the goals it sets for itself. The real problem is that those goals don't really seem to be very high at all. It's a piece of inconsequential fluff, well acted to be sure, with some great laughs but only a blunted point about how some directors view their own movies and cinema in general. Fun, but better movies are still playing out there.



John Malkovich as director F.W. Murnau

## CD REVIEWS

### Bad Astronaut — Acrophobe

Honest Don's

"Hey, these assholes sound like Lagwagon."

That was my first reaction upon hearing Bad Astronaut, and in fact, I would have thought it to be a Lagwagon collage of some sort, but the CD cover and the case itself obviously came as a package from WalMart, and I couldn't quite figure out why Honest Don would screw a Lagwagon hybrid out of a legitimate CD case. Anyway, I seem to be rambling. It turns out that the cereal-shifting did screw Joey Cape out of a good CD cover, whether or not Cape knew it (Cape being the lead singer of Lagwagon/Bad Astronaut). The fucking case

fell apart before I even heard the CD, not to mention the fact that the cover art could have been drawn by a drunken child. Although I took very little time to describe this CD in this review, it is good. The only way I can describe it is Lagwagon with piano/synth, or maybe the product of a street brawl between The Scorpions and Weezer. Let's Talk About Side-Projects. — Flexx

### Gotohells — Rock and Roll America

Vagrant Records

Fuckin' A' rock n' roll muthafuckas. There's more attitude recorded into one track on this album than can be found in a whole "Family Values" tour. I can imagine the Gotohells kicking the living shit out of those wanna-be, candy-assed wimps Papa Roach, and then showing their ladies what a real man is like, oh yeah.

This is an album made by the bastard lovechild of the Ramones and Bon Scott — a sleazy cock rockin' album with an intensity not seen or heard since the 70s. Songs like "Wasted," "Sin baby," "Drink poison, wrestle snakes" and "Lock up your daughters" pretty much sum up what the Gotohells are all about — and if you don't like it, FUCK OFF!

Just as ballsy as the original AC/DC or Iggy Pop, without degenerating into a spineless nostalgia for the geriatric rock currently in vogue with your mother. Go get yourself some Jack Daniels, a bag of horse, a big-haired tramp with feathered roach clip earrings, and put another dime in the juke box baby, it's time to party. — Jason

### The Beatles — 1

The first thing I noticed about 1 was its size. 27 songs on one disc? Sounded like a deal to me. The CD's playtime is just shy of 80 minutes, longer than most albums.

The second thing I noticed was how many of my favourites weren't included on the CD. The idea of 1 is to collect all the Beatles singles to hit #1 on the Billboard. Lots of the Beatles best material was released solely on album, so you won't find it here.

Which isn't to say that the CD is bad. It would take more than one album to collect all of the Beatles' best.

There's lots of good stuff here, including 'Paperback writer', 'Eleanor Rigby' and 'Hey Jude'. The songs span the lads' career, showing how much four people can change in eight years.

The ultimate Beatles collection remains the four album red/blue set from 30 years ago. But for fans on a budget, 1 is a fine addition to your collection. — Shawn

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# Independent film

## Big art for Halifax

by **patrick blackie**  
*the gazette*

Killer cardboard robots, unconvincing undead and gratuitous violence — all rampant in Halifax, the ideas of several independent filmmakers put to film for the enjoyment of the independent film buffs and executive big wigs alike.

In recent years, the independent film scene in Halifax has had a surge, giving the means necessary for the creative and inspired minds of Halifax to indulge in creative vision without the tainting of outside financial interests.

The Atlantic Film Festival, held every fall in Halifax, has been calling attention to the film scene in the area since its start 20 years ago. The festival

highlights local actors, directors and producers who have contributed to the Halifax film scene, and also features larger scale productions that were shot in whole or in part in Halifax.

Each year, the Atlantic Film Festival committee reviews over 1000 films submitted, and choose what films are screened based on a variety of considerations.

"Each year, [the festival committee] reviews a large number of films from around the world," said Festival Director Lia Rinaldo. "[The committee] try and chose what films are screened on a quality-driven program. [The committee] looks at films that commit the local and international films we review."

Last year's Atlantic Film Festival featured 175 films, 136 of which were produced in the Atlantic region. 61 of those films were full feature-length.

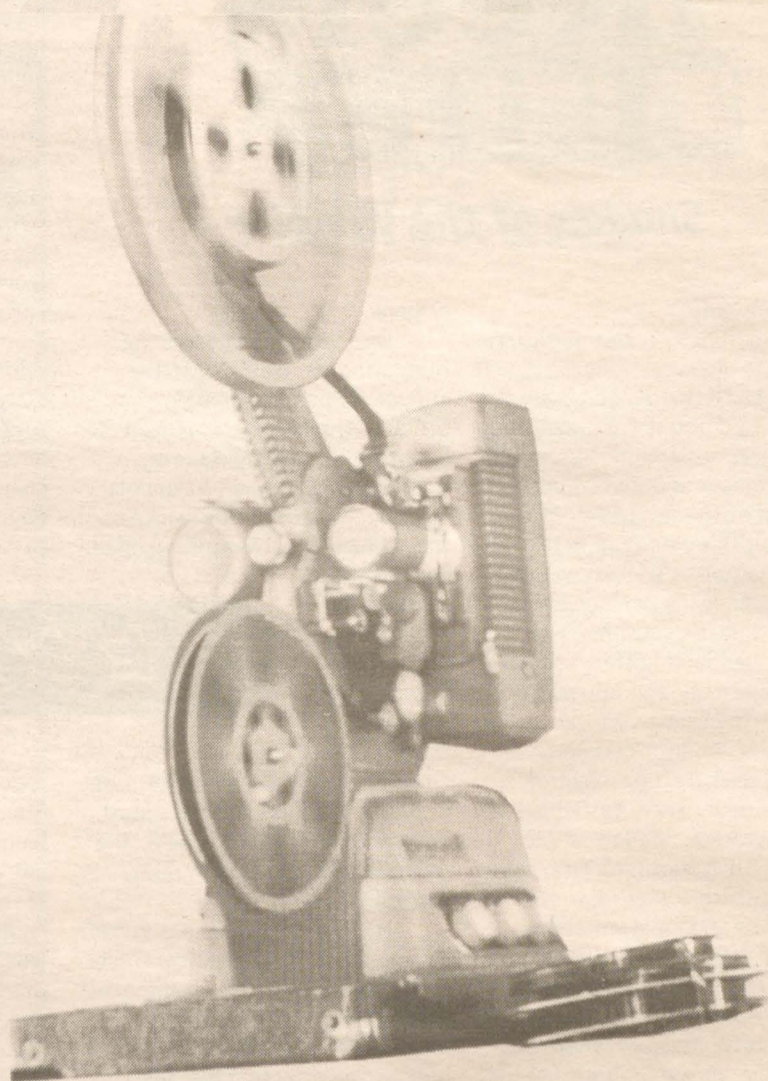
Rinaldo says that the film festival is a unique opportunity for filmmakers to showcase their work.

"There is no outlet for independent films [in Halifax], or even shorts," said Rinaldo. "By giving access to this [via the Atlantic Film Festival], maybe people will appreciate the work, and maybe become inspired."

Halifax also houses the Atlantic Filmmakers Co-operative (AFCOOP), an association of filmmakers in Halifax who share resources and conduct classes to aid in virtually any step in film production, from writing a grant to fund a film to how to use the equipment. Training is also available from Shortworks Film and Video Training, offering courses ranging from directing to cinematography. Shortworks offers training under Program 5, a training program that offers hands on experience on a Shortworks project in conjunction with seminar training.

The independent film scene in Halifax is not a huge money generator for the filmmakers, despite the fact that filming a movie, even a short, can be a costly endeavor. Film stock, equipment, actors, crew, food and any other cost that could arise when filming can easily mount up, and the payback for independent films is rarely immediate or substantial.

In order to fund the films being made, Halifax has a host of financial outlets that give various grants for different stages of production and different types of projects. AFCOOP, the Centre for Art Tapes, The National Film Board and The Canada Council for the Arts are just some of the groups that offers grants for various projects. Brochures published by each organization are available that describe each grant and list the criteria.



### What I thought...

I had the pleasure of participating in the filming of a short film not long ago, my first experience on the set of an actual film shoot. I had done a preparatory course so that I could participate as a camera assist, but I did not get paid. In fact, none of the crew was paid, and there was over 20 people on the crew.

The budget for the film was tight, so only the actors received financial compensation.

The thing that I found incredible was the fact that the entire crew donated their time and energy, while also taking on responsibilities. It was only a two day shoot, but each day was close on to a 15 hour day.

The crew, consisting of two Directors of Photography (cameramen), four camera assists, director, first assistant director, art director, a gaffer (head lighting), and...well, you get the point. There was not only a large group involved in the process, but this large group were all people with knowledge of their own particular department, skilled filmmakers that were there working hard because they enjoyed the process, and wanted to be there.

The mood of both days was remarkable. Long days, hard work, and a lot of idle time between scenes, but every single person there was happy and comfortable. Most office spaces don't have that kind of atmosphere for 15 minutes, let alone 15 hours.

I got to see how a film, even a short one, gets made. I got to watch how all 20-odd people work essentially as one machine to complete a mutual goal — make this movie as good as it can be by doing everything you can. I got to watch the actors take the words in a script and turn it into a vision that someone had and that everyone can appreciate.

But most of all I saw the real color of the independent film scene in Halifax, or anywhere else for that matter. A core of dedicated, knowledgeable people that see the true art in film, and spend their time at it because they love it, and because it is an enjoyable process that is highly rewarding.

The stats and semantics of the independent film scene are irrelevant — it is art, vision and a phenomenal way to communicate. Once a year, during the Atlantic Film Festival, Halifax offers this vision for people to come and pay their respects to the independent filmmakers, but it is there 12 months a year for anyone who wants to make/appreciate independent film.

Patrick Blackie

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# Beer ran like rivers 'round these parts once...

The bar business in downtown Halifax isn't like it used to be

Five years ago, it wasn't unusual to walk by a dance club in downtown Halifax and see young people lined up outside its doors, waiting for people to leave so that they could make their way in. Now such a scene is virtually unheard of.

What happened?

by amanda risser  
the gazette

Bar owners in Halifax all have their own theories as to why business has dropped, but most agree that it is primarily because there are now more larger bars in the downtown area.

"With an increase in larger bars it is harder to fill up each bar, and people have more bars to choose from," said The New Palace owner, Marcel Khoury.

Other bar owners argue that an increase in cabarets has hurt their business.

"We now get a later crowd, because people know that they can stay out later with cabarets being open until 3:30 a.m.," explains David Chiasson, manager of Merril's.

Merril's, Pacifico, The Mercury and The Argyle are all bars that depend mainly on students for their business. For some, this may mean selling drinks at a lower cost than other bars.

Matt Chisholm, an employee of JJ Rossy's, explains the bar's reasoning behind selling cheap drinks.

"Most students have student loans, so they appreciate the cheaper prices that JJ's offers."

The Pacifico, on the other hand, attracts their customers by sponsoring many student groups and teams. The management's theory behind this is a back-scratching idea.

"By helping out the students, we hope that in return they will help us out."

Appealing to one specific group — the student population — has proven to be a difficult task for some bar owners. In the past the management of The Argyle brought in alternative bands and Canadian music station MuchMusic, in an attempt to attract more customers.

Chris Tzaneteas, owner of The Argyle, is frustrated by the drop in business.

"It just seems that nothing brings in the numbers like our Thursday nights," says Tzaneteas. Consequently, the management of The Argyle is rethinking their business scheme and may be doing some renovations in the near future.

So what makes a cabaret different from any other bar? Not only are cabarets open later than other bars, they also offer high quality live entertainment, are larger, and play a more mixed variety of music. As a result, they appeal to a larger, more diverse group of people.

Greg Clark, manager of The Marquee, couldn't have said it

better when he described his bar as "a melting pot of everyone at the end of the night."

Five years ago The New Palace was the only cabaret, now there is also The Marquee, The 'Liquor Dome', and Reflections to choose from. Reflections tends to attract gays and lesbians, among others, while the Marquee attracts a more alternative group, but the Palace and 'the Dome' both compete for the same group of people (students, bar staff, business people). As a result, each bar suffers.

"We now have a population split between two bars," says Gordon Nesbitt, manager of The New Palace. To remain competitive, the owners of the Palace recently renovated the entire interior of its bar, including Jerry's Pub. They built a VIP room, put up cages for live dancers and have been the host of many high profile performances from bands such as: McMaster and James, Soul Decision and Platinum Blond.

All this hard work has not gone unrewarded. Marcel Khoury was pleased to announce that "we are now busier than this time last year."

Management of most downtown bars agree that business is not as good as it was five years ago, but that it has improved over the last year.

Uplifting.



The Gazette

## FRENCH REVIEW

As part of its routine planning process, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences conducts periodic reviews of all academic departments. In 2001, a Review Committee is examining the department of French. Students (undergraduate or graduate, current or former, majoring in these fields or studying them as electives) who would like to comment on the curriculum or future development of this department, their experience as students within this department, or any other aspect of this department's activities, are cordially invited to write to the Review Committee by **March 16, 2001**, at the address listed below. All communications will be treated as strictly confidential. (If an interview is preferred, please contact the chairperson of the Review Committee by **February 19, 2001**.)

Dr. D. Schroeder (494-3867 / -2418)  
David.Schroeder@dal.ca  
Chair (French Unit Review Committee)  
Department of Music  
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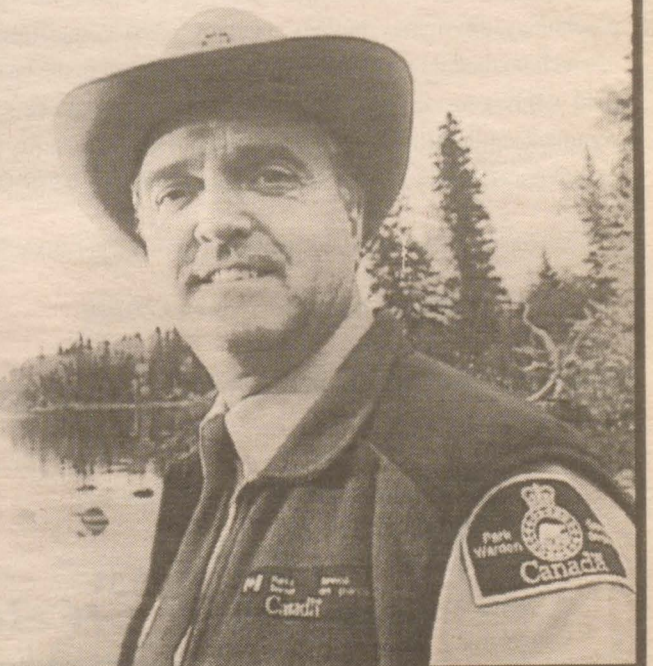
## Protecting our natural heritage

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Canada



## Information Hash news & facts

by nip neen

Psychopaths don't yawn. Of course they can pretend to.

When crossing the road you should never, ever stop, unless it is necessary.

Don't take crack from strangers unless its free.

A pie without crust dries out 25 percent faster, and nobody rolls joints with the Bible.

Root beer contains little root and less beer.

Sometimes cutting off a chicken's head results in their death.

If bowling were sex, I'd be setting up for a strike right now.

Cars without gas won't run, neither will Rita MacNeil.

Some countries don't allow human/animal marriages. Others do.

If you can't afford something, steal it, but not from us.

If there is a God, it is Steve Coté, but there isn't.

A newspaper is not a toy, but apparently not everybody knows that.

You'll never know unless you try, and we think you need to know.

# Universities switch to diesel to cut soaring cost

## Dal stuck with dirty fuel

by jonathan dieli colburn

the gazette

Universities across Canada are switching to cheaper, more environmentally harmful fuel sources in response to soaring natural gas prices, while Dal burns a less efficient fuel than natural gas called Bunker-C, not because of rising fuel costs, but because there is no natural gas pumped into the area.

"Natural gas has not even come close to us," said Bill Lord, Director of Facilities Management at Dalhousie. "Bunker-C tends to be dirtier than more refined fuels."

He added that Dal connects all of its boilers which balances intake of air and fuel and allows for the maximum heat output with a minimum amount of harmful byproducts released into the air.

Peter Howitt, Assistant Director of Facilities Management at Dal said that there is natural gas going to the Tuft's Cove power plant in Dartmouth, but nowhere else yet.

"Primarily there isn't a line that comes here yet," he said. "They do have facilities, but they don't come around the harbour yet."

Mr. Howitt has been to open houses regarding the possibility of extending a line, but has received no concrete answers.

The benefits of natural gas, he says, are not just in lower pollutant outputs, but in the fact

that burning natural gas improves equipment life as well.

Dalhousie Facilities has also entertained the possibility of running a co-generation power plant on site. This plant would involve a jet engine that burns natural gas which would power a generator that provides the school's electricity. The exhaust from the burning gas can be used to run a boiler to heat and air-condition buildings. There are no definite plans to build a co-generation plant yet.

Gerry Scott, Director of the climate change program at the David Suzuki Foundation, said in an interview with Canadian University Press that he's noticed that public and private institutions have moved to heating oil and even coal at an unprecedented rate over the past few months.

The switch back to dirtier fuels is having dire consequences on the environment both locally and globally, he said.

"We're in the 21st Century and we're moving back to a 19th Century fuel, which is a real concern," said Scott. "It's a reversal of many of the gains made in the last decade where people were going to a cleaner fuel and focussing on conservation."

One campus that has already made the switch is Simon Fraser University. The university's decision to go from natural gas to heating oil came last November when natural gas prices began to

rise steadily.

Scott said the increase in dirty fuel burning would cause a significant upswing in greenhouse emissions, which have been linked to climate change, as well as to increase the already significant amount of Canadians dying and becoming ill due to poor air quality.

California has kept the price of gas high for months and forced many large Canadian institutions to switch to oil indefinitely.

"We also need some serious policy and regulatory steps from government, as well as from institutions," said Scott. "The leaders of these universities who are flipping back to coal and heating oil are going to have to look in the mirror. I realize they have budgets, but we simply can't move back in these sectors, we have to move forward."

Scott said that many institutions in Canada have begun energy efficiency measures and are now recouping original costs by saving millions a year in energy costs.

To lower overhead and improve environmental impacts, schools can heat their water using solar panels, which can pay for themselves in energy savings within a few months. They could also be more conscious of turning computers and lights off at night.

With files from Canadian University Press

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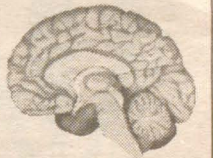
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## The Mind of Mr. Minimal



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There's nothing more refreshing (that cool refreshing drink)  
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Try it with your friends/ New World Water make the tide rise high  
Come in and it'll make your house go "Bye" (My house!)  
Fools done upset the Old Man River/ Made him carry slave ships and fed him dead ni\*\*\*s  
Now his belly full and he about to flood somethin'/ So I'ma throw a rope that ain't tied to nothin  
tell your crew use the H2 in wise amounts since it's the New World Water; and every drop counts  
You can laugh and take it as a joke if you wanna /But it don't rain for four weeks some summers  
And it's about to get real wild in the half /You be buying Evian just to take a fuckin bath  
Heads is acting wild, sippin poor, puffin dank/ Competin with the next man, but how your playa rank?  
See I ain't got time try to be Big Hank, Fuck a bank;  
I need a twenty-year water tank /Cause while these knuckleheads is out here sweatin they goods  
The sun is sitting in the treetops burnin the woods  
And as the flames from the blaze get higher and higher They say, "Don't drink the water! We need it for the fire!"

Way up north and down south is drinkin it/ Used to have minerals and zinc in it/  
Now they say it got lead and stink in it/ Four carbons and monoxide  
Push the water table lopside/ Used to be free now it cost you a fee  
Cause all things fully loaded they roam cross the sea  
Man, you gotta cook with it, bathe and clean with it/ When it's hot, summertime you fiend for it  
You gotta put it in the iron you steamin with / It's what they dress wounds and treat diseases with  
The rich and poor, black and white got need for it / And everybody in the world can agree with this  
Consumption promotes health and easiness /Go too long without it on this earth and you leavin it  
Americans wastin it on some leisure shit /And other nations be desperately seekin it  
Bacteria washing up on they beaches /Don't drink the water, son they can't wash they feet with it  
Young babies and professional neediness/ Epidemics hoppin up off the petri dish  
Control centers try to play it all secretive / To avoid public panic and freakiness  
There are places where TB is common as TV/ Cause foreign-based companies go and get greedy  
The type of cats who pollute the whole shore line /Have it purified, sell it for a dollar twenty-five  
Now the world is drinkin it/ Your moms, wife, and baby girl is drinkin it  
Up north and down south is drinkin it/ You just have to go to your sink for it  
The cash registers is goin to chink for it/ Four carbons and monoxide  
Got the fish lookin cockeyed/ Used to be free now it cost you a fee /Cause it's all about gettin that cash Money

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# Birds Crossing Borders

## Saving the Arctic Tern

by lindsay oreilley

the gazette

Kate Devlin has seen a lot of birds' feet. In the past two years, she has helped to band and keep track of over 935 adult Arctic Terns on islands in the Bay of Fundy and the Gulf of Maine. These islands are preferred nesting grounds for this endangered bird, whose numbers today are 5000 in the four main nesting colonies (reduced from eight thousand as recently as the 1930's). Conservation groups in both Canada and the U.S. are working together to bring this spirited little seabird up to its former numbers. Banding is done to keep track of the terns and observe whether the birds tend to travel between the nesting colonies. This allows scientists to determine what route to take in future conservation efforts.

"If there was regular travel between the islands, then it might

mean that our efforts on one of the Islands could cause all the birds to come to one island, or for all of them to leave and crowd one of the other islands either of which could cause some trouble," says Kate, a graduate

**"One big thing that has come out of this is the collaboration between Canadian and U.S. conservation groups", Kate said. "We are beginning to see now that it is going to take a combined effort. Birds don't respect political borders"**

student in biology at the University of New Brunswick. Kate has an easy smile and a down to earth manner. She seems to have the kind of patient nature that would be required when spending long days on rocky islands, searching for clues in the leg bands of small seabirds.

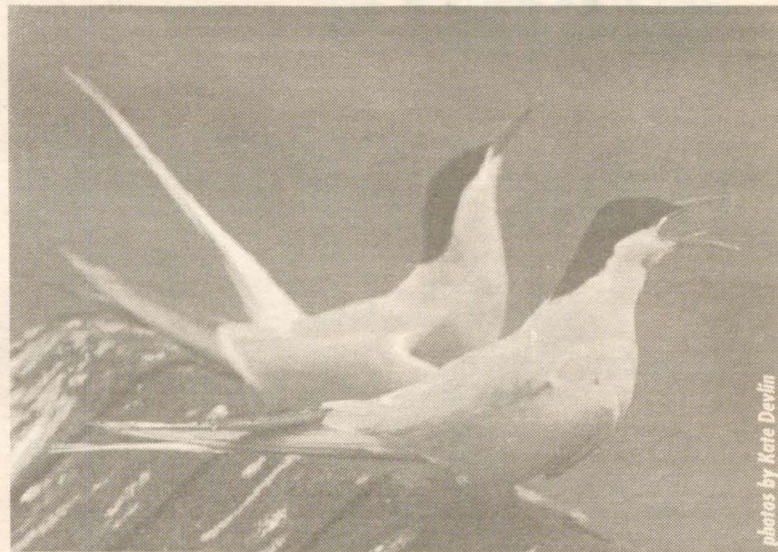
The birds are trapped at their nests, and fitted with two different

bands, one of which can be read from up to twenty meters away with a powerful spotting scope. The information collected so far seems to suggest that while the younger birds travel frequently from island to island, the older birds seem to stay put. There are still at least two years to this study; however, so it is difficult to say for sure whether this will still seem the case once more data is collected.

The Arctic terns suffered a major population decrease during the late 1800's and early 1900's, when they were commercially hunted. Women used them to decorate their hats and they weren't satisfied with just the feathers.

"The Arctic tern is a small bird, so it was a trend to actually stuff the whole bird and mount it on the hat" Kate explained.

Another cause of the Arctic terns decline was the increase in the populations of larger birds like Gulls in these nesting areas, partly due to offshore fishing. As well as eating tern eggs, the Gulls would show up earlier in the season and claim the islands, leaving the terns with nowhere to nest. In recent years the Gulls have been kept off of the islands, but despite this the tern population isn't growing as quickly as might have been hoped. Kate said that statistics are showing that the tern population has leveled off and is even slightly declining.



photos by Kate Devlin

"One big thing that has come out of this is the collaboration between Canadian and U.S. conservation groups", Kate says, "We are beginning to see now that it is going to take a combined effort. Birds don't respect political borders"

With continued research and conservation work, perhaps the Arctic terns will be able to return to the numbers that they once were. (And we will hope that the bird hat trend doesn't reappear on the runways any time soon).



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- **Dal SUB Lobby Funding Drive Official Kick-off**— 12-2pm • Michelle Tompkins and Djs
- **Grawood** —DJs R\$ Smooth, \$3/\$5
- **Khyber Club**— Dead Tone Collective

SATURDAY, 27 JANUARY

- **High Life Café**— DJ Naz and R\$ Smooth, \$3

TUESDAY, 30 JANUARY

- **The Party House** 9pm-2am • Fusion: electronic Djs Dark Trance, Nick Nonsense, Mind Control, \$3

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THURSDAY, 1 FEBRUARY

- **Merrill's**— Djs Flexxman and Dre
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- **Khyber Club**— Pagan drum jam
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## Tigers wrestle to the top

by scott aldrige

the gazette

The Dalhousie Wrestling Club (WC) hosted their fifth annual tourney on Jan. 21, 2001 in the SUB McInnes room. It's the largest Olympic wrestling event in NS, and had wrestlers from UNB, Memorial, PEI, NS, and NB. In the final team standings, the DAL WC placed second out the ten teams, behind the Bathurst, NB club, and above the third place team and archrivals, UNB.

The women's DAL WC placed second as well behind the strong UNB team. Individual results were as follows: At 54kg, rookie sensation Vince Ng placed third at his first AUAA event as did veteran 57 kg wrestler Logan Ward. At 61 and 65 kg's both Brad Pearson and Derrick Rawlston placed fifth. At 68 kg, Rob Doyle wrestled very well and placed second in one of the largest weight classes, losing a close hard fought match to Stockall from UNB. At 76kg, club president, Benji Parks, placed second also, his only loss coming to a 40-year-old veteran from

the PEI Big Cat WC. Fourth year medical student, Scott Malcolm, placed fourth in his first tourney in two years. Defending AUAA champion Mike Leblanc easily defeated his opponent in the Final to win the club's only Gold medal. Dalhousie's other defending AUAA champion, brother Bret Leblanc, finished second losing a nail biting match to Kelly from PEI. Both female wrestlers competed very well in their stacked category, with 1999 CIAU women's champion Hennick from UNB. Tracy Morine finished fourth and Nicole Rozier placed fifth.

The club's next tourney will be on the Feb. 3, at the UNB Open. This will be the last AUAA event before the Feb. 17 AUAA's. For the first time since 1995, the Dal WC will have to have wrestle-offs and will submit a full ten member squad team covering all the classes from 54-130kg. The club will attempt to win the AUAA team title by knocking off UNB who has won the title the last 12 years in a row.

## Capers upset Dal

by c.j. foote

the gazette

A close game came down to one man's exceptional performance this past Sunday, and this was Damien Alexander of the UCCB Capers. With excellent three point shooting and rebounding he was able to help the Capers past the eighth ranked Dal Tigers 73-67.

In fact, Damien's size didn't stop him. Standing only, six-foot-three and 190-pound frame he was able to drop 20 points against the Tigers.

Damien is currently third in scoring averaging 19.7 and seventh in rebounding with 7.2 a game.

This snapped a two-game losing skid for UCCB. It hurt Dalhousie's momentum coming out of their exceptional performance at the Rod Shoveller tournament. This loss was a big letdown for the Dal fans and coach Tim McGarrigle.

Alexander has been trying to fill the void left after the departure of six-foot-six, 250-pound power forward David Phillip and shooting guard Kirt Mombourquette from last year's team.

As for Dave Phillip, he is currently living in Halifax and there have been rumours that he might play for SMU next year if he does not go to Europe to play pro-ball.

"It's possible that I might play ball in Halifax next year but I'd really like to get a contract in Europe" said Phillips.

The way Alexander was recruited is interesting.

Alexander, heard about the University College of Cape Breton basketball program through former Capers guard Brian Aylward. The two met while playing in a summer league in upstate New York.

During the camp Aylward mentioned to Damien that he should come to Canada and play basketball for UCCB. Taking Aylward's advice, he sent a tape to UCCB coach Bill Burns who invited him to camp and later recruited him.

However, Alexander is also a musician. He plays piano, raps, and is a rhythm and blues singer.

He hooked up with former Dal guard Tremayne Howe who have done a few shows in Halifax and Cape Breton.

"I've heard Dammien rap and I think he's pretty weak. Tremayne's alright so I don't even know why he hooked up with him," said Halifax's top rap enthusiast Rydell Green.

On Sunday, six-foot-six Dalhousie rookie Rubens Aubourg from Montreal played Dammien and dropped 20 points on him.

"When I was watching the game I was watching Dammien a little trying to see what all the rave was about. He's got a real good jump shot and he rebounds

real well but his defence is a little weak. Rubens played real well," said observer Jason MacDonald.

Alexander and Aubourg often went head to head and engaged in some trash-talking, but after the game they shook hands and chatted about the game.

Although Dalhousie came crowd didn't get upset about Alexander's trash-talking the St. FX crowd did.

"A few weeks ago at St. FX everyone saw Dammien mouthing off to all the X [Men] players and the crowd starting to yell at him. I think most of the football team in the stands started to tell him that he was dead," said St. FX student Mike Aucoin.

In other games, the Acadia Axemen edged the Prince Edward Island Panthers 68-67 and the top-ranked St. Francis Xavier X-Men mauled the Memorial Sea-Hawks 112-70.

At Charlottetown, Phil Davis had 15 points off the bench as the Axemen overcame an astonishing 70-34 rebounding deficit.

Jonathan Mckercher led the Panthers with 22 points.

At Antigonish, Fred Perry sank 21 points as the X-Men improved to 10-0 in league play and 17-1 overall against CIAU competition.

Bridgewater native Jeff Saxby scored 22 points and hauled in six rebounds for Memorial, which dressed only seven players.

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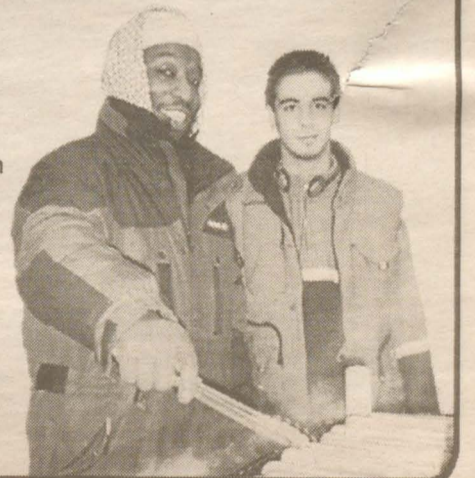
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# Time management largest factor against exercise

by Jackie Gough

the gazette

University students, business travellers and all other people who are highly constricted by time, obviously have trouble making it to the gym as much as their bodies need it. What is the answer to this universal problem? Time Management.

When writing your weekly schedule you shouldn't leave out your work out time. Treat exercise

as a job. You can't be late for it and must not miss it, as Darren Steeves, Adidas Three Stripe Sponsored Fitness Professional says, unless you are sick.

It is funny how we can fit *Survivor*, *Passions* and many others of our favourite television shows into our schedule but still we have no time for exercise.

Steeves says the workout is well worth the occasional leg pain.

"I have never seen anyone

who was committed to an exercise program for a year that hasn't seen the results they wanted to. Yes, that sounds like a long time but a lot of people have got to remember that it took you ten years to get where you are."

Weight reduction, strength-building, cardiovascular work are only some reasons why people have a personal trainer. Anyone who wants to be sure that they are doing the right exercise for their bodies should see one.

"We are here to make sure that you maximize your goals," says Steeves.

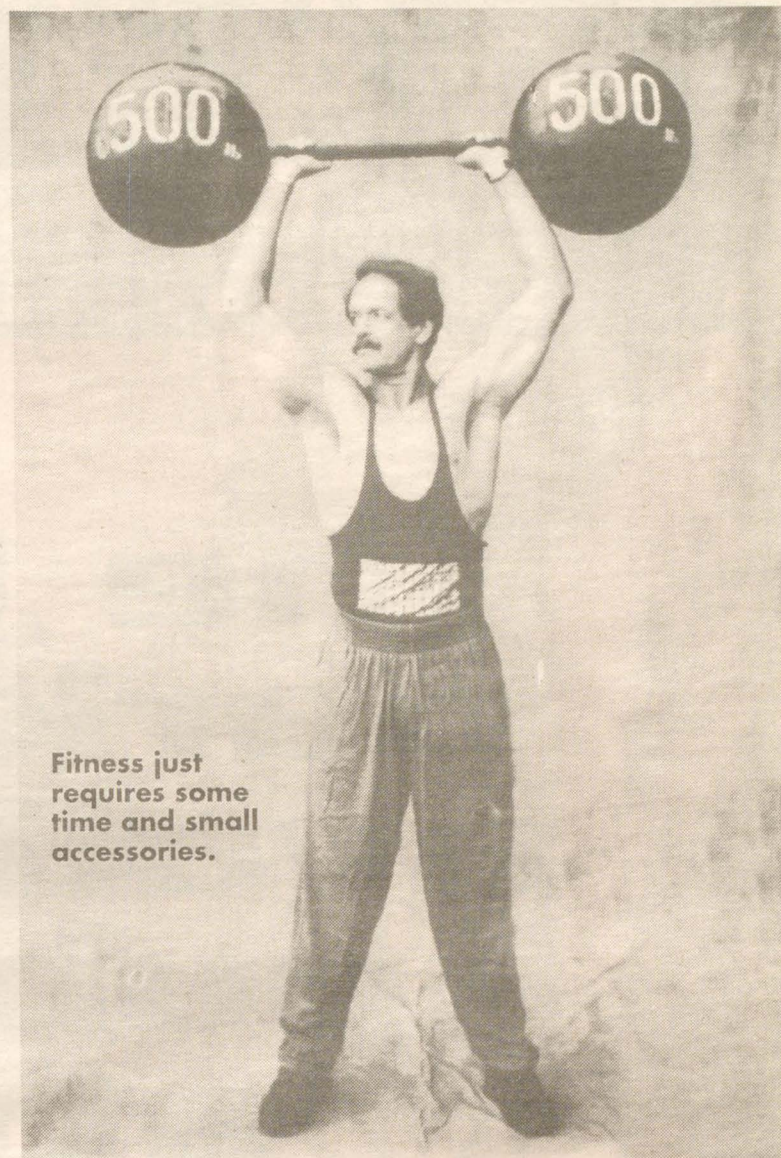
Steeves says that the two things he needs to teach his clients are exercise science and exercise psychology. Exercise science is about problems like osteoporosis and hypertensive and the exercise psychology is what he can say to motivate a client or change their thought on a certain part of their exercise. The goal is to eliminate the psychology and focus on the science.

The first session consists of a client consultation, in which the personal trainer discovers the clients' problems and then they jointly define goals. A fitness assessment can be done for those who want to know their fitness level when they start the program.

A couple of days later you can meet up with the personal trainer who will show you an individualized program. After this they will put it into action. It's a good idea to meet once a week to ensure the best success.

After a period of time, you will sit down with your personal trainer and assess what you have done so far. This is your chance to change the program to do exercises that you may enjoy more or to fit your new fitness needs.

Planning is a big job. One of the hardest problems for parents is to organize their fitness schedule around their family. Instead of doing this, they should set a time and make sure their

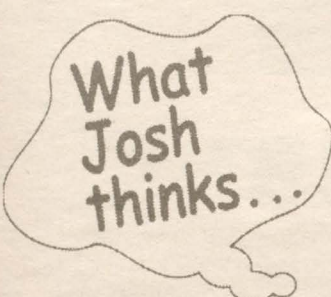


Fitness just requires some time and small accessories.

family knows that nothing is to interrupt them at that time.

"Exercise adherence reports show us the critical thing for adherence to exercise is home support," said Steeves.

To some people, the rates for a personal training session may seem expensive but when you compare it to \$150 for a nice meal for two or to a sport such as hockey where you pay about \$250 for registration and around \$300



What Josh thinks...

by Josh Smith

## Guilty By Association

XFL lacks credibility due to ties with McMahon, WWF

Sure, as its most enthusiastic promoter claims, it might be a more exciting brand of football than its more traditional counterpart, the National Football League. Sure, while virtual no-names fill the league's rosters, its games do move faster, and finish earlier. The Xtreme Football League, and founder Vince McMahon, are banking on it. But despite the many rule changes and concepts introduced by the new excitement-geared league, it is missing something of much more importance: true integrity.

The fact that the league is partly-owned, and strongly promoted by, owner of the the World Wrestling Federation, leaves fans no choice but to wonder about the validity of such a league. Can we trust a game which is run by the same people who arrange for The Rock to lose to Rikishi before the second commercial? Are we supposed to believe that an XFL game is a perfectly legitimate game of football? Even if the games are totally genuine, and are played without predetermined outcomes, it will never be the football we've come to know as a Sunday afternoon tradition for the last thirty-five years.

As a great man once said, the beauty of sports is that it is unscripted drama. Anything can happen, at any time. So, honestly, when you watch a game between the New York Hitmen and Memphis Maniax (that is not a typo), are you taking it seriously? Or is it just another version of Monday Night Raw, with Minnesota Governor Jesse "The Body" Ventura behind the microphone? My answers are no and yes, in that order.

The XFL is not about football, and the fans know it. They know that wrestling is scripted, but are willing to watch it anyway, and this is no different. Simply put, if you are watching the XFL and expecting a football game, forget it. Fans of the newly established league don't want real football. They want to be entertained. Many of them are the same people lining up to spend their hard-earned salaries booing The Undertaker. Sure, I'll be the first to admit, excitement is great, but when it comes to sports, legitimacy matters. That's the bottom line.

Now, just a minute here. Clearly, Vince McMahon is a very intelligent guy. He knows what gets viewers, and what keeps them coming back for more. But just because he's a shrewd businessman doesn't justify his actions. Ultimately, the results on the field will have little importance to him. All he seems to be concerned about is making more money than he's losing. And that is exactly why the XFL does not deserve your attention.. This is one writer who won't be wasting his time watching NBC executives scramble for reruns of 'Wings' after the XFL's third week.

Realistically, that won't actually happen. But while it will be popular, its fans will not be true sports fans. They will be watching it for all the wrong reasons. Tradition is more valuable than experimental bells and whistles. In a nutshell, there is a lot to be said about the state of professional sports when a wrestling organization establishes, and expects to profit from a football league.

Earlier this month, as you may or may not have heard, an XFL blimp crashed into an Oakland, California sports bar. Could it have been a preview of things to come? The fledgling league is just as likely to run out of gas and fall in the Nielsen ratings, just as its blimp nose- dived into the Golden Gate grill. Only time will tell as to whether the new league flies. However, if you find yourself on the couch this Sunday wondering what went wrong, here's my advice: change the channel.

## Five Tips to Remember for Exercise

- 1) Plan your week ahead
- 2) Find a convenient location — pick a place that you have easy access to
- 3) Get a work out buddy — interchangeably, both of you will keep each other on track
- 4) Business people should use a special program — this is ideal for when you travel
- 5) Have fun — make sure you enjoy the exercise and vary what you do



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