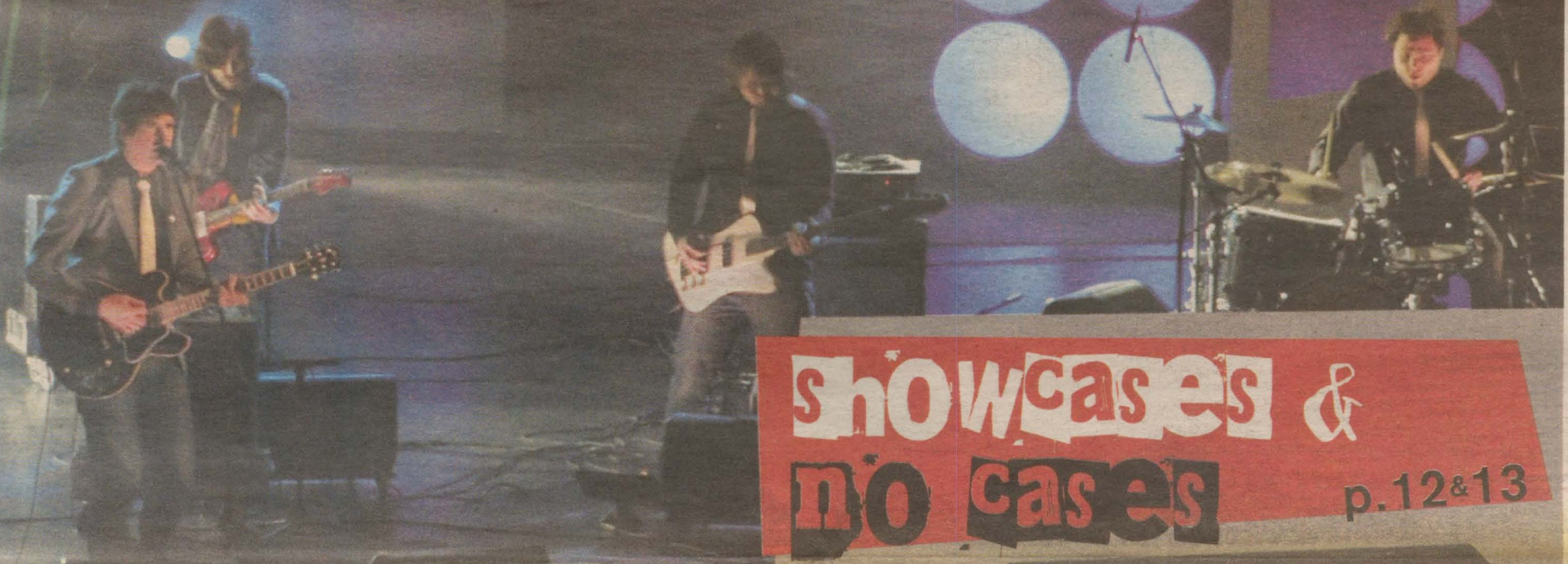


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139-21 / February 22nd - February 28th, 2007

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Gazette



**showcases &
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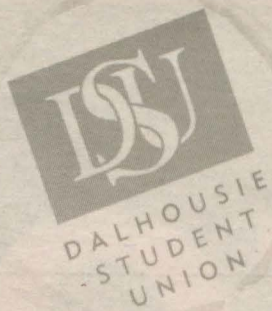
a weekend of music

**dal promises new
grad house** p.4

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election stage** p.9

**taekwondo team
preps for nationals** p.18

Photo: John Prodaman | Cover Design: Rafal Andrzejowski



WEEKLY DISPATCH

Free Pizza

The Dalhousie Student Union

Annual General Meeting

Will be held on Wednesday, February 28th at 6:00 pm in the McInnes Room, SUB

In addition to a yearly update from the DSU executive we will be considering changes to our bylaws that would create a Board of Operations. The function of the Board will be to oversee the operational aspects of the DSU, and it will be composed of the executive, six students at large, up to two alumni, and one staff member.

DSU General Elections:

The nomination period for the DSU general elections opened on February 12th. If you are interested in running for one of the ten positions available stop by the elections office in room 214, the DSU office, or the info desk to pick up a nomination form. You can also download the form from the DSU website, www.dsu.ca. Nominations close on March 6th with campaigning from March 12th to 19th. You can contact the Chief Returning Officer Anneke Foster at election@dal.ca or 494-1282 with any questions. You can also follow the workings of the elections committee on their blog at dsuelections2007.blogspot.com.

The New DSU Website:

On February 28th the DSU will be launching a new version of our website www.dsu.ca. This new site has been designed by the Dalhousie Chapter of the Association of Computing Machinery (ACM). It will have a sleek new look, improved functionality, and will integrate with my.dsu.ca, and Tigerbooks. Be sure to check it out!

Is Your Society Worthy of 'Society of the Year'?

Each year the DSU confers the Society of the Year award to a new society as well as an A, B, C, D, and E level society for outstanding achievements. These awards are presented at Student Appreciation Night – a dinner, dance, and awards ceremony hosted in the McInnes Room of the SUB on Saturday March 10th, 2007 (more information at my.dsu.ca). If your society is deserving of this award please submit a nominating letter to the office of the Vice President (Internal) located in room 222 of the SUB. Alternatively, the nominating letters can be emailed to dsuvpi@dal.ca. Nominations are due by March 5th at 5:00pm. Nominating letters must be less than 1000 words and should outline the society's achievements over the past year and reasons why the society should be granted this award. Best of luck!



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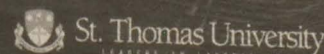
WHEN: February 26 @ 4 pm
WHERE: To be announced

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Gazette

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A "staff contributor" is a member of the paper defined as a person who has had three volunteer articles, or photographs of reasonable length, and/or substance published in three different issues within the current publishing year.

The Gazette is the official written record of Dalhousie University since 1868 and is open to participation from all students. It is published weekly during the academic year by the Dalhousie Gazette Publishing Society.

The Gazette is a student-run publication. Its primary purpose is to report fairly and objectively on issues of importance and interest to the students of Dalhousie University, to provide an open forum for the free expression and exchange of ideas, and to stimulate meaningful debate on issues that affect or would otherwise be of interest to the student body and/or society in general.

Views expressed in the Hot or Not feature, The Word at Dal, and opinions section are solely those of the contributing writers, and do not necessarily represent the views of The Gazette or its staff. Views expressed in the Streeeter feature are solely those of the person being quoted, and not The Gazette's writers or staff. All quotes attributed to Joey Ryba in the Streeeter feature of this paper are written, in good humour, by staff, and do not necessarily represent the views of Joey Ryba. This publication is intended for readers 18 years of age or older. The views of our writers are not the explicit views of Dalhousie University.

All students of Dalhousie University, as well as any interested parties on or off-campus, are invited to contribute to any section of the newspaper. Please contact the appropriate editor for submission guidelines, or drop by for our weekly volunteer meetings every Monday at 5:30 p.m. in room 312 of the Dal SUB. The Gazette reserves the right to edit and reprint all submissions, and will not publish material deemed by its editorial board to be discriminatory, racist, sexist, homophobic or libellous. Opinions expressed in submitted letters are solely those of the authors. Editorials in The Gazette are signed and represent the opinions of the writer(s), not necessarily those of The Gazette staff, Editorial Board, publisher, or Dalhousie University.

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All contributions in this issue of *The Gazette* were made by the staff listed above and the following contributors: Catherine Holloway, Hugh Wallace, Magen Powell, Karyn Haag, Brittany Curran, Anna Fong, Kristin Slonsky, Kieran Hanley, Joel Durling, Justin Patterson, Kristin Pasternuk, Leslie Flemming, Li Dong, Jen Bond, Chris Metler, Jennifer Belanger and Tom Howells.

The next contributor meeting will take place February 5th at 5:30 p.m. in Room 312 of the Dalhousie SUB. We need writers, photographers, illustrators, readers and ideas. If you can contribute any of these, please drop us a line or come by the office.

CORRECTIONS

• In issue 139-20, *The Gazette* regrettably failed to attribute a photo that ran with "In front of the flash" on page 4. The photo should have been attributed to local artist Doug Winsor. We apologize for the error.

Gazette

Are you a writer? Photographer? Illustrator? A reader?
Come to our meetings: Mondays, 5:30 pm, Dal SUB

An unjustified silence

Union should have posed tougher questions on referendum

JESS MCDIARMID
Copy Editor

Around this time last year, *The Gazette* learned the co-chairs of the Senate Discipline Committee resigned, citing fears an apparent attitude in the university Senate could endanger positive changes made to disciplinary procedures at Dalhousie.

Those faculty members were part of the highest academic body at the university, charged with overseeing the entire discipline process.

It was a big deal. But no one wanted to talk about it, except for an elected student representative.

Jen Bond, then a student senator and vice president (education) of the Dalhousie Student Union, spoke out against what she saw as an inactive body that refused to take responsibility for the problem.

One afternoon at a Senate meeting, Bond stood up and stuck it to some of the most powerful people in our school.

"If the highest academic body in the university isn't going to talk about it, then I'm not quite sure who's going to," she said. "That two people who were so committed... have decided they've had enough should be a red flag to this body that something isn't right."

It was remarkable. That, to me, was a shining example of a courageous and effective student union.

Now, a year later, I've watched the unveiling of the university's proposal to fund 11 construction projects by reaching into students' pockets.

And I have heard conspicuously few questions on the merits of that proposal coming from our union representatives.

That is not — necessarily — to say the union hasn't represented students' interests.

DSU President Ezra Edelstein says the union has taken an "adversarial role" in negotiating the terms of the project since university President Tom Traves met with council in November.

The union, says Edelstein, ensured students would be involved in the design process, that buildings would benefit students on all three campuses, that student lounges would be included — and that the proposal would go to a referendum.

"The university didn't have to take this to a referendum," he says. "They could have just arbitrarily gone ahead and did this."

By the way, thanks, Dr. Traves and DSU officials, for giving Dal's 15,500 students a choice whether they want to leave a "legacy" of more student space — and up to \$100 in



The leaflet advertising Imagine 07 featured Ezra Edelstein and Tom Traves side by side. Maybe they shouldn't have been. / Photo: John Packman

extra fees to go along with it.

The "choice" the union has presented to the student body appears to be a far cry from the commitment Edelstein made when he was elected two years ago — to represent the diverse interests of the Dal student body.

"I'm just the mouthpiece for 17,000 students at Dal," he told *The Gazette* after learning of his victory.

He got the number wrong, but the spirit of his message was dead on. Has he lived up to his promises?

Some students believe Edelstein has supported the referendum from the beginning and hasn't provided a sufficient forum for debate. He won't say what box he'll be ticking on referendum day. But he says people he talks to who "have the information seem pretty supportive."

"But I'm sure there's a lot of people out there that don't have all the information," he says. "It's really a matter of how much the university can get the information out about this project to students at Dal, so they can vote and be informed."

The university made adjustments to the proposal after Imagine 07, a public consultation. The concessions it made, such as re-locating the Grad House and capping student fees at \$100 per year, will no doubt benefit students if the proposal goes through — and increases the likelihood that it will.

But students, and not the union, publicly voiced those concerns.

Edelstein says the DSU wanted those changes from the beginning. "But it wasn't until we had a whole bunch of students come out and say that these are actually big issues for us that the university agreed to move on them."

Students harbour a "huge amount of distrust that the university isn't just going to take the money and run," says Edelstein.

Perhaps I am one of those people, because I find myself a little cynical about the whole thing

— and I don't think it's because I'm "uninformed."

If this proposal goes through, it will benefit students. But it will benefit Dal more.

The university wants to boost enrolment to 17,000 students by 2010. More space, funded by students, will help recruit and house more students, which means more money for Dal.

The university has expanded exponentially over the past 10 years, with new buildings and higher enrolments. But the existing buildings suffer from millions of dollars in deferred maintenance costs.

And I'm not convinced there is such a crippling need for more space.

Since students at Dal already pay some of the highest tuition in the country, it seems a titch unfair they're now being asked to fork out another \$100 a year for space to study.

Edelstein says students are the only possible sources of funding. The post-secondary education system in Canada, he says, lacks the resources to fund such projects.

"It's absolutely not the ideal way for this kind of a project to happen, but it's the way that spaces like this are built across Canada," he says. "It's the only way it will happen."

I am not alone in my skepticisms — students across campus have expressed concern for the future of the Grad House, the state of Dal's existing buildings and the cost this proposal leaves for future students.

I wonder, then, about the silence of the union executives. While the DSU has influenced the proposal in a manner beneficial to students, it has asked painfully few questions about the merits of the proposal itself. And it has yet to justify that silence.

I'm glad the university has listened to students. But the questions they asked were ones I would have liked to hear from our student representatives.

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Dal responds to student concerns

University President Tom Traves announced several changes to the proposed \$25-million construction project after hearing concerns from students across campus. Under the new plan, Dal would re-locate the Grad House and cap the annual student fee at \$100 if the March referendum passes. The university would also guarantee equal student / administration representation on the building planning committee and ensure the buildings satisfy environmental standards.

This week, *The Gazette* focuses on two of these proposed changes.



The university now plans to move the Grad House to 1252 LeMerchant Street if a March referendum passes. / Photo: John Packman

Grad students to get new campus home

REID SOUTHWICK
News Editor

Dalhousie has committed to re-locating the Grad House if a referendum on campus makeover projects passes.

The decision comes in the wake of public opposition to plans that would see the existing building razed to the ground.

The move also represents a shift from the university's position several weeks ago when President Tom Traves agreed to simply help grad students raise funds for a new house.

Traves says he was "impressed" with the level of student attachment to the building that became evident during Imagine 07, a public consultation on the construction proposal held on Jan. 31.

"I was impressed with the number of students who indicated this was a favourite space on campus and that it serves an important social need," he says. "Despite the progress that would be achieved by expanding the Student Union Building onto that space, something important will be lost."

The university now plans to move the Grad House to 1252 Le-Merchant Street if a March referendum passes. The university owns the building and rents it out to residential tenants.

Traves says the building is in better condition than the current site, which requires roughly \$750,000 in repairs. He says renovation costs wouldn't be "substantial" and the university could likely salvage parts of the existing building.

He says any overhead could be covered through a cost-sharing agreement between the university and the Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students, which operates the house, or through a slight rent increase.

Traves says the university isn't proposing a new Grad House site as a means to ensure the referendum passes.

"If there referendum passed without a new Grad House, it still seems to be a good idea to have a new one," he says. "We put forward a general plan that we thought would address the majority of needs. On the other hand, there were some needs that we had over-looked altogether."

DAGS hasn't decided if the university's proposal is in the best interest of students. President Yannick Tremblay says the university has committed to ensuring the house retains its food services. But he says the council wants to review building blueprints and cost assessments before determining whether the building can be transformed into a desirable establishment.

"We're still reviewing the whole proposal," says Tremblay. "Once we really see what we can do with the new Grad House, then we will make a decision."

Tremblay says DAGS will likely reach a decision by late February. The decision will come two months after the university formally announced the campus re-design projects and less than two weeks before the referendum vote.

Tremblay says the association has been flogged by a lack of formal leadership since November 2006 when the previous president resigned. Under DAGS' constitution, the group had to wait until the end of January before it could hold a by-election.

To set an earlier by-election date, officials had to change the constitution and hold an annual general meeting. The lengthy process shaved off just two weeks from the original by-election date.

Tremblay says when DAGS takes a position on the referendum, it can still have an impact on student votes. He says the association will likely send e-mails to graduate students.

"A lot of people haven't yet decided on their own position," he says. "Even if we make a decision late, we would probably provide guidance to people who haven't yet decided."

University caps student fees for construction

JOHN PACKMAN
Opinions/Photo Editor

Dalhousie has capped student fees that would fund 11 construction projects on campus at \$100 per year after some student groups called the original plan unfair.

That plan would have seen students paying \$10 more per course if a March referendum on the proposal passed. Some students would have been slapped with a larger fee than others.

Engineering students, for example, take a mandatory six courses, which meant they would pay \$120 per year.

The president of the Dalhousie Student Union says a group of engineering students proposed the cap during Imagine 07, a public consultation on the proposals held Jan. 31.

"After [Imagine 07], it was definitely something that was raised and seemed fairly reasonable," says Ezra Edelstein.

The DSU later asked the university to implement a \$100 cap.

Dal President Tom Traves says he hadn't thought about the effect different course loads would have on students' contributions to the construction project.

"The DSU raised that as a problem and offered a solution, which I thought was a sensible one," says Traves.

The president committed to notifying students of the cap on the referendum ballot.

Stephen Kuzak, assistant dean of student affairs in the faculty of engineering, says the cap isn't important for students.

"It would be a question of paying \$100 instead of paying a \$120, \$130," says Kuzak. "I don't think it's a large issue."

Mary Fawcett, a fifth-year chemical engineering student, disagrees. She says higher fees would exacerbate resentment from engineering students who already feel they won't be getting as much out of the proposal as students on other campuses.

"A lot of the students don't feel like they're benefiting from these



"The fee cap is a step in the right direction," says engineering student Mary Fawcett. / Photo: John Packman

projects, most of which will be on the other campus," says Fawcett. "By being forced to pay even more than most students, it's like rubbing salt in the wound."

The proposed renovations for Sexton campus include a two-storey, 810-square-metre workshop with three garages for applied group work and a learning commons on the top floor. The plans also contain renovations to the alumni lounge and the common room near the Sexton Memorial Gym.

Fawcett says a fee cap is "somewhat of a compromise" that should make engineering students feel better about the situation.

"The fee cap is a step in the right direction."

— with files from Reid Southwick

Uni-Briefs

CANADIAN CAMPUS SHORTS

UofC campus makeover stalled

The University of Calgary's plans to build a learning centre, green space and pedestrian area were set back after officials realized construction would likely involve the removal of key loading docks.

The university is looking for another location for the docks, which supply every vendor in the student centre and provide access to concerts and other events. Officials estimate the cost to move the docks would reach \$50 million.

The learning centre project has stalled with several setbacks since it was announced April 1, 2006.

The 2008 completion date of the project has been pushed back to the next year. Building plans have still not been finalized.

SFU mulls SUB construction

Simon Fraser University might erect its first student union building.

Architect Bing Thom, who helped design the university campus in the 1960s, is conducting a pre-planning study for a potential union building. The study is part of a wider effort to develop a design proposal that began in June 2005.

A portion of the \$30,000 earmarked for the project paid travel expenses for officials who flew to Washington State University to observe facilities there and find out how they were constructed.

Plans to hold a referendum on the construction proposal this spring were stalled after controversy erupted over the student union's decision to fire full-time staff. The union now plans to hold a referendum next spring.

UofS students march on president's office

Dozens of students at the University of Saskatchewan stormed the president's office earlier this month, demanding more resources and better undergraduate programs at the school.

Armed with placards that read "show us the money," the student group Anthropologists Among Us staged the latest in a series of efforts to draw attention to what they perceive as declining quality of undergraduate education at the university.

Students launched the campaign after one of two tenured anthropology professors took a leave last fall, leaving 1,700 students with a single tenured professor.

Michael Atkinson, UofS vice president (academic), told *The Sheaf* student newspaper that undergraduate education at the university is among the best in the country.

Fight breaks out at UBC

An unidentified person was arrested Feb. 16 after a brawl broke out in a University of British Columbia lounge.

The fight that involved roughly 30 people spilled out into the student union building's main concourse, according to the school's Alma Mater Society. At least one security official was bleeding after being struck in the head with a broken bottle.

RCMP arrived on the scene and diffused the dispute that saw individuals, most of whom weren't students, throwing rocks and bottles. The university's main lounge and pub were closed for the night following the incident.

Sources: *The Gauntlet*, *The Peak*, *The Sheaf* and *The Ubyssy*

Gazette

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King's union to launch 'No Campaign'

KATIE MAY
Assistant News Editor

Dalhousie's decision to exclude University of King's College students from voting in an upcoming referendum shows a "complete lack of respect" for the smaller university, says the King's Students' Union.

"It's discrimination," says KSU President Dave Jerome. "The majority of students that I've spoken to are very disappointed."

King's students are not eligible to vote on the \$25-million construction project in a referendum scheduled for March 6 and 7. But if the referendum passes, King's students will have to pay an extra \$10 for each course they take at Dal after construction is complete.

Jerome sent a letter to KSU members last week, outlining the union's upcoming "No Campaign" aimed at encouraging Dal students to vote against the proposal on behalf of King's students.

Dal President Tom Traves says only students who are registered with the university should be eligible to vote.

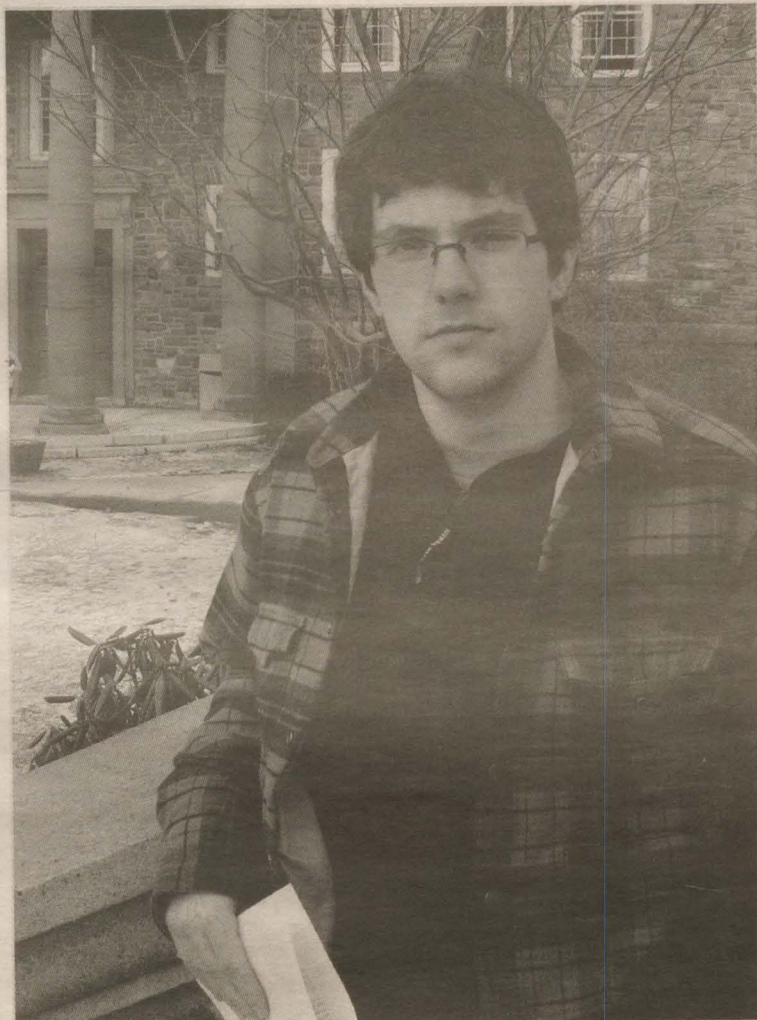
"King's students are partners with us in lots of things, but they're not formal members of the Dalhousie Student Union," he says. "They're affected by those decisions, but they chose to be King's students."

Traves says the university would consult King's students on the design of the 11 proposed construction projects, which include an expansion of the Student Union Building and re-location of the Grad House.

Some King's students disagree with Dal's decision to exclude them from the vote.

James Hutt says while some King's students take courses at Dal, the majority likely won't benefit from more student spaces on Dal campuses.

"It's not fair; we're not getting anything out of it. It's being forced upon me and I don't want it at all,"



Dave Jerome, president of the King's Students' Union, says many King's students are "very disappointed" with Dal's decision to exclude them from the referendum vote. / Photo: John Packman

the Foundation Year Programme student says. "Everyone at King's wouldn't be so opposed if we were given an option."

Fellow student Amanda Andrews agrees.

"I would be OK with paying the money if we had the opportunity to have a say," she says.

King's President William Barker says Dal is free to set its own fees.

"It would be nice if they con-

sulted King's students since it's a sizeable group of 1,100 students," he says. "In the end, it's Dal's decision to do what it wants to do."

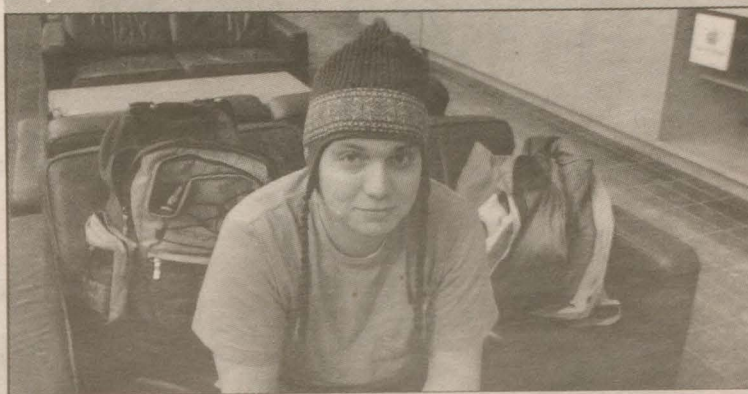
Barker says he understands why students are upset, but they might see the situation differently if the roles were reversed.

"Our students would find it difficult if Dal students were to vote on King's issues."

—with files from Reid Southwick

NEWS STREETER

WHO SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR FUNDING STUDENT SPACES: THE GOVERNMENT, THE UNIVERSITY OR STUDENTS?



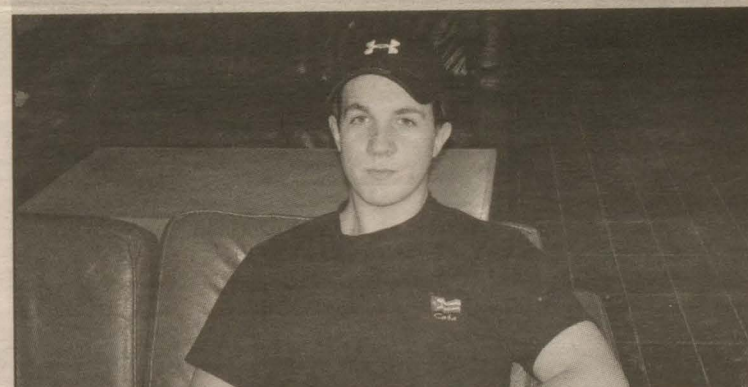
"Maybe a mixture of the school and the students. The students shouldn't pay for all of it."

Raymond Edwards, second-year computer science



"I think it should be split between the university and the government. Students pay enough already."

Leanne Huck, fourth-year kinesiology



"I think it should be a mix of the university and the government as well. I don't have any money myself. I can't pay for it."

John Ballantyne, third-year neuroscience



"The government, because basically all the money we're paying in tuition goes into those kinds of things. We shouldn't be the ones maintaining that. That shouldn't be our responsibility."

Suman Jha, third-year sociology and social anthropology

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now I want to
tackle the
tough stuff"

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From The Gazette archives

WISE OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN, WHO SHOULD I CAST MY VOTE FOR?



THIRTY YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

St. FX. referendum invalid

St. Francis Xavier University students voted in favour of joining a regional student lobby group in a referendum, but the results were turned down.

The university's student union required 40 per cent of students cast ballots in favour of joining the Atlantic Federation of Students for the results to be valid. Only 38.5 per cent of students voted.

AFS student leader Mike MacInnes said the organization was trying to legalize the referendum results by reviewing the list of eligible voters. He said if enough students had dropped out of school since September, voter turnout would have met quorum after all.

The votes would have been valid if 57 students had left St. FX. between September and February.

TWENTY YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Sex excludes fraternities

A judicial board decision ruled that Dal's Interfraternity Council promoted sexual discrimination and violated the Dalhousie Student Union's constitution.

The IFC, a collective organization of fraternities and sororities, lost its bid for a seat on DSU council because it limited fraternity membership to males.

The DSU constitution prohibited discrimination based on sex, race or ethnic origin.

The judicial board recommended the DSU change its constitution

to allow the IFC and other religious and cultural groups to maintain society status.

IFC President Mike Dunn said the organization would lobby the student union for constitutional amendments. He said fraternities at Dal didn't have the chance to discriminate against potential members.

"There's been no documented cases of females being refused entry into male fraternities," he said. "There hasn't been a call for co-ed fraternities."

TEN YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Ex-finance clerk jailed

A former Dalhousie finance clerk was sentenced to a year in prison after pleading guilty to fraud.

Dal administration fired Linda

Anne Hill in June 1986 after it discovered she had stolen more than \$143,000 from the university.

Hill submitted invoices from a fake company and illicitly collected consulting fees and travel expenses over an eight-month period. She also told the judge she spent the funds on "dinners, clothes and playing the big shot."

The judge ordered Hill to repay the university's insurance company for the money she stole.

But some administration members said the sentence was too lenient.

"She set out to deliberately defraud her employer, and just so that she could 'act the big shot,'" said Brian Mason, vice president (finance and administration). "A serious sentence was definitely warranted. Is one year enough? I don't know. Everyone will have to decide that for themselves."

Uni-Briefs

SOUTH OF THE BORDER

Crows kicked off campus

The University of Albany removed 20,000 crows from its campus last week to protect students from disease.

University officials installed flashing lasers and low-frequency sound devices around wooded areas on campus to discourage the birds from nesting. Roughly 50,000 crows migrate to the campus each spring, said a university grounds manager.

Tim Reily told the *Albany Student Press* crows create noise pollution and spread diseases such as West Nile Virus.

"The measures we're taking are intended to benefit both the students and the crows here in the most positive sense," Reily said. "The goal is not to offend the crow population, but to move it on to a different, more suitable area."

Kiss images 'inappropriate'

Valentine's Day posters put up by a gay and lesbian student advocacy group caused controversy at Princeton University last week.

Members of Pride Alliance distributed posters across campus depicting same-sex and straight couples kissing under the slogan "Love = Love" to raise awareness about homosexuality.

But some students considered the posters too explicit for public display. When the Pride Alliance launched the Valentine's Day campaign two years ago, students responded negatively and many of the posters were torn down.

The former president of a conservative-leaning student society told *The Daily Princetonian* that while this year's reaction wasn't as negative, some students were concerned about the posters.

"Sexually suggestive pictures of any combination of people would seem inappropriate for flyers posted all around campus," said Sheriff Girgis. "If the posters were aggressive, they might put people off and foster hostility instead of mutual understanding, which I believe is their goal."

ACROSS THE POND

Fatal hazing prompts ban

Initiation ceremonies at United Kingdom universities may be banned after a student died from a hazing-related injury.

Exeter University student Gavin Britton died after attending a golf club initiation earlier this month. In response to his death, university officials banned all initiation activities at the school.

Under the new code of conduct, Exeter students caught hazing could be fined and expelled from the university athletics union.

The union recommended that 150 universities across the U.K. implement a similar ban to discourage organized peer pressure.

"This code of conduct will save lives," union President Richard Soddy told the *Exeposé* student newspaper.

But *Exeposé* reports other schools aren't willing to completely prohibit initiation, fearing a ban would drive hazing practices underground.

Sources: *Albany Student Press*, *The Daily Princetonian*, *Exeposé*



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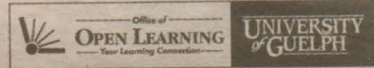
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Gazette

The Gazette is a student-run publication. Its primary purpose is to report fairly and objectively on issues of importance and interest to the students of Dalhousie University, to provide an open forum for the free expression and exchange

of ideas, and to stimulate meaningful debate on issues that affect or would otherwise be of interest to the student body and/or society in general. The views of the Editorial Board are not the explicit views of Dalhousie University.

A response to readers

Several letters *The Gazette* has received over the past month reflect a perception that this publication focuses on negative characteristics of the Dalhousie campus. Some students believe their campus newspaper frequently degrades the university of which they are proud to be a part.

These readers are frustrated with coverage that overlooks many active societies on campus, or the excellence in scholarship countless professors and students regularly achieve.

The comments come as a disappointment to *The Gazette's* editorial staff, which strives to carry out its responsibilities as the voice of Dal students. More importantly, the comments call into question this publication's methods of presenting the news.

The Gazette often identifies characteristics of the university's campus it believes deserve more attention than is currently being awarded. Students, and not the paper's staff, are the original sources who bring these issues to light.

The news section ran a spread in issue 139-19 on campus buildings that are in desperate need of repair. The theme was sparked by arts society President Jamie Blasina, who confronted the president of the university during a presentation on the campus makeover proposal.

Blasina showed the president a cup filled with an unidentified black substance that leaks from the Dalhousie Arts Centre. He, like many others, feels the university should place maintenance projects above construction plans in its spending priorities. *The Gazette* believes these concerns demand a real and important place in the public debate.

The stories and images featured in the issue were indeed shocking and alarming. While the chair of the music department called on the administration to assign more funding to building maintenance, photos depicted decrepit staircases and crumbling walls.

The spread was a clear sign the Dal campus is anything but world class. *Gazette* editors, however, failed to report the university has a long-term strategy that aims to increase its commitment to facilities renewal by \$1 million each year until spending matches demand.

This omission was irresponsible and *Gazette* staff corrected the error in the following issue. But while the

lapse in judgment likely detracted from the legitimacy of the spread, the spirit of purpose was still present in every page.

The Gazette honours its relationship with the students it seeks to serve. As such, its staff demands the best facilities and quality of learning the administration is responsible for providing. This publication will never settle for anything less. In an increasingly competitive market, Dal has to acknowledge there will always be room for improvement.

Meanwhile, *Gazette* staff strives to highlight the university's strengths. The last issue the news section dedicated to a specific theme was published in October after encouraging enrolment figures were released.

In sharp contrast to the 2005 Future of Dalhousie issue, the 2006 edition indicated residence occupation had increased and that the university's budget swelled following unexpected levels of student registration.

The news section has also covered several important student projects, including the irrigation pump engineering students designed over the past few months for Third World countries.

During the 2006 winter term, the section featured weekly profiles of exemplary students, professors and staff members whose work helped shape the identity of the Dal community. Letters *The Gazette* received over the past month, however, indicate the absence of such profiles may have left too great a void to be ignored.

In response to its readers, the news section will resume its "Dalifamous" series, and current staff members will strongly encourage next year's editorial board to ensure the profiles become a regular feature.

The Gazette will also take greater pains to inform its coverage of campus issues and events with an even hand. When its staff highlights negative qualities of the university to encourage improvement, it will seek to juxtapose those with strengths, meanwhile using this editorial space to explain its methods and intentions.

This publication encourages its readers to continue sending recommendations that aim to improve its quality of coverage. Readers, however, should be mindful *Gazette* staff takes its responsibilities seriously and strives to inform students in earnest.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Letters

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

Articles

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

Letters@dalgazette.ca

Save the Grad House

I graduated from Dalhousie two years ago, but I needed to visit *The Gazette* web edition when I got ear that the Grad House was going to be torn down! This is a terrible, terrible thing and I am writing to you to make sure you understand the gravity of the situation at hand.

Most agree that Dal has undergone more changes in the past five years than in the five decades before that. The face of Dal has morphed, from new buildings to a new marketing campaign.

This is all fine and dandy, according to some students. One lady student was quoted as saying (and I paraphrase) the spirit of a building is determined by the spirit of the people that visit it.

I challenge this statement by raising attention to the case of the old Grawood. The old Grawood was the Grad House — wooden floors sticky with beer, wooden tables, East Coast music and cheap pub food.

It was the place for students to gather after classes in a typical East Coast collegiate environment. But the old Grawood suffered from its popularity, since it was judged to

be too small and the place was ultimately torn down and replaced with a post office.

The new Grawood was inaugurated to students walking in a plastic room reminiscent of an elementary school classroom.

Plastic must have been the architect's fetish. Jesus, I think even the pool tables were made of plastic. The establishment, though the same in name, was not the same in spirit.

I remember spending much less after-hours time on campus after the old Grawood ceased to exist. I am sure thousands of other students can attest and spark up their lighter in solidarity.

In the case of the Grad House, one must take a second to consider what makes Dal "Dal" and acknowledge the influence of the Grad House on the entire student body. Dal is synonymous with the intimacy of Halifax, the friendliness of the Maritimes, the warmth of a scotch after class at the Grad House. This is what makes Dal and the collegiate experience enjoyable.

We must cherish and treasure those last few environments that foster the growth of the student community. It is this community and the

exchanges that happen within it that ultimately impact the quality of the university experience for thousands of future leaders. The Grad House in the present state does a terrific job at nurturing these exchanges.

I urge you to continue raising awareness on the Grad House's death sentence in your next issue of *The Gazette*.

Cheers,
David Lukofsky

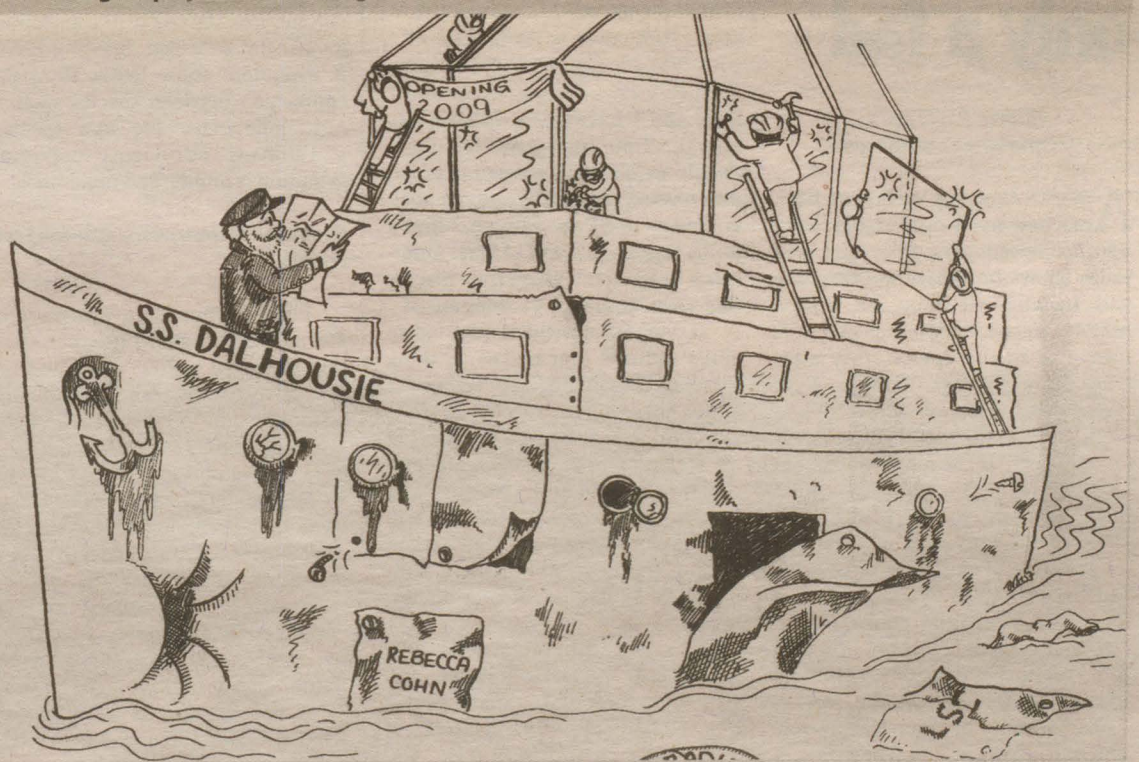
Conditions fit for closure

Shock and concern were the two feelings I felt when I read issue 139-19. I understand that approximately \$25,000,000 is to be spent improving the look of Dalhousie, including a considerable amount destined for new fabric. Perhaps these funds would be better spent on repairs to existing buildings.

May I remind you that many public buildings, particularly schools, have been completely closed after conditions, as displayed in your photographs, came to light?

G. Boyce
BSc. '68

Sinking ship by Jennifer Belanger



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People are blatantly spreading prejudice toward Americans and our society seems to accept it. / Stock Photo

Public America-bashing only a fad

JUSTIN PATTERSON
Opinions Contributor

America-bashing seems to have reached an all-time high in popularity. Newspapers, television and radio shows bombard us every day with negative views on U.S. policy, military decisions, politics and culture. The media spews story after story on how the U.S. is destroying the world as we know it.

It seems that the easiest and fastest way to make it into the media spotlight is to take a jab at the most powerful country in the world.

Even in day-to-day conversations on politics and world events in Halifax, the phrase "stupid Americans" is uttered with little consideration for what it means. I'm not going to jump on the bandwagon and blindly blame the U.S. for all the world's woes. I want to broaden this narrow line of thinking and maybe even get your heads out of your asses.

I am a Nova Scotian, born and raised, and I have noticed a distinct one-sidedness to the views expressed in the media with regard to the U.S. In many foreign events and affairs articles, the U.S. is mentioned and, more often than not, it's something negative.

Somalia is in turmoil due to American policy; the genocide in Sudan continues because the U.S. won't stop it; Israel invaded Lebanon because the U.S. supports Israel. And I have a strange rash on my genitals because the U.S. didn't prevent me from going home with that chick from the Palace.

The U.S. is not responsible for everything that happens in the world. It may be a powerful country, but I'm quite certain that America is not omnipotent. People seem to be adopting a submissive attitude that makes them believe nothing is their fault or in their power to change. They are simply puppets of the mighty U.S.

I've heard many people comment that Americans are stupid and igno-

rant, and I have been disgusted to hear this from my fellow Canadians. People are blatantly spreading prejudice toward Americans and our society seems to be accepting it. I find it ironic that people would label Americans as ignorant, since they display their own ignorance in doing so.

It seems that we have adopted an elitist attitude that makes us think that, as Canadians, we are much better than Americans. Well, guess what? Canada has many flaws. What are we doing to combat drug addiction and suicide in the North? What are we doing to reduce pollution and waste? What steps has Ottawa taken to stop the genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan, or for that matter, what has any country done?

I have read many articles stating the U.S. should do something to stop these atrocities. Canada is also a developed country with considerable influence and resources. Why aren't we taking actions to stop the genocide? Maybe we should step out of the shadows and make a difference instead of waiting for the U.S. to fix the problem.

Many people expect Americans to fix all their problems and at the same time call them "American pigs." If this is true, then the other countries of the world are the piglets, suckling from American teats and depending on its protection and support. They whine when they get too much or not enough milk, and when they get milk instead of champagne.

I hope people will think before they blindly accept anti-American articles, reports and television shows. There are many factors and variables that cause world events, not just the actions of the U.S.

I'm sure many of you can list a lot of negative things about the U.S. But you must understand that just because the fad of the day is to bash Americans, it doesn't mean you should. Don't get sucked into the popular belief that the U.S. is responsible in one way or another for all that is bad in the world.



CATHERINE HOLLOWAY
Opinions Columnist

The Scientific Skeptic In defence of Darwin

Feb. 12, 2009, will mark the 150th anniversary of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* and the 200th anniversary of Darwin's birth. In anticipation of that day, a non-profit group of scientists organized events to establish a new holiday called "Darwin Day."

The events included Evolution Sunday on Feb. 11, when hundreds of churches around the world held services attempting to bridge the gap between religion and science.

For my part, I intend to debunk some of the most common anti-evolution arguments:

We've never seen evolution happen

We see evolution happening every day. We see it when bacteria and insects become immune to antibacterial soaps and pesticides. We see it in the changes scientists have made to domesticated animals — they've turned wolves into dogs and boars into pigs through artificial selection.

We see evolution in genome mutations in certain species over several generations. We see it in the documented cases of speciation in plants like roses, ferns and cabbages, where one species breaks off to form two unique species.

We see evolution in the fossil records of species like the horse, which has grown from the size of a dog to its current size. We see it in transitional fossils, the so-called "missing links" in evolution. These fossils show the connection between species such as Australopithecus, the ape species, and humans. The evidence supporting evolution is prolific and undeniable.

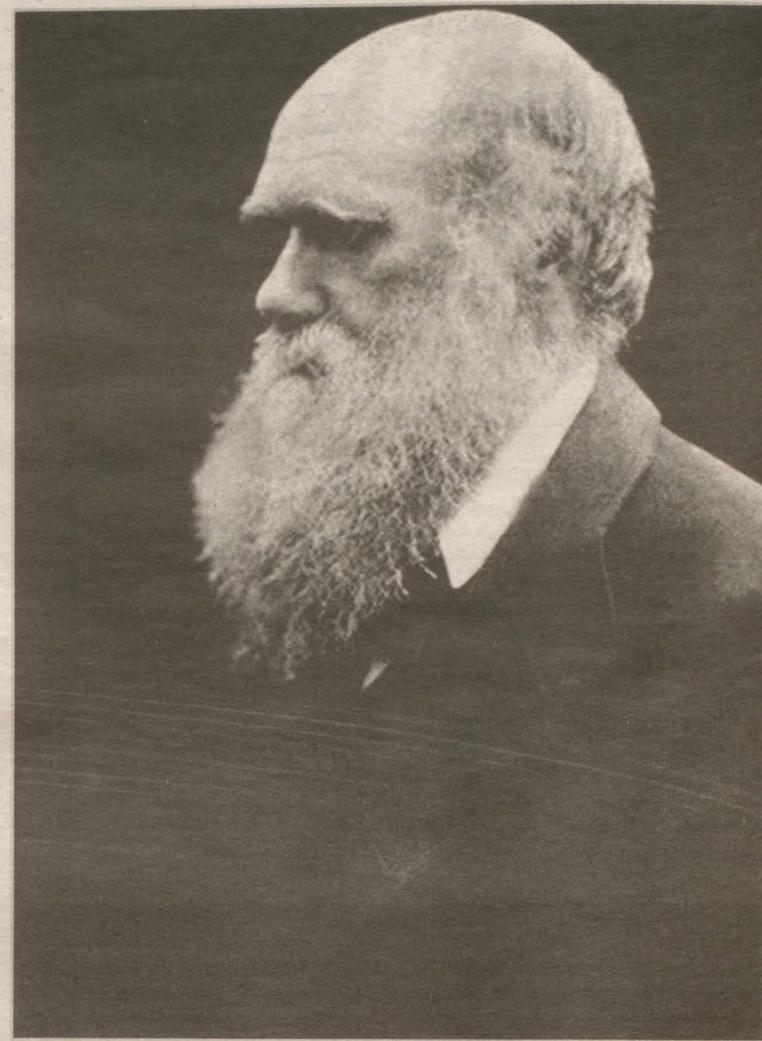
Evolution is controversial among scientists

Phillip Johnson, a professor of law and born-again Christian, used this argument in 2005 when he tried to convince the American public school system to teach creationism. The argument is simply wrong.

The Discovery Institute, a non-profit Christian think tank Johnson belongs to, took five years to scrape together 600 signatures of scientists under a petition that claims Darwinism is false.

Meanwhile, a counter-petition circulated by an independent group of scientists secured 7,000 signatures in four days.

A poll conducted by *Newsweek* magazine found that 99.8 per cent of



The evidence supporting evolution is prolific and undeniable. / Photo: Julia Margaret Cameron

respondents believed in evolution. One might say these scientists are biased or have a reason for lying about their beliefs. But that would mean an estimated 2.5 million people in the United States alone are secretly part of the biggest conspiracy theory ever.

Evolution is dogmatic

Once you say that nearly all scientists believe in evolution, another response from creationists is that scientists are either stuck in a particular world view blind to evidence pointing the other way or that there is no way to prove evolution wrong.

Not so. Just one fossil of a species known to have existed in one specific time frame or place where it didn't belong would make most scientists seriously re-consider scientific thought since Darwin published his seminal work.

Evolution can't explain ears or eyes

This is the one argument cre-

ationists love to make, from Ann Coulter to Ted Haggard. But science has proven this wrong.

Evolution of seemingly complex organs is possible and can be explained through specific theorized pathways.

Evolution is only a theory

Yes, evolution is only a theory, but it's a scientific theory with a lot of evidence supporting it.

Electromagnetism is only a theory, too, but that hasn't prevented us from understanding electricity well enough to power our homes with it.

Gravity is only a theory, so why don't we see creationists jumping off buildings and expecting to fly?

Creationists are still out there, and they've still got followers. No matter how much evidence we collect or how many counter-arguments are debunked, doubters of evolution will persist.

Send comments to: skeptic@dalgazette.ca

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Harper must consider environmental policy to win a majority government. / Photo from Wikipedia.com

Environment to be election issue

KIERAN HANLEY
Opinions Contributor

A spring federal election appears to be imminent.

The election will be different from those of recent memory — Paul Martin is gone. Although many Liberals liked and respected him, it became clear the man had surrounded himself with poor election strategists. Perhaps there were a few positive lessons he could have learned from his predecessor, Jean Chrétien.

The Conservatives won the last election by naming top priorities and sticking to them throughout the race. For the most part, to the credit of Harper and his party, they have done well in keeping their word — “promise made, promise kept,” as they boast.

Many Canadians were insulted and frustrated when Stephen Harper brought the same-sex marriage debate back to Parliament, but you have to respect the guy for actually doing what he said he was going to do. Canadians might not like his policies, but at least they can count on him to do what he says.

Despite this track record, the Conservative Party may be in trouble in the coming election over something they made no promises about at all: the environment. The average Canadian seems to care a great deal about the health of this planet, and it's mind-boggling how Harper was so blind not to see this.

The environment is typically not on a right-wing agenda, but if Harper wants a majority government, environmental policy is the obvious big ticket. Now that new Liberal leader Stéphane Dion has made the idea of a sustainable economy his prime

directive — he named his dog Kyoto. A major theme for the next election has been set.

Harper saw the writing on the wall and fired Rona Ambrose, the minister who fronted his ridiculed Clean Air Act. In the past week, several old Liberal environmental programs, nixed by the Conservatives not even a year ago, have reappeared under different names.

But is it too little, too late for the Conservatives? The exciting Liberal leadership race made household names out of participants such as Ken Dryden, Michael Ignatieff and Bob Rae. Dion has surprisingly managed to keep all of them in the fold.

On paper, the Liberal Party has far more recognizable names and faces, many of them fresh, and this could spell trouble for the Conservatives.

Harper has kept his ministers quiet, which has given his government a consistent face. It is troublesome, though, that the public has only been exposed to a select few of the Conservatives such as Ambrose and foreign affairs minister Peter MacKay — and not for all the right reasons.

The coming election will provide a good indication of where this country is headed. Have Canadians become more comfortable with Harper and his Conservative agenda? Or have they decided the boys in red spent enough time in the penalty box for their scandalous antics? Is Dion even ready?

Do we really want to expend that much energy if all we're going to get is another shaky minority anyway? It will all depend on how much Canadians really do care about the health of their planet.

Capital Health: get serious about costs, services

JOEL DURLING
Staff Contributor

Much as the old Halifax Infirmary became infirmed, the Victoria General has been on the decline.

According to the Dalhousie Medical Alumni Association, the VG is Halifax's oldest existing hospital. The original opened in 1859. It was replaced in 1948 by today's structure, the 'new' VG. The site, which now falls under the umbrella of the QEII Health Sciences Centre, also houses the Centennial, Dickson, Bethune, Mackenzie and Centre for Clinical Research buildings.

Needless to say, the VG lacks aesthetic appeal, its interior resembling that of an insane asylum of the late 1800s. The site is clearly in disrepair, has progressive limitations, poor infrastructure and is wrought with problems.

The VG falls under the responsibility of the Capital District Health Authority, which is one of nine health authorities in the province of Nova Scotia. Capital Health released a statement in mid-2006 regarding legionella bacteria found in the VG's water system.

The contamination is an old problem that dates back to 1980. The bacteria is commonly found in water systems but becomes a problem when it's aspirated into the lungs.

Aspiration can cause Legionnaire's disease, which is a form of pneumonia. Risk of acquiring the disease is low in the healthy population but increases significantly for sick people.

Due to the bacteria problem, the VG site used bottled water for consumption and bathing. The cost placed a greater burden on our health-care system.

Consultants were brought in and proposed a treatment solution that didn't guarantee full eradication of the bacteria. Despite the lack of assurance, officials agreed to a \$70,000 pilot project. The site remained on



The VG uses bottled water for consumption and bathing due to bacteria contamination. / Photo: Rafal Andronowski

bottled water precautions and still does today.

Capital Health runs many facilities within its jurisdiction. Ten of these are part of the QEII Health Sciences Centre, which indicates the authority has to thinly stretch its resources to meet commitments.

Capital Health needs to get serious about its costs and services. The authority should propose to con-

struct a new, large single facility that would contain out- and in-patient services, complimenting those provided by the new Halifax Infirmary. The focus would be on wellness and primary health care. Up-front costs would be high, but long-term figures would be promising.

And improvements in patient care and wellness in our population would almost certainly follow.

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Student: If it's seven cents, shouldn't you round down?

In the SUB washroom

Girl1: Do you think I'm pretty?

Girl2: Oh, don't worry. People think you're pretty when they're drunk.

At a pizza place

Drunk Girl: ...and then I realized that we couldn't be friends anymore since she stopped dropping acid. She's too different. Less fun? Yeah, less.

In the Dunn

TA: You need to write your answer as a vector.

Student: What's a vector?

TA: ...You fail.

In the SUB

Girl: Do these stairs go up or down?

In a history class

Prof: As you all know, this is Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Girl1: (whispering) Wait, he's dead?

Girl2: (whispers back) Yeah, I think he died last year.

HOT / NOT

- | | |
|--|---|
| HOT: Flying home for break | NOT: Sitting near crying babies |
| HOT: Sense of humour | NOT: Censorship |
| HOT: Road trips | NOT: Family road trips |
| HOT: Curtain/carpet jokes | NOT: Britney Spears' shaved head |
| HOT: Grey's Anatomy | NOT: Grandpa's anatomy |
| HOT: Knowing where the hell you are | NOT: Peter MacKay |
| HOT: KRZR | NOT: RAZR |
| HOT: Oprah saying "va-jay-jay" | NOT: Dr. Phil saying "slamhog" |
| HOT: Comfort in your relationship | NOT: Being afraid to fart |
| HOT: Seeing old friends | NOT: Forgetting their names |

Suggestions? hotornot@dalgazette.ca

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Gazette



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STREETER

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE DECADE, AND WHY?



"The '50s, because it was so weird."

Alia Saied, second-year IDS



"The 2000s, because they have good potential for change."

Rebecca Siamon, fourth-year English



"The '80s, 'cause I long for the days where a man could wear a suit with shoulder pads and not be ridiculed."

Marc Antoine-Robertson, fourth-year English



"The '40s, when the war was over, when people were makin' a lot of babies."

Drew Marshall, third-year business



"The '80s, because of hide and seek with all the neighbourhood kids."

Ewan Pelletier, fourth-year biology



"The period 4010 to 4000 B.C. because of significant developments in hunter-gatherer ways of life."

Mary Cobham, fourth-year IDS



"The '30s because the Depression eventually led to emo and that led to hilarity."

Ahmed Rostom, fourth-year neuroscience



"The '80s because of *Teen Wolf*. I dig the chest hair."

Joey Ryba, eighteenth-year car surfing

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

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Gazette

ECMA hopping in Halifax

The Gazette reviews some of the weekend's highlights

From Feb. 15 to 18, more than 150 Maritime bands and musicians convened in Halifax for the 2007 East Coast Music Association (ECMA) Awards. Nearly every venue in the city was booked for the ECMA showcases, from the Seahorse Tavern to Sam the Record Man. *Gazette* reviewers offer a glimpse of the goings-on.



Jill Barber, two ECMA awards later. / Photo: John Packman



Joel Plaskett picked up three ECMA awards at Sunday night's gala. / Photo: John Packman

ECMA Max Trax Rock Showcase: *Carmen Townsend and the Shakey Deals, In-Flight Safety and Mark Bragg @ the Marquee, Feb. 16*

Despite the cold night, ECMA spectators made the trek to the Marquee. Arriving fashionably late, I was thrilled to find I was in time to see some of my favourite Maritime acts.

In-Flight Safety captures the hearts and souls of many Haligonians and its performance Friday night was unparalleled. The band drew the largest crowd of the evening, and its sound reverberated off the walls of

the Marquee and seemingly across the Atlantic. Frontman John Mullane projected a full-bodied voice that led his boys through a night of precise, intricate melodies.

Carmen Townsend and her band, the Shakey Deals, were anything but trembling as she delivered powerful ballads to an open-armed crowd. With the most exciting act of the weekend, including a quick recovery from a guitar-strap malfunction, Carmen Townsend is turning The Shakey Deals into solid contracts. The three-piece band is exploding in the rock scene with Zeppelin sound and

Townsend's Joplin-inspired vocals.

Mark Bragg's unconventional act kept a few people dancing, while others seemed confused. There was no lack in talent, but Bragg music sounds more like that of a mathematician than a musician.

The lead singer's stage antics were entertaining and the music was energetic. Bragg also incorporated comedy into the show, jumping on the stage like an orangutan. It seemed a bit silly, but the remaining crowd was receptive.

-Magen Powell, Staff Contributor

ECMA award highlights

- Male Solo Recording of the Year: Ron Hynes (Ron Hynes)
- Female Solo Recording of the Year: *For All Time* (Jill Barber)
- Group Recording of the Year: *The Coast is Clear* (In-Flight Safety)
- Single of the Year: "Nowhere With You" (Joel Plaskett Emergency)
- Video of the Year: "Drinkin' Thinkin'" (George Canyon)

ECMA 2007 Gala Awards Show @ the Metro Centre, Feb. 18

It took two hours to figure out what exactly I was watching on Sunday night as I sat at the ECMA 2007 Gala Awards Show.

The cold, metallic hockey arena, transformed into a pseudo-awards assembly, was still half full of parents in parkas. The only evidence of a "gala" was a few ladies who stiffly traversed the bleachers in stilettos.

The awards for classical recording, gospel recording and blues recording were given out.

The show seemed underway, though the process was completely unlike American awards shows such as the Golden Globes or Academy Awards.

The presenters perfunctorily announced categories, the winners were modest and the jokes were impromptu, awkward and refreshingly genuine.

The setup of the show was artlessly disorganized — children ran for popcorn in the middle of acceptance speeches and grandfatherly security guards practiced a mild form of crowd control by vaguely gesturing to where people were supposed to sit.

The entire thing was similar to a PTA meeting or peewee hockey awards ceremony and, I was enjoying this equally unglamorous version.

Something felt distinctly Maritime about the experience and,

whenever the host linked the words "Halifax" and "community" together, I found the sentimental description honest.

All this changed when the ECMAs went live. Fifteen minutes before the pre-gala show became the "real" gala show, the host told the audience to demonstrate how great Halifax is to the rest of Canada. This included not leaving our seats, cheering maniacally at absolutely nothing or keeping an unholy, collective silence.

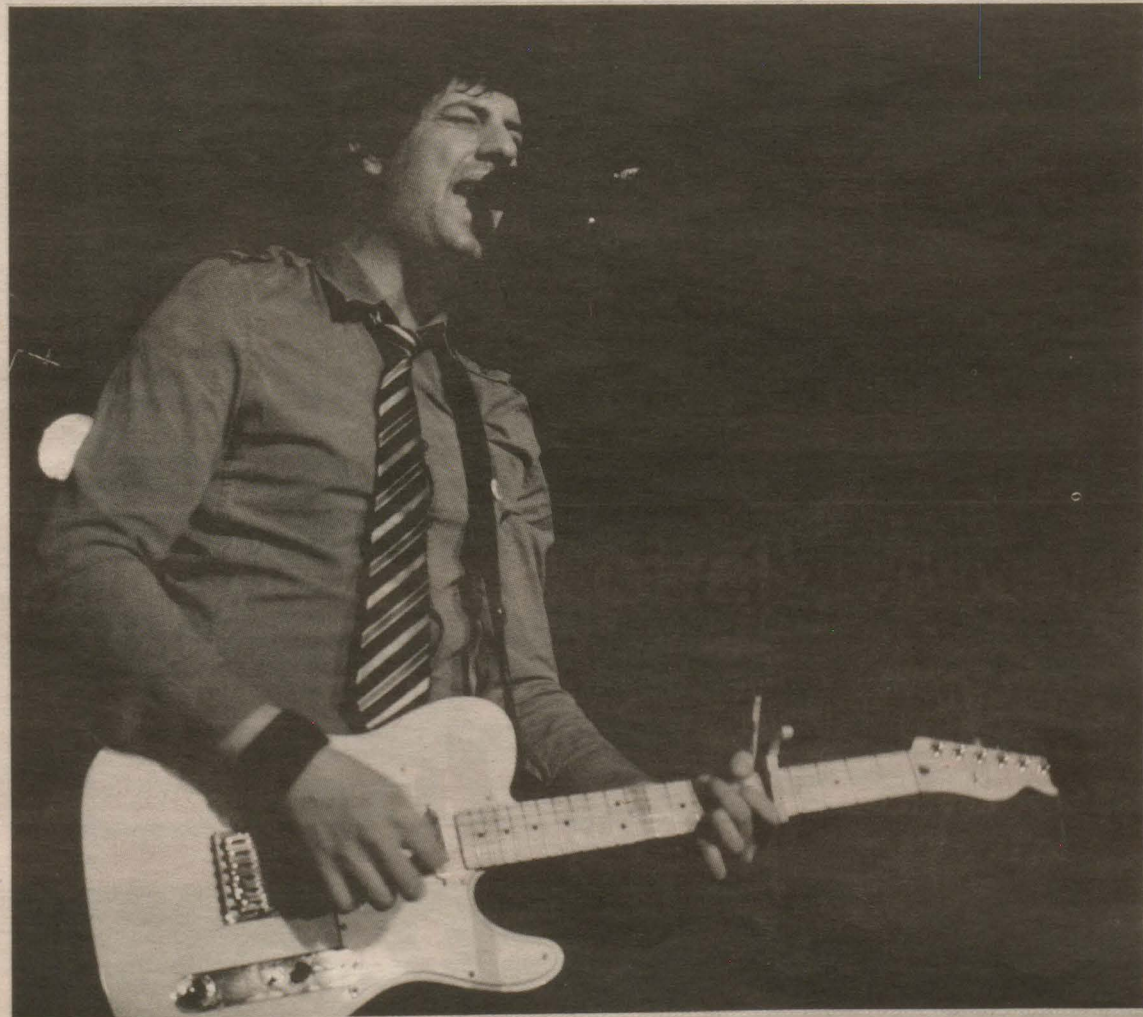
And then the epileptic light show began, the Trailer Park Boys busted through a wall in a "stolen" car and the audience, now suddenly full of "seat fillers," began clapping robotically.

The first awards were given to In Flight Safety and Jill Barber, artists who had won different awards in the precious pre-gala award show. The musicians now sounded fanatically happy and, sadly, clichéd.

Suddenly, the ECMAs became the boring awards show from TV, following the same repetitive, lackadaisical formula.

I finally figured out that I had been watching the pre-gala awards for the last two hours — and that it was the awards show of my dreams. Perhaps not primetime material, but at least somewhat representative of the true, unassuming Halifax most of us live in.

- Laura Trethewey, Arts Editor

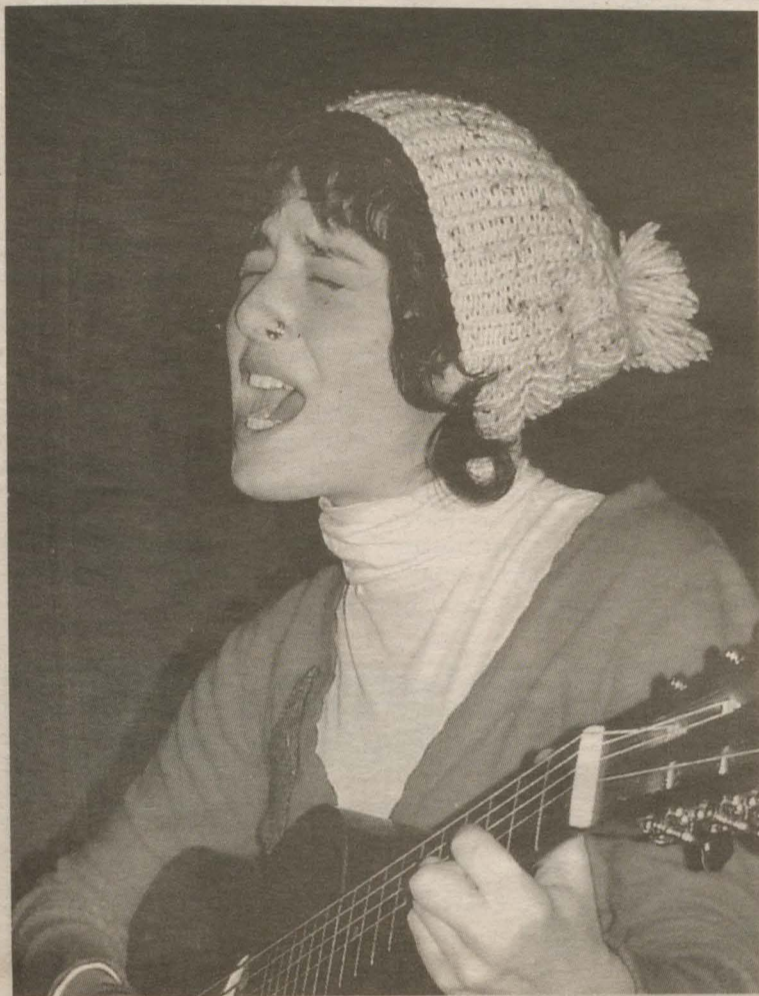


In-Flight Safety's John Mullane was a familiar face on the Marquee stage. / Photo: John Packman

Answering to ECMAs

No Cases show different side of Halifax music

In response to feelings that the Aliant-sponsored ECMAs are over-commercialized, local musicians created the No Cases, a weekend of concerts organized by musicians themselves to coincide with the ECMAs. The No Cases may present a more realistic cross-section of the Halifax music scene, without the cell phones.



The Ghost Bees performed a short but sweet set at the Bus Stop Theatre. / Photo: Ashleigh Gaul

The No Cases:

Great Plains, Museum Pieces, Shotgun and Jaybird and AV @ The Bus Stop Theatre, Feb. 16.

Apparently, this show was a No Case event.

But the implication of alterna-tivity was suspiciously absent. There were only Halifax faces or stalwart Maritime musicians on the Bus Stop's stage.

Shotgun and Jaybird, an indie band from New Brunswick, made more than a few beguiling jokes about coming from Truro. The audience laughed, but they were just as confused as me. Perhaps this stage banter was a slam against Truro. If that's the case, we can all laugh heartily.

The group also tittered about releasing a new album but the new songs played from this upcoming "joke" album were tight and original. The band is departing from its overly Pavement-inspired sound and somewhat contrived bitterness, creating a sound distinctly its own.

The group might lose a few fans as it tinkers with an already established and appreciated sound. These experimentations are a rewarding abandonment of Shotgun and Jaybird's clean lo-fi sound and descend into a darker, more personal recess.

The Museum Pieces, with Andy March on drums and Tyler Messick on guitar, is quickly becoming one of the most ambitious acts in Halifax. Messick's smooth voice and sober songwriting is accented with March's controlled but volatile drumming style.

The live show is frighteningly intense. March claws masterfully over his drums with unrelenting energy while Messick stands collected, eyes closed, sometimes even turning his back to the audience.

At times, March's drumming rose to such a pitch of flailing contortions that it forced Messick to jump out of his stoic rock star posture. Crouching on the floor in front of March's drum set, Messick peered wide-eyed at March as if pushing the drummer onward. Or the two would glare steadfastly at one

another, their instruments and the audience's gaze merely superfluous elements to the tense scene.

Finally, a quick note to the Bus Stop Theatre: thanks for sticking to the "let's bring back Gottingen Street" rallying cry that seemed to die out a few years ago. Your bathroom is officially nicer than mine.

-Laura Trethewey, Arts Editor

The No Cases:

Ruby Jean, Fall Horsie, Stacey Low Brown, A Helpful Diagram and Ghost Bees @ The Bus Stop Theatre, Feb. 17.

The Bus Stop Theatre is fast becoming one of Halifax's favourite hybrid venues. In the past three years, I've seen its antechamber alone triple as a waiting room, coat check and banquet hall. Its main space regularly hosts theatre productions, song circles, poetry readings, punk shows, and, as on Saturday night, disparate local folk band mash-ups.

The original press for the show penned Fall Horsie to appear separate from and much earlier in the night than Stacy Low Brown, the two acts merged on the night to complement Brown's powerful rasp with the fuller strings and keyboards of Fall Horsie. While Brown's set might have been tighter alone, the collaboration was not without moments of synchronization.

A Helpful Diagram, ex-Ghost Bee Aaron Mangle's one-man band, focused the crowd's attention with his charmingly unscripted set and sombre, buttery vocals.

Ghost Bees, Romy and Sari Lightman, closed the night with the help of Andy March, fresh from an earlier set with the Museum Pieces at Sam the Record Man. While Romy's cold cut the set short, the sickly twin played a perfect Pollyanna, which I guess makes March the curled old spinster aunt, hunched stoically over his glockenspiel or weaving disapprovingly on his bass.

It was a night of sometimes pleasing, sometimes disappointing, sometimes sweet and sometimes creepy, hybrids.

And the bathroom of the Bus Stop is singularly superb.

-Ashleigh Gaul, Assistant Arts Editor

ECzeMA No Case award highlights

- The Tiny Draft Beer Award for Least Surly Bartender at Gus' Pub: Peter
- The Most Ridiculously Abbreviated Name for a Band (a.k.a. the A.A. Award): OTBOO (On the Blood of Others)
- The Band With the Most Genetically Identical Members: Horses
- Worst Bathroom: The Rock Garden
- Best East Coast Band: Gidi Gidi Maji Maji from the east coast of Africa
- The Rita MacNeil Rising Star Award: In- Flight Safety
- E Chucky Danger Award for Best-Dressed Band: Risky Business (for wearing their own merch).
- The BA Johnston Shrimp Ring of Excellence: Dimo
- The Sloan/AV/Matt Mays/Trews Award For Band Who Moved Away to Make It Big: BA Johnston
- Best Appearance by A Local Musician In A Film: Dale Fahey in "Vampire Bats."

ECzeMA Awards Show:

TMA, the Maynards, the Stolen Minks, Picnicface and Windom Earle @ Gus' Pub, Feb. 18.

The first signs of spring heralded the close of this year's ECzeMA awards show at Gus' Pub. Smokers mingled jovially in the balmy evening air outside and non-smokers took the opportunity to exit the North End pub for a stroll.

The crowd was filled with fresh faces and scene regulars alike, both on stage and off. TMA opened the night with a thrashing, angst-filled set that matched the spirit of an awards show created in response to the often over-commercialized ECMAs.

Mark Black announced a succession of silly awards from Gus' greatest resident bar tender to the best post of the year on halifaxlocals.com.

The awards were superfluous. You just had to look from the smiling faces of the dancers and minglers to the upbeat sets of the Stolen Minks and the Maynards to see that the greatest reward of the night was just to be a part of that energy.

Picnicface cracked up the crowd and, for the first time ever, the crowd stuck around after the set. You only have to notice these things to see the best privilege of the Halifax scene is the Halifax scene.

-Kristin Pasternuk, Arts Contributor



The Museum Pieces displayed a terrifying intensity. / Photo: Laura Trethewey

Heavy together again

Heavy Meadows reunite to make new album

ASHLEIGH GAUL
Assistant Arts Editor

"Heavy Meadows? Where the hell has Heavy Meadows been for the past 20 years?"

— Claude Alain Alain, former Heavy Meadows fan.

Twenty years ago, Heavy Meadows vocalist Virgil Muir was perfecting his Eddie Vedder impersonation in front of the bathroom mirror in Ontario before school on Monday morning. Guitarist Seth Timothy was probably playing air guitar to King Crimson in Victoria, B.C. and Benn Ross was likely parading through a Nova Scotian kitchen, banging on pots and pans.

They were far too young to be in a rock band.

Perhaps Claude Alain Alain is exaggerating, but he poses a question that has been on the mind of many Halifax scenesters wondering where Heavy Meadows has been.

Four years ago, Muir, Timothy, Ross, and then-bassist Jeff Wheaton

were in the centre of Halifax's music scene, hosting a short documentary for the CBC on schmoozing at the ECMA's and playing shows to support their own nomination in the festival: best alternative group of 2003. They had been playing music together for four years.

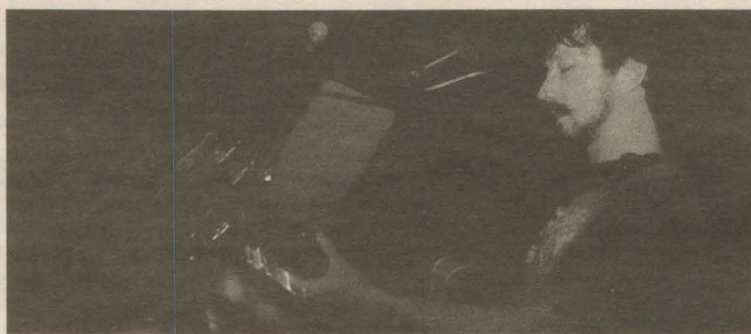
Muir, Wheaton, Ross and Timothy created Heavy Meadows in Halifax in 2000.

By that time, Muir had perfected his Eddie Vedder impersonation along with that of Billie Holliday, while developing his own rambling, though melancholic, vocal style.

According to Muir and Timothy, Benn Ross was playing in 12 different bands when he joined the group in 2000. Wheaton was a full-time cameraman doubling as the band's bassist, who quit in 2004.

Timothy was already an accomplished guitarist, but when he walked into an empty café one morning, he also became a self-taught keyboardist.

"Peter Boileau [from the now-defunct Horseshoes and Hand Gre-



nades] was just sitting there, and he looked at me, and said 'hey, you want a keyboard?' and I took it," says Timothy. "But on one condition. I can't sell it. I have to give it away. But I won't do that now, either."

Timothy's inherited keyboard, a vintage oscillator in the style of Herbie Hancock and Parliament, melded with Muir's unorthodox vocal training, Wheaton's dilettante style and Ross's dogged, obsessive approach. Four years later, the band had toured eastern Canada, made music videos, earned an ECMA nomination, and produced a nationally charting album.

And then Timothy moved to Winnipeg.

Heavy Meadows never officially broke up, but the 2,000 miles of distance between members put a stop to

regular practices, and the band never managed more than two shows a year.

As for long distance collaboration in the style of the Postal Service, Muir shakes his head. "We tried, but there was never enough time."

The band members pursued side projects, one of which resulted in Benn Ross's Fabulous Band — according to Timothy and Muir, Ross has still been playing in about 12 different bands.

Meanwhile, Muir has been experimenting with an African percussion band and Timothy continued a side project, Cantaloupe Wang, which he began in Halifax.

After a four-year hiatus, Timothy returned to his first love, Heavy Meadows. The group plans to start work on a second album this spring. The band intends to keep its origi-

nal name and, with the exception of the loss of Wheaton, the original lineup, but Heavy Meadows will not slink into its old routine.

Timothy says the band will broaden its sound on the new album.

"More loud. And more soft, too," he says. "More dynamics."

"It's already happening," Muir adds.

Heavy Meadows will also look for more guest appearances, both in the recording studio and on stage, says Timothy.

Heavy Meadows hopes to reach a wider audience through touring.

"We want to play different venues," says Timothy. "Like a parks tour... We'd like to tour every major provincial park."

The band will play its first show on Prince Edward Island this month and Timothy wants to play Newfoundland in the summer.

And where will Heavy Meadows be 20 years from now?

"I don't know," says Muir. "I'd like to play in Egypt, maybe in one of the pyramids."

And Benn Ross will probably still be playing in about 12 different bands.

Catch Heavy Meadows before they run off to Egypt on May 11 at the Attic with the Mercy Band.

Double Take

The Gazette does 20 dates in three hours

LESLIE FLEMMING
Arts Contributor
LI DONG
Staff Contributor

The challenge: 20 guys in three hours.

Get your mind out of the gutter. I'm talking about speed dating.

I was skeptical about such a flurry of dating all in one evening. My skepticism heightened when I was informed that these 20 dates would occur on Valentine's Day.

What kind of person actually goes speed dating?

On the one hand, I could be committing to an evening full of charming, attractive bachelors. On the other hand, I could be signing up for three hours of quality time with the members of the Kling-on Appreciation Society and some dudes with sweet Pokémon collections.

When I arrived at the event, I was pleasantly surprised to see that the people I was about to "date" were fairly normal looking. Everyone there seemed like an average guy/girl at an average bar on an average night — no uni-brow cave-men, no tuxedoed Don Juans with roses between their teeth, just normal people.

After a drink or two and some casual co-mingling, the registration began, skillfully supervised by members of the Dalhousie Dating Society. Yes, that's a real society.

The males were all given an "ice-breakers" sheet featuring conversation starters such as the innocent "If you could make three wishes what would they be?" to the more leading question, "On a scale of one to 10, how adventurous are you?"

And then, the games began. Only five minutes per date. That's pretty short, right?

Some of the bachelors were entertaining conversationalists (a short five minutes). Some were a little nervous and stuck to the ice-breakers list (a normal five minutes). Some exhibited no discernable sense of humour (a long five minutes).

Some were quite nice to look at (a short five minutes) and some stared longingly into their beer as if the secret to speed dating was at the bottom of their glass (excruciatingly



long five minutes).

But who am I to judge?

By the end of the night, I had met businessmen, UFC fighters, exchange students, army reservists, varsity athletes and one or two really, really drunk guys. While I may not have found a "soul mate," I did expand my dating horizons and, all things considered, had a good time.

I may have done 20 guys in three hours, but I have no regrets.

— Leslie Fleming

It was a dark and stormy Valentine's Day and my co-writer and I were sitting in the T-Room with 40 other Dal students, waiting for the speed dating fiasco to begin.

It was a night that would surely arouse a full spectrum of human emotions.

The process is simple: 20 girls sit at 20 tables while 20 men talk with them. After five minutes, the men move over a seat and repeat the process.

The whole formula is predicated on three shaky principles: women are the choosers and men the wooers, five minutes is long enough for one to infer whether they want to see a person romantically and in no way does this experience feel contrived or artificial. Even if it does, love shall overcome.

To be semi-charming and/or coherent to 20 girls consecutively is more exhausting than one would imagine. Also, around date nine or 10 the process starts to get repetitive. One thing I've definitely learned is that knowing where a girl

comes from helps me determine how much I like her.

That's not to say the experience was a negative one. On the contrary, almost every girl I talked to seemed relaxed and in good spirits. I had been drinking for a while, so I fared well (and I hardly ever used my icebreaker conversation sheet!) The friendlier girls had no problem carrying on pleasant conversations about theatre, history, literature, society, world news, mathematics (seriously) and bestiality (not joking).


At times, five minutes wasn't enough to get to know a girl properly. At other, more awkward times, five minutes felt like an hour. My experience with one girl was similar to a chat with a rude wall. But there's always exceptions.

Although students don't realize it now, when they go out into the working world it becomes incredibly difficult to meet people. Social devices such as speed dating must be created in order to facilitate the mingling of singles.

There are some who believe the whole process is a cold, mechanical attempt at engineering something that should happen between two people naturally. This perspective is overly rigid and takes the idea of "true love" a little too purely.

In reality, speed dating is a light-hearted way to spend a night meeting friendly, attractive and interesting new people. Except for that one girl.

— Li Dong




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Arts Hole

Scorsese deserves a golden year



Martin Scorsese, yet to win an Oscar, is nominated for 2006's *The Departed*.

CHRIS METLER
Arts Contributor

The 79th Annual Academy Awards nominations were announced recently. Among the nominees, the least surprising was Martin Scorsese for best director.

Little can be said about Scorsese that people don't already know. Nearly 65 years old, he is experiencing a welcome resurgence in popularity in the twilight of his career. But Scorsese has never won an Oscar for best director.

Scorsese can be likened to Alfred Hitchcock. Like Scorsese, Hitchcock was recognized as a genre director by the academy, and his groundbreaking efforts were largely ignored.

Nearly 30 years after his death, there is no doubt Hitchcock is a great master in cinematic history. And Scorsese, despite his immense respect and prestige, has never been a part of the Hollywood establishment.

Hollywood likes its own kind and Scorsese is a New York filmmaker at heart. He has remained independent, assuming total control over his pictures, and has never compromised his vision.

From the brooding intensity of *Taxi Driver* (1976) to the Shake-

spearian tragedy of a fighter in *Raging Bull* (1980) and three decades of life in the mob in *Goodfellas* (1990), Scorsese has earned his reputation as America's finest living director.

Screenwriter Samuel A. Taylor once said, "The basic hypocrisy of Hollywood is that they don't really believe film is an art... Hollywood believes the art of film lays in the content."

Hollywood and the academy are less interested in the technique and its effectiveness in telling a story than in the morality and profundity of the story itself.

This was the case when uplifting, Hollywood-friendly films like *Rocky* (1976), *Ordinary People* (1980) and *Dances With Wolves* (1990) won awards over Scorsese's graphic and thematic street pictures.

The Departed is his modern masterpiece. It is a work on par with his finest films. Only Scorsese could take that subject matter, so familiar to him and his audiences, and again render it with passion, originality and stunning technique.

I wouldn't necessarily expect *The Departed* to pick up the trophy for best picture, but I hope the academy will right its 30-year wrong and read Martin Scorsese's name for best director.

Pocketful of DJ might

The Spin Doctors mix up Tribeca's iPod battle

JEN BOND
Staff Contributor

Aspiring iPod DJs finally have a competition to call their own in Halifax. The iPod battles that have roused crowds in Paris and London have arrived in the Maritimes.

On Feb. 9, Tribeca's second iPod battle packed the venue, the second falling on the same night as the city's attempt at a record-breaking pub crawl. Eight pairs of contestants decked out in their favourite costumes loaded iPods with music and took the stage. The stakes were high: bragging rights and the official title of iPod champion.

Ryan McNutt, a member of the Spin Doctors, one of the finalist teams, said do-it-yourself DJing appealed to him and teammate Travis Smith.

"Every music fan has been at a party or a club and had the urge to run up to the DJ booth, hijack the sound system and play something better," he says. "An iPod battle lets music geeks appease these urges without getting thrown out on the street."

The battle plan is simple: teams draw names out of a hat to determine who will be pitted against whom. In the first round, each team plays a minute from five different songs. Competitors can queue up their iPods to start at any moment in the song or edit the

best parts into one file. A decibel meter reading measures the crowd's reaction and the loudest outburst advances the team to the next round.

At this battle, the second and third rounds only permitted three songs per team, meaning teams had less time to secure audience support. Because the only gauge of success is audience appreciation, teams used costumes, wild dancing and old-fashioned showboating to work up the crowd.

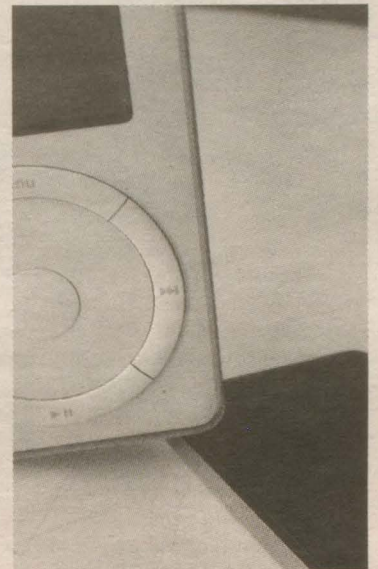
Audience member Eddie LaRusic said a mix of danceable music and good stand-bys makes for a winning set list.

"There were some classic tracks, and those were good for nostalgia... [but] being familiar with the song is less important than simply being able to enjoy its [beat]."

The Spin Doctors — a name that pays homage to the two DJs' jobs in public relations — made it to the final round by appealing to a large audience with an eclectic mix of music. From Guns N' Roses to the Killers, most of the crowd found something to cheer for.

"We wanted to be the team that people kept in the competition round after round to see what great, eclectic stuff we'd pull out next," said McNutt.

But in the end, the Game Boys, Yusef Dennis and Andrew Hines,



iPod battles have just arrived in Halifax.

took the title. With obvious crowd support behind it, the duo finally out-mixed the Spin Doctors. The winning team's advantage lay in its easy prowess in front of a crowd.

McNutt offered advice for aspiring iPod gladiators. "Go outside of your comfort zone a little," he says. "Play to the crowd but don't pander to it and hope that you don't cross paths with the Spin Doctors, or your prognosis won't be pleasant."

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Helen Mirren should take the Oscar for her role as Queen Elizabeth II in *The Queen*.

Oscar picks

The Gazette weighs in on contenders

BRITTANY CURRAN
Staff Contributor

The 79th Annual Academy Awards will be a night of glamour, great expectations and angst. Six categories unquestionably dominate the evening.

Eddie Murphy may take home the award for best supporting actor for *Dreamgirls*. Whether people loved it or hated it, the point is that they saw it. While this attention could translate into a golden statue for Murphy, Mark Wahlberg in *The Departed* is stiff competition. Once a member of *New Kids on the Block*, Wahlberg reinvented himself in to a polished actor who might take the award.

For the best actor category, Peter O'Toole's performance in *Venus* is engaging and worthy of the statue. But my bets are on Forest Whittaker for his supreme portrayal of Idi Amin in *The Last King of Scotland*.

As for the best actress category, Helen Mirren, Penelope Cruz, Judi Dench, Meryl Streep and Kate Winslet will battle it out. This roster drips

with talent and flair, but Helen Mirren's depiction of Queen Elizabeth II in *The Queen* is sure to place her first.

The lovely 10-year-old Abigail Breslin was a refreshing nomination for best supporting actress, Jennifer Hudson will snatch the award for her role in *Dreamgirls*. Another singer-turned-actor, Hudson's innate on-stage charisma amazed audiences and the academy.

The competition for best picture is fierce. While *Letters from Iwo Jima* and *Little Miss Sunshine* are exceptional contenders, the brawl will take place between *Babel*, *The Departed* and *The Queen*. *Babel* took home best picture at this year's Golden Globes, but *The Queen* will reign at the Oscars.

Finally, the most grueling category of the night: best director. Martin Scorsese for *The Departed* and Stephen Frears for *The Queen* will go head to head. My money's on Scorsese. He has yet to win best director despite being nominated six times in the past, but a win wouldn't be for pity.



HUGH WALLACE
Sex Columnist

Sex with Hugh

Public sex: air down there

Shady-looking men in trench coats, women on Bourbon Street and college students at Mardi Gras on spring break are just some examples of people you might find naked in public.

Public nudity is something human beings either agree or disagree with, depending on the situation at hand. If you're caught having sex with someone in a bar washroom, you'll probably get a stern "please leave." If you're caught flashing your bits to anyone, whether purposeful or not, you could legally be charged for "indecent exposure."

My question is whether or not being naked in public is indecent, or natural.

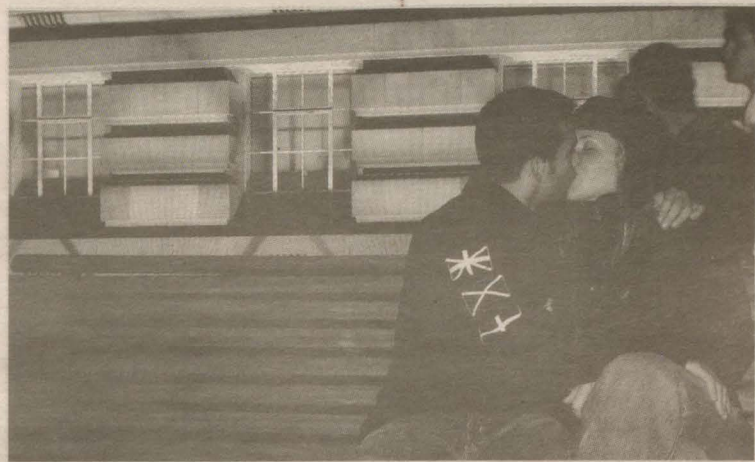
Most people would like to say natural. Ontario made it legal for women to go topless in public to establish more equality with men. But according to the REAL Women of Canada website, the Supreme Court ruling was petitioned by more than 60,000 men and women's signatures, claiming that being topless is indecent exposure, harmful to children and so on.

What is more natural, may I ask, than a pair of breasts?

My hope is all of you reading this are saying "nothing." But assuming that would be the same as assuming everyone has blue eyes — just plain wrong.

This leads me to my topic of the week: public sex.

Sex in public can be exhilarating. It is shocking for some and definitely goes against the norm of sex in bed. The fear or excitement of getting caught drives some people absolutely crazy with lustful desire. It is definitely an interesting thing to engage in.



Remember that not everyone finds it amusing catching two lovers in the midst of sex. / Stock Photo

There are many safer and less obvious places to have public sex. On the rooftops of certain buildings, public restrooms and parked cars are some suggestions Sex101.com offers. I'm sure we can all think of at least one. My favourite idea would have to be an elevator. The movies make it look so exhilarating.

The basic thing to remember when choosing that perfect place is not everyone finds catching two lovers in the midst of sex amusing. I'd even hazard to say that some would find it rather offensive. Police officers, well, I shouldn't have to finish that one. Be careful.

The next thing to remember is there should be some risk of getting caught. That is the entire thrill of the situation. It can be embarrassing, but it is pretty funny, too.

And make sure both you and your partner are game for the experience. Both people need to be willing participants in the exercise. Do not to pressure your partner into doing something they don't want to do — the golden rule of any sexual encounter.

Writing that public nudity is OK and we should explore this realm of sexual fantasy does not, or at least should not, correlate with predatory behaviour.

It should be a world of coupled public sex, not a world of sexually preying on the public. In no way do I encourage or endorse any sexual activity that is undertaken distastefully in public — don't be that person in the trench coat.

This exercise is not for the faint of heart. It is something that is uncharted territory for most people. Steps to take before going for the final leap? Try having sex somewhere private other than your bedroom, or even your house.

Public sex can be fun. Be sure to think about what you are going to do before you do it. Planning ahead is sometimes crucial in sex, especially when it involves the public. Go frolic my friends, feel the fresh breeze on each other's genitals. Maybe wait a couple of months. It's a bit too cold.

E-mail your sex questions or comments to sex@dalgazette.ca

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MARINE INSTITUTE



International Produce: Richard Swift

Dressed Up For The Letdown

LAURA TRETHERWEY
Arts Editor

The first two tracks of Richard Swift's third album, *Dressed Up For The Letdown*, seems to pick up where his first two albums left off.

On the beginning title track, the California musician's gliding vocals swoon over the silence of an echo-filled hallway and faraway tap dancing crackles across the smooth veneer of his voice.

Now that Swift has dropped the record needle down again, the listener is left wondering if he has spun forward at all. The same lo-fi indie pop sound is there, but the encroaching fuzziness, distant lilt-ing voices, carnival-esque twinkling and creepy, yet sweet ambience of his last albums is missing.

Dressed Up For The Letdown is a perfection album: Swift decided to concentrate on elegant reincarnations of dreamy, forlorn pop of the past.

Fans of his lush experimentations might urge him to continue down this path, but he seems to declare his musical territory on this album.

The album's title seems to acknowledge this declaration — Swift, disappointed with progress's destructive grind forward, has placed his allegiance in the ornamental but unoriginal sounds of the past. I hope Swift might resurrect his optimistic tampering and not let the title become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Local Crop: Tomcat Combat

Tomcat Combat EP

ASHLEIGH GAUL
Assistant Arts Editor

I am about to tell Tomcat Combat something the band members have probably already heard: their EP would be wonderful if it had vocals.

Friends have probably mentioned the moog glissando at the two-minute mark of "Black Belt LA." Belle and Sebastian used a synthesizer in almost exactly the same way on "Electronic Renaissance," but with layered monotone vocals

over the spacey synth technique to a euphoric effect.

I'll say it again: some monotone vocals would have been nice.

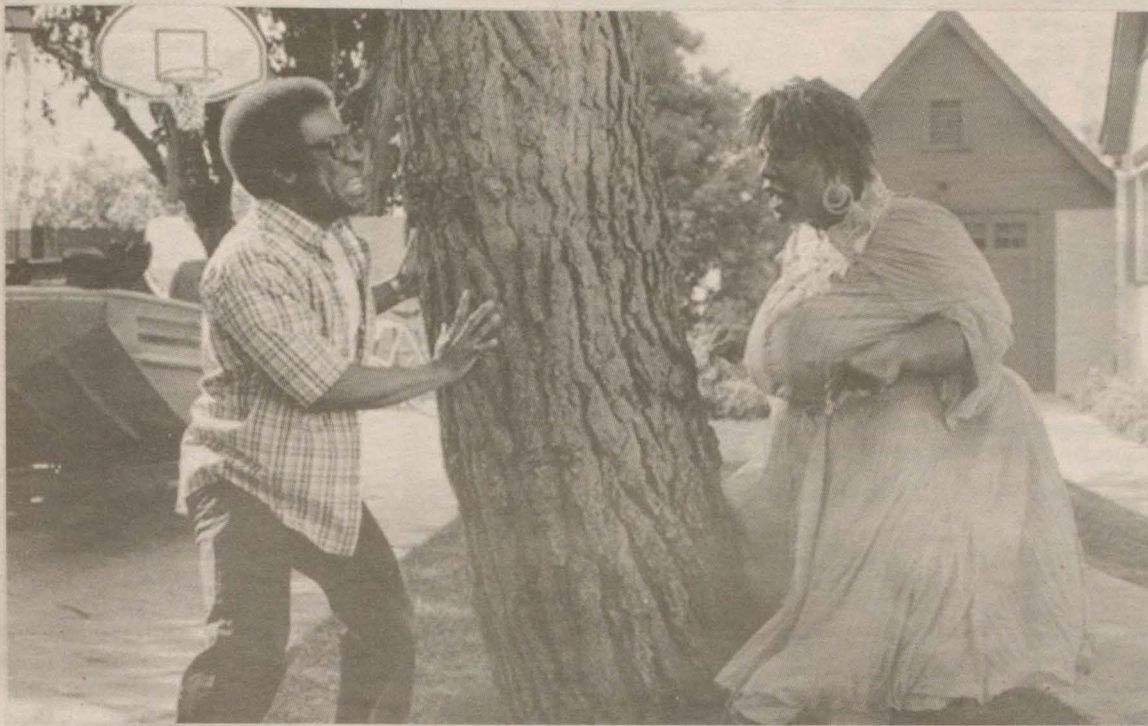
I'm sure their parents have already mentioned this. Stereolab grounded their overly dance-y numbers in robotic French nonsense. Tomcat Combat would be wise to follow Stereolab's example.

But I'm going to tell them anyways: the first half of "Murray Black" could use a little robotic French nonsense.

The band's sisters and broth-

ers have likely already drawn the comparison. The recorded voices on "Building a Better Bridge to Antarctica" are a lot like those on Godspeed! You Black Emperor's "East Hastings."

But I might as well point out that the recording is most effective in "East Hastings" when it drowns out real vocals. So why am I telling Tomcat Combat something they've already heard? I don't know. I'm not even right. Track 5 is perfect. Vocals would have ruined it.



Eddie Murphy pulls off three characters

A Review of *Norbit*

ANNA FONG
Staff Contributor

After watching the romantic comedy *Norbit*, the phrase "How you doin'?" inspires laughter as it conjures up images — maybe they should be called nightmares — of Rasputia, the female lead of the movie.

Eddie Murphy stars as three characters: *Norbit*, a geeky but lovable guy, Rasputia, a monstrous female bully, and Mr. Wong, a Chinese restaurant owner who runs an orphanage under the same roof.

When *Norbit* finds out his wife has cheated on him with her dance instructor, he remains faithful and

stays in the loveless marriage. But when his first love, Kate (Thandie Newton) reappears in town, he is given an opportunity to pursue true love. The movie also stars Cuba Gooding Jr. as Kate's fiancée.

I went to the show because I'm an Eddie Murphy fan, but he has had some bad luck at the box office with movies like *The Klumps* and This movie is worth watching for its memorable, funny characters.

Some jokes are reminiscent of the stand-up routines of popular comedian Russell Peters, whose jokes are largely based on cultural stereotypes. According to the Internet Movie Database, the movie was re-

edited for a larger viewing audience, but there are still scenes with sexual humour and cultural stereotypes that may offend some people.

The seats at the movie's premiere were filled with families and dating couples who laughed so loudly it felt like the walls were vibrating.

The public and die-hard fans can surely enjoy Murphy's multiple personalities as well as appreciate the time he invested to transform into these hilarious characters. The Mr. Wong scenes alone will guarantee some hilarious outtakes on the DVD version.

Burn Baby Burn

BOOKS VERSUS SLUTS

SIDE A: Books
Laura Trethewey / Arts Editor

At the end of reading week, a student is often confronted with one of two ghastly conclusions. The first is the feeling that you've actually accomplished some work. This feeling is coupled with the realization that the next two months will see only more schoolwork steadily increasing until you spontaneously combust.

The second conclusion is one of guilt over an obvious avoidance of all work-related objects: textbooks, calculators or even pencils. Whether you actually studied, or just lied to yourself about cracking the books, this list of songs will hopefully keep you going.

1. "The Book Lovers" – Broadcast
2. "Faking the Books" – Lali Puna
3. "Benefits of Lying" – Apples in Stereo
4. "One Heavy February" – Architecture in Helsinki
5. "Carry that Weight" – The Beatles
6. "Everybody's Gotta Learn Sometime" – Beck
7. "Pressed in a Book" – The Shins
8. "What Will You Do When Your Suntan Fades?" – Beulah
9. "Feel the Pain" – Dinosaur Jr.
10. "The Shape of Things That Never Come" – Jonathan Fire*Eater

SIDE B: Sluts
Ashleigh Gaul / Assistant Arts Editor

My definition of "slut" is 'someone who is sexually promiscuous.' I have chosen to further limit the list with another requirement: the slut in question must prove his or her promiscuity in the narrative of the song.

Without further adieu:

1. "I Got Erection" – Turbonegro
2. "Milkmaids" – Hefner
3. "Slip It In" – Black Flag
4. "Stroker Ace" – Lovage
5. "Leopard-Skin Pill-Box Hat" – Bob Dylan
6. "Teach Me Tiger" – April Stevens
7. "Funky Cold Medina" – Tone Loc
8. "Cherry Bomb" – The Runaways
9. "Tick" – Yeah Yeah Yeahs
10. "I Want a Little Sugar in My Bowl" – Nina Simone

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The best thing about Japan costs \$4 dollars and comes in a box. / Photo: Kristin Slonsky

The full Tokyo story

Japan questions answered

KRISTIN SLONSKY
Arts Contributor

As a person who lived in Japan for a long time, I feel there are many things people should know before applying to teach English there, or even visiting.

For example, April is the most beautiful time of year because the cherry trees are in bloom. Mount Fuji can only be climbed in July and August. There is so much more to Japanese food than sushi. I could talk about Japan for hours on end, but for the sake of brevity, I'll limit myself to the top five questions that people ask me.

Do you need to speak Japanese? Nope, anyone can survive without fluency, but it definitely makes day-to-day life easier. Most Japanese people understand a lot more English than a foreigner might think, but some are ashamed of their accents and pretend to not know a word.

Is Japan an expensive place to live in? Tokyo is expensive, but the rest of the country is amazingly affordable. Most bachelor apartments are cheaper than in Halifax. A litre of gas

is pricey, but most Japanese people avoid the highway and take commuter trains. Grocery stores have several rows of fresh, cooked food, which are discounted by 50 per cent after 6 p.m.

What's your favourite thing in Japan? The vending machines. It feels as if there's a vending machine for everything. I'm a particular fan of canned ice café au lait. If that's not enough, there are also machines that sell beer, cigarettes, porn magazines and women's underwear.

What's the worst thing about Japan? Upon arrival, the average Westerner must quickly accept that they are the minority, and embrace their celebrity status.

For people who have never felt like an outcast before, culture shock and a strong feeling of isolation can become overwhelming. It takes time, but most people get used to the stares. Sometimes I felt like shouting "Boo!" or making a funny face at someone staring just to see how he or she would react.

What's the best thing about Japan? The food, of course! Was there ever any doubt?

Sports Editor: **Joey Ryba**

Assistant Sports Editor: **Colleen Cosgrove**

Contact: sports@dalgazette.ca

Taekwondo tournament focuses on fun over winning

JOEY RYBA
 Sports Editor

More than 300 taekwondo students will take part in a tournament at Saint Patrick's High School on March 9.

The tournament, organized by Carabin's Taekwondo School in Halifax, will feature competitors of various ages and skill levels from across Nova Scotia, including 15 from Dalhousie's taekwondo club.

Dal's taekwondo instructor, Master Il-Han Kim, says he's excited about the tournament.

"I'm always waiting for this tournament," says Kim. "People are usually lazy at this moment because it's wintertime and cold. This is a good breakup."

The competition is a provincial tournament. Winners will advance to a national competition, and potentially to international competition.

To keep things equal, the tournament is structured so that only students with the same colour belt compete against each other.

Kim says he isn't sure how his students will fair against students of the same level from other clubs. He says it all depends on how other instructors teach.

"Our class is focused on the right techniques," says Kim. "We are focused on the right way, not expecting to get the first gold or bronze medal... The way I teach is more focus on discipline and meditation."

Kim's students are training harder and his classes are more strenuous with the tournament approaching, but Kim says having fun at the tournament is the most important thing.

"I'm hoping my students have a really good experience more than [winning] medals and to realize taekwondo is a practical martial art in developing self confidence and discipline," says Kim.



Dal taekwondo club member Adam Aleksis says he wants to perform well at the upcoming tournament to show respect for his instructor. / Photo John Packman

do] to a new level," says Aleksis. "You start to realize how you can apply the things you learn in class. People perform at their highest level in competition and you get to see them using their skill in the most applied way."

Aleksis says he wants to compete because it's a way to see how much he has improved since his last tournament.

"It's good benchmarking experience," says Aleksis. "It's also good to see your peers and the ways the different schools teach martial arts. Everybody has taken taekwondo, but each master will have a little different tweaking on how they prefer the kick."

With the tournament on the horizon, Aleksis says he training more rigorously. His strategy for the tournament is to pace himself so he doesn't tire early in the match.

"Last time I was a lot less controlled than I planned," he says. "When you first step into it, you're stepping into a different experience. You tend to burn out quickly and I want to be a lot more conservative this time."

Like Kim, Aleksis says having fun at the tournament is more important than winning medals.

"It's a great learning experience," says Aleksis. "It creates a lot of team spirit because you really cheer on the other people you see."

He still wants to perform well at the tournament to show his appreciation for his instructor, he says. He's never wanted to perform better for any other instructor.

"[Kim is teaching taekwondo] to become a better martial artist," says Aleksis. "You feel very confident in his teachings and the way he approaches [taekwondo]. He has a really strong dedication to his students."

Adam Aleksis, a second-year Dal student, is competing in a tournament for his second time. Last year,

it was a different experience from class, he says. "[Tournaments bring taekwon-

Athletes of last week

FEMALE ATHLETE

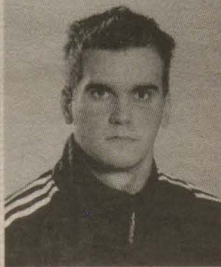


ASHLEY AITKEN
 SWIMMING

Ashley Aitken had a terrific weekend competing in the AUS championship at Dalhousie on Feb. 10 and 11. She dominated three events en route to becoming champion in the 50-metre breaststroke, 50-metre butterfly and 50-metre freestyle. Aitken was named female athlete of the meet. Her performance also helped the Tigers win the team championship. Aitken is a fourth-year kinesiology student from Devonshire, Bermuda.



MALE ATHLETE



DOUG YOUNG
 SWIMMING

Doug Young had a superb weekend in the pool on Feb. 10 and 11, winning three events at the AUS championship. He won gold in the 50-metre and 100-metre breaststroke and the 200-metre individual medley. Young's performance earned him male athlete of the meet and led the Tigers to the AUS team championship. Young is a fourth-year sociology student from Grand Lake, N.S.



Athletes of this week

FEMALE ATHLETE



KATE MCNEIL
 BASKETBALL

Kate McNeil led the way in two close wins over rival Saint Mary's. In the Tigers' 69-63 road win on Feb. 15, McNeil scored 19 points and hauled down 11 rebounds, despite being constantly double-teamed by Huskie defenders. On Feb. 18 at Dalplex, she scored 20 points and grabbed 10 rebounds. The veteran is fourth in league scoring and second in rebounding. McNeil is a third-year biology student from Halifax, N. S.



MALE ATHLETE



DAN MURRAY
 VOLLEYBALL

Dan Murray had a great match in the Tigers 3-1 victory over the UNB Varsity Reds in Fredericton on Feb. 17. With the win, the team captured its 21st consecutive AUS championship and will be making its 28th consecutive appearance at CIS nationals on Mar. 2 to 4 in Hamilton. The veteran was named player of the match, recording 12 kills and eight digs for the Tigers. Murray, an AUS first-team all-star, is a third-year engineering student from Oakville, Ont.



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E O L A S A G U S O B A I R

DALHOUSIE'S OFFICIAL ENGINEERING NEWSPAPER



The Great Northern Concrete Toboggan Race

Leave those GT snow racers, boogie boards and crazy karpets at home. The only thing you need is a good slab of concrete to rocket down a ski hill.

That's the philosophy of 500 engineering students from universities and technical institutions across Canada, who united in Winnipeg for the 33rd annual Great Northern Concrete Toboggan Race.

The rules are simple: build a 300-pound sled with all running surfaces made out of concrete. The sled must be able to seat five people, steer and brake. It is then raced down a ski hill where sleds can reach speeds of over 70 km/hr.

This year marks Dalhousie's second attempt at the race. Building on

what we learned last year, we were able to construct a sled that can easily compete against the veteran universities who have been racing since the competition began.

Our 13 member team consisted of engineers from multiple disciplines including civil, mechanical, industrial, environmental, mining and materials. Together we were able to design a sled that was faster, lighter and had an actual steering system.

On Feb. 3, we braved -37 C (with a wind chill of -48 C) weather to race our sled and achieve a top speed of 61 km/hr.

Luckily we all arrived home safely with no broken bones to report, though playing spondee took a few of us out for a day or two —

more than I can say for some teams, which rolled their toboggans resulting in some serious injuries.

Although this year's competition is over, we have already started to plan next year's team. If anyone is interested, please check out our website at www.daltoboggan.com, which will have pictures of this year's competition posted up soon. If you want to see some videos of this and previous competitions, search youtube.com under GNCTR to find them.

The location of next year's event has yet to be decided, but work is being done to make Halifax a possible host. If you are interested in helping to organize this event please contact me at mantolin@dal.ca

Spread the love with development-friendly Valentine's

EDANA ROBITAILLE

So, Valentine's is done for another year. If you've got a Valentine, you probably bought your sweetheart chocolate, jewellery or a stuffed animal. But don't you think that's a little boring?

If you hadn't bought them, she would have killed you, but next year maybe you should look for some variations on a theme. Those who celebrated Singles Awareness Day should take note as well. Maybe next year you won't find yourself singing hate songs over a pitcher and will be mighty glad for a few ideas.

If you want to show your special someone that you are a sensitive global citizen you can do this by buying gifts that benefit your fellow man. It's quite possible to do this and still live up to the expectations of the traditional Valentine's gift.

Let's start with chocolate, as it's a pretty standard gift for both sexes. Cocoa farmers in less developed countries are seldom paid fair prices for their cocoa and are often impoverished as a result.

Global and regional cocoa price fluctuations inspire multinational corporations to pursue the lowest price, which almost always translates into either poverty wages or no business at all.

Fair trade chocolate offers farmers a fair price and guaranteed buyer for their cocoa so they get better wages and an increased standard of living. It tastes good, too. So impress that special someone by purchasing fair trade chocolate instead of a generic brand — they'll be amazed by your thoughtfulness. You can get it at Just Us Fair Trade Coffee Roasters on Barrington Street or Planet Organic on Quinpool.

Those of you who want to indulge a partner's love of shiny objects will probably browse for jewellery. Diamonds are especially popular this time of year. The problem with diamonds is that people in countries such as Sierra Leone, Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo may have been killed for them.

Yes, we're talking blood diamonds. Rebel groups in these countries sell diamonds to northern diamond cutters and

refiners, using the income to buy arms and drugs. Giving these groups the means to buy weapons makes peace impossible and puts development on hold.

The much-celebrated Kimberley Process intends to certify that rough diamonds for purchase on the international market do not come from banned or conflict regions. When you're purchasing jewellery, there is still a possibility that it could be a conflict diamond. Fortunately, there is something you can do to lower the risk: support the home team by buying Canadian diamonds.

Canadian diamonds come with an identification number that allows you to trace a diamond back to the mine and the company that cut and polished it. They also come with a certificate that verifies that the diamond is Canadian.

According to the Canadian Diamond Code of Conduct, they have to be kept separate from other diamonds the entire time they are being cut, polished and shipped. Participation in the code is voluntary for retailers, so make sure you ask before making the purchase.

Finally, we come to the ever-popular stuffed animal. It's very cute and cuddly for a few days, but then it sits around collecting dust. You can do better than that. Imagine your lover's surprise and delight when you announce, "Honey, I bought you a goat! I love you."

The best part is they don't even have to look after the goat. Instead, it will be living a happy and busy life in an underdeveloped country providing food and livelihoods for a disadvantaged family.

If your partner isn't a fan of goats, you can buy animals he or she is more attracted to, such as chickens, sheep, camels, bees and alpacas. Who wouldn't want an alpaca purchased on their behalf? Look for them online at www.farmafrica.org.uk or www.oxfamunwrapped.com.

Valentine's Day is often dismissed as a greeting card holiday, or a corporate creation that has no significance beyond consumption. But, with the above ideas, you can take Valentine's Day back by giving compassionate gifts that spread the love a little bit broader.

Sexton Engineering Endowment Fund Call For Proposals

For those of you Sextonians that have not already heard, it's that time of the term again, where we ask you how you want to spend the \$15 per term you contribute to the endowment fund.

The purpose of this fund is to better life for us on Sexton. Examples of such spending can be seen in the new comfy leather furniture in the Alumni Lounge and new furniture for society lounges.

If you have any ideas on how you would like to see your \$15 spent, then put together a proposal and submit them to dseus@dal.ca. The committee will then meet early in March to evaluate proposals and award funds.

Examples of past items proposed through SEEF:

- Workout equipment
- Lounge Furniture
- Lab Equipment

- Team Safety Equipment
- New Digital Camera for the Chemical Engineering Department
- Concrete Canoe Transportation Rack

If you have any questions about SEEF please email us at dseus@dal.ca, or check out dalsexton.ca for examples of old SEEF proposals

The Deadline for Proposals is Friday, March 2, 2006 @ 4 p.m.



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Dalendar

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Thursday, Feb. 22

Groovin' to Break the Cycle

9 p.m. @ Ginger's Tavern
Performances by Don Brownrigg, Grassmarket, Off The Dock and The First Class Jerks. The goal is to raise money in renewable micro-credit loans, to be given out mostly to women in the developing world to help break the cycle of poverty. Presented by the Halifax chapter of Agents of Change.
\$5 at the door

The United States of Atlantica?

7 p.m. @ Just Us!
Guest speaker Dr. Janet Eaton, Canadian Voice of Women for Peace will be examining a free trade concept, spanning the New England States and Atlantic Provinces
For more info: info@nspirg.org | 902.494.6662 | www.nspirg.org

Friday, Feb. 23

No One Is Illegal Meeting

3 p.m. @ NSPIRG Office, Room 314 of the Dalhousie SUB
General public meeting of the No One is Illegal Halifax group, a coalition of immigrants and solidarity activists.
Free

Saturday, Feb. 24

Web Design 101 Workshop

1 p.m. @ NSPIRG Office, Room 314 of the Dalhousie SUB
A workshop on designing and creating an effective website. To register: 494-6662 or info@nspirg.org.
Free

Sundays

Vegan potluck

6pm @ the Dal SUB, Room 224

Monday, Feb. 26

Film Screening: "Workingman's Death"

8:30pm @ Bell Auditorium, NSCAD U
Hosted by the NSPIRG Club and Cinema Politica, this documentary represents a mediation on the world of work; from Ukranian coal-miners to Indonesian sulphur-miners.
Free

Wednesday, Feb. 28

'Resist/Replace Atlantica' Campaign Organizing Meeting

7 p.m. @ NSPIRG office, Room 314, Dalhousie SUB
A public meeting to mobilize a campaign against 'Atlantica', a free trade concept spanning the New England States and Atlantic Provinces, which threatens to severely undermine labor rights and environmental standards in the region. For more info: resistatlantica@nspirg.org
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INDEPENDENT LAKE CAMP

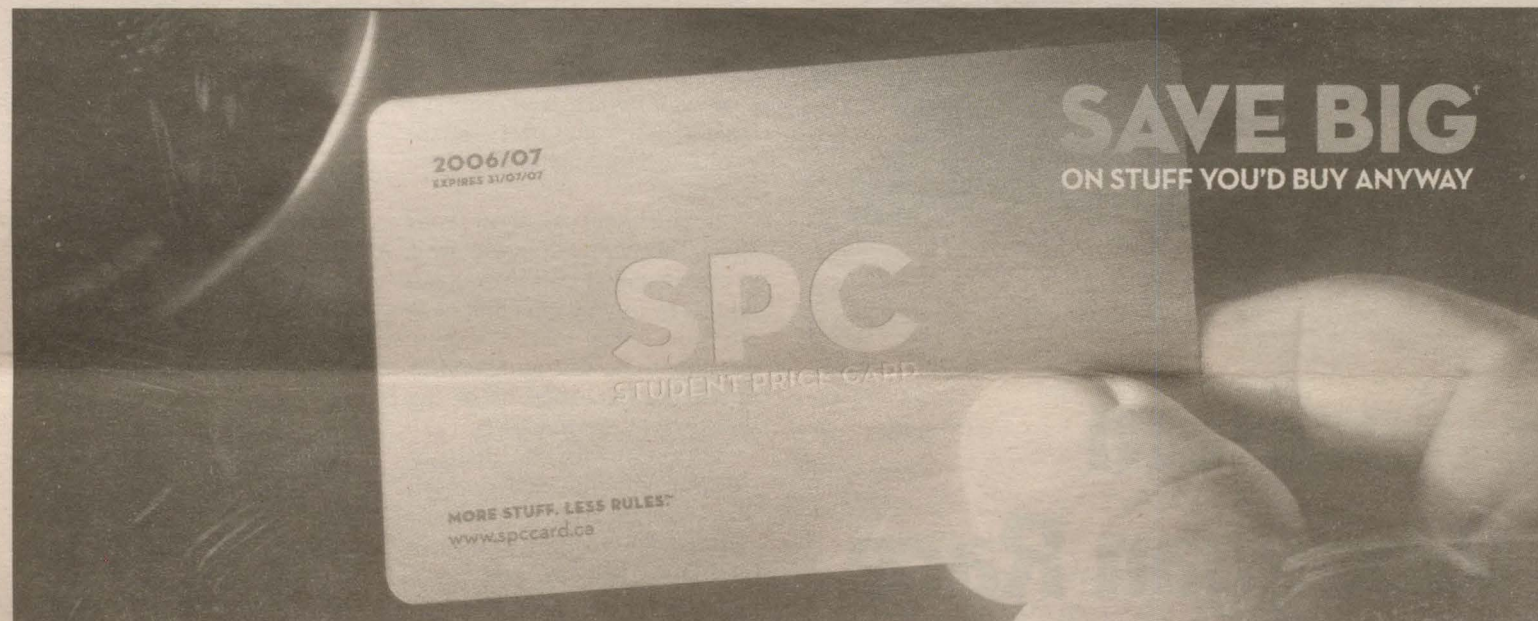
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