

the

# Gazette

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DALHOUSIE'S STUDENT VOICE

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## Journal visits Dal

by Jerry West

Like it or not, Television is an integral part of our culture.

Mark Starowicz, Executive producer of CBC's *the Journal* explained this premise at Dalhousie's Law school last Friday. He believes that the Canadian intellectual community should stop looking down their noses at T.V. and start dealing with its inevitability.

Starowicz said many of this country's unity problems stem from the Americanization of our airwaves: "Four Detroit T.V. stations are among the ties that bind this country together. It is amazing that anyone from Halifax to Inuvik can turn on their set in the evening and learn how to make

crack [from the Detroit local news]."

Starowicz said our present problem stems mostly from a lack of broadcast strategy. It isn't economical for a local station to produce a program at a cost of \$500,000 to \$750,000 per hour when an episode of the *Cosby* show costs only \$60,000. "Every time you set up an independent station you increase American viewing."

He pointed out that a rerun of *Gilligan's Island* costs around \$150 per hour. Station managers need only sell two or three advertisements to make their money back.

The result of these cost differences is that 76 per cent of our prime-time programming is American. Starowicz suggested

that in English Canada Donald Duck receives 100 times the airtime that French Canadians do.

In a country where the average person, who will die at age 69, will have spent nine full years watching T.V., this is a real barrier to any sense of national unity. Starowicz said we are suffering from a misplaced sense of freedom. Instead of being free to watch whichever American show they want, people from the Yukon should be free to watch a show about their own world.

We need to come up with a cohesive national broadcasting strategy, "Otherwise we will become passive, non-voting citizens of a video America," Starowicz said quoting Peter Herrndorf, publisher of *Toronto Life* magazine.

## Native learning centre

by David Foulkes

Imagine this: it's your first day in a strange city and you're literally lost. You're from a small isolated rural community. Perhaps you are lacking practical job skills and are not sure what to do or where to go to look for work. You are alone and almost broke. One other thing, you're a native.

Unfortunately there are many people not only imagining this frustrating situation, but living it. In Halifax the Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre is there to help these people, and it is making a difference.

The Learning Component of the Friendship Centre is perhaps its most important program. Established in 1985, some twelve years

after the idea for the friendship centre came into being, the Learning Centre offers a wide variety of programs.

The newest program is the banking course offered in association with the Royal Bank. This is a year-long course which teaches students the "ins and outs" of banking. Nell Landry, Assistant Director of the Learning Centre says corporations like the Royal Bank are becoming more understanding of the needs and potential of the Native community. Since the inception of this banking program other banking institutions have expressed an interest.

Computer literacy is emphasized throughout the centre's different programs due to the labour market's need for these skills. Students

are enrolled in micro-computer courses, office automation courses and small business development programs. As well, there are university preparatory courses and general education development (GED) upgrading.

A course unique to Canadian Native centres is the Native Life Skills program now being developed. The program attempts to help students become aware of and understand their unique cultural background, and to integrate their cultural differences into so-called mainstream society.

"The hope is to offer students an experience which will familiarize them with their own history and make it easier for them to participate in the mainstream," says Landry.



Dal photo: Bruce Homer

Mark Starowicz, Executive Producer of CBC-TV's *The Journal*, pauses to find out what's going on in the world.

Participants must have at least partial native ancestry but they don't have to be status Indians, and their place of origin is not restricted in any way. They must, however, be at least nineteen years old. There is no upward age restriction. Landry recalls one participant who was fifty-six.

If the student is interested in a course or program not offered by the learning centre, it will act as a mediator and attempt to get the student placed in a program elsewhere, for example a community

college. "Our goal is to one day become a community college with a variety of programs," says Landry. He admits that the existing funding, provided by Employment and Immigration Canada and some private sector assistance is not enough to realize that goal.

The Mi'kmaq Native Learning Centre is located at 2158 Gottingen St. in Halifax. As well, there are one hundred and nine other Friendship Centres across Canada.



Allison Johnston, Co-editor of the *Dalhousie Gazette* (seen here verbally battling with the media) said she believes the dialogue between students and the *Gazette* has been useful. "There seemed to be a good exchange of information and ideas, hopefully that will be reflected in next year's paper."

## Controversy ends in dialogue

by Gazette staff

After printing an article entitled "A gay men's guide to erotic safer sex" over three weeks ago, it appears the furor over the *Dalhousie Gazette* decision has subsided.

In the three weeks since the article was published the Dalhousie Student Union, student's opposed to the present nature of the *Gazette*, and *Gazette* supporters have all been active in addressing the issues of content, editorial freedom, and the controversial article.

• March 9, DSU Council met and voted down a motion to cap funding for the *Gazette*

• March 13 the *Gazette's* publishing Board proposed a committee of Board and DSU repre-

sentatives, to examine the relationship between the paper and the DSU, and the paper's structure.

• March 15 the Halifax Police Department announced the article, and accompanying photograph, "were not pornographic within the meaning of the criminal code."

• March 17 DSU council passed the Publishing Board's proposal. Motions to dissolve the paper and cut its funding were withdrawn and replaced by a motion outlining terms of discussion for the committee. A motion was passed to ensure any further funding to the paper this year would be in the form of a loan.

• March 18 a students forum, organized by the *Gazette*, allowed students to voice their opinions

about the paper. Stuart Slater, a third year Bachelor of Commerce student, who led the charge for *Gazette* reform said he was pleased with the turn of events. "By having a forum the *Gazette* has a better understanding of what some students want and we have a better understanding of what the *Gazette* does," he said.

"The forum was really good, and necessary," said Jamie Laugheed, DSU Community Affairs Chair and an outspoken critic of the *Gazette*. He added he was not completely happy with the outcome of the council meeting on Sunday. "I hope what people said isn't forgotten, that the committee will discuss the issues and not blow them off," he said.