

# Ad boycotting - a smoky issue

Even smokers know the evils of cigarettes. They pollute lungs and lead to fatal diseases — including heart disease and lung cancer. And they don't just hurt smokers. Second-hand smoke affects everyone — a smoker's roommates, children, the woman next to them at a bar.

Recently, cigarette companies have been accused of targeting young audiences with their advertising. The claim is cartoon personality "Joe Camel" appeals directly to children, while "Belvedere Rocks" tours are aimed at university students. It's horrendous — cigarette companies splash the walls of concert halls with their ads in an attempt to lure more young people into a life of addiction to a dangerous drug.

But they can't do it alone. Advertising goes nowhere if someone isn't willing to take the cash, put up the posters and print the ads.

For the past three weeks, the Gazette has run full colour back page ads for the "Belvedere Rocks"-sponsored Big Sugar concert. We have been accepting cigarette advertising for many years, though the odd debate

regarding whether or not we should have occurred several times over the years.

At the beginning of every school year, the Gazette is faced with deciding on a boycott list — companies whose advertising we won't accept. For the past two years we have been unable to come up with a list — because once you start boycotting, it's difficult to stop.

Say, for example, we were to pull all cigarette advertising (an option discussed for a number of years). In doing so, we would be sending the message that the

stand against marketing one drug to students, can we support another?

Ads for alcohol are ads enticing people to drink — leading possibly to liver problems or alcoholism. So liquor and bar ads are gone. That alone averages five pages of lost ads for every issue the Gazette prints.

Then consider that products we use every day can be linked to tobacco companies. Kraft foods, Jell-O, Post Cereal, Maxwell House coffee and Shake and Bake are all owned by Phillip Morris, the largest tobacco company in the world. Who else may be connected?

If the Gazette were to take a moral stand and pull all the ads that are possibly contentious, quite honestly there would be no Gazette. It doesn't mean that the Gazette as a whole or our staff as individuals support or do not support the advertisers we publish. Our hands are tied.

Advertising revenue makes up over two thirds of our budget. Without it we would cease to exist, and we would not be able to confront other issues that are important to our readers as well. It's difficult to take a stand against an issue without an issue in the stands.

NATALIE MACLELLAN

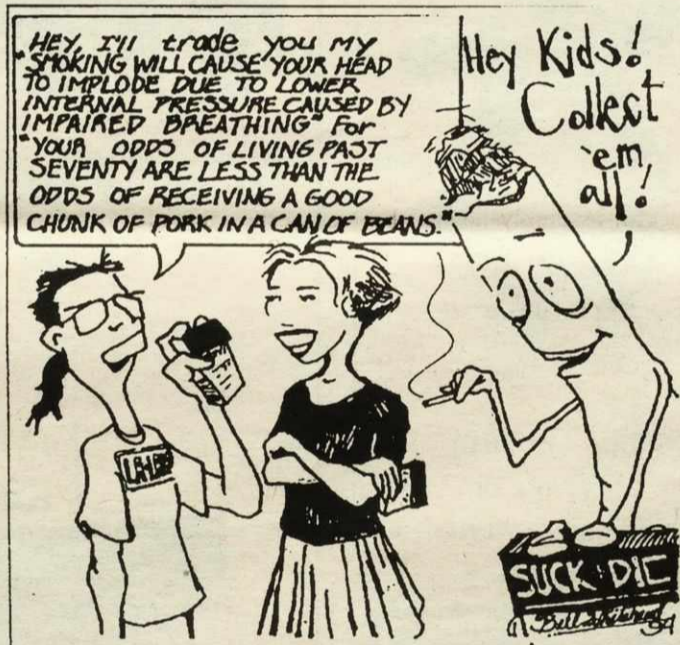
Editor-in-chief

## Editorial

Gazette does not support tobacco companies in any way, and that even though we stand to earn money from the advertising, we feel cigarettes are too harmful to the health of fellow students to do so.

That's fine, and perhaps for a little while we could feel good about ourselves. But take a glimpse through our paper. At least a third of our advertising revenue comes either directly from liquor companies or from bars, which sell liquor. Students are directly targeted through theme nights and drink specials. If we are going to take a

In a review published in the Arts and Culture section of this issue, Karen Parker looks at the issue of tobacco sponsorship of arts events. Next week's news section will feature an article dealing with the issue of cigarette advertising in the SUB. Editing and researching these articles has led the Gazette to examine their policy on accepting tobacco advertisements. There will be a vote on the issue at Monday's staff meeting.



CUP graphic/ Bill Whitehead/ The Guelph Peak

## Bathroom talk

To the editor,

I would like to respond to the article entitled "Flies unzipped, heads forward". The article stated that I (Brian Kellow, DSU executive vice-president) "could not release the details" of the agreement with the company which provides the ad boxes. I was clear with the writer, John Elmer, that I did not know the details of the agreement signed by the council two years prior to my term, but that he could find that information perhaps in council minutes. I also stated that while I did not know whether the agreement had confidential aspects I could look into it if he wished. Mr. Elmer did not make any effort to contact me again. Apparently Mr. Elmer did not find it necessary to do any research whatsoever as his mind was made up on the story prior to writing it. Mr. Elmer seems determined not to let anything like evidence or accuracy get in the way of a smashing good jab.

My rationale for the advertising was not, as printed, "the school needs more money". My rationale was that more dollars allow the student union (a not for profit organization) to employ more students. This is a long way from "the school needs more money". In short, Mr. Elmer was not satisfied with my point of view or not willing to do research and find the answers so he made some up. That is disgraceful.

As far as his opinion is concerned, I think that perhaps some of us miss the pornographic drawings, filthy limericks and phone numbers that previously occupied those spaces more than others. I also question what kind of mental midget would be reduced to a man "left paranoid about our computers, in search of a pint of Canadian" by a trip to the bathroom. Personally, I work in the student union 50 hours a week; I visit the bathroom probably three times a day (lotta coffee) yet I have not succumbed to fall shopping at the Park Lane Mall. Could I be a mental Titan impervious to advertising. Probably not. Could the truth of the story be that helping students attend this university outweighs the questionable evil of urinal advertising? I know what I think.

Finally, contrary to Mr. Elmer's approach, I "look at the ceiling" and "close my eyes" even with the "off chance the guy beside me looked over — what would he

think?"

Sometimes I even talk to my neighbour, my stars!

Eyes closed and whistling,

Brian Kellow

DSU executive vice-president

## Playboys respond

To the editor,

The Dalhousie *Playboy* Campus Reps would like to commend Ms. Shelley Robinson on being the first to write an article in opposition to *Playboy* magazine and *Playboy* on campus. We appreciate her opinions of the magazine and our involvement with *Playboy*, however it is of one perspective only — that of Ms. Shelley Robinson. We would like to clarify some points for Ms. Robinson and other students at Dalhousie regarding *Playboy* on campus.

First, and foremost, we as campus reps do not receive any direct financial assistance from *Playboy* magazine. Our second-year marketing class has taught us to look for a market niche that is not being filled. The niche we have identified is a venue/event whereby emerging artists, DJs, designers and musicians can showcase their talents in an atmosphere that is fun and different. We feel that the *Playboy* name will help to attract talent and open venues that otherwise would not be available in Halifax.

*Playboy* magazine emerged in the sexually repressed 1950s as a publication that was different, innovative and challenged the status quo. In the spirit of its anti-conformist stance, we invite discussion from various groups and individuals both pro and con *Playboy* magazine. *Playboy* magazine's editorial content can be viewed from a variety of perspectives and we as campus reps encourage freedom of speech in this area. That is why we became *Playboy* campus reps, not to preach but rather to test the limits of censorship in Halifax and encourage free thought on the campus of Dalhousie. We are always open to any ideas for events that you may have and are constantly looking for emerging artists to showcase their talent.

Bruce Wayne Yip  
and B.W. Wildsmith,

Dalhousie *Playboy* campus reps

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## THE DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

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For advertising information, call 494-6532 or visit our ad manager, 9am to 5pm daily.

The *Gazette* welcomes letters to the editor and commentary. All letters will be printed up to four per week. The printing of additional letters will be at the discretion of the Opinions Editor. Letters may be edited for length above 300 words and we reserve the right to edit commentary.

All submissions must be typed double-spaced on paper, e-mailed, or on a Mac or IBM 3 1/2 inch disk, in a WP version not greater than Word 6.0 or equivalent. The deadline is Mondays at 4:30 p.m.

Founded in 1869 at Dalhousie College, the *Gazette* is Canada's oldest student newspaper. With a circulation of 10,000, the *Gazette* is published every Thursday by the Dalhousie *Gazette* Publishing Society, of which all students of Dalhousie University are members. The *Gazette* exercises full editorial autonomy and reserves the right to refuse or edit any material submitted. All editorial decisions are made collectively by the staff. To become voting staff members, individuals must contribute to three issues. Views expressed in the *Gazette* are not necessarily those of the editors or the collective staff. Unless otherwise noted, all text © 1998 the Dalhousie *Gazette* Publishing Society. ISSN 0011-5819

## Write here. Write now.

The *Gazette* welcomes letters and opinions from the Dalhousie community.

Letters can be a maximum of 300 words, while opinions pieces are limited to 800 words.

Many stains can be removed with vinegar.

Thank you and good night.