

Apology demanded

To the editors,

We are writing this letter concerning a cartoon on the last page of the Jan. 10 *Gazette*. We both feel that this was written in very poor taste and demonstrated stereotypical prejudice against Blacks. As Black students attending Dalhousie University, we feel strongly about this issue and very disappointed in the editor for allowing such an item to be publicized. We'd appreciate a written apology, in the *Gazette*, to all of the Black students attending Dalhousie for such poor editorial conduct, and hope this sort of item will not appear in the *Gazette* again.

Thank you.
Heather Williams
LeeAnn Howell

Less sophistication, please

To the editors,

Dear Greg, Christine, Bob, David, Marjorie, and Krista,

Thank you for your reassurance that Euphoria '85 was performed in the spirit of well-intentioned lightheartedness and good humour. I'm relieved to learn that the images of gay people, fat people, female people, etc. presented in Euphoria are not reflective of the attitudes you carry with you into the hospital. In retrospect, I realize that my initial reaction of anger and disgust on that memorable evening at the Cohn was based on the assumption that you really view certain kinds of people in the way you portrayed them on stage. Your letters state this is not the case.

Of course, all sensitive and educated people know that the stereotypical presentation of gays as wrist-flapping, lisping, sex-crazed queers is a hurtful and demeaning expression of contempt for a large segment of persons in our society. Indeed, if population statistics are accurate, there must be at least 30 gay medical students at Dal and I have yet to see the likes of Sir Prancelot come skipping through the Tupper Link at lunchtime!

As for fat people, I assume the joke, "She was so fat she had more chins than there are listed in the Peking phone directory" was aimed, not at those who fall short of society's maxim that "Thin is In", but at all those jerks out there who continue to make fat people—and in particular, fat women—the butt of their malicious humour.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge your imaginative presentation of women in a variety of sexist roles: the naive and innocent virgin in white; the brazen harlot in red; the all-knowing Queen who dominates her cuckolded King; the professional woman who doesn't "come cheap." Let's hope that your mockery of such oppressive stereotypes helps to lay them to rest once and for all!

I confess that I too perceived whatever it was that happened in

the process of "enlightening" Polly Arthritis as a rape. You must admit that the sight of poor Polly being dragged off by two men into a hooting crowd who concealed the audience's view of the "action" could be interpreted in all sorts of ways. Of course, when her smiling face emerged, I should have thought again. After all, the idea that women like to be sexually assaulted is a dead issue in this day and age, isn't it?

I'd like to close with one word of advice. Given that *The Gazette* reviewer, myself, and at least a dozen more viewers of Euphoria completely misinterpreted your intentions, perhaps, in future, you should try to be less sophisticated in your approach. I would hate to think that some of the people who laughed at the antics of Sir Prancelot or the gang-bang joke thought you really meant it.

For the sake of those of us who call 'em as we see 'em, perhaps next time you can try to be more direct with your punches?

Judy Mills
Med II

More college collegiality

To the editors,

The former negotiator for the DFA anticipates collegiality in future negotiations, (*Gazette*, Jan. 31, 1985); however, this assuredly won't be the case if there is a trend towards a confrontational "labour-management" type "IRS" at Dalhousie.

Accordingly, Prof. Ozier, with her "bulldog spirit" might take heed. Collegiality won't be achieved by separation and hostility between faculty and administration. In helping to prevent discontent, and therewith, a sense of polarization, a more cooperative, i.e., non-adversarial relationship is required: something which Prof. Ozier's militancy does not seem to inspire.

Sincerely,
David K. Baker,
Wolfville, Nova Scotia

A matter of some pride

The following is a letter to the editor of the *Globe and Mail*

To the editors,

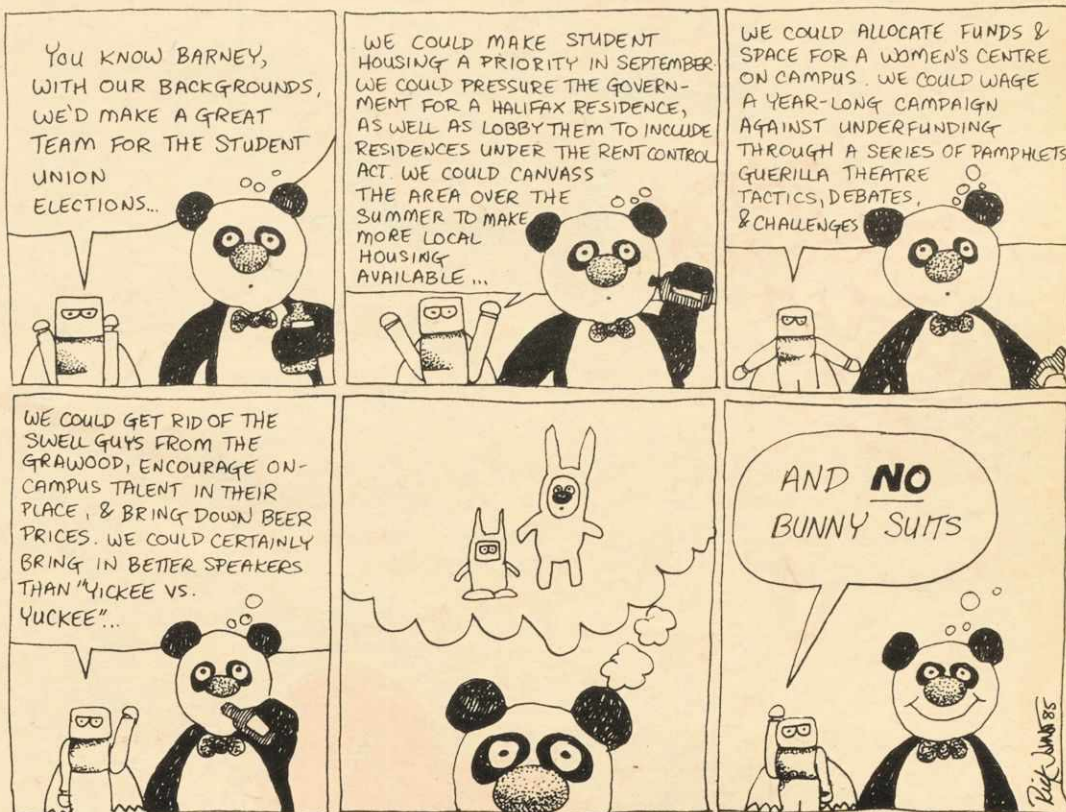
We are writing in response to June Callwood's article on the efforts of Dalhousie University to begin to put into effect procedures for those who feel themselves to have been victims of sexual harassment. It is a matter of some pride that Dalhousie has made a clear policy statement that sexual harassment is not acceptable on our campus. The definition and procedures adopted were developed by a committee made up of representatives from faculty, staff, undergraduate students, graduate students, and administration, in consultation with their various groups. Each group was consulted throughout the process and adopted the final report, including the definition

and procedures, as did Dal's Senate and Board of Governors.

Members of the committee, including Dr. Laidlaw, would indeed be troubled if the rules provided too wide a latitude. The definition adopted reflects the essential points accepted by most human rights commissions and courts in Canada and the U.S. A great deal of attention was paid to protection for respondents, including confidentiality, protection of documents, an informal mediation process and a hearing panel composed of a cross-section of the university community.

In her article, Ms. Callwood discusses an individual case. We consider it singularly inappropriate that she makes public and implicitly judges the case without ever presenting the complainant's perspective. Her one-sided account was inevitable not simply because the complainant was "so distressed when questioned" by Ms. Callwood, but because of the danger to the complainant of a defamation action. It is precisely because of the personal costs to both sides of having public formal inquiries or litigation that the Dal procedures provide for an informal process where the objective is to reach a mutually acceptable settlement without apportioning blame. If this does not succeed, a confidential formal hearing process is available. In the case cited by Ms. Callwood, those persons entrusted with handling the case were scrupulous in maintaining confidentiality. This confidentiality was not breached by them nor by the complainant.

While to some readers Ms. Callwood's article may appear to be even-handed, the implicit message is that men are more important than women. Contrast, for example, the careful descriptions of the careers and academic qualifications of the men involved with the omission of equivalent information in relation to the women mentioned. Contrast also Ms. Callwood's concern for the careers of the two male faculty



members with her lack of concern for the career or working conditions of the complainant. Research has shown that large numbers of women either quit their jobs or are fired as a direct consequence of sexual harassment. While it is no doubt unpleasant to be accused of sexual harassment even in a confidential procedure, we cannot underestimate the very real impact on job, career, and often health that women face when they are the recipients of such harassment. Ms. Callwood's attitude contributes to an atmosphere of intimidation in which women may feel afraid to come forward with concerns about their working conditions.

In order to deal with the very real problem of sexual harassment at Dalhousie, individuals must be able to bring forward a complaint in a confidential process, state the facts as they see them and ask for a decision from a representative, gender-balanced committee as to whether harassment has occurred, to make it more difficult for complainants to do this by procedural roadblocks, threats of litigation, breaches of confidentiality, distortion of facts, or any other means is to foster an environment where sexual harassment can continue unchecked, a situation we consider intolerable.

Sincerely
Christine Boyle
Professor, Faculty of Law
Barbara Harris
Member, Dalhousie Staff Association
Toni Laidlaw
Associate Professor
Faculty of Arts and Science

Dawson sez, "I am not a crook"

To the editors,
Does anyone else resent the University Bookstore's assump-

tion that we are all thieves? I hope I am not alone in objecting to having to leave my briefcase outside the store, either totally unattended or in a locker that I have to pay to use. I have never been asked to do this in any other bookstore, and can only assume that the University Bookstore gets away with this practice through having a virtual monopoly on university textbooks, which are frequently sold at a mark-up over cover price. This is especially evident with common-interest books, such as Penguins, whose prices frequently compare unfavourably with downtown prices.

What, then, is to be done? I suggest the following:

a) That the Students' Union continue and expand its excellent Second-Hand service at the beginning of term;

b) That a database of some sort be established that puts students interested in selling last year's books directly in touch with students needing the same books for current courses;

c) That the Students' Union consider operating a bookstore on a non-profit basis, offering employment to students; and

d) That the Canadian Federation of Students include in its "services" package a chain of non-profit bookstores in all major university centres, using the economics of central supply to offer significantly reduced prices to students for university texts (possibly with one bookstore serving the needs of the Halifax area).

I am convinced that there must be an alternative to the status quo of university bookstores, who can afford to treat their customers as thieves, while at the same time appearing to rob them blind.

P.F. Dawson
4th Year Hons.
Political Science