

Rape result of 'weak security'?

By Paul Clark

A premeditated rape occurred in the Life Sciences Building several weeks ago and women on campus are starting a campaign to ensure it will not happen again.

Michelle Roy, a journalism student at King's College, said the victim, a friend of hers, signed into the Life Sciences about 9 o'clock on March 6, the Thursday after spring break and went off to a biology study room.

Before 10:30 when she was about ready to go home the lights were turned out in the room and she was attacked by two men who forcibly had intercourse with her.

"She said they put something over her mouth so she could only make muffled sounds. They knocked her against the wall and she fell unconscious for a while."

Roy said the men did not talk and the victim could not see what they looked like, though they seemed to be about medium height.

The next morning the victim went to see Dr. Joyce Curtis of Student Health who tested her to see if pregnancy or infection had occurred.

The woman, who is 20 years old, afterward had trouble sleeping and decided last week to drop out of school this year, due to the stress caused her after the incident, Roy said.

She said the victim did not contact the police and press charges over the assault.

Dr. Curtis said Student Health has treated three or four other rape victims at Dalhousie this year and was not sure how many went to the Victoria General Hospital or elsewhere after such an attack.

She said Life Sciences was a particularly bad place for women, due to its nooks and crannies and dark corridors, and she said she knew of at least one other rape occurring there this year.

Liz Tidmarsh, administrator of the Oceanography department, said, in conjunction with a number of female graduate students, and other women concerned over the issue of sexual assault, she was involved in starting a campaign publicizing the event and pressing for increased security on campus.

She said letters would be written to the university administration and the head of security, and posters may be put up near the location of the rape.

Biology professor Dick McBride said Dalhousie is so short of study space that students are forced to search out isolated corners in buildings to study, thus making them particularly vulnerable to attack. He advised students to study together in groups of three or four.

He was also disturbed the rape received so little publicity.

"Dalhousie has a very strong policy of pretending crime does not exist on campus," he said.

"Incidents like the brutal rape which occurred in front of the Dental Building last winter or molestings and flashings are not publicized."

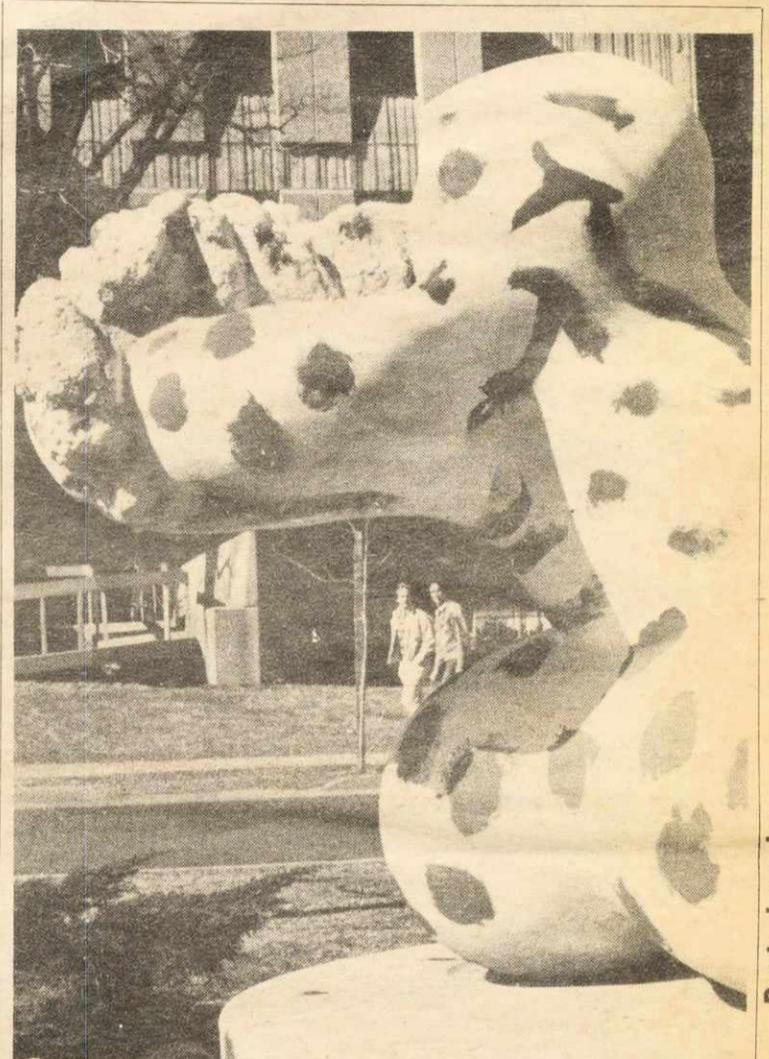
Cheryl Hebert, a representative of the Sexual Assault Education Collective in Halifax who has contacted the victim, said she saw weak security at Dalhousie as a possible cause of the problem.

With the energy crisis upon us, and cutbacks in government funding to education occurring, she said the cutbacks in lighting and staff could be factors.

She said there are now no facilities specialized in providing psychological counselling for rape victims in Halifax, though she and others are working to establish such services at the Victoria General and the Halifax Infirmary.

She said it is a common reaction among rape victims not to contact the police after an attack.

"There's a lot of intimidation involved in an interview with police and court hearings. Only a small percentage of victims press charges." continued on p. 3



Pat Jordan

Down with old, up with new

by Sandy MacDonald

With the coming of milder spring weather, dormant winter creatures begin to stir and among those are the elusive Dalhousie maintenance grounds staff.

Work began this week on the erecting of a new flagpole, situated on the front lawn of the Arts and Administration building. Citing reasons of an advanced case of woodrot and the general inconvenience of dealing with an 80 to 90 foot pole, the ground staff are to install a new 65 ft. aluminum mast.

In the past general maintenance was carried out by personnel from the Halifax Shipyards, but more recently the work has been done by Dal's own pole people. The upkeep of this old pole was becoming too expensive, so it was decided to replace the structure with a new shorter aluminum mast.

Aside from the disrepair of

the old staff, the lanyard had been cut recently, presumably by vandals, making the raising of the flag impossible, and the replacement of the rope tedious, except by high scaffolding, a helicopter or an adept chimpanzee.

The Ocean Construction Co. finished the removal of the old mast, pedestal, and concrete footings on Wednesday to make way for the new structure which should be airborne in a few weeks.

Elsewhere on campus, the familiar white sculpture located in front of the Rebecca Cohn was treated to an overhaul of its own early Tuesday morning.

Somehow contracting a strange epidermal condition, highlighted by bright red blotches, the artwork is otherwise in its usual nondescript state. After a hasty diagnosis, it was decided that liberal doses of water and a cleaning agent should quickly clear up the blemished statue.

Student jobs created

HALIFAXCUP)—The Nova Scotia government on March 26 approved a 4.3 million summer employment program which will create 2,000 jobs for students.

Provincial development minister Roland Thornhill said the program was initiated to alleviate potential high unemployment, especially among students, during the summer months.

He said the program will provide meaningful and productive jobs which will have a positive impact on the province's economy, and provide valuable work experience for those employed.

Priority consideration for job creation is being given to the resource sector.

Deadlines for applications

The provincial government also indicated there will be an increase in the minimum wage. The rate is presently \$2.75 an hour for persons over 18 years old. Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island have the lowest minimum wage rates in the country at \$2.75 an hour although PEI has scheduled an increase to \$3.00 effective July 1.

The increase in Nova Scotia will not benefit students this summer, however, as the government has said it will follow traditional practice of giving employers six months notice before the legislation becomes effective.

Federal employment and immigration minister Lloyd Axworthy said it is likely new job creation measures will be announced when parliament resumes in April. Axworthy was in Halifax meeting with manpower and party officials, and a status of women's group.

He said the elimination of Young Canada Works was a mistake, but the Youth Summer Employment Program was in place and the new government has no choice but to administer it.

He also said he was aware that federal employment programs which pay wages according to provincial minimum wage levels create inequities from one part of the country to another.

"I have been told by provincial manpower officials, status of women and party officials that minimum wage allocations contributes to regional disparity. This will be taken into account," he said.

The New Brunswick government said it will launch a \$2 million direct employment program and a \$400,000 work experience program for young people this summer.

The provincial Progressive Conservatives announced they had an unexpected surplus of \$52.5 million from 1979 and will increase government spending by almost 14 per cent.