

# Change the Rules

Whether it's hopscotch, poker or baseball, business, car driving, or airplane assembly, everywhere you go, you encounter rules.

**RULES.** They can drive you crazy if you're learning the secrets of an abstruse math proof or eating dinner with a group of pseudo-English aristocrats. Many of us spend most of our lives studying, memorizing and judiciously following rules. Apart from the odd highway sign or drug law, we treat rules with unquestioning respect, as if they emanated from some gradiloquent Deos directing the heavens. Seldom do we have the courage in our own mind to intellectually challenge them, let alone publicly oppose them.

Occasionally, however, when the great legal meat grinder falters and mutilates an excess amount of our flesh, our best instincts revolt and we are driven to protest. This Wednesday, for example, 70 odd students stormed the registrar's office, protesting the short shrift they have been receiving from an administration which has been charging them 150 dollars a head to squeeze into a sardine can of a classroom. Last week, another example, 102 students signed a petition rejecting student council's decision to ban food and drinks from the Green Room in the SUB.

These students are not always informed of the background to these situations, be it lack of space, logistics, or money. But they do know when they are being screwed.

They know that when they pay out their scarce and hard earned dollars for an education, they ought to receive it. And they know that when they, the students, own their own building, that place should be run to serve their own interests, not that of an unrepresentative few.

So far, despite a flurry of consternation, the administration has not done anything to alleviate the crowded accommodations for Political Science 2200. Council, thus far, has proved more flexible and will be reviewing their decision (for the second time) within their Sub Ops Committee.

But protest, oftentimes, more than letters and polite telephone conversations, can produce action. Progress, or more protest, will occur on these issues.

Protest, and this editorial isn't supposed to be a parable, also teaches you something about rules: that they are made and applied by humans. And sometimes, when they radiate from some all too human authority several times removed from the subjects of his or her little regime, they can be wrong.

## the Dalhousie Gazette

The Dalhousie Gazette, Canada's oldest college newspaper, is the weekly publication of the Dalhousie Student Union members, and is a founding member of Canadian University Press.

The views expressed in the Dalhousie Gazette are not necessarily those of the Dalhousie Student Union, the editor, or the collective staff. We reserve the right to edit material for space or legal reasons, or if it is considered offensive to our readers.

The deadline for articles and letters-to-the-editor is noon on Monday. No unsigned material will be accepted, but anonymity may be granted on request. Letters should not exceed 500 words and must be typed on a 64-character line and double spaced. Local Advertising is handled by DAL-ADS — the advertising department of Dalhousie Student Union: Tel. 424-6532. Ad copy must be submitted by the Friday preceding publication.

Our office is located on the third floor of the Dalhousie Student Union Building. Our mailing address is the Dalhousie Gazette, Dalhousie University, Halifax, N.S. You can reach us by telephone at (902) 424-2507.

The subscription rate is \$10. per year (26 issues) and our ISSN number is 0011-5819.

Editor: Paul Clark

Advertising and Business Manager: Sandy MacDonald Tel: 424-6532

Circulation manager: Joe Wilson

Staff this issue: Glenn Walton, Paul Creelman, Arnold Mosher, Nancy Ross, Marlene Peinsznski, Paul Withers, Elaine Frampton, Michael McCarthy, Bob Cohen, Elizabeth Jollimore, Charles Spurr, Cathie McDonald, Daphne Ross, Gretchen Pohlkamp, Judy Pelham, Tom Regan, Alan Christensen, Deirdre Dwyer, Sandy Smith, Andrew Sinclair, Gisele Marie Baxter, Kevin Ellis, Bruce Rae, S. J. Hayes, Ken Storey, John Cairns, Frank McGinn, Greg Dennis

## COKE Responds

Dear Sir,

I refer to your article of September 18 on the Coca Cola Company. Amnesty International launched a campaign last October to draw world attention to the terror and violence in Guatemala, and to try to persuade the Guatemalan Government to put an end to it. Group 15 in Halifax took a particularly active part in the campaign, with letters and petitions to the Guatemalan authorities, Coca Cola Company, our own local Trade Unions and the Federal Government as well as every member of parliament.

My main reason for writing is to inform your readers of the latest development. On September 4th we were informed by A.I. U.S.A. that the Coca Cola company had agreed to the demands of the International Union of Food and Allied Workers. This is a significant event in the progress towards establishing the responsibility of business corporations in respect of human rights. However, there is still no news of the 27 disappeared trade unionists, and we fear for their lives. We

respectfully suggest that letters requesting information on their present whereabouts, and asking that their physical safety be guaranteed be sent to: President Romeo Lucas Garcia, Palacio Nacional, Guatemala City, Guatemala, Central America.

Yours sincerely,  
Peggy Matthews  
Secretary, Halifax Group  
Amnesty International

## Bureaucrats Hurt

Dear Sir,

This is my third year at Dalhousie and through the years I have observed a steady pattern emerge with respect to the Student Union Building (SUB). In my first year, 78-79, the students had for their use: (1) a room with a ping-pong table, (2) a full room of pin-ball machines, and (3) a T.V. lounge with a seating capacity of approximately one hundred.

In 1979-1980 the ping-pong table and the room was removed from student use. There was, by the way, no explanation about how the room was to be better used or, for that matter, where the ping-pong table went.

I came back in the 1980-1981 term and discovered that, besides the room that was

taken away from us in 1979-1980, we had now lost the use of a separate (larger) room for pin-ball machines. The T.V. lounge was partitioned off so that there is now only enough seating capacity for about thirty-five people. The other half of the former T.V. lounge was used for the pin-ball machines. Out of a university population of over seven thousand students, it is a little ridiculous to believe that only thirty-five would want to watch a particular T.V. show at one time. This year the confiscation of the room was explained by the sign on the door: "OFFICE SERVICES".

It is, at the very least, disturbing that even in supposedly our own building the students are being pushed around and squeezed into inadequate facilities in order to make room for those bureaucrats among us.

Since it may be impossible to rearrange the basement as it was last year, may I suggest that the Student Union refrain from further reductions in actual services to students in the future.

If I am not mistaken the SUB is not solely for the administration of the Student Union but also for the entertainment of the students. I hope that this will be kept in mind when the Student Union considers further alterations to the SUB.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Paul McAuley

