

A kick in the ass

To the editor,

Just when I think things are beginning to change for the better, something comes along to kick me in the rear. Two letters to the editor in March 23 *Gazette* did just that.

It seems that by requesting the same rights as the able-bodied population, I have become a "whining zealot." As a student with multiple disabilities, I am one of 2390 "whining zealots" attending Nova Scotia Post Secondary institutions. Be careful we're everywhere and we're pissed off.

I'm not angry because you are 'able-bodied,' and I'm not even mad that you don't care how I struggle to get by in *your world*. What makes me angry is close-minded punks who disregard issues of accessibility as the whining of a special interest group.

Let me put this as simply as I can: Access is a right. Does the phrase 'Charter of Rights and Freedoms' ring a bell with anyone? 'Human Rights' perhaps?

Students with disabilities at Dalhousie are among the most committed and hard working I've ever met. Aside from the usual course load, we serve on numerous committees regarding access to education, trying to enlighten the rest of the Dalhousie community on the way the non-disabled world impairs us from full participation in campus life — a life that you may take for granted.

I must however commend the Dalhousie Student Union for their patience, and for what I see as a sincere desire to make this new election accessible, and future elections fully accessible. This has been messy, but a necessary step in access awareness and education. From a mess, positive change can come.

I believe that Dalhousie will look very good as a result of the judicial board's decision. It shows that we are leaders in making post-secondary education accessible. To those who are still sceptical of what I'm saying I suggest you reread (assuming you read it the first time) the supplement on disability in the March 9 *Gazette*.

And thank you for pissing me off. It has given me some anger to constructively channel into several disability-related projects. Care for some enlightenment? It's free!

Tim G. Verney
A happy zealot

If anyone different wins, they will not have won the election. They will have simply won the second vote, which will probably be less indicative of what the Dalhousie community feels than the first one.

James Worrall

Campaign slander

To the editor,

"Slander campaign" should have been the title of the article appearing on the front page of the *Dalhousie Gazette* last week. This article, written by "Gazette Staff" tried to shed light on a subject that resulted from the *Gazette* receiving the letter "I Hate Politics" that appeared in the same *Gazette*.

These two pieces tried to point a finger of blame at one of the Vice-Presidential Executive candidates, Erin Ahern, and myself, her campaign manager. The image presented was one that is far from the truth, and is seriously jeopardizing the Ahern for External campaign.

In response to the allegations made in the *Gazette's* "Slander campaign?" article I have a number of points I would like to address. I would never have said that Poirier was banned from Shirreff as it is not true. I had heard from individuals in a second year Political Science class, that a Shirreff Hall resident had been

upset from a previous incident concerning Mr. Poirier and spoke out against him when he tried to campaign in front of the class.

When I had heard this I was quite surprised, as I was under the opinion that she did not want this matter brought up after lodging a complaint with the Employment Equity Office. I decided to talk to Tyler Russell, a member of Poirier's campaign team, about the incident in the classroom. He seemed quite surprised when I asked about it, and we had a discussion on the matter. This was certainly not spreading rumours, it was an enquiry into how Aaron felt. This certainly was not slander of any kind.

Further, I left for New Glasgow the next day, Friday, where I was attending a conference. While there, I started to feel ill, and spent all day Sunday in the New Glasgow Hospital. I found out that it was very likely that I had a kidney stone. For those who know about such things, I can now empathize, it is one of the most painful experiences of my life. When I returned home I certainly wasn't going out, and spent most of the next two days happily sedated at home. On Wednesday, March 15, the day the *Gazette* claims that I was spreading rumours at a polling booth I was in fact at work. While there, I was still on pain medication, and certainly not running off to any polling booths.

It also makes no sense to say that I would have been at a polling booth in any case. The booths are manned by

impartial members of the elections staff, and any kind of campaigning would have resulted in a \$75 fine. Obviously, common sense would indicate that neither I, nor the members of any campaign team, would be found near any of the polling centres.

Finally, I would like to respond to Poirier's comment in the last *Gazette*: "I can get as many letters [supporting that these rumours were spread] as I want..." It is my opinion that this has been a complete case of slander, by one that has been aimed by Poirier at myself and Erin Ahern. The Chief Returning Officer, Paul Larkin, and the Elections Committee didn't feel that there was a case to be made against myself, but Poirier didn't stop. The *Gazette* provided him with the forum to completely slander my candidate. Anyone can get letters written, but these are not sufficient to create proof.

I would like to finish up by saying that I did not slander Poirier, nor did Erin Ahern or anyone else that was related to the Ahern campaign. Any allegations stating otherwise are false, and have been drummed up with the intention of slandering Ahern.

There were no rumours about Poirier spread, so none to stop, and thus none to slander him. I'm also letting my name stand as the author of this article. Why won't anyone else?

Chris Whynacht

Finally... my story

To the editor,

The cover article of the *Gazette* last week described an angry female student that spoke out against Aaron Poirier. I am that angry female student.

Everyone is so interested about what happened between Mr. Poirier and myself, yet no one has even bothered to ask me about it, not even the *Gazette*. The information was distorted and the article was one-sided.

This all began back in January. As Shirreff Hall's Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) Rep, I was informing students about Social Security Reform, the DSU's decision not to endorse the national student strike on January 25, and what the DSU had chosen to do in protest to proposed post-secondary cuts instead.

On January 20, I received a phone call from Mr. Poirier, who I didn't know, telling me to stop my presentations. Because I feel very strongly that all sides of an issue should be represented, I told Mr. Poirier I would not stop. This angered Mr. Poirier and he

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Candidates should boycott

To the editor,

While the DSU elections may have had accessibility problems, I think a greater injustice may yet occur.

As voter turnout for the second elections may be far poorer than it was for the original election, it is certainly possible that the election results may be different than they were before. The difference in results due to voter turnout will probably be far greater than the effect that the accessibility problem ever had.

I think that the Dalhousie population has spoken, and I call for all candidates defeated in the first election to withdraw from the second round.

I understand that some candidates may have legitimate problems with the fairness of the first election. Those who do not should ask themselves: "If the elections hadn't been thrown out, would I have another reason to challenge their validity?"

Let's see some integrity. I understand that the names must remain on the ballots, but the candidates can withdraw in spirit if not legally. We are not having another election. We are having a re-vote.

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This time it's for real...

The DWC

Perogie Pinching Party

FRIDAY, MARCH 31 AT NOON

Take time out to de-stress!

For info, call Heather at the Centre.

The Midwifery Option

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, AT NOON

A presentation about midwifery in Nova Scotia presented by two midwives at the Dal Women's Centre Lounge.

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Hey! LOOKING FOR RESOURCES OR A NEAT PLACE TO STUDY?

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