



# See the big picture, live the small one

What a great time to be a cynic. It all started in May when I read Jim Morrison's biography. It was a really good read, but I got into it so much that all I did for the next couple of months was turn up my nose at the humdrum of everyday life. Instead of taking advantage of my first summer in Halifax, the Lizard King in me chose to snub the doldrums of day-to-day living. I rose with the setting sun and laughed at the world until dawn's early light.

However, the thrill eventually wore off. I realized that though it had been fun for awhile, I wasn't Jim. Walking in his worn leather boots had been interesting, but as all good things must come to an end, so then must all things that are interesting.

Then came the biggest photo op to ever hit Halifax — the G-7. Cops, security, special agents, and members of the press swarmed the city. The hordes of tourists were next, all just hoping to get a glimpse of power or to see all the other people who just wanted to get a glimpse of power.

Meanwhile, I couldn't open a newspaper or watch some TV without hearing how OJ's defence team had introduced some elaborate ploy to mystify the jury. The "farce" of DNA proof, the insignificance of the bloody gloves, his deteriorating arthritic condition...they had it all. Whether he's guilty or not, what's going on now in Ito's court is a crime in itself.

Even worse was the Paul Bernardo supplements that made their way into our respected metro papers. It was so refreshing to hear from Paul's own mouth that he only kidnapped and raped young schoolgirls — he was far too much a gentleman to actually choke and dismember them.

The entire stomach-churning affair illustrated (to me) Canada's vanishing innocence. We lost our virgin purity. There are countless atrocities in our past, but none had this combination of calculated cruelty and blatant disregard for another's suffering, all to the tune of a media circus of American proportions. When you sit down and think of the last few days of those young girls' lives, you realize that somewhere, something is drastically wrong.

Unfortunately, there is no way in hell you or I am going to right things. I think that was the big attraction of the G-7 headliners — they theoretically have the power to make things better. To ensure that such heinous crimes will never happen again. We entrust them with the security and well-being of the world, and when they screw it up, we vote them out and bring in another fair-haired lad.

Despite all this negativity, I hope that people see the silver lining. And that is that what we do, one way or the other, matters. Maybe not a thousand years from now, but we're not going to be here, so don't worry about that.

If you look too intently at the big picture, you realize that Dylan's dust-in-the-wind argument is pretty solid. There have been a lot of people come before us and there'll be plenty more after us.

This is something out of our control — so don't sweat it.

Instead, make a difference in your immediate environment. It won't save the world, but it might make a bigger difference than you'd expect. There's lots of misery out there, but dwelling in it isn't going to change anything.

We're lucky enough to live in a country where enjoying yourself is an option; choose to exercise that option.

Sam McCaig

## EDITORIAL

## OPINION

# Joe is back

Guess what? I'm back!

For those of you who don't know me, My name is Josef Tratnik. I have been a regular contributor to the Dalhousie Gazette for a little over a year now. I like to tell people what I think, and inspire others to do the same by generally pissing them off. It is something that I enjoy a great deal, and as last year's Opinion section editor, I did my best to create an environment that fostered debate on any number of issues.

This year, I hope to do the same, so don't be surprised to find that at various points in time, you'll open the paper to find me criticizing your opinions, clothing, and attitude.

Oh yeah, please do take it personally. Get really mad, upset, angry, just plain pissed off; and then, put your fingers down on the keyboard of your computer and let the rest of the world know just exactly why you hate my guts.

Well, now that I have that's over with, I can return to an issue that has bothered me since I

first arrived in this province: VICTIMS!

After you've been here awhile, you begin to notice that there are very few people who don't have some sort of problem in their lives. What I mean is, I can only name a handful of people who don't have some issue that prevents them from either succeeding in the real world, or just coping with day-to-day life.

This city in particular has more tolerance for people who feel the need to be victims than any other place I've been in the world. Is it any wonder that the economy of this province has never truly boomed?

What's the problem here? Have the churches that ran this province for so many years completely killed your sense of fight, so that you just take everything lying down?

Every day in the Student Union Building and in the Graduate House, you hear people talking about how the system is against them, or how they can't surmount this or that problem.

...cont'd on next page: "Get a Life"

## LETTERS

To the Gazette:

"Tips For Living Off Campus", by Jen Horsey, the Gazette, Sept 7th, did indeed provide useful advice concerning the kind of questions that should be asked when a landlord has been successfully contacted. Regrettably, the advice, "...to wander over to Dalhousie's Housing Office" was something less than the panacea suggested. The lists of accommodations were on display in the corridor. Together with other students I scrutinized the lists. We stood, crouched, leaned, breathed, sweated, and in one case flatulated, while trying to read the small print, compensate for the 'optical relationship' between the glass case and the corridor lighting, as well as avoid the endless stream of Student Union Building (SUB) employees that were taking bits of paper somewhere and/or using the washroom.

My reaction was to enquire whether the Housing Office could provide a copy of the lists. Sorry, no. Okay, I guess it would be costly. So,

how about a master copy that I could copy on a coin-operated machine. Sorry, no. After persevering with the lists, and clutching my 'short list' of potential abodes. I made use of the two free phones in the Housing Office. The problem was that the 'short list', that I had literally scrambled for, WAS HOPELESSLY OUT OF DATE. Get the message! Perhaps it is the responsibility of the landlord to inform the Housing Office when a vacancy has been filled, but reality is that once the dwelling is rented, the landlord doesn't give a damn. For the 1996-97 students, the Housing Office should consider the following: master lists, in exchange for student cards/I.D., that can be copied (as they do successfully at McMaster University); some coin-operated copiers; relocation of the lists away from the corridor; bigger print; no glare glass; and, a realistic system to update the lists.

Colin Knight

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- Tim Richard, Eugenia Bayada, Mike Graham, Aleixo Muise, Geoff Stewart, Tim Covert, Josef Tratnik, Carmen Tam, Carol Hilton, Geoff Ineson, Danielle Boudreau, Steve Tonner, Gordon Campbell, Kathleen Miko, Judy Reid, Richard Lim, Jodi Gallagher

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Student Union Building, Dalhousie University  
6136 University Avenue, room 312, Halifax, NS, B3H 4J2  
editorial tel. 902 / 494-2507 • fax 902 / 494-8890  
email GAZETTE@ac.dal.ca

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