

CROSS CANADA

Charge of harassment dismissed

TORONTO (CUP) — Queen's University has dismissed a racial harassment complaint against a student newspaper.

Third-year student Mark Givens had argued that an Oct. 24, 1991 column in *Surface* demeaned white people by negatively comparing white bread to brown bread.

But the university's disciplinary board decided that because white people are "an historically advantaged majority," the column didn't poison the campus environment for them.

"Harassment isn't just an expression of bias, it's a demonstrable effect on a person," said Denis Magnusson, law professor, and chair of the university's Student Non-Academic Discipline Adjudication Board.

"In this case, we couldn't see a demonstrable effect."

Surface editor Suzanne Kim said she's pleased with the decision, and hopes it will set a precedent for quelling "reverse discrimination" charges against minority students.

"There's a lot of accusations that minorities have this tyrannical power," Kim added. "I'm glad an official body came out and said publicly that this isn't the case."

Men walk against violence

WINDSOR (CUP) — A pro-feminist men's group in Windsor is walking to Toronto to demonstrate its opposition to violence against women.

Men Walking Against Male Violence, endorsed by Windsor's city council last month, also plans to speak to high school students and sponsor workshops, said group member Rich Friemann.

"We're against all male violence, although primarily violence against women," he said. "Men haven't been involved in the issue, and we want to address that."

The group has scheduled a rally for Apr. 4, and has booked Bob White, president of the Canadian Auto Workers, to speak at the gathering. Following the rally, group members will depart for Toronto.

Men Walking Against Male Violence originated in Toronto, and has branches across the country.

Prof charged with harassment

MONTREAL (CUP) — A Concordia University professor, who was fired following sexual harassment complaints by five women, told a hearing he often commented on the way employees dressed.

Testifying at a labour arbitration hearing Mar. 9, Gerald Trudel, a chemistry professor and former co-ordinator of the Concordia Co-op Institute, said his comments were inoffensive.

"It is no different than my female colleagues telling me, 'Oh you must have an important meeting today, you're wearing your blue suit,'" he said.

Trudel's lawyer, Rene Martel, questioned him about earlier testimony given by one of the women who filed a complaint. Trudel's secretary said he told her he liked it when she wore dresses with camisoles underneath.

Trudel also testified that when his secretary had applied to work for him, he asked her if she was married and planned to have children.

"The last woman we hired left after a few weeks when she told us she was pregnant," Trudel said.

Students promote products

MONTREAL (CUP) — Private companies have come up with an innovative strategy to market their products: get students to do it for free.

As part of a "National Challenge" involving Canadian universities, a group of McGill management students are promoting Levi's jeans. The students volunteer their services "to work with the business community, and gain skills required for working in the field of public relations," according to a written statement by McGill's marketing club.

Noting the amount of free publicity corporations were getting, some students questioned the motivation behind this so-called Campus Challenge For Charity.

"I think it's wrong for private companies to use McGill students and student facilities as a cheap way to advertise a product," said Ziad Rouag, an economics student.

Club members are not about to give up what they consider a fun learning experience.

"This is a chance for us to learn about the business," said Rhonda Sherwood, a participant in the Levi's challenge. "It allows us to put the theory we learn in the classroom into practice."

NEWS

Pandora free from sexism

BY JERRY WEST

Pandora is not guilty of sex discrimination, ruled the Nova Scotia Human Rights Board of Inquiry. In a March 17 decision the board said *Pandora*'s policy was "reasonable for the purpose of ameliorating disadvantage."

The local women's only newspaper was accused of sex discrimination for refusing to print material written by men.

"[This policy] does not cause material or substantial harm to men," said David Miller in his decision for the board.

Miller said under the existing laws any disadvantaged group may undertake an activity to correct their disadvantage even if that activity leads to distinctions against the advantaged group.

But the matter isn't over yet.

Pandora plans to pursue a complaint against the Human Rights Commission for evidence presented by the commission's lawyer during the inquiry. The publishers of *Pandora* were characterised as "hysterical," "extremist" and it was said that they were "contributing to women's phobia of men."

"This is the type of comment that has been used for centuries to denigrate women," said Anne Derrick,

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legal counsel for *Pandora*.

Derrick added this type of action was quite deplorable coming from a body supposed to be protecting the rights of the disadvantaged.

"*Pandora* will not let it drop," she said.

Derrick also said that *Pandora* will try to recover some of their costs from the province and the commission.

There have been reports that Gene Keyes, the man who lodged the original complaint on the grounds that *Pandora* would not print his letter, plans to appeal.

"The decision is clearly grounded in the law," said Derrick, "there is nothing to appeal."

"What I find most distressing," said Betty Peterson, a spokesperson for the coalition in support of *Pandora*, "is that Mr. Keyes can publicly pursue his relatively weak claims while the members of *Pandora* can not even be here [at a press conference] because this is not a safe place to be."

Pandora has received death threats since their case was reported in the media.

RCMP conduct questioned

BY DAWN MITCHELL

HALIFAX (CUP) — The RCMP in Cape Breton, N.S. have yet to make a decision regarding an alleged Sept. 1991 sexual assault.

"It's a complicated case," said RCMP superintendent George Timko. "Certain matters need to be carefully examined from a legal point of view and that's the main reason things are taking so long."

Last fall, it was reported to the local RCMP detachment that a female, University College of Cape Breton student had been sexually assaulted in the university residence by three men during a party.

The woman was questioned several times by the RCMP, and was charged with mischief after changing her statement. The charge was later dropped due to lack of evidence.

The woman issued a written statement through her lawyer, criticizing the investigating officer, and demanding an inquiry into his conduct.

The RCMP re-opened the case and have been investigating the officer's actions.

The police have not charged the male students, and the university has not taken any disciplinary action against the men.

The woman's lawyer, Elizabeth Cusack Walsh, said she has met with the Mounties several times, and expects a decision by the end of April.

In the meantime, the slow progress of the investigation and the media attention may have a negative impact on other women who have been abused, says a crisis worker.

"There is no doubt [the case] has deterred people from reporting cases of sexual assault," said Bea LeBlanc, executive director of the women's shelter in Sydney.

"I have spoken to several women

Students still "in"

BY JERRY WEST

Dalhousie's Board of Governors decided not to make any hasty decisions at their March 17 meeting. The board was considering a motion to reduce their monthly meetings to five a year.

According to President Clark the executive of the board would still meet on a regular basis to deal with the day-to-day matters.

"This would allow the full board time to deal with the bigger issues," he said.

Under provincial legislation the executive of the board has virtually the same powers as the full board.

Student leaders are worried the move will decrease their already minimal input into university affairs. Four students sit on the board but only one, the student union president, would sit on the executive.

"At present the only power the

students have is to advise the members of their opinions," said Alex Boston, VP external of the student union, "this will put the responsibility for the collecting and disseminating of information solely on the president, the most overworked student on campus."

Tom Digby, a student board member suggested that the decision be tabled until the next meeting, to allow members time to consider the implications. On the recommendation of the chair the motion was tabled "until such time as the board feels ready to deal with it."

"Which means in the summer, when all of the students are away," said Boston.

Is this move related to the recent BoG meeting at which 800 students showed up to protest tuition hikes?

"No that's not the case," said Clark, "We've been thinking about this for months."