

Peace building at UNICEF

BY DAVID FINLAYSON

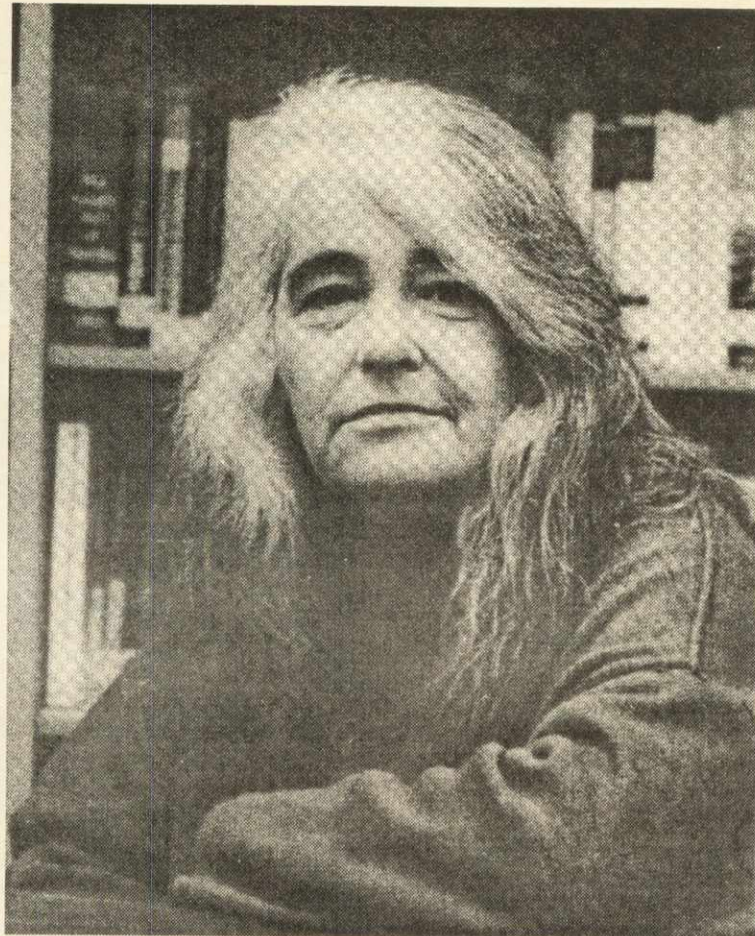
For those of you who do not know anything about UNICEF except that they put out little orange boxes at Halloween, here is a rundown.

UNICEF stands for the United Nations Children's Fund. They are dedicated to providing life-saving services to millions of children around the world. They provide emergency relief, health care, education, nutrition, clean water, sanitation, and social services. At the moment, they are very active in Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Sri Lanka, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Bolivia, to name just a few. Canadian donations help to fund these projects, among others.

This year's theme is Peace Building. Obviously, this is especially noteworthy with the current situations in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

Not many people realize, but UNICEF has a card and gift store on Spring Garden Road. It is located at the corner of Spring Garden and Carlton St. (I'm sure that many of you have stumbled by it on the way home from downtown). Anyway, at the store, they sell a variety of cards, games, calendars, day planners, and other interesting things. If you purchase from the store, it's tax free — NO GST and NO PST. Also, you're supporting a very worthy cause.

If you are interested in purchasing anything or finding out more about UNICEF, feel free to drop by anytime between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Saturday. And, if you are interested in volunteering some time, please feel free to talk to me (David Finlayson) or call 422-6000 for more information. We can always use more volunteers.



"Well, if the government is pushing you around, who are you going to talk to — God or the NGOs? — fortunately, they invented the NGOs because up to that point, it was just God, and even He, or She, hasn't got that much done to stop the politics of cruelty in our time. NGOs are kind of like the Enlightenment."
— Kate Millett

Dal students go to science conference

BY JAMES WORRALL

While Dalhousie was celebrating homecoming this weekend, members of the Atlantic Canadian mathematics, statistics, and computing science community gathered at the University College of Cape Breton (UCCB) for the annual Atlantic Provinces Council of the Sciences conference (APICS).

Dalhousie undergrads fared well in the student competitions, placing second in the computing science competition and winning the mathematics competition. While Dalhousie and Memorial University (MUN) are perennial winners in the mathematics competition — they've won seven and 10 times, respectively, in the last 18 years — with this year's win, Dal broke MUN's streak of three consecutive victories.

Dalhousie's entry in the math competition consisted of Brian Ingalls, a fourth-year mathematics student, and Mark Lewis, a third-year economics student. Both are graduates of Halifax West High School.

In this, the first year that teams have worked together on the competition instead of summing their individual scores, Ingalls and Lewis outperformed a very tight

field. Ingalls estimates that the team got three or four correct answers on the seven question, three-hour competition. Lewis added that although the questions were difficult, he and Ingalls "worked well together in the team format," and noted that they solved problems together that they would not have been able to do individually. Both team members cited the intensive practice and coaching by professor Karl Dilcher as a key element in the win.

When asked if he thought the team's success reflected the quality of the mathematics program at Dal, Lewis — who recently dropped the math half of his combined honours program — smiled and said, "I plead the Fifth."

Ingalls, however, pointed out that Dalhousie's continued success through the years shows the university's ability to attract top students.

David Benoit and Rebecca Page, Dal's computing science team, managed to take second in their competition despite technical difficulties with the computers they were working with.

Dalhousie's two other entries in the mathematics competition finished seventh and eighth, respectively.

Feminist author and activist Kate Millett speaks at Dal

BY KIM LEWIS

"The women's movement is against nationalism, obfuscation, waste, and bureaucracy," proclaimed Kate Millett, during one of her many sweeping pronouncements made to an amply filled McInnes Room at Dalhousie last Tuesday.

Millett — one of the pioneers of the American women's emancipation movement and perhaps best known for her 1970 book, *Sexual Politics* — was invited by the Dalhousie Women's Centre to speak on the women's movement as it was, and to discuss her impressions of its current direction in light of the recent United Nations (UN) conference on women's rights in Beijing. She also read from her latest autobiographical novel, *A.D., A Memoir*.

For the first forty-five minutes of her hour-long speech, Millett disconcerted audience members by discussing none of the above — she engaged instead in lengthy expositions about her hometown, what her family was up to these days, and her observations on fax machines. Interspersed with the anecdotes were several astute points of departure, but these were left unexplored, or wandered into puzzling digressions: a cursory reference to the origins of patriarchy, for instance, became a fifteen-minute reflection on the sequestration of animals.

Upon finally addressing the women's movement and the Beijing conference, Millett again had some interesting insights, but unfortunately these too remained disconnected.

"Women's rights as human rights — internationally, that's progress," was soon followed by extensive remarks on the "deplorable" behaviour of the Chinese officials, Hillary Clinton's sensationalized appearance, and the copyright of artwork.

Millett also provided a rapid-fire (and hence, vague) list of atrocities occurring in a number of countries, decrying "terrible,

crazed authoritarianism," and stating that religious orthodoxies are "boring."

Millett concluded her speech with the encouragement, "Keep the faith...what else (are) you going to do...I'm not moving to Mars — it's too hot."

Since students devoted much effort and money to hear Millett speak, it is disappointing that she did not see fit to accord a similar degree of respect to her audience of approximately one hundred, many of whom left during the intermission.

After the talk, Millett agreed to be interviewed by *the Gazette*.

Throughout her work, she consistently opposes social inequality, be it gender-based or otherwise. Her 1994 book, *The Politics of Cruelty*, deals with the subject of state torture of political prisoners. I hoped to focus on some of those issues, particularly in relation to political activism, that were not elaborated fully in the lecture.

GAZETTE: What do you think of the role of international law...

KATE MILLETT (interrupting): Be nice if we had international law, wouldn't it? We could do something about torture. I don't mean a horrible law squad with law cops and all the rest of it and psychiatric medicine and computer printouts for the whole world, I don't mean that at all — I just mean if there were some form of redress by citizens against their own national governments, that would be useful.

GAZ: In your book, *The Politics of Cruelty*, you look favourably upon non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

KM: Well, if the government is pushing you around, who are you going to talk to — God or the NGOs? — fortunately, they invented the NGOs because up to that point, it was just God, and even He, or She, hasn't got that much done to stop the politics of cruelty in our time. NGOs are kind of like The Enlightenment...

GAZ: Do you see any promise in conjunction with the recent UN

conference on women's rights?

KM: Well sure, for God's sake, consider our condition but a short while ago — they used to bind the feet of women in China — they still sell them, they don't bind everybody's feet anymore, you have to see these things with some perspective, it's all relative and stuff.

As long as one person is still crucified, it's terrible, right? But when they used to routinely crucify thieves, then you had a kind of generalized brutality. You see, there are degrees of things, like mutilation is sort of worse than incarceration; well, they have to incarcerate you to mutilate you, don't they? And torture is worse than incarceration, but again they have to incarcerate you to torture you. So I'd say incarceration is maybe where you start to reform, but if you just want to stop the worst abuses, you work on torture...because torture is spreading...with United States assistance, and the computer thing, you have to watch out what technology does because it only expands control.

GAZ: Do you have any words of advice, suggestions for direction for university students?

KM: For God's sake, join Amnesty. Don't just give twenty-five dollars and wear a sticker — write letters. That's what an Amnesty group is supposed to do. So the first thing you could do is form an Amnesty group, it's real easy, it's a fun way to drink coffee, and all you have to do is write these form letters to directors and kind of laugh about whether anything will happen, and guess what, it even does. Individuals are let out, okay, they still got other guys, the day they released Harry Wu they arrested two other people...you asked me what you could do.

Inform yourselves. Read *The Politics of Cruelty*, read the Amnesty reports, see what the hell's going on. Get annoyed, do something about it. All you have to do is write letters anyway. Jesus Christ, they have to get tortured.

Write for the
Gazette.

Staff
meetings
Mondays at
4pm.

Drink
coffee.

