

OF DALHOUSIE

by Kim Schofield

Dr. Susan Sherwin is presently employed at Dalhousie University in the Philosophy Department. Dr. Sherwin is the only woman ever to be employed in this Faculty. Dr. Sherwin arrived at Dalhousie in 1974. She received her undergraduate degree from York University in Math and Philosophy, her PhD from Stanford University and her post doctoral from Case Western Reserve University in Medical Ethics. Dr. Sherwin has held various administrative positions within her

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department and the faculty union. This form of administrative work seems to be common for women within the university community, especially if you are dedicated in striking a gender balance by trying to ensure the further employment of women.

Within the Philosophy Department itself, Dr. Sherwin has not experienced any direct "horror stories" which seem to be all too common at Dalhousie. She believes she is taken seriously and treated with respect by her male colleagues. She has, however, experienced considerable hostility in reference to the substance of her work as being feminist. Often this hostility is not directed at her but rather at her students. Despite Dr. Sherwin's particularly lucky experiences at Dalhousie, she does not ignore the fact that the university community can be an inhospitable and often hostile environment for women.

Both the personal and professional goals of Dr. Sherwin center around improving the

situation of women in university and abroad. She observes that Dalhousie needs more diversity in their hiring practices, and more women and minorities in high ranking positions. Unfortunately, the power structure at Dalhousie mirrors that of society. Therefore, commented Dr. Sherwin, legitimizing the status quo. It should be the university environment which challenges these oppressive norms. Dalhousie must come to grips with its role within a sexist, classist society, setting an example for the world beyond.

Dr. Sherwin sees herself as a professional

role model for her female students. She is, however, uncomfortable with holding such a position, for it involves more responsibility than she would like to bear. Sherwin is an accomplished feminist but admits that she does not have all the answers. Constantly learning and figuring out her theories can be applied, she learns as much from her students as they learn from her.



Jane Arscott

by Chris Bellon

Jane Arscott, a part-time Lecturer in Dalhousie's Political Science Department, feels "trapped" in the system, though she doesn't feel hers is an atypical situation. Arscott describes herself as "an example of women on the fringes of the [university] system".

Part of the problem seems to lie in the continuing perception of young up-and-coming women as either career oriented, or family oriented. However, between the two

extremes are women like Arscott who have made choices which leave them with important responsibilities other than for themselves and their long term career goals.

In addition to the pressures of keeping up with increasingly high standards demanded of teaching staff, equalled only by the severe cutbacks in funding and resources, Arscott has the added responsibilities and pressures of children, a husband (with tenure), finances and finding "the wherewithal to complete my [Ph.D.] thesis" she said.

When asked about her career goals, Arscott responded "It's difficult to disassociate career goals from family...it's difficult to compartmentalize my life into public and private."

Women in her situation face the problems of immobility and lack of autonomy. "Because of my responsibilities, I'm more limited in my career possibilities. I don't have long term plans because I don't have personal autonomy. People in my situation don't have that luxury...I hope it will be altered in the course of time" she said.

She suggested several ways in which her sort of situation could be addressed and corrected. As to affirmative action programmes, she said "It would be nice if there wasn't a need for them, but there is." Universities must first recognize that a problem exists and then begin to accommodate the two career family. "Universities are too used to having a domestic system of support behind the principle earner in a family" she said.

When asked if she thought role modelling was an important aspect of future change, Arscott whole-heartedly responded "Oh, definitely. My role models were mostly male...but now it's very important for me to have contact with other women, since it affirms that my experiences aren't unique.

Arscott said there is a definite need for more female role models in the university

role models stems from her childhood in Saskatoon, Sask., where her mother was a medical doctor who began her career in a northern farming community. Arscott said that her personal development was very much influenced by her mother's example and that she means to further it. "Having an 18 month old daughter helps to sustain my desire to be a positive force for change...to be a role model to those you know personally, and to those you don't as well" she said.



Marion Fry

It's difficult to disassociate career goals from family...it's difficult to compartmentalize my life into public and private.

-Jane Arscott

system. But she doesn't see how this will come about "without structural changes". She said that part of the problem is "that you see men and women with career paths that start to diverge radically. The standards are increasingly difficult for women to achieve."

"It's unfair to ask women to adopt masculine standards of success. I would rather see [women students] assessed in terms of what they have the potential to do for the next 30 years rather than to project future success based on the most recent seven years of graduate school" said Arscott.

When asked if she considers herself to be a role model for younger students, she replied after some time for thought, "Yes. It doesn't matter what stage of life you're at, you find that you have influence on others. To have someone come up and tell you this years later is kind of neat".

Her belief in the necessity for strong female

by Stephanie Nolen

Dr. Marion Fry is obviously happy as the first woman President at the University of King's College. She knows that among the many large oil portraits of former presidents, in abundance at King's, her own will attract particular attention.

I've come to King's at a time of considerable challenge, above and beyond those a University President usually faces.

-Marion Fry

"I look around the dining hall, and I think one day I'll be up there. I wonder where they'll put me?"

Fry is part of a very definite minority of

female university presidents. Her stately and charming friendliness make her the embodiment of the institution of which she is the head.

Fry has long ties with the college. "I was an undergraduate right here at King's, in the class of '53. And now I've come home to the

Whilst by no means easy, Eileen felt that being female and a single parent tended to be to her advantage.

University to head it. That's rather thrilling," she smiles.

Fry also holds degrees in classics and philosophy from Dalhousie and Oxford Universities.

Fry began her teaching career at Bishop's University in Québec. She says she "heard through the grapevine" that they were searching for their first ever female faculty member, and applied. Fry got that job and was Bishop's first Assistant Dean of Women, as well as a member of their philosophy department, for six years.

A search for women's input lead Fry to leave Bishop's for Trent University, in Peterborough, Ontario, which was being founded in 1964. She was asked to "head up the Women's College at Trent" and thus was involved in the beginnings of Catherine Parr Traill College. Fry served as Trent's Vice President for four years.

In 1987 Fry received a letter from Dr. Robert Crouse, then King's Vice President, informing her that she had been nominated for the position of President at King's College, and asking if she was interested.

"I was happy where I was," remembers Fry, "But I knew after I came down here, after the interview, that yes, I wanted it."

Fry was offered the job and became King's first female President.

"This was a special opportunity for women to move into a place that had always had a male president, and make it work," she says.

Fry has thus far had a busy Presidency. "We come to King's at a time of considerable challenge, above and beyond those a University President usually faces."

Among Fry's particular challenges have been the construction of a new library, the institution of a second degree program for King's (the still tentative Contemporary Studies Programme), and the celebration, last year, of the College's Bicentennial.

Fry recites this list of special items which have claimed her attention, and concludes "I'm extraordinarily lucky to have had such a series of opportunities."

Fry recognizes that as a woman in a very male-dominated area she serves as a role model for her female students.

"It's always been inescapable for a woman in a professional position to be a bit of a role model," she explains, "I hope I have been helpful to some women students."

Fry is satisfied with the situation women in universities now face. "I think women must be glad to see what is going on, with programs such as the Women's Studies. In my own department particularly, good study if being done of feminist theory."

She sees King's as a good environment for female students, pointing out that women are a majority in the student body.

And the changes at King's, traditionally such a patriarchal institution, continue to come. Fry's presidency is a landmark.

"In an elderly institution, an ancient institution, like King's, changes may come slowly," Fry says, "But when they come, they're timely and they work."



Eileen Pease

by Celia Lamond

Horses brought Eileen Pease, then a secretary, from England to Canada. Today she is the lecturer of the Communication and Career Management Course in the School of Business Administration and the owner of the successful business Dynamic Learning. She is currently on the executive of the Nova Scotia Board of Trade, of which she was the first female director in 1982-83 having been one of the first female members.

Eileen completed a BA in psychology and BEd. at Dalhousie before teaching for 5

years in local primary schools. Meanwhile she was developing a program for, and teaching, speed reading. After her husband had completed his PhD Eileen decided to take a MEd. in reading at Mount St Vincent so as to raise her teaching license to a higher pay bracket. Although she fell pregnant soon after commencing the degree Eileen pressed on regardless and returned to class sitting on a rubber ring with her baby on her lap one week after giving birth.

By 1981 Eileen was a single parent with two children, working full time as a Guidance Counsellor and running two businesses part time. She was teaching at Henson College and was the manager of the Halifax Nancy Thompson Trust for Women being the most successful agent in Canada. Eileen also found time that year to take the Canadian Securities course, renovate her house and develop an intensive speed reading course to be taught commercially. It wasn't however until July 1986 that Eileen was financially able to work full time with her business, developing new courses and focusing her energies into making it successful. All the while she continued to teach at Dalhousie.

Members of the Board of Trade were also very helpful and encouraging. Whilst by no means easy, Eileen felt that being female and a single parent tended to be to her advantage. Without a spouse she learned to make all the decisions at home, and at work, developing a self assuredness and confidence which has enabled her to compete in a male dominated environment. Knowing the difficulties of being a female executive Eileen considers gender an important issue which both male and female MBA students should pay attention to.

At present Eileen is planning to franchise her business here in Halifax and start another in England. The decision is a major one but Eileen is keen to meet face to face with a new challenge.

by Lara Morris

"Being a feminist means being openly active and vocal on issues that concern women as women," said Susan MacIntyre, Assistant to the Vice President, Student Services.

It was difficult for me to find women role models. It wasn't until I hit the university that I really found women role models...

-Susan MacIntyre

MacIntyre has been an active feminist for a number of years on the Dalhousie campus. As a student in the mid-1980's, MacIntyre was involved in the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU). She chaired the DSU Women's Committee and helped run a campaign to get more women involved in student politics.

MacIntyre's experience at university impacted her greatly. "It was difficult for me to find women role models. It wasn't until I hit the university that I really found women role models, as professors and particularly as student leaders. My experience as a student leader gave me the opportunity to meet other women from across the country...They gave me strength to carry forward," said MacIntyre. Currently completing her Masters in Public



Susan MacIntyre Administration, MacIntyre believes some progress is being made on women's issues. "Sadly, I don't think the issues have changed. Personally I feel I'm still fighting the same battles, but I think what's really important is more and more women are fighting with me. We are fighting to be heard, and for an equal voice everywhere," said MacIntyre.

MacIntyre feels she had the opportunity to express her views within her position as Assistant to the Vice-President, Student Services. However, she would like to see more progress within the campus community.

"At Dalhousie, like many places, I'd like to see decision-makers look more carefully at the work women do and to examine the little value they place on that work. Issues such as pay equity will partially address these con-

cerns, but my fear is much will be overlooked," MacIntyre said.

MacIntyre believes daily stresses prevent more women from being active on women's issues. "The demands and the stresses on our time today are incredibly great and it's difficult to put energy into all of these issues. I think there are a lot of people who are interested, but because of these demands you don't see them," she said.

MacIntyre looks to advancements that will change the face of the campus. "Affirmative action and pay equity will have a great impact...I'm not sure that alone will be enough, but it's a beginning," she said. She thinks more work should be done on personal security issues, such as campus safety.



Susan Sherwin