

# You mean you didn't know?



University  
bureaucracy  
presiding over  
student body.

"Isn't it around now that we're supposed to be registering?"

"Wasn't it called Early March Registration or something?" Last week I sat in a washroom cubicle and couldn't help but overhear these confused questions.

"No, it's been scrapped," I said as I came out. It's too bad everyone can't have a personal chat with the registrar about this.

Dalhousie's administration made radical changes in the registration process for undergraduates and surprisingly few people are aware of them.

Gudrun Curri, Dalhousie's new registrar, has separated enrollment and advising. Faculty advising of students has already happened and enrollment is supposed to occur by mail during the summer. Oh, and the deadline for the first tuition

fee installment was moved from September 25 to August 19.

Starting with what most of us have already missed, Undergraduate Advising Week was March 14 to 18. The Advising Fair on March 15 in the Green Room was the highlight of the week.

Less than 100 of Dalhousie's 10,000 students came.

"We didn't get the message across to the students, but neither did the faculty," says Curri. One faculty member said they were never asked to announce it in classes. This professor thinks it wasn't successful because the timetable wasn't up yet. She thinks calendars and timetables should have been available well in advance.

But Curri says the major decisions concerning the timetable are only made by the end of March. Last year the timetable

was available at the beginning of March. Seven hundred changes were made before classes started. This figure includes time slot and professor changes, but doesn't include room switches.

"By giving the departments six more weeks, I'm aiming for a 95% accuracy. Last year's was about 50% accurate," says Curri.

She's gotten a lot of flack from faculty, though, for not requiring departmental signatures for registration. The faculty is, according to Curri, under the impression that if students aren't forced to come and get a signature, they won't come in for advice.

Curri says she wants to see real advice instead of just faculty keeping track of lists. But most of us probably won't be getting any advice on our course selections for next year. By the time

we've finished our last exam and have realized that March Registration never was, it may be too late. Faculty tend to leave for the summer, and they'll be renovating around the registrar's office, making it inaccessible.

And when it comes time to send in the registration material, will a possibly striking Canada Post be held responsible by the university for delays in out-of-town students' forms if they don't get into some of the classes they chose?

And will students' summer employers be held responsible for them not getting into any of their classes if they don't pay them enough before August 19?

If you have the answers or any problems with any of this, call the registrar, Gudrun Curri, at 424-1109.

—Ariella Pahlke

## l e t t e r s

### Daly's racism

#### To the Editors:

When a man tells me he is not sexist, I am alarmed. I do not trust his self-assessment, because the concepts he uses to evaluate himself are patriarchal, his thinking processes are patriarchal, the language he uses to give shape to his thoughts is patriarchal and the context in which he is evaluating himself is patriarchal. This is a global, and grim, reality. The conceptual framework in which we all operate is patriarchal. With this understanding, I cannot even say that I am not sexist, not in the absolute sense meant by a statement like that. I can say that I have the keen sense of and ability to detect sexism that is particular to women, as the targets of sexism, and that I am dedicated to doing *whatever I can think of* (conceptual limitations here), or feel would help, to eliminate it.

When a white person says they are not racist, I am similarly alarmed. Mary Daly's pronouncement to this effect, in the talk she gave at the Mount conference on Women and Language last Friday night, deeply disappointed and troubled me. While Daly is doing some very creative and essential work to challenge the ways we think, in the interests of enabling us as women to change our reality, she has been shaped by the context in which white North Americans live, as much as any of us. Her conceptual framework, which she is working committedly to change and expand, is not free of the mechanisms of the oppressors.

As well as the patriarchal shapes and meanings this framework gives our world, there are also white supremacist ways of perceiving in that framework. I

do not believe that there is any white person who can claim to have eradicated all of those ways of thinking from their consciousness, and all the consequent expressions in attitude and action.

I spoke with Mary Daly about this after the lecture and she denounced what she calls a confessional politic in the white women's movement that involves, in her words, "weeping to our racism". She states that the racists are the patriarchal white men. I agree that there is an expression of white women's new consciousness of their racism which is not to be trusted: it is exploitative in that it somehow enables us to be even more politically correct by admitting that we are racist! Our sense of our own importance in the world, as white people, doesn't necessarily change with this admission. The power doesn't necessarily shift. This kind of a step in a growing consciousness lacks depth and allows for a continued white supremacy.

However, between this type of attempt and Mary Daly's false confidence about herself not being racist is an essential place that white women have to find. With a real understanding of the fact that mechanisms of racism still operate in us no matter how good our intentions, and without expecting that the act of admitting this to make us feel better and make us better people, we can stand on solid ground from which to battle racism and build solidarity with women of colour. The white supremacy in history and in existing conditions of racism is a scar on our consciousness as white women, but it is also quite plainly where we are, and the only place from which we can move on with any integrity.

This gap in Mary Daly's consciousness and her vehement

insistence that no such gap exists is a fundamental flaw and a very serious limitation on her work. If there were other women doing what she is doing with language, I would stop reading her work. Since this is not the case, I will now read her work with the awareness and the caution it demands. I suggest other women do the same.

Andrea Currie

### Hu(wo)-manity

#### To the Editor:

Thank you, Dal Gazette, for showing me the error of my being. My being male, that is. Every year, your Women's Issue shames me and all that I apparently stand for. I have come to realize that my existence has been a single twenty-two year blasphemy to the female sex. I can only hope that God, if she is up there listening to the likes of this penis-bearing fool, will forgive me and accept my penance.

Since many men, I am sure, feel that same way I do on this issue, I shall make public the promise that I feel we must take, so that all of hu(wo)manity may at last be unified into one, happy, androgynous family.

I, [state your name], hereby solemnly pledge to never open a door for a female (thus implying my superiority), to spend an equal amount of time following non-sexist women's sports like hockey and judo, as I do men's, and to not partake in the war machine which men have built with the sole intent of destroying women and babies. I also, in my shame, must state that in the past I have snickered, nay sometimes even laughed, at jokes derogatory to women (the horror...).

To prove to you all that my intent is honest, my remorse real, I am having all of my male

accoutrements revoked: I am trading my testosterone for estrogen, and my penis for poetry. I urge all thinking men to join me in this gesture. I think it will bring us all closer together.

Kevin Desroches

### Seething tirade

#### To the Editors:

It happens at least once a year. Somebody — it's always a straight white man — decides he doesn't like the Gazette because it prints too much feminist/gay copy, so he writes a seething letter. Last week's paper contained the seething letter.

The seething letter blames the Gazette for not printing what the students want to hear. But the seething-letter writer doesn't seem to understand that it's a lot of work to put out a student newspaper, always with a small staff, and the staff can't cover everything everybody deems to be of interest. Does he suppose there are enough people to cover city council, and student council, and residences and student societies and administration and what-all, and still have time to be students, let alone design and produce the paper every week? Perhaps if the seething-letter writer would actually write something for the paper instead of whining, it might be more to his liking.

The seething letter always, to my endless amazement, says that printing feminist articles is sexist because it blames men for everything. Well, I blame men for everything, too, and I fail to see how that's sexist, and I'm a man. Who's responsible for virtually all the rapes and other sex crimes, the destruction of the environment, the abundant and increasing violence, the situation of the poor and homeless and defenseless? Men, that's who. Perfectly ordinary men —

the man on the street, if you will — that's who's committing all those rapes, and there are a lot of them. People in control of corporations in their endless gluttony for more product, more money, more power — they're ravaging the earth, and they're almost all men.

There's no point in arguing that it's not men as a class who are responsible but only some people who happen to be men, either: Men in general have so much power that all the really big problems can be traced to them. The writers of the seething letter don't want to blame men for anything, but who else can be held responsible? It's not the women and children, and it certainly isn't the animals — they're getting the short end of the stick, too, with hundreds of species driven to extinction every year. That leaves inanimate objects, plants, and men, and I'll put my money on the last group.

So for god's sake, seething-letter writers; if you don't like what the radical feminists are saying about men, get out there and do something to change what's wrong with the world, because like it or not, they're right. Donate money to a rape crisis centre. Help organize protests against corporations that dump chemicals into the drinking water. Militate for fairer housing. Just don't sit there and complain in your virulent, spleenetic, seething little tirades. Please. Because that really is what nobody wants to read.

Robert Matthews

### Pro-wimmin

#### To the Editors:

As a feminist, I was disgusted by (though not completely unsympathetic to) the attitudes present in the letter of Michael Lee and Paul Babin in the March

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