

# Univ. not listening to students

O.K. enough of this shit. I am pissed off, I mean really P.O.ed. Does the Board of Governors really think students at Dalhousie are stupid or do they just think we are so apathetic that we're just going to take it lying down.

What am I so angry about? Why am I sitting here ranting and raving to the computer in the wee hours of the morning.

Well, it's an issue that has started revolutions and toppled governments. It's also an issue someone better take action on before it's too late. The issue is taxation without representation.

No, I'm not talking about the Goods and Services Tax, although I could make a good argument against that (and maybe I will at some later date).

I am talking about the Financial Strategy Committee of Dalhousie University, and the fact they obviously don't give a flying fu.. about what students want.

To refresh your memory, and to fill in those of you who weren't here last year, the Financial Strategy Committee (FSC) was set up to produce a long term plan to help solve Dalhousie's financial problems. These problems include a huge capital debt (expenses for expansion and construction that have not been paid off) and a large

operating debt (general expenses of the university above and beyond the financial resources of the university).

The FSC took the time to listen to all members of the Dalhousie community. Numerous forums were held, Board of Governors' meetings were opened to the public, and submissions were accepted from special interest groups, including the Dalhousie Student Union.



The FSC took the time to listen to everyone, but heard no-one. I can only conclude all members of the Committee and the Board had cauliflower stuffed in their ears.

After listening to group after group tell them tuition fee increases were a bad idea, the FSC is still planning to tax (i.e. increase) tuition.

As a member of Student Council last year, I was repeatedly told that working with the Committee would, in the long run, benefit stu-

dents far more than protesting and shouting our demands from the steps of the Arts and Administration building. Boy, do I feel like I got suckered.

Council worked within the system and played by the rules. Presentations were made, student leaders spoke to the Committee, and proposals were drawn up. Where did it get us? Right where we bleeping started from!

The FSC released their report. "When, when did they release the report that will affect students at Dalhousie over the next ten years? I didn't hear about any report" you say.

Well let me tell you when the report was released. When the students weren't around to say anything about it, that's when. The Financial Strategy Committee conveniently released their report at the end of June, blatantly circumnavigating any student reaction.

"And what was in the report?" you might ask. I'll give you three guesses.

"Ugh, a student refund for 1989/90 tuition fees?"

Nope!  
"Free Dalhousie T-Shirts to raise school spirit?"

No siree!  
"How 'bout a guarantee of a better education?"

No, not even that!  
Surprise, they proposed a massive tuition fee hike.

That's right. Dalhousie students are expected to pay 110 percent of the Nova Scotia average tuition fee. This means an average increase of 25 percent, per student.

Undergraduate arts and science students have the wonderful opportunity to pay an additional \$300 next year. Professional students win third place in the tuition fee grand prix by coughing up another \$430 to \$545. PHD students get the silver and a chance to pay \$610 more.

Of course the real winners are the med and dentistry students who have the pleasure of trying to find \$820 in additional income this summer so they can go to school.

What a wonderful opportunity we all have to contribute more money to a university that doesn't

seem to know how to manage it.

Well, the fact is the FSC is still trying to carry out the charade. That's right, they're having another forum to hear student concerns. It's not enough that they didn't listen to the more than reasonable student requests for a staggered increase in fees, or a grandparent clause for those already in university. If they didn't listen to the professional students who asked why they should pay more than everybody else (what ever happened to the principle of universality? Oh ya, Ly'in Brian got re-elected) the first time round, are they really going to listen now?

To be honest, I don't think so. But maybe, just maybe, if enough students show up and demonstrate the fact that they're sick and tired of getting the proverbial runaround from the suits and ties and pearl necklaces on the Board, maybe the members (most of whom haven't been in university since 1946) will finally hear something students are saying.

Showing up to the forum in the green room of the Student Union Building on October 10, at 12 noon, even just to heckle, could save you a couple hundred dollars. I think it's worth it, don't you?

Alex Burton

## Do we need women only events?

Women only events, such as the Take Back the Night March, are frequently met with suspicion and anger from women and men. Before making such judgements, one should examine why some women feel the need for women-only events. My explanation is based on two premises: 1) women have traditionally been sexually discriminated against in a male-dominated, male-oriented society, and 2) women only events/groups/spaces are a means to an end, not the end in itself.

Our society is economically, politically, and socially dominated by men. On average women earn \$0.65 for every \$1 earned by men. There are three women in the Nova Scotia Legislature, compared to 49 men. Women's roles have traditionally been limited to that of nurturer: mother, nurse or teacher. These examples illustrate women's limited independence and the need to improve it. Women only gatherings provide that forum.

In a women only space, women's voices are not only heard, but listened to. It is a safe environment where women are independent of their predators and protectors (sometimes one and the same). For women who have been sexually abused or sexually discrimi-

nated against (most of us) the absence of men makes us feel less intimidated and we can work together from our common experiences. Women only events also represent a challenge to society's power structure.

Power, control and access are inter-related. Women only events make women inaccessible to men. Without access, men can not control us and their power is threatened.

So frequently since the March I have been asked "when will women and men come together to work on these issues?" In response I believe a time will come when women and men are ready to work together, but it will be after successfully addressing these issues in women only, or male only groups.

Women separate themselves from men for many reasons: independence, liberty, growth, sisterhood, safety, reason, or health. By working together women gain strength to challenge male norms and values. The choice to take part in women only events should be respected as one of the many ways to seek equality for women and men. I can only hope that we are all working towards the same goal.

Lara Morris

Last Friday I was forced out of the Green Room in the SUB. I had entered the room while on a regular security check (I work as a Night Manager for the Dalhousie Student Union). The room was full of women who had just finished a march billed as "Women Unite: Take Back the Night!" As someone was speaking I stood just inside the door, waiting until they finished so I could take a quick walk around. After a few moments of listening to the speaker I was approached by a woman who told me to leave. I explained I why was there, but still I was told I had to leave. A short time later, a group of women approached, made some ignorant remarks and told me I had to leave. When I refused, they got angry and pushed me out of the room.

Before I tell you how I felt personally, let me just explain how I felt as an employee trying to do a job. I was concerned about what was going on in the room. No alcohol was permitted, and there was a fair chance that someone might, either mistakenly or purposely, have taken some into the room. As it was a Friday night, and there was a band playing in the room, it seemed a possibility. If a Liquor Inspector had stopped by and found any alcohol in an

unlicensed area of the SUB, with children present as well, a formal complaint would have been lodged. Complaints of this nature aren't taken lightly, indeed, it wouldn't take too many before our (the Students of Dalhousie) liquor license could be revoked. This doesn't mean that there would be no liquor allowed on campus. What it means is that the Student Union would no longer administer the license. Instead, you might find the University Administration controlling where and when students are allowed to drink on campus. I don't think students would like this.

And how did I feel personally? Confused and annoyed. I don't think that pushing men around is going to help in the campaign to stop men from pushing women around. It will just make it worse. And excluding men from such gatherings is perverse. If anything, men should be forced to attend. Only then will they hear how it feels to live in fear. Only then will they begin to feel and understand what is happening in our society. Only then, will they begin to act like men.

As for the women who pushed me out of the room, I'm still trying to understand how they must have felt. It's hard to understand people who won't even talk to you.

Joe Morrison