

## Did you know?

To the editor:

I am writing to inform the Dalhousie community of the importance of the Dalhousie Student Outreach Society. The DSOS provides a vital, safe place to talk about sensitive topics regarding sexuality; confidentiality is respected, and everyone of any affectional/sexual orientation is welcome. Our goal is education through discussion, safer sex workshops on campus, presentations with guest speakers, and in-class discussions with professors think they are of use in their courses. I am very enthused about the possibility of doing some peer education on sexual abuse; I think sexual assault and sexual harassment are well-covered territory in workshops on campus, but sexual abuse is still swept under the carpet and it needs to be addressed publicly and without shame or inhibition. As a survivor of sexual abuse, this is of utmost importance to me, and I am pleased to have found the DSOS; I'm sure it will also serve me as a support group, since I am free to discuss my

feelings if I so choose. Anyway, I just wanted to extend an invitation to any individual who thinks this might be a useful group.

Rebecca Blakeney  
Dalhousie student

## Chopped down

To the editor:

Those who claim that Canada's Generation X are nothing but a bunch of layabout 'slackers' are way off mark, since many hundreds of them have been arrested defending the forests of Clayoquot Sound.

Clayoquot, in fact, has all the makings of becoming the moral symbol for an entire generation of Canadians, just as the civil rights movement was for my generation of 'sixties Canadians. Except that in the 1960s, the NDP was on the side of the angels of the civil rights movement; in the 1990s, it is the baby boomers in the NDP who are busy arresting those Generation Xers.

There are many explanations for the failure of the NDP in this election, but Clayoquot is as good as any place to start.

Michael Marshall

Hi!

I am Rita Baker. I am the Queer Contact for the paper. This is a new position and I am responsible for making sure that Lesbian, Bisexual, and Gay issues are included in the paper. So if you have any queer story ideas (news, opinions, arts, science, sports, etc.), please contact me at the Gazette. I am also looking for writers, so if you have any Lesbian, Gay, or Bisexual articles, please submit them. Thanks!!!

## NAFTA: The darker side

During election '93, Canadians were told by the media that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was not an issue. I think if more people knew more about what is actually in this agreement, it would be an issue.

The basic idea of NAFTA is to take away some of the sovereign authority of all levels of government in Canada, the US, and Mexico, and give that authority to large trans-national corporations. These corporations want to do business with a minimum of government interference. This might sound reasonable at first, but consider what is meant by 'government interference'. Environmental, health, and safety standards, all these and more would be open to question under NAFTA as 'disguised barriers to trade'. For a simple example, the Province of Nova Scotia has in place a regulation against inefficient appliances, in order to promote energy conservation in Nova

Scotia. This is a regulation for a social and environmental goal, but it may cost a producer in the US some money to meet the regulation. Under NAFTA, the US company would have the right to complain to an international panel composed of 'trade experts' (translate 'big business interests'), which may ask the Nova Scotia government to pay compensation. This panel would be unelected, unaccountable, and would decide behind closed doors whether or not any government is allowed to pass certain laws. This represents a fundamental destruction of democracy.

There are side deals in place which basically say that each government should enforce its own existing standards, and that no country should use low standards to attract investment. These side deals are over-ridden by the main text of NAFTA, and they rely on the word 'should'. There are no minimum standards set out, and no penalties for contradicting this 'should'. Sup-

porters of NAFTA compare it to the formation of the European Community, but neglect to mention that in the European Community there are minimum standards for wages, working conditions, and environmental protection, as well as a system of transfer payments from richer to poorer countries.

NAFTA embodies the desire of large corporations to override governments, so that they will have the right to sell products wherever they want, without the social responsibility of having to keep jobs in the local community or abide by local standards. If a company doesn't like local standards, under NAFTA it will move to a more 'competitive' region, and take jobs away with it. The 'competitive' region of North America is the *maquiladora* zone in Mexico, where 'comparative advantage' means child labour, torturing of union leaders, wages of \$0.60 per hour,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

## Hey Bikers!

The Nova Scotia Public Interest Research Group's Eco-action cyclist committee is looking at bicycling issues on campus and in the metro region. The committee will be lobbying for more on-campus bicycle parking spaces, bicycle lanes on the MacDonald bridge, and greater use of ecologically sensitive means of transport (i.e. legs, bikes and public transportation).

In the upcoming week, a questionnaire will be distributed to bicycles parked on campus. The aim of the questionnaire is to find out how often people cycle to school, and how they feel about on-campus bike parking facilities. The more response we get, the more power we'll have in convincing the administration to address our suggestions.

Another of our initiatives is to have cycling lanes established on the MacDonald bridge. In this era of acid rain, global warming, tire fires and oil spills it would seem that the wiser alternative is to promote cycling and walking. Letters and phone calls to the transport authorities are encouraged and a rally for bicycle lanes is tentatively planned for November sixth. Please contact the Dalhousie PIRG office, room 310 in the SUB if you are interested (or call 494-6662).

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