

Kudos to Dan

Dear Editor,

I enjoyed reading the February 1 letter by Dan Falk on Science. I think the article is wonderful, but was left with three uneasy feelings: a) science still sounds like it is necessarily terribly complex; b) science comes across as being more "objective" than I suspect it is; c) science seems to be equated with technology.

Anyway — last evening I took a bit of time off to write down responses that Falk's fine article triggered. I share them with you here. You may or may not find them of sufficient interest to use in one form or another.

Yours truly,
John Fentress
Professor in Psychology &
Biology

Ed. note: John Fentress' article was too long to include here, but for a copy of his article "Watch the Children Play," come to the Gazette office and we'll give you a photocopy of it.

Backward breeding

Dear Editor,

In reference to Howard Brown's letter, "Freedom of Expression" (Jan. 18), I find what he said absolutely ridiculous. He stated that the Dalhousie Gazette

is wrong in printing guidelines which warn that submissions to this newspaper must be devoid of all racism, sexism, and homophobia — because, according to Mr. Brown, all people, no matter who they are or what they represent, *must* have their freedom of expression/opinion. That is true — to a certain point. Although he disagrees with these "socially retarded attitudes," what right (rhetorically-speaking) does *he* have to say, "I cannot bring myself to deny them a place next to letters allowed to demean racists, sexists, and homophobes of the world"? *Give me a break.* For years these racists, sexists, and homophobes have had their "freedom of expression." They *still* don't shut up. For years these people have suppressed their victims. For years these victims have been denied their freedom of being. The racists, sexists and homophobes of the world don't deserve to have their letters printed *anywhere*. No place should be a breeding ground for these backward ideas.

Anne-Marie Walsh

Weathering university

To the Editor:

Dalhousie University showed its infinite wisdom Tuesday, January 30, when in the midst of a sea of cancellations throughout the city, not to mention surrounding areas, the university perseveres and remains in operation. Wait a minute, just who is persevering here?

Does the administration of Dalhousie not feel susceptible to the forces of nature? I certainly did the moment I stepped outside into up to 100 km/h winds and ice pellets being hurled down on me. Why was I out in this weather front that radio stations and television stations had been warning all of us against? I was out there because Dalhousie University refuses to accept the advice of others, and continued to hold classes; that is, classes whose professors had managed to struggle in.

Those of us who are not within walking distance; those that must drive, or wait endlessly for public transport, or for a ferry that isn't going to arrive, what of them? They are forced to sacrifice this day of classes because they are forced to remain in the safety of their homes! Even Dalhousie's daycare centre closed for the day. So what happens to those mothers and fathers who depend on the daycare for the freedom to attend classes? They are discriminated against, just as all of us are who are subject to the whims of Mother Nature.

It has become increasingly evident to me that Dalhousie University is more concerned with 'things' than people. Surely if there are experiments, plants or animals that require constant attention, an arrangement could be made prior to these events with the people and departments involved.

I find this 'open or closed' approach unacceptable and negligent. I hope that those other students, employees, and faculty who feel as I do will rise up and make their opinions heard in the hope of effecting a change. It must not be left up to the individ-

ual to decide whether or not to hold classes. How then can another person inform someone as to whether a particular class is going on? They can't. As usual, the right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing.

P.A.W.

Revise policy

Dear Gazette,

I am writing in response to the letter by Tod Scott in the February 8 issue of the Gazette.

Mr. Scott supports the Gazette policy, "to print only letters devoid of racism, sexism and homophobia" on the grounds that removing this policy would, "extend freedom to the expression of hatred."

This policy not only infringes on the freedom of expression, but builds even greater resentment between these individuals and the group, or groups, they despise. The hatred Mr. Scott speaks of eventually does come out, in more inventive ways, such as defacing university property, or in threats to particular minorities.

Ignoring different or even violent views will not change the mind of someone who feels ignored. All students should be able to state their views, one way or the other, in a student newspaper. The responsibility of the editorial staff, as I see it, is to insist the articles are in no way threatening or obscene. However, any opinion, whether we see it as

right or wrong, must be allowed expression.

Mr. Scott, and the editorial staff, would be well advised to note that hatred and threats of violence can take many forms, not just those prohibited by this newspaper. E. A. MacKay has demonstrated this with great eloquence. The method of expression, not the subject, or the view stated, is my concern. I suggest that Gazette staff consider revising their policy.

Christine MacKinnon

PIRG update

To the Editor,

I would like to thank the Gazette for its coverage of our speakers night on February 5, 1990 ("Question Authority" Feb. 8). We would like to take the opportunity to explain further one issue raised in the article. While it is true that part of the funds collected from the student body will of necessity be used for the day to day operations of PIRG, our first concern will be the funding of research projects on areas of interest or concern to our membership. This is the basis of our mandate, and thus is our first priority.

Secondly, we would like to thank all those students (over 1450 in total) who signed our petition. As of the DSU meeting of February 11, 1990, our petition has been accepted, and a referendum will be held during the DSU election period.

Yours sincerely,

Dal-PIRG Organizing Club

o p i n i o n

Canso - floundering economy At risk?

by Alistair Croll

The federal and provincial involvement in the National Sea Products crisis proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that the people who lead our country have forgotten their formative years.

Haven't the legislators raised children before? Isn't it true that if you give one kid a cookie, all the kid's friends will want one too? Isn't it also true that it would be unfair *not* to give the kids a cookie? More importantly — how full is the government's cookie tin?

While it is obvious that the government must take steps to provide for the residents of Canso, their actions are a sure sign that they have acted hastily. If they resurrect National Sea from the depths of fiscal imbalance, we can expect other small, single-industry towns to cry foul. The government policy in this

instance will set a dangerous precedent for future cases of this sort.

Economists will tell you that if National Sea is in trouble, it is because the public doesn't value them enough to buy either their shares or their food. If the fish market is in such trouble that plants such as the one in Canso are under heavier and heavier debt burdens, then it is the fish market on which the government needs to work.

Perhaps more importantly, however, is the fact that Canso put all its eggs in one basket. Such a large part of the town's population worked for National Sea that the plant's closure spelled economic ruin for the entire area. Funding National Sea, and supporting floundering industries (no pun intended!), is a sure way to increase the dilemma with which the government is currently faced.

Far better for the government to devote less of its funds to getting National Sea Products back on their feet for some unspecified time, and use the rest of their money to *create* jobs in other industries within Canso. This way, when there is a slump in the fishing industry, other industries can take up the slack. The government can then remain a regulator — not a creditor — and avoid further complicating matters by pouring tax dollars down a seemingly endless pit.



FIRST AID COURSES OFFERED

St. John Ambulance Emergency First Aid Courses will be held at Dalhousie over the next few months. There is a \$25.00 charge which covers the cost of workbooks and pamphlets. The one-day sessions are scheduled for:

February 21
February 23

March 9
March 23

from 8:30 am. to 4:30 pm. Registration and payment must be made prior to the day of the course and a confirmation will follow.

For more information, or to register, contact the Safety Office at 424-2495.

GRADUATION PORTRAITS

The contract for DAL PHAROS Yearbook Graduation Portraits has been awarded to Robert Calnen, Master Photographer of Halifax.
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