

# Farce

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two minutes before print time, but with your effort. Impress us with your dedication, prove to us you're worthy of our vote by how you uphold your ideas and principles against the other candidates. Those interested in running should seriously consider if they

can expel the kind of energy it takes to equally represent the entire population of Dalhousie, even those that don't vote. People who understand how dysfunctional and cliquey it is now and are determined to make every effort to change it, who aren't doing it for the notoriety, perks, or a resume bonus. Change it so that there can be a continuation of good leadership through effective election procedures and increased voter participation.

I think this can be achieved by increasing the number of forums, cutting candidates' budgets, and devoting more of the cut funds to a greater emphasis on advertising the actual forum dates and locations as well as voting times. We'll see if the newly-elected DSU executive takes notice of the disaffection the majority of the Dalhousie student body has towards the whole thing, and if they plan on doing anything about it. Until then, do what I do — sit and gripe.



March 17 to 21

To take part, pick up a copy of the advising week brochure with your 1997-98 calendar. Brochures are available in the Registrar's Office until March 14.

# Caught in the Net

BY DAVID LAWRENCE

Yesterday I felt a real kinship with Ned Lud, the first of a group of English workers who took to smashing new labour-saving machinery in the textile industry during the early 19th century. The Luddites were protesting the unemployment and reduced wages these machines caused. My brush with Ludditism came more out of frustration during my trip down what I now refer to as the information cul-de-sac.

I'm not what you would call a technophobe. I have a CD player, which serves as a great bookend for my album collection. I have a VCR, but I can't seem to get the timer to work unless I am taping something at midnight and noon. I am not afraid of these gadgets, I just find them a pain in the ass to operate.

Well, recently I have been looking for some information and have been unable to find it in the usual places (i.e. books) and some

friends directed me into "the net". All I have heard about this remarkable tool is positive. Except for the occasional embarrassing kiddie porn incident, the net seems like a gift from the gods — a wonderful tool that will unite the "global village" and rid the world of the godawful curse of ignorance. My experience was a little different.

I am not computer illiterate. But you could say I am computer-impaired. I have taken a few basic computer courses but the language has always seemed as amorphous as Bob Dylans's singing. I have come to see computers as really complex toasters. Make sure the settings are right and press the right buttons and everything comes up fine. However, if the settings are wrong you end up with burnt toast, lots of smoke, and at worse, a fire. Oh, and never stick knives in any of the slots.

Even with my shortcomings, I had no problem opening up my defunct account at SMU. I rarely use the computer lab because I have a personal word processor/typewriter at home that has served me fine. However, as MBANX informs me, "The times they are a-changing." And he that gets hurt will be he who has stalled. So I was eager to start surfing with the big boys and grab my first wave into the information age.

The screen stood blank for fifteen minutes while the server connection was attempted. Half an hour later I was still waiting. I tried to entertain myself by swirling the little hourglass around the screen as fast as I could to see if it would leave tracers. I clicked out the beat of some favourite songs on the mouse buttons. And still I waited.

Apparently there was some sort of grid-lock on the info highway. I felt like the guy you see in the Corvette revving his 350 horsepower engine, burning 10 gallons of gas every minute while he puts along at walking speed in dense traffic down Spring Garden Road.

I gave up and went to a friends house. She assured me her connection was much quicker. We fiddled with her modem for about an hour, and then called her server for assistance. "We value your call, please press 1-20 for any number of confusing encounters with the same mechanized female voice."

After an hour of number pressing on a cordless phone, strangely reminiscent of the old computer game "MERLIN", I gave up. I considered reviving the Luddite movement and hurling the computer out the window, or levelling it with a baseball bat. But reason triumphed. I never blame my toaster when it burns my toast. However, my search for information had been the high tech equivalent of standing for six hours in front of the library trying to get the door open. I drove home in a disillusioned funk, pondering my netscapade, wondering if "getting on-line" is just a clever new information age synonym for getting in line.

## Dalhousie Student Union Strategic Plan Preamble

Over the past several months, the Dalhousie Student Union has been working with a number of stakeholders to outline its strategic plan for the next five years. Below is an outline of that plan setting out the Mission, Vision, Core Values, Goal Areas and Objectives set forth by the Student Union.

All students are encouraged to provide feedback to the Student Union with respect to the content of the draft plan. An open forum, facilitated by the consultant from Ernst & Young, to discuss the contents of the plan will be held at noon, on Tuesday, March 18<sup>th</sup> in the Green Room. All students are invited to participate. Written comments can be submitted until 4 p.m., Friday, March 21<sup>st</sup> either to the Student Union Office on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Student Union Building or by E-Mail to [amy.newhook@dal.ca](mailto:amy.newhook@dal.ca). A full copy of the draft strategic plan is available from the Student Union office.

## Dalhousie Student Union Strategic Plan Outline 1997 - 2002

In pursuing our Vision and help guide future decisions we will be mindful of the following principles:

Our primary areas of focus over the next five years will be the following:

We will accomplish the following by the year 2002:

VISION	MISSION	CORE VALUES	GOAL AREAS	OBJECTIVES
<p>Our vision is to be innovative and proactive leaders and advocates. We will strive to address and meet the needs of the student body, in an informed and professional manner.</p> <p>We will promote the involvement of students in university activities and seek put their opinion on key issues and decisions.</p>	<p>As students serving students, our mission is to serve, support and represent the diverse interests of Dalhousie University students by proactively being their official voice, and by providing products and services which complement and enhance their University experience, in a financially, socially and environmentally responsible manner.</p>	<p><b>Student centered/student involvement</b> - we put the interests of students first and encourage their participation in all aspects of university life.</p> <p><b>Value diversity</b> - we value the ever-changing needs and diversity of the student body.</p> <p><b>Open/Responsive</b> - we will maintain an accessible and approachable environment in representing the interest of students in a timely manner.</p> <p><b>Responsible &amp; accountable</b> - we are financially, socially and environmentally responsible to all our stakeholders and the community at large.</p> <p><b>Trust/Respect/Teamwork with Students</b> - we are here to serve and act as partners with our stakeholders.</p>	<p><b>Achieve financial stability through an increase of \$250,000 in the current surplus by April 30, 2002</b></p> <p><b>Increase the credibility of the Dalhousie Student Union among all stakeholders</b></p> <p><b>Maintain a high level of Governance over the staff, executive and council including roles and responsibilities</b></p> <p><b>Increase student advocacy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase services based on student needs and increase revenue from those services.</li> <li>- Increase the efficiency of service provision including proper management of resources.</li> <li>- Evaluate building utilization and optimization.</li> <li>- Increase public awareness of functions and issues of the Dalhousie Student Union, especially through the media.</li> <li>- Seek to increase student involvement in campus life and student union activities.</li> <li>- Develop a more positive rapport with Dalhousie University and other Student Unions.</li> <li>- Continuous improvement and review of this strategic plan.</li> <li>- Review roles and responsibilities of Executives and full-time staff, defining their job descriptions.</li> <li>- Developing annual performance evaluations and measures for assessing performance of full-time staff.</li> <li>- Investigate options to maintain continuity on the Executive.</li> <li>- Review roles and responsibilities of Committees to determine relevance and usefulness.</li> <li>- Review roles and responsibilities of part-time staff, and establish a performance evaluation process.</li> <li>- Improve the communication process between Dalhousie Student Union and Students.</li> <li>- Continuously address the issues of:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- accessibility/affordability of University degree</li> <li>- employability of students</li> <li>- student jobs on campus</li> </ul> </li> </ul>