

Raising awareness for the arts

by Jen Horsey

Despite the Board of Governors' approval of the Budget Advisory Committee's report last week, students in the threatened programs are still fighting.

A large sign bearing the 'heARTless' logo has been posted on the Dalhousie Arts Centre, and petitions are still circulating, both around the student body and in various locations throughout Halifax. Brian Bowser, a theatre studies alumnus, is optimistic about the level of awareness outside of the school. There are "posters out there, in the coffee shops — everywhere. People have stopped and looked. They know what's going on and hopefully they'll be able to help us when the time comes."

Julie Martin, a history student who is working for the Indigena Exhibition at the Art Gallery, finds the idea of the cuts "absolutely horrifying" and says that "it's scary to think that bigger institutions like Dal see no need for art."

Students are concerned about the stability of their programs, and want

people to understand the importance of these courses. "You couldn't come off the street and do this. You need specialized training," says Shayne Cunningham, a mature student in the technical theatre program. He is also concerned about the promises that the administration has made to the students, one of which states that, should the cuts be made, anyone presently enrolled in a threatened program will be able to finish that program even though no new students will be admitted.

In the technical program, the first-year students make up much of the stage crew, while in costume studies, the first-year students are the cutters and the second-year students are the sewers. These programs need the first-year students. Says Cunningham, "All theatre students work a lot of hours. There is no point in [cutting admissions]. It has to be all or nothing."

Torin Buzcek, a second-year technical theatre student, calls the decision to cut these programs "ignorant". He believes that "instead of cutting it, you

should make it better," and is certain that, with some thought, this could be done successfully.

It is not only the students in the threatened programs who are concerned. "I came because of the prestige... and the diversity of people," says one science student. He is fearful that the cutting of programs will diminish the school's national reputation.

Sue Cheng, a high school student in Toronto who has been considering applying to Dalhousie's science program, said, "I'm not sure I'd want to go to a school that was cutting out its arts."

Students have been slightly reassured by a notice from the Senate which has been circulated throughout the threatened departments reminding them that it is the Senate who will have the final say in any department cuts. But the approval of the BAC report by the Board of Governors has kept students waiting anxiously for a final decision. "It's not a confirmation that they're going to be cut," says Buzcek, "but it's one step closer."

Stats hard to come by

Gay students attacked

by Rita Baker

In the last few weeks there have been several assaults on gay men on the Dalhousie campus as well as death threats and a physical bashing of a man in the south end. "You won't find any statistics on that," said a representative of the Halifax Police Department when asked about the numbers of gay bashings in Halifax. "It's very unreported."

Following meetings of the campus group Bisexual, Gay and Lesbian Association of Dalhousie (BGLAD) there have been assaults on several members. "Homophobia is just fucking rampant in Halifax," says Josef Tratnik, a member of BGLAD. Tratnik and his partner recently relocated to Halifax from Ontario to attend Dalhousie University. In that time they have been harassed numerous times. "It has happened a lot since I came to Hali-

fax," says Tratnik, comparing the incidence of assaults in this city to that in Toronto.

One assault occurred after a BGLAD meeting. Tratnik and his partner were leaving the Grad House, a pub and coffee shop on campus. They were verbally assaulted by a man yelling, "Stick it up his ass, faggot!"

Verbal assault is nothing new for BGLAD members following their meetings. One member walking on South Street heard people yelling "faggot" and making hand gestures at him from what seemed to be a fraternity party. He realized that they seemed to be following him. He went into a convenience store until he felt safe enough

to continue his walk home.

Another member of BGLAD exited the Student Union Building alone. On his way to the Grad House he heard a man taunting, "Hey, fag!"

BGLAD is trying to find a way to make it safer for members to get home following meetings. For example, it has discussed educating Dalhousie Security of the problem of gay bashing and assault, and advised members to use Tiger Patrol, a walk home service on campus.

The Bisexual, Gay, and Lesbian Association of Dalhousie hold meetings every Thursday at 7 pm in the SUB.



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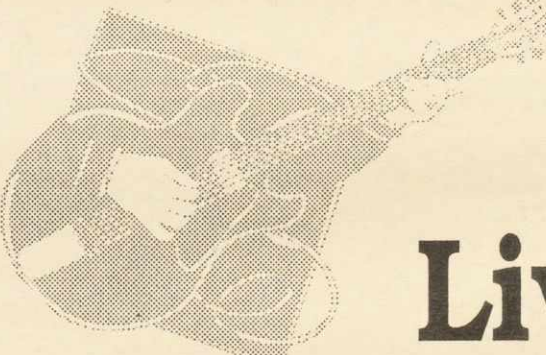
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