

PC, PCers and Peace

Last weekend, I was treated to a variety show complete with singing, dancing, costumes, scenery and comedic plots. Euphoria, the Dalhousie Medical School's annual charity show was an impressive production showing off lots of talent and contributing to a good cause. But I didn't wholly enjoy it.

The copious tidbits of stereotyping of the genders and mocking of homosexuality created an insidious veneer which I could not ignore. It disturbed me there were not enough people involved in the performance who were conscious enough of the issues of sexism and homophobia to identify the questionable material and insist it be changed.

After the show, I turned to a friend, "Next year, someone should put on a politically correct show." She was glad she had not been the only one who had felt uneasy about some of the show's material. I did not share my feelings with many others, however, aware of the risk of being cast off as an over-sensitive prude.

At a recent forum on political correctness, a member of the audience suggested a definition of the term at hand. "Political correctness is censorship of the Right by the Left." A panelist noted this definition suggested it was not of concern when the Left was attacked by the Right. Indeed, backlash against efforts towards progressive thinking is so prevalent, groups often capitalise on it. For instance, the Progressive Conservative Youth of Canada launch a Anti-Political Correctness Campaign. "By attacking Political Correctness on campus we can provide an entrance into the campus intellectual debate," says a paper outlining the group's strategy. "The potential to make allies from a broad range of groups is substantial." They go on to describe a plan for a student government takeover, "Success at taking student government will allow us to divert the student government resources away from the political causes of the student left and towards the accomplishment of the goals of the PCYF and our party in Canada."

In keeping with this scary stuff, the Young Conservatives at UBC, started a petition to shut down the student newspaper at the University of British Columbia, claiming the "left-wing bias" of the *Ubysses* does not represent the students. The *Ubysses* is an "outlet of left-wing thought, radical feminism, homosexual militancy, eco-warrioring, and any other anti-establishment interest," said a PC Youth representative.

After reading of this I no longer worry about labels. Call me over-sensitive. Dub me a prude. Insist I am a raging whatever-ist. Clearly, opponents of political correctness feel they stand to lose a lot of power in a world where everyone is equal. It is no wonder they portray our small steps towards peace as weapons on their perpetual imaginary battlegrounds.

Miriam Korn

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CONTRIBUTORS

MIKE GRAHAM
MIKE GUSHUE
DANIEL SPENCER
ROB CURRIE
RYAN STANLEY
PAT GINN
ADAM NEWMAN
JASON SILVER
JAMISON CHURCH
HAROLD MACPHEE

WOMEN'S LIASONS

JUDY REID
MARY JANE HAMILTON

TECHNICAL ADVISOR

SHANNON MACAULAY

DISTRIBUTION MANAGER

LESLIE FURLONG

PRODUCTION MANAGER

MIKE ZELLE

EDITORS

JENNIFER BECK
MIRIAM KORN

NEWS EDITORS

CHANTAL SAXE
MARIE MACPHERSON

ARTS EDITORS

GEOFF INESON
BRUCE GILCHRIST

SPORTS EDITOR

JOHN DANCY

KALENDAR EDITOR

STEVE MILLS

TYPESETTER

TAMMY ROGERS

AD/BUSINESS MANAGER

CONNIE CLARKE
494-6532 PHONE
494-1280 FAX

STUDENT UNION BUILDING, DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
6136 UNIVERSITY AVE., HALIFAX, N.S., B3H 4J2

From our corner of the world...

I'm sitting in the Gazette office of the Dal SUB and thinking how the January Blues are affecting the staff here. Apart from an increasing tuition rates and an ever-grim global scene, this particular time of year plays tricks on the nerves. People aren't meeting deadlines; various editors are missing meetings; Shannon, the technical advisor, keeps busy, and happily I might add, by reminding people how awful life is in general. What Shannon dives headfirst into, is what some of the staff here are ailing from: namely a 'wicked gravity'.

Our typesetter, Tammy-the, claims she doesn't have the blues. Which is really great because nothing would get done around here if she were under the weather. Mike, another staff person, just goes with them. Mike's advice is bubble-bath, beer, a fat joint, and an old movie. However, the best advice I've heard thus far came from Connie, who says "Don't sleep-in, even if you might want to".

Some people write poetry to ease the burden of these 'gravity months'. This is an excellent way to reclaim

Don't worry, be sappy

a bit of free space in the old 'hard drive'. There is a certain angst or inner-conflict in people, that, if left unarticulated, remains inside. And what good can possibly come from keeping angst inside. Dostoyevsky wrote how the act of writing was a purgation for the soul. In effect writing exercised the soul free of evil spirits.

There is one staff member here in particular who has had it rather rough these past few weeks. This person will remain nameless but this article is written with that person in mind. Whomever this person may be, I do deeply side with and I hope this particular person reads this and finds something in it of value.

I was sitting with a dear old friend last night and while over a drink we discussed some of the more sure-fire, less time consuming ways in which to find a flip-side to the 'wicked gravity'. The general agreement between Tiffany and myself was that we both have our memories of more pleasant times to keep us from, well, getting down. Personally, it may be anything from a near perfect game of golf, to a sublime line of poetry. For

Tiffany, the happy qualifier would be a song or a camping trip, or a sunset perhaps. We continued to sit and talk and agree until she had to go.

A definite role model for the office here at the Gazette, is a fellow named Harold, who has got such the genuine passion for Jazz that he ain't never coming down. Even Harold's voice is a cool, mellifluous tone. Bruce thinks that if James Baldwin were alive he would speak just like Harold. A certain surety I think he means. Harold and I exchange Jazz tapes and I hope to emulate his attitude.

When the snow is falling as quickly as it is tonight, it calms us all down. I like that, that whole blanketed-softness piece of time that a winter storm is. Amidst the falling snow, we can all talk together, and be sure to our selves, and calm in our relations. This all helps us to stick together, like the flakes, one atop another in a light-weight snowbank. Our individuality assured, and our peace aligned. This is what is cool to me.

-Geoffrey Ineson-



LETTERS

The Dalhousie Gazette welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should not exceed 300 words in length and should be typed and double-spaced. The deadline for letters is Monday noon before publication. Letters may be submitted on Mac or IBM-compatible 3.5" disk.

Hey you...

To the editors:

Do these "anti-tuition hike" people think Black students are stupid? Perhaps they don't, but I see a heinous flaw with the way university student "leaders" handle delicate situations on campus, in particular tuition hikes.

This year, like the last few years, many different student leaders, all of whom happened to be White, have approached myself as well as other Black students seeking their united support behind tuition increases. This, under any other circumstances would seem logical, seeing how increases in fees affects all students, regardless of colour. And I'd applaud them for trying to unite students on common issues, however, these same people who want you to help them, never seem to have time to help us.

Why is it that when Black students have concerns they are never properly addressed? Why is it that when the Dalhousie Art Gallery displayed art that was offensive to the majority of Black students, the DSU, the Gazette, Arts Society, etc., etc., didn't come and support those students? Why is it that when the Black United Students wanted to have an opinion column in the Gazette, there was such a "fuss"

over editorial control? Why is it when Black students attend class only to here their professors degrade their intelligence, those same liberal student "leaders" aren't there to support them?

I'll tell you why. The DSU, just like president Bill Clinton, who's trying to show Black America that he loves them, only seeks the support of Black people when it's for their gain. If they (DSU) can get a Black student in front of a camera saying that he/she is in support of the anti-tuition increase, then that will add more validity and credibility to their efforts. "Look ma, if tuition goes up them poor coloured students won't be as smart as me!" This is the message these student groups want the media and the Board of Governors to see. Well they won't get that from me or any other Black student who can see through their liberal tokenism.

If they want the support of Black students, then they must refrain from using the master-slave mentality they have and treat us as equals. To quote from a biblical text, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Jasen Gannon, Black Man

Read this!

To the editor:

University students are literate.

Most are young people of reasonable income and social mobility- the leaders of tomorrow. If that's true, I'm scared.

A study once found that more students read their campus newspaper than the local daily. Our "future leaders" are insulated from a larger reality.

Yet even within their microcosm, students are remarkably apathetic. Response to the Gazette has been frighteningly small. On a typical week the letters column consists of apologies, corrections, and a lengthy tirade from the International Socialists Club.

Is this representative of the student population? Are we all just clamouring to read a list of addenda or waiting for the next revolution?

I came to university to be exposed to new ideas. I have exposed mine here in print for all to see, but other people seem to think it indecent to do so. A student newspaper should be a forum for discussion, a vehicle for intelligent conversation. If you are a student, and have something to say, why not write to the Gazette? I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

Will Printit

The Dalhousie Gazette is Canada's oldest college newspaper. Published weekly through the Dalhousie Student Union, which also comprises its membership, the Gazette has a circulation of 10,000. • As a founding member of Canadian University Press, the Gazette adheres to the CUP Statement of Principles and reserves the right to refuse any material submitted of a racist, sexist, homophobic or libelous nature. Deadline for commentary, letters to the editor, and announcements is noon on Monday before publication (Thursday of each week). Submissions may be left at the SUB Enquiry Desk c/o the Gazette. • Commentary should not exceed 500 words. Letters should not exceed 300 words. No unsigned material will be accepted, but anonymity may be granted upon request. • Advertising copy deadline is noon Monday before publication. • The Gazette offices are located on the third floor of the SUB. Come up and have a coffee and tell us what's going on. • The views expressed in the Gazette are not necessarily those of the Students' Union, the editors or the collective staff.