

# Atlantic's first veterinary college lost in five year controversy

by Elliott Richman

The creation of the Atlantic's first veterinary college has been prevented for years by inter-provincial disagreement over its location. The Nova Scotia government advocates Truro as the college site, as opposed to Charlottetown, P.E.I.

Charlottetown was recommended in 1975 by the Howe Report, commissioned by the Maritime Higher Education Commission.

Currently the federal government is withholding (but is willing to pay) its 50% share of the capital costs of building the college, pending agreement on one site for the school.

Newfoundland is not involved in the financial aspects of the proposed veterinary college. Its economy does not have as great a need for vets as the other three provinces. A possible collaboration between Newfoundland's medical school and P.E.I.-based vet college means an influx of money into Newfoundland from the students which in turn will make that province very happy.

Veterinary medicine is the only profession not taught in the Maritimes. It is exactly for that reason that P.E.I. Premier MacLean feels a "regional veterinary college should be located in P.E.I." He goes on to say, "Veterinary Medicine is not only reasonable, but probably the only opportunity for (P.E.I.) to make a contribution and benefit from professional post-secondary offerings in the Atlantic Region."

The 1975 Howell Report recommends Charlottetown, P.E.I. as the site for the veterinary college. However, Nova Scotia has made some

very good points in proposing Truro as the more suitable site for the proposed school when Dr. H.F. McRae, of Nova Scotia Agricultural College pointed out some flaws in that report. Two notable examples are:

"The vice-president of nearby Dalhousie University confirmed support of an affiliation with a veterinary college in Truro. (The report) places more emphasis on a possible co-operation between UPEI and Memorial University, St. John's, Newfoundland, two island universities, separated by over 600 miles."

"In discussing accessibility to other parts of the region, the report chooses to make compromises based on the distance from campus to the nearest airport. It rates Truro 'good' and Charlottetown 'excellent' on this basis. There is no mention of the major differences in frequency of air service or the quality of air, road and rail transportation. Truro is geographically central to the mainstream of animal production and ground transportation systems in the Maritime provinces."

Nova Scotia's failure to get the other Maritime provinces to support its bid to have the proposed veterinary school located in Truro has prompted Guy Brown (Liberal MLA for Cumberland Centre) to insist that Premier Buchanan replace Agriculture Minister Bacon with "someone who can get along with his fellow agriculture ministers in the Maritime provinces."

Tufts University in New England has set up a veterinary college sponsored and maintained by several Eastern states. The university has offered to accept each Maritimer into its vet school for \$15,000 (U.S.A.) per year. The offer has not been used. The premier of P.E.I. is not aware of such an offer and "feels that \$6,000 to \$7,000 annual tuition charged out of State students would be a major deterrent to most Atlantic Canadians," but it would come out cheaper for the taxpayer if the provinces pay for the tuition as shown by \$15,000 (U.S.A.) per student per year at Tuft's as compared to at least \$100,000 (Canada) per student per year at the proposed veterinary school.

On the other hand, Premier Buchanan of Nova Scotia is aware of such an offer and justifies not taking advantage of this offer with, "...there is a veterinary college at Guelph, Ontario which has been able to accommodate our students." However, Guelph University has slowly decreased the number of Maritimers accepted into its veterinary school.

At the present time, it looks as if there will never be a Maritime-based college as the Atlantic provinces have been bickering since 1975 over the location of the proposed veterinary college.

## The new rape legislation

by Margaret Little

If Justice Minister Jean Chretien's bill is passed by the House of Commons, "rape" will be erased from the Criminal Code, "but it won't do away with rapists," argue several local rape experts.

Chretien hopes to replace the word "rape" with "sexual assault" (maximum sentence of 10 years; and "aggravated sexual assault" (maximum life sentence).

The purpose of Chretien's bill introduced in the House two weeks ago is:

- to take away the taboos and myths associated with rape;
- to give more protection to the victim;
- to assure the accused of a fair trial.

The proposed legislation is a "useful and important reform but it won't deal with the real social problem," argues Bruce Archibald, Dalhousie law professor.

The government is "aiming at the kneecap and not at the jugular" to alleviate the social problem. "If you shoot the animal in the kneecap, it may slow him down but it won't kill him," said Felix Cacchione, a Nova Scotia legal aid lawyer who specializes in rape cases.

### ASSAULT

By considering rape as an assault, judges and juries will focus on the violent rather than the sexual aspects of the crime, said Cacchione. Gone will be the lengthy discussions of penetration in the courtroom. Also gone will be the feelings of shame and guilt which the Victorian standards placed on rape victims, or so Chretien reasons.

Instead, judges and juries will focus on the physical abuses the victim suffered.

### VICTIM'S HISTORY

Since the actual sexual act will be less important, the right to cross-examine the victim's own sexual history will also become a minor factor in court cases.

Although the Criminal Code was altered to outlaw a complete examination of a rape victim's history on April 26, 1976, the amendment is not enforced, said Ronald Grantham, an inspector in

Halifax police force's criminal division.

"It is fair game for any lawyer to bring up the victim's past history. It's like saying in order to prove a rape, you must be a virgin," said Grantham.

Lorrene Clark, one of Canada's experts on rape and a part-time professor at Dalhousie Law School agreed with Grantham. "It is being raped that is punished, and it is being raped that is the crime," wrote Clark in her book, **Rape: the price of coercive sexuality.**

But legal experts and lawyers like Archibald and Cacchione are confident that Chretien's proposals will give the 1976 amendment new strength against detailed questions regarding the victim's past in the courtroom.

### CONSENT

Several previous rape cases were fought on the basis that the man "honestly believed" he had consent from the woman to have sexual intercourse.

The definition of consent was vague and the victim's feelings were sometimes doubted by the court.

"The consent question has been outrageous. The idea of doubting the victim's feelings protects the accused," said Trisha Miller, a social worker and active Metro feminist.

In any other case where physical pressure is used, there is no discussion in court of whether the victim consented. Why should it be different for rape cases? asks Miller and Clark.

Chretien's proposed legislation hopes to clarify the muddy consent issue.

### MARITAL RAPE

Another reform in the Chretien package is the clause which would allow wives to charge their husbands with rape—something totally new to Canadian law.

Gordon Gale, assistant director of the provincial justice department's criminal division, believes the wife-husband charges will "be troublesome. How are you going to be able to tell whether the case is spite or real?" he asked.

Although Miller and Cacchione think the legislation may cause some problems, they believe it is an important



step forward. "Some of the most violent cases of rape are within the confines of marriage," said Cacchione.

These reforms will ensure a fairer trial for both victim and accused, argues Chretien.

But local people who deal frequently with rape cases argue that following the trial, there is little protection for either the rapist or the raped.

For the rapist, rehabilitation centres are needed, argue the local rape experts.

"Putting someone in prison for a maximum of 10 years translated into two years and nine months if he gets off for good behavior) I guarantee the man will be more violent to the next victim," said Grantham, citing several local cases.

But a rehabilitation centre would not allow the person back out on the street until he proved that he was able to cope with his problem, explained Grantham.

"The (present) facilities aren't there to help them (the rapists). Let's face it, no one gets rehabilitated by going to a penitentiary. But little can be done if society does not want to give money for rehabilitation centres," said Cacchione.

Similarly, society has not contributed generously to counseling centres for rape victims, said Miller. Metro's Rape Relief Centre was forced to close six years ago because it had neither the funds nor the manpower, said Miller.

This centre was one of two such organizations in the Atlantic region where women could go for advice and expert counseling, said Miller.

Since the Sexual Assault Education Collective which replaced Rape Relief folded in September, 1980, there has been no rape centre for Nova Scotia women.

"There just isn't any rape specialists at the Metro hospitals," said Miller.

Although Margaret Love, of the Infirmary's Emergency Division, said the staff was quite capable of giving the necessary tests to rape victims, she confirmed that the hospital has no rape specialist.

Social reforms are as badly needed as legal reforms, believes Miller. And it is "a very limited view to think that changing the laws (regarding rape) will erase violence against women."

## Press

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King's book *The Wendy King story* allegedly referred to judge Davey Fulton. Fulton has brought action against King and her publisher. Bookstores stopped selling the book after they received letters from Fulton's lawyer, but the publisher has continued to sell the book from a Davie Street storefront.

Adams has obtained the publishing rights for *S: Portrait of a Spy*. That cost him \$10,000, in addition to the \$30,000 settlement with Bennett, and his own legal costs.

The Bennett vs. Adams case might seem to be a typical libel case, until one considers that it concerns a work of fiction. A disclaimer at the beginning reads "all characters fictional and any resemblance to persons living or dead is purely coincidental." But that disclaimer carries no weight under Canadian law.