

Liberation not degradation

To the editors,

I was shocked at *The Gazette's* recent review of the Medical School's variety show, *Euphoria*. Rarely have I seen a performance so misrepresented and misunderstood by its reviewers.

They said it was racist, sexist, vulgar. It degraded other professional schools, notably nursing. It was a sad testament to the talents of the Dalhousie Medical School.

First of all, all professional schools poke fun at one another. Medicine is no exception, and for another professional school to *take* exception to jokes made in fun, and with no malice intended, is self-important in the extreme. No one seriously believes the barbs are representative of prevailing attitudes among doctors in hospitals.

The Med II skit is about *liberation*, not *degradation*. In fact, *Euphoria*, ridiculed sexism on various occasions. The two male emcees who tried to crash the show were parodying the male chauvinist stereotype. Other elements of supposed chauvinism in the skits were tongue-in-cheek products of the three female directors. I also did not remember any truly racist jokes, or any reference to rape in the Med II skit.

Absolutely no mention was made in the review of some very competent choreography, imaginative costumes, and a variety of enjoyable little musical

interludes and stand-up comedy routines.

No *Euphoria* goer would deny that the show has definite elements of vulgarity. But to make this the final impression, the final conclusion, is gross misrepresentation to the public and injustice to the players.

Nina Waite
Dalhousie Alumna '81

DFA held Dal campus hostage

To the editors,

Perhaps the most revolting and disheartening aspect of the recent attempt by the DFA to hold the student body hostage were the endless claims from all sides that their only real interest was the betterment of Dalhousie. Such statements, whose equivocal nature is all too clear in light of the actions taken by the parties involved, suggest that there are very few people who can be proud of their efforts on behalf of this university over the past few months.

Most distressing were the deeds of many faculty members, who seemingly perceive no connection between certain actions and their logical consequences: it is easy to vote for a strike in October, but when it comes to living up to that threat suddenly all sorts of principles and moral issues arise to render such extraordinary actions unjust. How fortunate we are to be taught by men and women of

such principle.

Just as bad was the executive of the student union, whose definition of the word "neutral" I defy anyone to find in a respectable dictionary. They could see nothing more in this terrible trial than merely a chance for self-promotion through nightly appearances on the television.

From the administration we are told that the period of building at Dalhousie—for which we are all still paying— "... was the age of growth and [that] Henry Hicks provided the leadership and vision necessary for the period." A sad reminder that this administration refuses to recognize its excesses in an "affluent" time when government paid the bills.

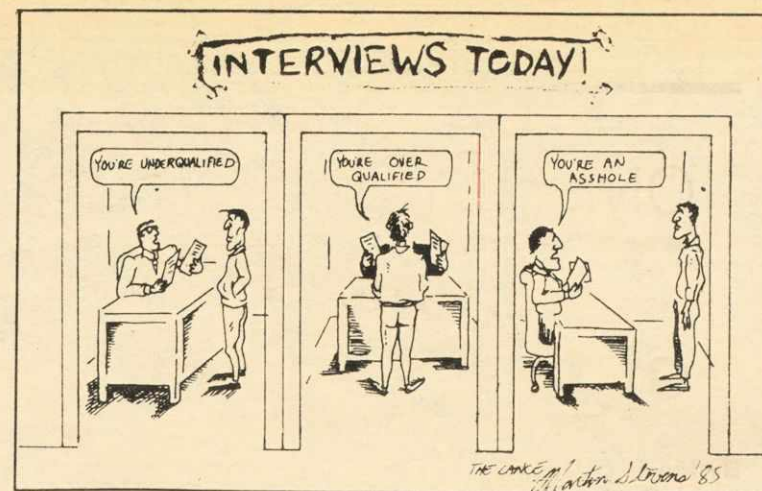
Unfortunately in these bleak winter days such descriptions of this university as the "flagship university of Atlantic Canada" have a notably hollow ring to them. The whole idea of a university, an idea which is contained in the very word 'university', has been replaced by the cult of self-interest. Our fellow citizens, upon whom it falls to pay for our existence, will not allow such a change to pass unnoticed.

Sincerely yours,
Bruce Gordon

Friendly Giant idealism

To the editors,

After reading your attack on *Euphoria '85* I can sympathize with your distorted viewpoint since your staff is probably still distraught over the recent cancel-



lation of "The Friendly Giant". I know that this wholesome show reflected all your hopes while growing up that life would be as innocent as portrayed daily by F.G., Rusty and Jerome. But for those of us who went through adolescence and eventually maturity, we experienced the varied emotions of peer pressure, sexual relations, and academics in gaining our self-identity.

It is not the fault of the medical students if some viewers are offended by these novel concepts not included in the Friendly Giant format.

Even though the medical students don't have time to write Broadway screenplays, they are able to pull together and produce an enjoyable three hour show containing their comedy, singing, and dancing talents. Much of the content of *Euphoria* is in reference to "in jokes" familiar only to medical faculty and students, and makes use of many

plays on words to produce puns and double-meanings for comic effect. One can only hope that naive people, intent on "identifying" any resemblance of sexual stereotyping and abuse, finally mature and lose their eagerness to criticize such events without an insight into what the humour really stands for.

In closing, I would like to point out that your petty and childish attitudes resulted in the printed accusation that four respected Dalhousie doctors "decided the Med II skit 'Comelot'—rape scene and degradation of career women was the best of the evening". This constitutes criminal libel and clearly deserves a written apology in the *Gazette*. You must respect the laws and humour of others who have grown out of the idealism of the Friendly Giant many years ago.

Kim Chalmers
2nd year Biology

NOT ENOUGH MONEY

If universities can't get the money they need from government, they'll turn to an increase in tuition fees . . .

Continued from page 13

their fields too early. "There's been some expression from employers that they'd prefer students with an arts and science background and then train them themselves." As well, he says some of the professional programmes have fixed enrolments.

In a statement released two weeks following the MPHEC's announcement of its funding recommendation the Nova Scotia Confederation of University Faculty Associations (NSCUFA) said the commission failed to recognize the impact these additional 8600 students are having on the post-secondary education system.

The NSCUFA says the consequences of this move can only mean continued crowding in classrooms preventing individuality from giving the kind of individual attention to students essential for learning.

And although students can expect fewer classes offered with more people in them, they can also expect to be paying more for them.

If universities can't get the money they need from government, they'll inevitably turn to an increase in tuition fees.

Sterling says the commission's report is based on an overall increase in revenues of 4.5 per cent. This means they have counted on tuition fees also being increased by at least 4.5 per cent. The MPHEC's report says the commission is committed to

maintaining an accessible, quality post-secondary education system.

"Without proper funding the students' education suffers," says Caroline Zayid, the VP external of the Dalhousie Student Union. "We pay the highest tuition fees of all (students in Nova Scotia) and don't necessarily get the best education."

At Dalhousie, though, the student union plans to hold a referendum that would put a ceiling on any tuition fee increase in exchange for a student contribution to the university's capital fund drive. This may help students at Dalhousie but Gigeroff says he's more worried about the tuition fee increase students at other universities will face this fall.

Larry Andrea, St. F. X. Student union president, says he's certain tuition fees will go up significantly and it's just a question of how much. He says he's opposed to any increase in fees but that when all other routes are exhausted administrations are forced to turn to tuition fees.

The NSCUFA says another increase in fees will be yet another barrier to accessibility and can only hinder the process of N.S. universities catching up to the rest of the country.

Right now, though, the universities must simply wait to see what the Council of Maritime Premiers decides to do with the MPHEC's recommendation. The prospects do not look good. For the past number of years the Nova Scotia government has

reduced the increase substantially from what the MPHEC recommends. Last year the MPHEC advised the government to increase grants by 7.5 per cent; the government gave the universities a four per cent increase—just over half what the MPHEC had said was necessary to maintain standards of education in the province.

Om Kamra, president of the NSCUFA, says the MPHEC is basing its recommendations on its knowledge of the government's past record.

"They simply tailored their recommendation to suit political pressures," said Kamra. "Their report embodies a defeatist attitude to government restraint rhetoric and should be retracted and replaced with recommendations based on the real needs of educational institutions and students."

These kind of accusations are leading to questions about the credibility and future of the MPHEC.

"We need an independent advisory board," says Gigeroff. "But the MPHEC is continuing to lose whatever credibility it had." He says he's not sure if the MPHEC is fulfilling its purpose as an advisory body any longer.

He touches a common cord among those involved in the running of Nova Scotia's universities. Once trusted by the universities and ignored by the governments, the MPHEC with this year's recommendations seems to have reversed that process.