

## Students say Spanish text is sexist

By ELIZABETH DONOVAN

A widely used textbook authored by Spanish professor Sonia Jones is meeting with charges of sexism from some students and faculty members at Dalhousie.

The book, *Spanish One*, besides being required reading for all Spanish majors at Dalhousie, is used at more than a hundred other campuses in the United States and Canada.

Rosanne Biocchi, a graduate student at the Maritime School of Social Work, was angered when she saw her friend's copy of the book.

"I found the text fairly upsetting. When you are learning a language you do things by rote and repetition as a method of teaching," says Biocchi. "I'm worried that the negative images of women as portrayed in the text will be reinforced by repetition."

Biocchi says that people not only pick up the language but the values behind the language. She says one blatant example is the first dialogue from the text.

Javier: *The ideal woman? And what's the ideal woman like?*

Frank: *Well, she's good and generous soul. She's intelligent and sincere.*

Javier: *No. That woman isn't ideal. She's hypocritical and bad.*

Frank: *But why?*

Javier: *Because women aren't sincere. They're opportunists. And they're not generous. They're ego-centric like cats.*

Dr. Donald T. Betts, Dean of Arts and Sciences, decided after looking at the text that "one might construe it as being sexist."

Betts says some students objected to the sexist tone of the dialogues and he decided to open a file.

"I wasn't particularly enthralled about the exercises," he says.

Danielle is one Dalhousie student who did not continue her Spanish courses at Dalhousie because of the sexist nature of the textbook.

"Last September when I took the course we used the text for role playing, in our lab work and in our exercises. I found it was degrading to both men and women," she says.

Jones, who is also the chairperson of Dalhousie's Spanish department, says people who have made the complaints have taken the characters in the book too seriously.

"This character Javier, who is always saying annoying things, is to stimulate discussion in the classroom. I created the character to be annoying on purpose," says Jones. "I wanted to create drama in the classroom. In order to create drama you must have an antagonist and a protagonist. Javier is the antagonist."

"It is clearly obvious that he is a louse, all the characters in the book

dislike him. I think the complaints are unrealistic and exaggerated."

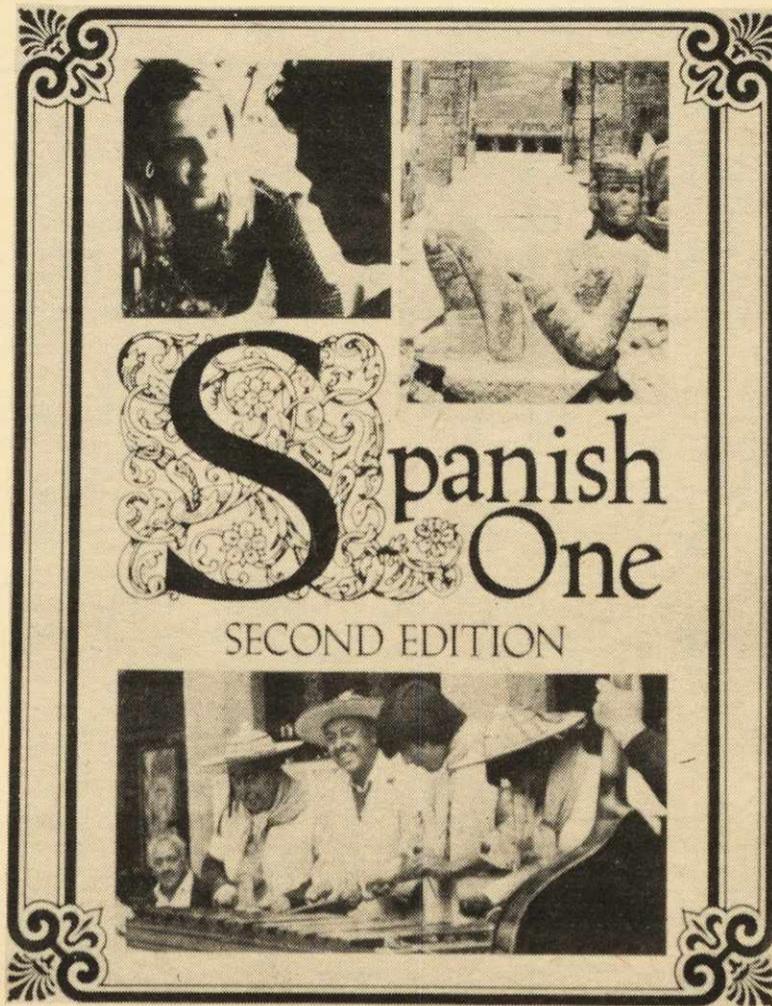
Bibiana Burton, another Spanish professor, says only a minority of students have complained to her about the text. She says that if students don't bring up the issue she "lets it ride."

"My role is to teach good grammatical usage of the language and I tend to undermine the issues raised in the dialogue and stress the language," says Burton.

This isn't the first year the textbook has provoked complaints from students.

Four years ago, Sarah avMaat took a Spanish course at Dal and raised objections about the book.

"I made a complaint to the Dean and the Chair of the department because I objected to the negative stereotypes that the text portrayed. When I had asked other students what they thought of the text, they didn't see anything wrong with it," he said. □



## Graduate students face unique concerns in faculty dispute

By KIM MUNDLE

A faculty walkout would affect more than teachers and students. Graduate students working as teaching or research assistance have their own concerns.

Bev Vincent, a graduate student in the Chemistry Department, is not worried. In the event of a strike he says his work would change little.

"I assume that labs and tutorials will be cancelled," says Vincent. "We'll just have more time for research." He says his research will not be interrupted.

Due to the nature of research projects in areas like Biology and Chemistry, he says a strike will not put them on hold. The only difficulty, says Vincent, will be the decision to cross a picket line or not.

As for the scholarship that supports his research, he says it will not be affected because "it is external to my lab assistant work."

"A strike will affect me to a certain extent because I wouldn't be able to see my professors at the usual time but I would just keep up on my reading in the meantime," said a history graduate. She says strike action would postpone discussion of her work with her professors but would not slow down the work itself. She also said it would have no influence on her university fellowship.

Several graduate students interviewed said they did not feel that the DFA would have to resort to a strike.

## Fenwick Towers kicks students out in middle of exams

By KATIE FRASER

Fenwick residents studying for exams this April will have the additional worry of finding new accommodation.

Students are forced to vacate their apartments in mid-April, which for some residents falls in the middle of exams.

"It takes a couple of days to move out, and this robs you of the time that you need to spend on studying for exams," said Robert Jeffery, a previous resident of Fenwick Towers.

Students who can not vacate on the specified date are charged \$10 per additional day.

Fenwick Towers should have the same lease policy that Howe and Sheriff Hall have, which allows students to stay until their exams are finished, setting the vacating limit at 24 hours after their conclusion says Jeffery.

"We pay rent on the same basis as residences do. The only problem is that the rent that we pay for second term only covers till April 15th, which is only half way through the exam schedule," said Jeffery. "You have to worry about exams and your accommodation from the 15th onward. Because you're paying rent at Fenwick in the typical residence fashion, the second installment should also cover the period of the exam schedule, to accommodate all students."

Jeffery says part of the problem is students can't afford the extra rent at this time. One of the main reasons behind this is their student loans have run out by April, and they haven't begun summer work.

John Graham, manager of university services, justifies the policy saying that the time period on the lease is designed to take the period of time which will benefit most residents.

"Classes actually finish early in April. Many people don't have any exams to write, particularly seniors, who are the main people that make up the Fenwick population. Some are finished on the 4th, most are finished by the 15th, and there will be the odd one who will drag on," said Graham. "We've taken the least block of time when the significant proportion of students are living in Fenwick. Therefore, only the people that use the facilities pay for them."

Graham claims that this system saves the majority of students money, and that the alternative, paying a base rate [number of

weeks multiplied by rate] would unnecessarily cost all students.

"Students as a whole pay a minimum," said Graham. He said that a base rate would cost many of the students for time they aren't there.

Since Fenwick is a university-owned highrise, should it follow the guidelines of a university residents, asks Jeffery.

"What is the extra cost for Dalhousie to allow the students to stay there till they have completed exams?" said Jeffery. The cost to Dalhousie to simplify the lives of students living at Fenwick is slight in comparison to the value it would provide; time and money during the mid-April crunch," he added.

"This is all spelled out to them in the agreement [lease], and what-specific time is being covered. It shouldn't come as any surprise," said Graham. □

## Hill down but not out

By MICHAEL DANIELS

The New Democratic victory party at Hotel Nova Scotian Nov. 6 celebrated what was seen by the party as a major victory.

In a speech to party supporters, Alexa McDonough said the NDP was now a strong and viable party in Nova Scotia. She said the media, by saying NDP support was based solely in Halifax, considered Wolf-

ville and Sackville to be part of Halifax.

"We know better," she said.

The NDP picked up two seats in this provincial election. Bob Levy defeated Paul Kinsman in King's South and John Holm defeated Malcolm MacKay in Sackville, while McDonough held her own riding of Halifax Chebucto.

McDonough said the NDP was on its way to providing strong representation across the province.

For some the evening was a per-

sonal defeat. Former student leader Tim Hill lost in Halifax Cornwallis by over 2,100 votes to the incumbent education minister Terry Donahoe. Hill campaigners had expected the large student vote to carry him to victory. He said that instead the student vote had split between the three candidates.

Hill said he would be around to run for the NDP in the future.

"This is the first election I've ever lost, and I don't intend to take it lying down," he said. □