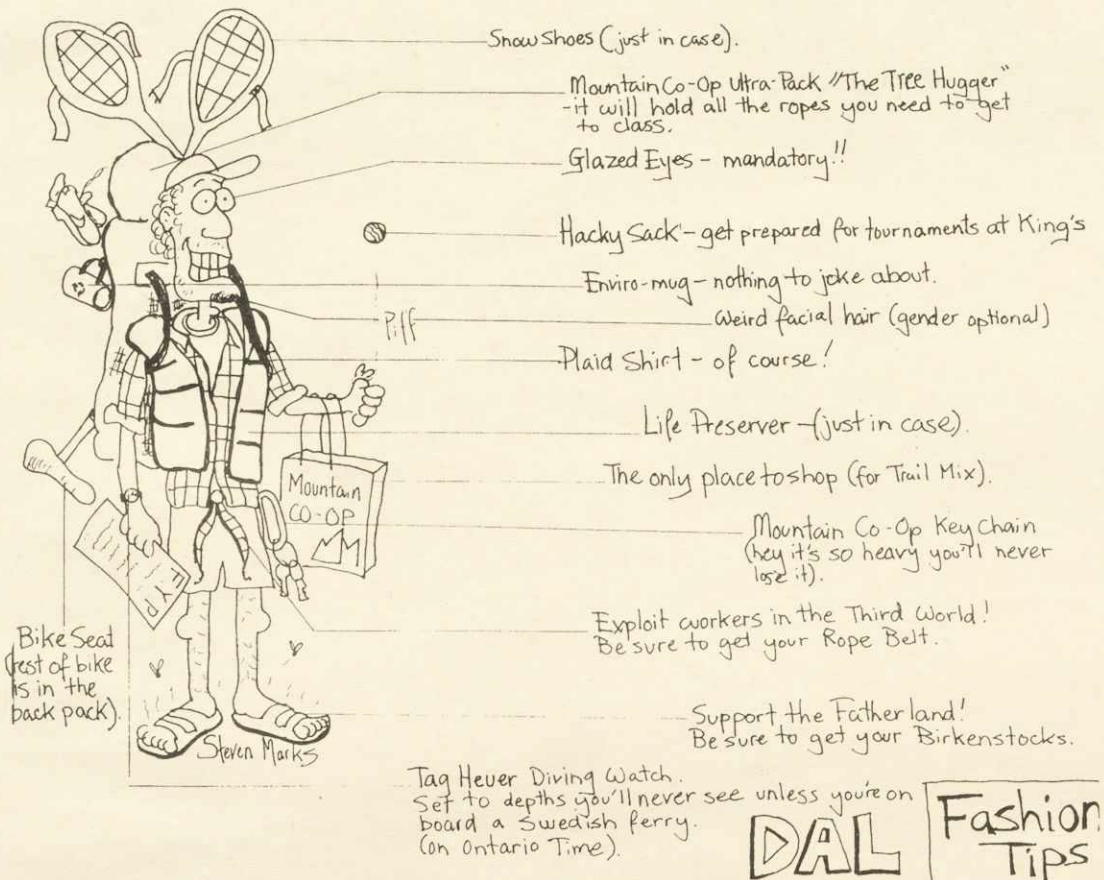


# opinions



Due to premonitions of **MASSIVE INDIGESTION**, the Gazette will not be publishing during the week of Thanksgiving.

Our next issue will be out **Thursday, October 20.**

Deadline for all submissions is noon, Monday, October 17, 1994.

## Fashion crimes etc.

It's me again. I've got more to say again this week. More tirades to go on. One thing I must say, before I start my ranting, is that I'm not at all surprised that I haven't seen one article or letter to the editor about the stuff that I wrote last week.

It seems that the left-wing crazies, besides being totalitarian, are cowardly too. Not one person had the personal strength of character to challenge me. I must say though, that some goof had the nerve to threaten me physically about what I wrote. I laughed at him. Maybe I was right about everything I wrote, huh?

This week what's really got me upset is the fact that there are all these people on-campus and around the city, that for some strange reason, have developed this weird idea that there is some deep intrinsic value in ugliness.

Now, I'm not talking about those who were born aesthetically-chal-

lenged. I'm talking about those individuals who have taken it upon themselves to be walking museums of the worst mistakes that humankind has ever made in the area of clothing.

I cannot understand, for the life of me, why people of obvious means absolutely must wear the ugliest clothes on the face of the earth. Is

*stay out of my field of vision*

there something I'm missing? It is a crime of the worst kind to not only wear one shirt of bad plaid, but to layer over it, another shirt of equal or greater ugliness.

Why do people who absolutely have to wear sandals (Birkenstocks), wear them with socks? And why do these very same people wear these

sandals and socks in the rain and snow? I don't understand.

Why do people who can afford to buy backpacks worth hundreds of dollars and trendy sandals that cost even more (see above), offend all of us blessed with eyesight with this need to look ugly and to abandon the history of aesthetic sensibility that all the world holds dear?

Really, do they think that they're gonna ever get a date? And if that's not important, then at least they should have the decency to stay out of my field of vision.

As always, you can send me your opinions and letters to the editor. Whether you like what I say or not (especially if not), you're more than welcome to send me stuff. You can send it to my email account: tratnik@is.dal.ca, or you can drop by the office and drop it off for me to look at. I have office hours from 3-4 p.m. on Mondays.

Joe Tratnik

## Self defence spells sales

It's all in your mind. Women are often told this at different times in their lives. They are told this when they have been sexually harassed, offended by a sexist joke, and/or when they are in self-defense courses. Being sexually harassed or assaulted and being in a self-defense course should be experiences at complete opposite ends of the spectrum.

However, recent self-defense courses being offered at Dalhousie and around the city are not making the divergence of these experiences apparent.

The current increase in self-defense courses seems to be related to the proliferation of Quorum International products, a company that produces personal and home alarms. Distributors have developed workshops and info sessions that feature a sales pitch at the end.

Traditionally self-defense seminars focus on physical defense moves and mind preparation, in other words getting you mentally ready and able

to react to situations. Wen-Do has been taught at Dal for four years now as a subsidised service of the Dalhousie Student Union. It focuses on the empowerment of women in situations and facilitator Anne Campbell spends a lot of time talking about getting out of uncomfortable but not unusual situations, like dates and social settings. Empowerment seems to be what is missing from many of the new workshops springing up.

One of the workshops being offered at Dal has been developed by distributor Harley Firth and is being taught by a retired RCMP officer, Laura Culvert. It includes sections on personal property, sexual assault, and "after the fact" things. Sexual assault contains subsections including "(ii) Guns; (iii) Knives; (iv) Sticks". The other workshop, which has looked for financial support from Dal Security, the Dalhousie Women's Centre and other organizations, focuses on "identifying insincerity and the potential rapist", and then includes a section on abduction and

what confinement does to the mind and body. Both workshops organizers reiterated to me that they were not trying to scare anyone.

One of the most common criticisms of personal alarms and self-defense courses is that they turn the focus away from where women face real threats. For instance, 70-84% of sexual assaults are committed by someone the survivor knows.


When asked if date rape is covered, Firth asserts it is mentioned "in passing". He believes date rape is "a grey area" and is "not violent rape".

Despite what seems to be the best intentions of the organizers of these seminars, they do not take a big step away from women being portrayed as victims. Both seminars seem to perpetuate the myth that it is strangers that women have to be scared of. Without violence by acquaintances or in the home mentioned women's experiences of this is not validate, and is therefore "all in their mind".

Lisa Lachance

**Dalhousie Women's Centre**

6143 South St. (between Seymour & LeMarchant)  
Halifax, N.S. B3H 2J7  
(902) 494-2432



GENERAL MEETING

October 11, 7-9p.m.  
Room 318, DAL SUB

All women invited to attend. In the case of voting, only Society Members will be recognized.

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October 12, Noon

*Got a lease that's too long?* The Public Legal Education Society presents a students overview to landlord & tenancy questions. Council Chambers, SUB.

October 18, 4:00 p.m.

*Persons Day Celebration!* Lots of HERSTORY at the Green Room, SUB!!!