

editorial

Lest we ever forget

November 11, 1918 — Armistice Day.

Stories I have heard tell of the epiphany which so completely overwhelmed Europe on that day. Soldiers on the battlefields spontaneously dropped their weapons and climbed out of the filthy trenches to stumble home. The world shook its collective head in disbelief. Everyone was so completely fed up with war and no one spoke — they were too stunned.

Seventy-six years ago tomorrow, the fighting that had been raging across most of Europe came to an abrupt conclusion. The boys would be home for Christmas. The Great War was over. Humankind shall fight no more. Never again will we let our differences bring us to this bitter end.

We commemorate the occasion tomorrow, as we do every November 11, as Remembrance Day. We take the time to remember those who died fighting for freedom. We wear poppies on our lapels as symbols of a debt to those who never came back. We see old soldiers gathered around memorials, their uniforms dusted off and adorned with fading medals, standing attentively once again for proud anthems and heartfelt speeches. We stand motionless on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month and our thoughts inevitably turn to those gravesites in Belgian poppy fields, *the crosses row on row*.

But do we really remember?

When the dust finally settled in 1918, when Woodrow Wilson's fourteen points had all been checked off the list as Europe staggered out from under the cloud of four years of senseless fighting, we remembered.

That was when everyone still believed that there would be no more war. The "war to end all wars" would be just that. Armistice. Peace.

Were we remembering the peace of November 11, 1918 when we "fought them on the beaches" in World War II? Here was a war so great it caused The Great War to be renamed World War I.

But unlike World War I, when World War II ended, everyone knew there would be another. We've been talking about World War III since what was arguably civilization's darkest hour — those horrible days in August of 1945 when we learned in awe of the nuclear devastation of Japan. That was not a moment of epiphany but one of foreboding. No one doubted this was a sign of things to come.

Were we remembering when Canadians and Americans were dying in Korea in the 1950s? General MacArthur certainly did not remember when he suggested dropping the atomic bomb on China.

Were we remembering when Americans were dying in Vietnam in the 1960s and 70s? Did the National Guardsmen who killed the four students at Kent State University remember November 11, 1918? Did President Nixon remember that day when he ordered the carpet bombing of Hanoi on Christmas Day?

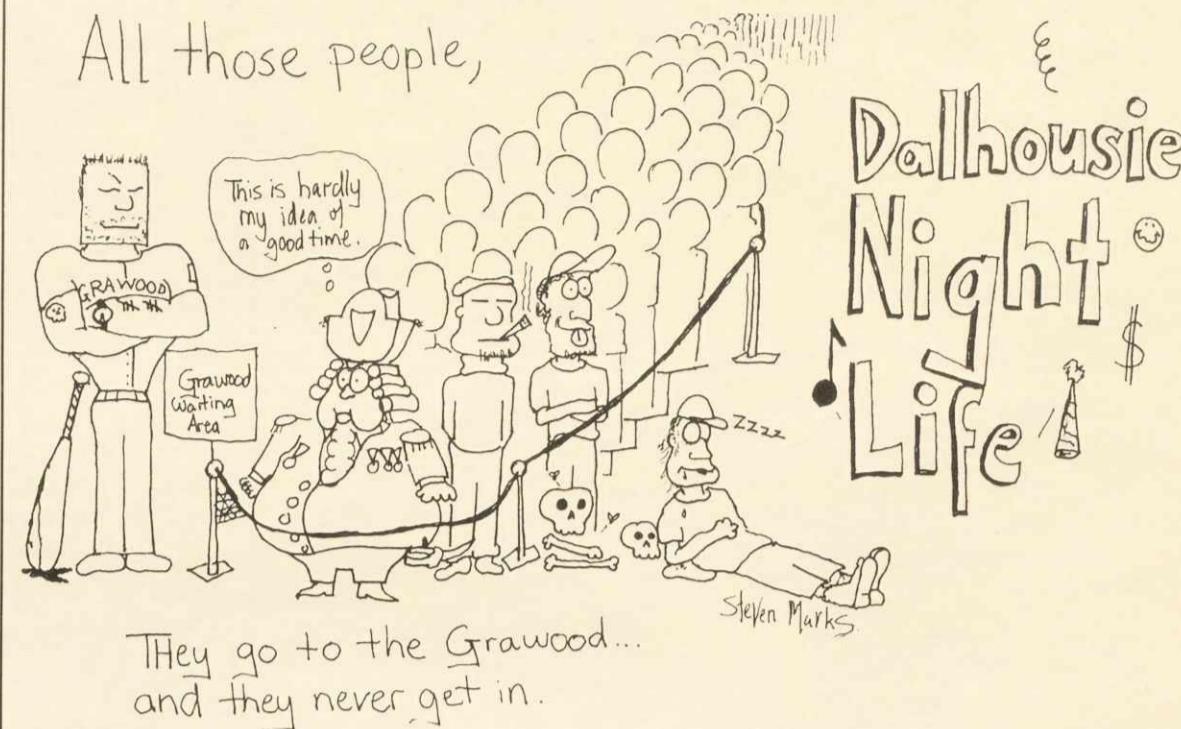
Were we remembering when CNN and the UN took on big bad Saddam in the Nintendo war in the Gulf?

I was brought up to respect the poppies and the veterans who had given their lives so that I might be free. And I was told that we shall never forget. But evidently, we have all but forgotten. I have never felt the feeling those soldiers in the trenches must have felt on that day — the feeling that war was over forever.

Perhaps the day I switched on my television and saw people dancing on the Berlin Wall was close. I felt for a fleeting moment that humankind had come to its senses, that people would be free and that war was really over forever. It was a wonderful feeling but it didn't last.

On this Remembrance Day, I am going to really try to remember. Lest we ever forget.

Milton Howe



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 4 pm before publication. Letters may be e-mailed or submitted on Macintosh or IBM-compatible 3.5" disk.

Joe good

To the editor,

I've been meaning to write in for some time now, but I haven't really had anything to say. I did feel motivated to write in and say that I really appreciate the candid, no-nonsense attitude of your Opinions Editor. I don't really agree with everything that Josef Tratnik says, but I think that he has gone out of his way to encourage discussion on campus.

If his detractors spent as much time thinking about what is wrong with this school (and what they might do about it), as they do criticizing those who have opinions, we might end up with something of an interesting school.

Adina Kelly

Dizzy not fab

To the editor,

I must protest about your ongoing segment of *Lifestyles of the Fabulous and the Dizzy*. I just happen to be talking about the Dal Profiles section. Is this the section where the photographer tries to get a girlfriend by asking all the girls he knows to participate in this sexist section. My god, Gumby would be more interesting than these people.

It's like the *Gazette* is becoming the Toronto Sun. All you have to do is move the chicks to page 3.

Come on folks — this is supposed to be a university paper. And besides, if we want to see some Tracy Lords look-alike, we could always buy Playboy.

Filipe Parks

Oprah good

To the editor,

Morgan Wade's article about talk shows was really insightful. I greatly enjoyed reading it and his perspective was quite refreshing.

I have only one problem with the whole thing, and that was his use of Oprah [Winfrey] as a target. I have been a talk show junky for many years, and I consider myself something of an expert on the subject.

In the world of trash, Oprah is the model of what a good host should be. Don't compare her with the likes of Shirley or Ricky Lake. They're not even in her league.

Mike Mancini

the Gazette

Vol 127 No 10

November 10, 1994

contributors

Steven Marks
Jennifer Hockey
Amanda Murray
Craig Shiller
Michael Mainville
Kristin Denault
Wayne Groszko
James Covey
Malik Adams
Jefferson Rappell
Jo Mirsky
Harold MacPhee
Adam Block
Kevin Halfpenny
Mike Devonport
Tim Richard

managing editor
Judy Reid
copy editor
Lilli Ju

opinions editor
Joe Tratnik
science editors
Brian Wade, Steve Tonner

news editor
Milton Howe
calendar editors
Feng Tan, Jodi Gallagher
a & e editor
Mike Graham
movie critic
Mark Farmer
focus on dal editor
Eugenia Bayada
photo editors
Danielle Boudreau,
Mike Devonport
CUP editors
Sean Rooney, Katrina Hurley
women's liaisons
Michelle Duffy, Heather Gibson
sports editors
Sam McCaig, Carmen Tam

distributor
Tara Hoag
typesetter
Rob Currie
ad/business manager
Jan Del Mar
Phone: 494-6532
Fax: 494-1280

Student Union Building, Dalhousie University
6136 University Ave., Halifax, N.S., B3H 4J2
(902) 494-2507/email GAZETTE@ac.dal.ca

Course evaluation book sucks

Every year for the past four years the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) has put out a course evaluation booklet. It's a great idea, in theory, but in practice it just seems to be a waste of time and a waste of money. The problem is that money allocated for course evaluation can only be spent for that purpose or it just sits there being no good to anyone.

Did you know that in your Student Union fees (totalling \$144.00) each and every full-time student pays \$1.00 to course evaluations? And how many of you honestly use the damn things? You can barely give the things away and they hang around in offices and society spaces for years sometimes before they disappear. Check out the Student Union offices and see how many they have left.

I don't think anyone would say

that evaluating courses is a bad thing. I certainly don't. But the way it is done now is inefficient, ineffective and a waste of students' money. What the fuck is the use of a course evaluation booklet that comes out at the end of October? Hell, I picked my courses in July like the rest of you. It would be useful if I got it with my registration pack or could at least pick it up then. Or how about putting it on-line so at least some of us could access it in the summer when we are actually picking our classes? It would be a lot cheaper that way.

And how many professors actually let DSU course evaluations be done in their classes. I'm a history major and I'd say only half of the profs will let them be done on their classes. Some professors just don't want to have anything to do with

them and one prof sent back the course evaluation package to the Coordinator ripped up and shoved in an envelope. And of what use to us are these course evaluations if a number of profs are hostile to them and many more won't allow them to be done on their classes?

Either the course evaluation system has to change or the DSU should get rid of it because it really isn't benefiting students in its present form. I don't think anyone will say that the way course evaluations are done now are beneficial or a good use of student's money. Pick up a course evaluation booklet, look it over, see what you think. Is it worth our money the way the DSU is doing things now, really?

Jennifer Hockey

Founded in 1869 at Dalhousie College, the Gazette is Canada's oldest student newspaper. With a circulation of 10,000, the Gazette is published weekly through the Dalhousie Student Union by the Dalhousie Gazette Publishing Society, of which all Dalhousie University students are members. • The Gazette exercises full editorial autonomy and reserves the right to refuse or edit any material submitted. Editorial decisions are made by staff collectively. Individuals who contribute to three issues consecutively become voting staff members. • Deadline for commentary, letters to the editor, and announcements is 4:00 pm on Monday before publication (Thursday of each week). Commentary should not exceed 800 words. Letters should not exceed 500 words. No unsigned material will be accepted, but anonymity may be granted upon request. Submissions may be left at the SUB Enquiry Desk c/o the Gazette. • Advertising copy deadline is noon on Monday before publication. • The Gazette offices are located on the third floor of the SUB, Room 312. • The views expressed in the Gazette are not necessarily those of editors or the collective staff.