

CROSS-CANADA BRIEFS

Student Challenges Lesbian Role-Playing

BY GEORGE PRINGLE

VICTORIA (CUP) — Kathleen Westergaard decided to attend the University of Victoria to earn a Women's Studies degree so she could work towards bringing feminist ideals into mainstream Canadian society. Once in the program, however, Westergaard felt she had entered a lesbian studies program.

"Most of the material is by lesbians and about lesbians. It is a political movement not an academic program," said Westergaard. She felt a class assignment that required women students to walk around campus with another woman class member "acting in an affectionate manner," was harassment.

Westergaard walked around campus holding hands with another class member but stopped participating in the exercise after a few minutes. She returned to the classroom and complained to the instructor, Michelle Pujol. Dissatisfied with the response from Pujol, Westergaard brought her complaint to Waelti-Walters.

"I don't think any prof should be asking any student to do anything sexual," said Westergaard.

Dr. Jennifer Waelti-Walters, the Director of the Women's Studies department feels the accusation of harassment is unjustified.

Waelti-Walters took over the marking of the remaining assignments and thought the issue was resolved but she was later informed that Westergaard had filed a harassment complaint and issued a press release.

"When we do experimental exercises, we use as many safeguards as we can," said Waelti-Walters. "We try at all times to make students understand that they can say no at any time."

Westergaard didn't feel she could say no to the assignment without repercussions as 10 per cent of her grade was based on class participation.

"Students are never free to say no because of the power differential between faculty and students," said Westergaard. The harassment complaint is in the formal stage, with a ruling from a three member arbitration panel expected soon.

Academic Freedom Debate Reopened

BY CYNTHIA PERANANDAM

TORONTO (CUP) — In a bid to protect the privileges of academic freedom, a group of professors are going head-to-head with proponents of equity programs at universities across Canada.

The Society for Academic Freedom and Scholarship (SAFS), a national organization founded by professors at University of Western Ontario, has been linked to a resurgence in research that evaluates intelligence and superiority based on biological and genetic differences. Opponents of the group say they are not protecting academic freedom but are promoting race bias.

An article published in the March/April 1995 issue of *This Magazine*, argued that SAFS was established as a group to legitimize the research of people like Philippe Rushton. While a professor at Western, Rushton argued that skull size directly correlated with intelligence. His research placed people of Asian descent at the top of the intellectual spectrum, followed by Caucasians. Blacks were placed at the bottom and deemed responsible for promiscuity and crime.

The SAFS, which has 300 to 400 members, has published numerous studies based on speculative research. One such study linked fingerprint patterns to male homosexuality. Another alleged that women were not as capable at math and spatial reasoning as men are because of the hormonal changes their bodies experience.

University of Toronto professor John Furedy calls the accusations directed at the SAFS "Velvet totalitarianism", which he describes as "the idea that certain assumptions should be protected on the grounds that their criticism is 'offensive', and the idea that performance should be assessed not in terms of merit but in terms of whether the individual is a member of a designated group."

Teferi Adem, counsellor at the Centre for Race and Ethnic Relations (CRER) at York University, feels differently.

"Faculties are not above the law," he said. "Laws in Canada say you cannot promote hate. This is the promotion of hate."

Immigration Quotas Challenged

BY ROSE DIPALMA

TORONTO (CUP) — There is a growing belief that Canada's immigration system is out of control. Media reports suggest immigrants abuse our social service programs, are involved in criminal activity, and are a drain on our economy.

A recent decimal poll published in the *Toronto Star* found that half those surveyed felt that current immigration policy allows far too many people of different races and cultures into Canada.

However, Cyclic Kemi Jacob, Executive Director of Culture Link, a non-profit government settlement agency, views anti-immigrant sentiment as a sign of the times. Jacob said she finds every time there is a recession people begin blaming immigrants for taking their jobs. She asserts that Canada needs immigration and that it is a myth to believe that people come to Canada to sit ideally and live off welfare or to profit off of crime.

"Our population is aging. We have a workforce that is slowly moving out of the labor market, and we need to supplement our labor force by having immigrants come to Canada."

Professor Lam, Associate Director of The Centre for Refugee Studies at York University contends, "Blaming economic hard times on immigrants is just a farce."

"As Canadians we need to ask ourselves why there are so many highly-skilled and highly-educated refugees unable to find work. Rather than taking part in collective fingerpointing let's work on how we can help immigrants develop themselves in this country."



The returned Wickwire Field and Robin's Donuts are two of the most notable additions to Dal.

GAZETTE PHOTO: DANIELLE BOUDREAU

Backhoes invade Dal

Summer brings slew of construction and demolition projects

BY KATHARINE DUNN

Students returning to Dalhousie may feel a bit disoriented when they step back onto campus this fall.

This summer, our university took on the arduous job of re-vamping several important buildings and tearing down others to make way for some much needed construction.

The most visible addition to the campus is the new turf on Wickwire Field. It is hard to forget the "grass" that our athletes have been forced to play on over past years. The high-cost maintenance and unsafe conditions of the field led Dalhousie administration and the Dalhousie Student Union to decide to build a new one. However, the new field is NOT astroturf, as those working on the project are quick to point out.

Keenan Oxford, a representative of Edel Grass, the company installing the turf of the same name, maintains that astroturf is out.

"Astroturf is too abrasive—only NFL fields use it anymore. Edel grass is designed for the player. Its fibres are chemically treated so that they curl, unlike those of astroturf, making the carpet more forgiving than earth. As well, the elastic layer under the grass is designed to hold water, which slows down play," he says. "This is important for sports like soccer and field hockey, where the athletes wear no protective equipment."

The new turf is 159,000 square feet, making it the third-largest of its kind in the world. The field is going to be divided into three parts — two practice fields and a main one for competition. Also, the new field should heighten school spirit by enticing students to join intramural sports as well as coming out to cheer on the varsity athletes.

The funding (\$3.3 million) for the turf is coming from five sources, with the largest contribution coming from Student Athletic Fees over the next seven years (see pie chart). Dalhousie will be banking on community rentals after school finishes in April.

Although the field was to be completed this month, there have

been problems with several of the carpet panels sent over from Holland. Half of the field is finished now, but it is unclear when the remaining panels will arrive and be laid down. Mr. Oxford claims that if the weather holds, it could be a matter of five or six days needed to lay down the rest.

Part of the controversy surrounding the field lies in the fact that certain areas on campus were demolished in order to make room to build the turf.

The parking lot and Education Building behind the old track were both destroyed. In addition, five houses behind the security office were torn down, one of which was the Dalhousie Women's Center. This has been relocated to 1229 LeMarchant Street. The space created by the demolitions

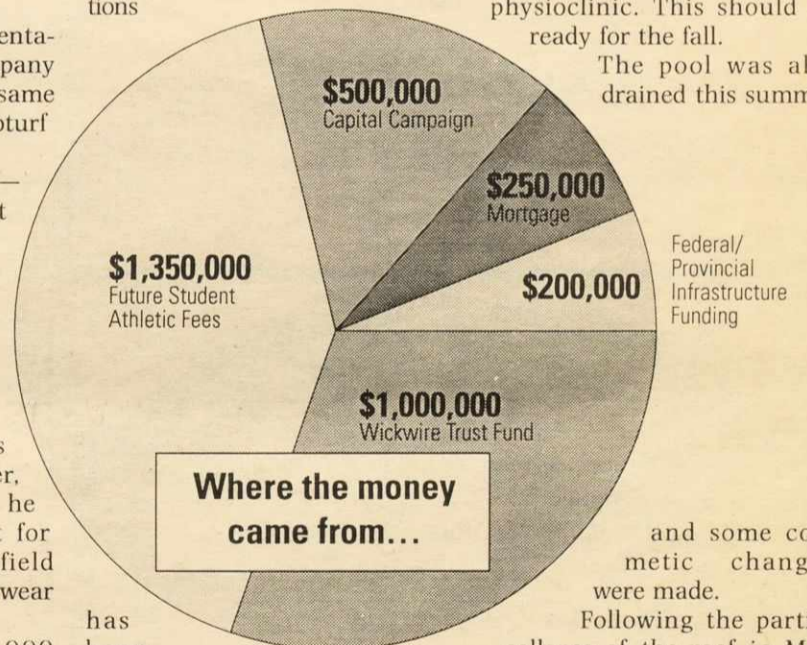
treadmills, stairmasters, and aerobicycles were also purchased. The price for student membership to the Cardio Plus room is \$16 a month, unchanged from last year's nautilus/cardio price.

This year, Dalplex is making a greater effort to appeal to families with small children. With this in mind, a play area for kids called the FunZone has been built in the field house.

The weight room is now directly beside the FunZone, and the construction of a family change room located at the back of the men's change room will begin this month.

Further improvements at Dalplex include the conversion of part of a kinesiology lab into an ergonomics center; this operates in conjunction with the physioclinic. This should be ready for the fall.

The pool was also drained this summer



has been turned into a parking lot to replace part of the space that was lost.

New parking spots have also been added beside the rink, behind the Chase Building, behind the Maritime School of Social Work, and in the already existing parking lot beside the Arts Center.

Another place where major improvements were made this summer was the Dalplex. Perhaps the most exciting change for students is the renovation of the nautilus/cardio room, located off the main lobby. The nautilus weight equipment was relocated to the weight room behind the equipment desk, and there is no extra charge for usage. New

and some cosmetic changes were made.

Following the partial collapse of the roof in May (which led to extensive flooding), a new squash court was built. In Studley gym, the hardwood floor was resurfaced.

Elsewhere on campus, the Student Union Building now houses a Pizza Hut and a Robin's Donuts. Both are in the main lobby and price-wise are no different than other locations in the city.

To make way for Pizza Hut, Travel Cuts has moved up to the third floor.

It is evident that Dalhousie is spending a great deal of time and money for the renovations and construction on campus. What is all this effort going to mean for the students? Only time will tell.