

Remarks on the Halifax Bible Church and David Brown

I would like to take this opportunity to make some remarks on the confrontations which have arisen lately between the Halifax Bible Church and members of the Dalhousie community.

To begin with, I wish to state some facts which may not be known by the majority of Dalhousie students and staff. The Halifax Bible Church is not a "church" in the commonly accepted meaning of that word; it consists essentially of Mr. David Brown himself, aided by his wife, his computer, his telephone, and a

tiny handful of "congregants".

I attended an HBC meeting two weeks ago at the Gottingen street YMCA for the purpose of observing this group, and found a gathering of only six people. Mr. Brown and his wife included, located in a small room on the second floor. The HBC seems to be less of a church and more of a small weekly meeting group. Mr. Brown seems to have convinced many people that the group is much larger, but as far as I can determine, it is not.

My sources tell me that Mr.

Brown himself is a student at the Atlantic School of Theology, where he is currently pursuing his Master's Degree. He believes that Christians like himself are "persecuted" by modern ("heathen") society. I would describe him as young, non-violent, highly religious, very vocal, and narrow-minded.

What has urged me to comment on the HBC is the way that members of the Dalhousie community have reacted to Mr. Brown's presence on campus. While I completely disagree with

Mr. Brown's views, opinions and beliefs, I am angered by the way that several Dalhousie groups (including the DSU and the Dal Women's Group) have felt it necessary to protest his presence here at Dal.

Mr. Brown deliberately uses inflammatory language in his communications and has resorted to derogatory name-calling to attack local groups and communities, including homosexuals and feminists.

His goal is to make a name for himself and his tiny organization by attracting widespread media attention, and so far (unfortunately) he has been very successful. He has been interviewed on Global TV, and *the Gazette* has already printed several articles about him. What is worse, however, is that groups like the Dal Women's Group and individuals like Brian Kellow of the DSU are helping Mr. Brown achieve his goals by giving into their fear and making such a big deal over him.

As far as I know, Mr. Brown has not done anything illegal thus far; if I am wrong and he has, or if he does in the future, then I would urge those who fear him to stop wasting their time with protests and have him arrested or charged. If he has committed "hate crimes", as I have heard many people assert, then why hasn't he been held accountable for these crimes?

Illegal actions notwithstanding, Mr. Brown does have the freedom to express his views in public and hold peaceful assemblies. Those who would have him silenced or removed simply because they disagree with his views are no better than fascists. Who is to say which views are

"acceptable" and which aren't, when the law grants freedom of thought and speech to all?

Protests against Mr. Brown's presence on campus are equally despicable because they only serve to flatter his ego, make him feel important (which he isn't), feed his delusions of "persecution", and bring him the attention he so strongly craves. Mr. Brown wants to create an "issue", and those who take his bait and scream their indignant protests against him are merely furthering his goals.

In my considered opinion, the wisest course of (re)action when dealing with childish individuals is polite indifference and disinterest so long as he plays by the rules and swift legal action if he breaks them.

John G. D. Holton

Let me do the thinking for you

This school and its paper have been screaming about student apathy for years, which proves the point that nobody gives a crap. I mean really, I have better things to do than worry about whether a DSU mutual fund includes INCO which is good for Canada but is in Indonesia as well.

Oh no, the DSU must be bad and have no ethics and they support tyranny blah blah blah.

For god's sake, I have marks and my own personal finances to worry about. Now, if the DSU were robbing me of money I could put to good drinking usage — which they are — well then, baby, hand me a placard.

And I have to ask why those car-deprived activists who justify their Gap labels and designer Enviro-wear actually care. Aside from being International Socialites, are these people anything other than children yelling because they were silenced by mummy and daddy during the 60s, 70s, 80s, and 90s?

I don't have anything against people who make a stink, I mean hell, it gives us journalists something to write about. Without activists, I and many others would have no employment future in the journalistic profession — there are no journalists in Utopia.

I don't think I've offended anyone yet — better try harder. Okay. Let's say you're walking down the sidewalk on Hollis street, looking for some cheap TLC, and you see a crack (not that kind).

Now, obviously you're not going to stop and fill the damn thing. You keep walking. It's not your job to fill the cracks on the street, nor is it your job to solve the problems of the world. This same attitude is paralleled in most students, especially some computer science majors I've met. Please note: "why do I need to worry about this sort of thing? That's what the government's for." Yeah.

What makes people flinch? I mean what causes a normally apathetic citizen to suddenly snap and write some half-cooked — I mean cooked — half-cooked article, "well, so's yo mamma!"?

I wouldn't know. I have written opinions piece after opinions piece for this paper and have yet to see a response. I thought I was saying some pretty controversial things sometimes, but I guess everybody agrees with me. Well, that's what I thought — my insight is unparalleled.

Come on people. You must care about something other than marks and money (a.k.a. booze and pot). I know, I know, why should you? You've got Tristan writing opinions for you. You've got International Socialites yelling about something this week. You've even got NSPIRG to activate on your behalf (but how many actually know what NSPIRG stands for?). If CKDU, *the Gazette*, the DSU, etc. all disappeared tomorrow no one would notice. Hell, I wouldn't even notice and I publish at this gosh darn school.

I'm not sure what motivates

humanity at this level. I'd ask you to make a suggestion but that's asking a little much around mid-term time. I don't expect students in science, engineering, computer science, professional, or law school to respond because they do work all the time (what a bunch of bloody heroes). Arts students should have the time but they are usually busy contemplating their navels (I know that's what I do on a Friday night).

Have I reached any point at all? No. Do you care? No. Should I shut up now? Probably. I'm listening to Leonard Cohen now and it's depressing me because he sounds apathetic, but he's probably contributed more to contemporary thought than most of the students who have passed through the line at the Registrar's office. Coherency is fleeting. Apathy is rampant. Rebel! Nah.

Tristan Stewart-Robertson

Submit your

PHOTO OF THE WEEK

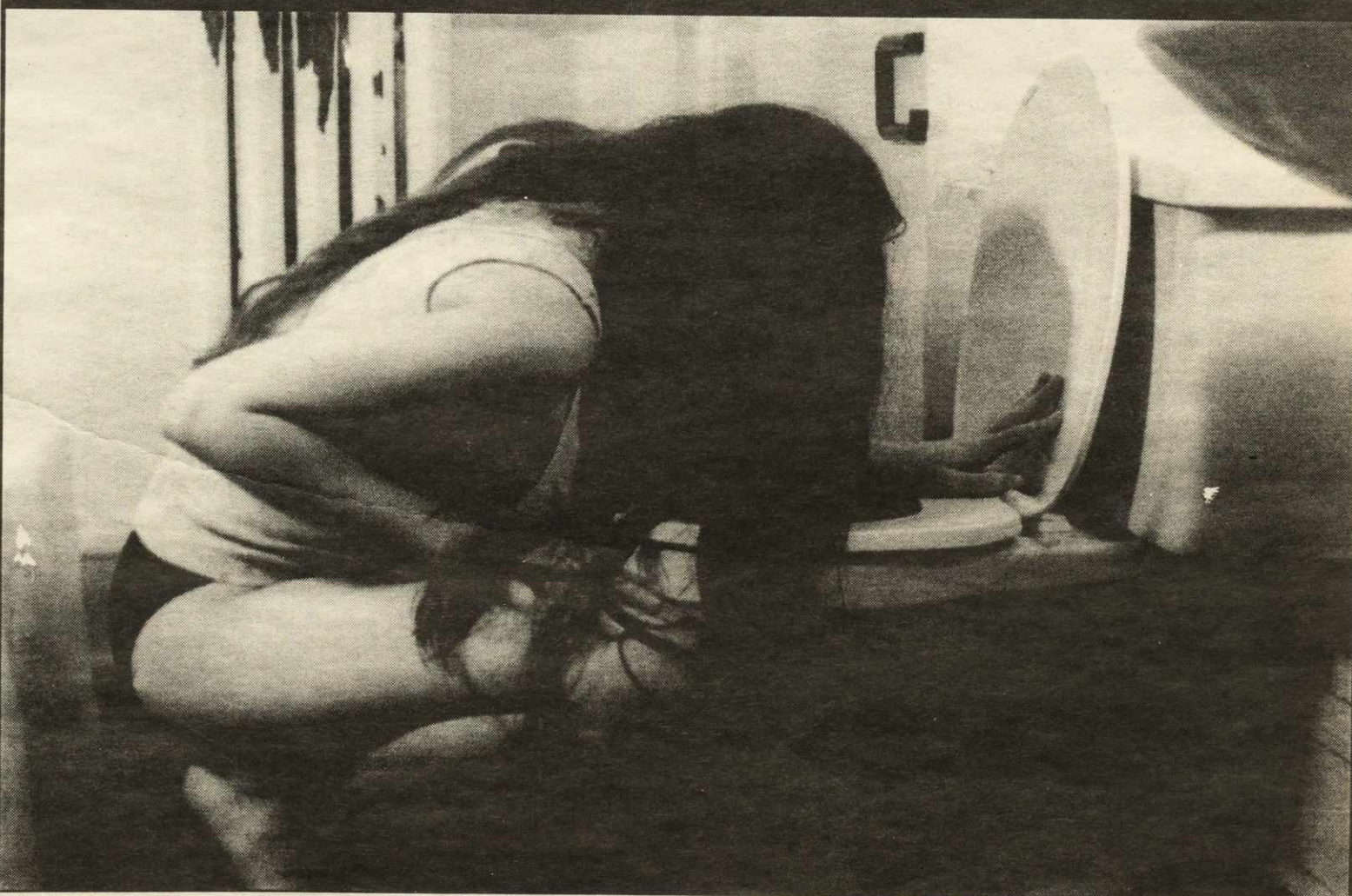


Snap happy!

Drop off photographs to room 312 SUB anytime (drop-off box on the door).

THE GAZETTE

PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Looking for the meaning of life in all the wrong places? Get out and get involved in one of Dal's many worthwhile activist groups.