

'Hard to imagine the president pick-pocketing \$25'

by Joe Morrison
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Unlike most issues the DSU Council commonly deals with, the issue of the Athletic Fee Referendum is one that will *directly* affect every student at Dalhousie. It's hard to imagine the President of the university, Howard Clark, standing by the September registration lines pick-pocketing \$25 out of students' pockets while his Australian-tanned face (Dr. Clark spent the entire month of February '88 on vacation) asked them to excuse his actions on the grounds that Dal Athletics really needs the money. Of course, he could apologize for having to take to the money in such a blunt fashion by alluding to the fact that he couldn't just tack on \$25 to tuition fees because of an agreement between the DSU and the Dal administration. And he could add that when the tuition fee agreement expires (in three years) he would no longer have to pick-pocket you directly and could do so by just quietly raising tuition fees. It is sad to say, but I think some students, including myself at some times, would merely smile and continue in the registration line, more concerned with getting into history 1050 so as to get an

A on the transcript and an easy ticket to law school. Not that I fault students, though, as I think it's the environment that is more to blame.

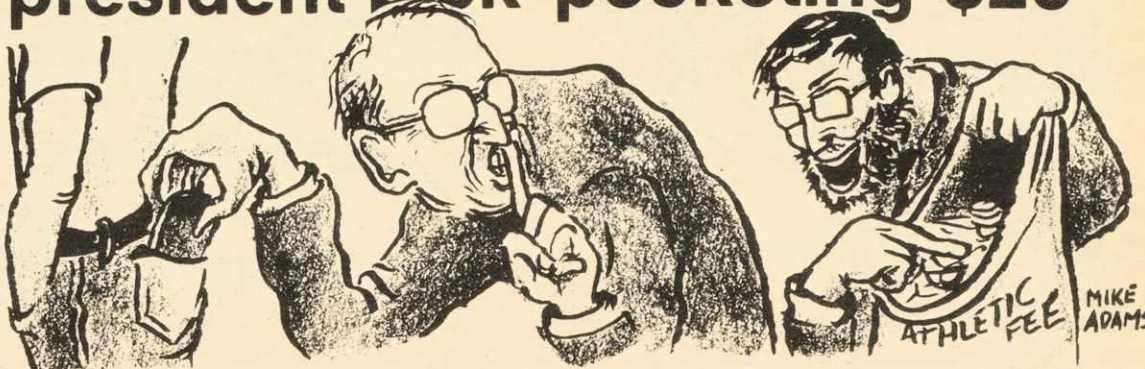
I'm not using this issue as just an example. That the DSU Council, moreover the Executive of this Council, of which I am a part, did not make a satisfactory effort to inform students of all the aspects of this issue is a sad testimony. Fortunately, it is not too late for all Dal's students to take action. Here is some important information:

1) Students already contribute money towards the Dalplex.

Every year, for the past 10 years, students have paid \$35,000 towards the cost of the Dalplex. The money has been taken indirectly from students (making it less noticeable) through their student union fees.

2) It is not surprising that fees are going up, since this was not a "student" idea in the first place.

Because of a tuition fee agreement between the university administration and the Dalhousie Student Union, the administration cannot increase tuition by more than an annual inflationary amount for the next three years. So the administra-



tion cannot increase tuition fees to compensate for poor government funding, low alumni support, etc. Considering that Dal students contribute more to the operating cost of their university than do most other Canadian university students, it only seems fair that students should not have to pay extra for items which are "standard" features at other universities. Of course, there are some universities that do charge athletic fees, but then, what are their students paying in tuition fees, and are their athletic programs comparable to Dal's?

Here are some examples of the Administration's unusual interest in this issue:

The Director of Athletics could be seen on the sidelines at the public forums looking like a third base coach giving signals to batters who in this case were phys. ed. students or friends supporting the proposed fee. Unfortunately,

his signals weren't camouflaged enough, as he appeared to be directly interfering with a *student* forum. As well, he showed up at a council meeting to argue for the fee. (I guess he thought a student representative couldn't get the job done.) And while on the topic of visitations to council meetings, did anyone notice the presence of the V.P. Finance at a recent meeting? How about the letter he sent to every councillor stating he favoured the fee but thought students should have only an advisory role in directing where the funds should be allocated? Indeed, although he wants students to contribute *all* the money, he felt students should have only a partial, minority say in where it is to be directed.

3) We can't extend the tuition fee agreement if we don't have anything to bargain with.

Earlier this year (long before the idea of an athletic fee was proposed), Bryan Mason, V.P. Finance of the university, said in meetings with the DSU executive he had no intention of extending the tuition fee agreement. For this reason, some students think it's Mason who controls this. Actually, it's the Board of Governors. If students were to propose to help support athletics in return for an extension on the tuition fee agreement, a reasonable and fair proposition for all parties con-

cerned, there is a 50 per cent chance the Board of Governors might accept it.

Unfortunately, this issue has led to cleavages on campus that pit students against students, the DSU against Dalplex supporters. The real issue is that the Dalhousie administration wants students to pay for something they shouldn't necessarily have to. As well, the administration would prefer to give students next to nothing in return, not even the ability to direct these funds in ways which would most benefit students. As it stands now, the administration is supporting, lobbying, and campaigning for the collection of a "user fee" for athletics while it is rejecting a reasonable request that it extend an agreement to limit increases in tuition at a reasonable rate of inflation.

No wonder alumni support at Dal isn't as strong as it is at other universities. If this situation typifies how the Administration wishes to treat students now and in the future with regard to financial matters, I think it is a fair prediction to say alumni support will never reach its full potential. Perhaps if the administration would start respecting the rights to the fair treatment students deserve, financial support for such items as athletics, which are traditionally funded through major support from alumni, would increase, and this cause-and-effect relationship might be reversed for the better of all Dalhousians.

l e t t e r s

Hail men

To the Editors:

I am responding to R. Matthews' letter to the Gazette last week denouncing the person he calls the seething letter writer. He says he fails to understand why blaming men for the problems of the world — rape violence, pollution, the poor and the homeless included — is sexist. Unfortunately, his letter became one of those "seething little tirades" that he says nobody wants to read.

My response is that it is not only sexism Matthews does not understand, it is also the stupidity of most of the arguments about it. Here's why:

If it is right to blame men for all the tragedies of society because they are in control of society, then it must also be right to applaud them for all the blessings of society.

If indeed "men in general have so much power that all the really big problems can be traced to them," then we must also hail men for all the "really big" triumphs in this world. To blame men for rape one must thank them for our institutions of authority, justice, and democracy; for the destruction of the environment praise them for agriculture and irrigation; for the poor and the homeless

applaud health care, electricity, transportation, and communications.

But men do not deserve all of these laurels any more than they deserve all the blame. The fallacy of Matthews' argument is just that; one can't blame men for all the wrongs of the world because that would be just like saying that one must glorify them, and accord them responsibility, for all the good things. It just ain't so. Women, from Joan of Arc to Winnie Mandela, deserve to be included.

Truth is, only one group can be held responsible in Matthews' global scale: Mankind. All of us and our ancestors can be blamed for every secular creation in this world. Mankind includes both men and women. Hitler and Mother Teresa, Einstein and Earhart, Oppenheimer and Curie, Marconi and Nightingale, and the whole gang including you and me.

To blame only one group of people for all our problems is stupid. Blame Mankind: not women, and not men.

What the anti-Gazette writer is seething about are the scores of articles on sexism that explain nothing and contain stupid arguments, like Matthews'.

By the way, "God" is spelled with a capital G.

Hugh Paton

It didn't take long

To the Editor:

I read the Gazette now and then. I think it's a good project and that it's important to see what students are writing about and what's going on that is relevant for us. But lately I've been surprised to discover that there's a common belief among my fellow students that the Gazette has become a newspaper about gay and lesbian issues, and now and then about women in general. Most agree that these are interesting and important topics, but even more are disappointed to see that they've overshadowed others, like academic and scholastic issues, human interest stories and impartial coverage about important events. Readers are being lost as this view spreads.

I've also noted that the staff of the Gazette has on numerous occasions appealed to students to contribute articles and/or letters to fill out the paper's content. If anyone has a complaint about the present content, I challenge them to do something about it. It didn't take long to write this letter.

Gillian Saunders

Love never fails

by David Deaton

All Christians know themselves to be "prisoners of conscience". One's house of faith stands upon the rock of conviction.

It seemed only appropriate March 18th when the Dalhousie chapter of Inter Varsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF) heard a representative from the Halifax chapter of Amnesty International.

He in turn spoke of a South Korean medical student who has been imprisoned these last twelve years for no more than expressing his convictions.

Kang Jong-Hon is his name. His situation is so dire and so manifestly unjust, he was adopted by Amnesty International as a prisoner of conscience. He is the special concern of an Amnesty chapter in Halifax and of two Amnesty

chapters in Western Europe.

The facts about Kang Jong-Hon are not unique. After taking part in a peaceful student demonstration, he was arrested, charged with "espionage", and thrown into jail. At his trial, Kang declared his confession had been obtained under torture. He was sentenced to death.

Although successive amnesties have reduced Kang's sentence to twenty years, the fact remains there is no cause for him to be in prison at all. He has done nothing wrong. He has done only what Martin Luther did, lo these many years ago: *protest*.

Kang Jong-Hon now wastes away in an inhumanly crowded prison cell, reported the Amnesty speaker. He suffers worse brutality than that meted out to hardened criminals.

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