

letters

The common enemy

To the editor:

I very much appreciated reading the article by M.J. Hamilton in the Gazette, "Escaping Violence". This writer puts forth valuable points. I have a concern, though, regarding the phrase "being treated like whores". I've heard this phrase, and variations of it, before.

I think of women who are prostitutes as victims of slander in a society that continues to blame victims of abuse. To me, the phrase "treated like a whore" connotes that being a prostitute means not worthy of respect or protection against abuse, and an outcast.

I know that women who choose this profession are often, if not entirely, survivors of child abuse (making the word "choose" questionable). If we ever succeed in ending the prevalence of child abuse, women might be less inclined to sell their bodies. The fact remains that it is a sure fire way to earn a living, albeit a dangerous one, in a society that is sexually screwed up and

makes it difficult for women to be employed in jobs that our society judges respectable and worthy of adequate pay (which I see as part of the conspiracy of keeping women subordinate and accessible to "fulfilling" men's "needs".

A phrase such as "treated like dirt" is perhaps more specific, and does not bring into question, in my mind, what it means to be a "whore" (although someone could catch me up on that word "dirt" too, because it is just misplaced, misunderstood soil). In any case, language is a complicated tool to be used with awareness as long as oppression exists around us.

T. Thiebaut

Committees, consultants, & communities

To the editor:

I have just finished reading the "Final Report" of the Brookfield Cement Plant and Community Liaison Committee, dated November 1992. The terms of reference of this committee are listed, "to provide community input into the environmental assessment

of the proposed Contaminated Waste Oil and Spent Solvents Project at Lafarge Canada's Cement Plant in Brookfield, N.S." The committee was financed by Lafarge. This proposal for using hazardous wastes as fuel for cement-making can, in its various aspects affect the lives of a large number of humans and non-humans. Yet it has not been widely discussed in our province. It will have impact, for example, not only on those living in the immediate area of the plant, but on all who will become subject to the fallout from a plume of known and unknown toxic contaminants.

The "Final Report" lists 14 committee members and two observers who have given their positions on whether or not they support the burning of hazardous wastes as "fuel". I would like to commend the following individuals - David Carter, Charles Cox, Kim Leier, Bernice Sandeson, Patricia Jean Steeves, Heather Saunders and Tanya Mackay - who have declared their opposition to the Lafarge proposal in the Report. As one committee member noted "at many meetings" the "experts" who were promoting this project outnumbered members of the committee.

However, as I see it, the so far successful strategy of the company in setting up this committee, has been to confine the discussion to a small number of people, so that the public - and the province-wide environmental movement - has been essentially uninvolved. Unless this situation changes, the extremely lucrative proposal for Lafarge to burn hazardous wastes in their cement kiln, which would be a first for this province and for Canada, will soon become a reality. I believe that what essentially is being proposed is a toxic waste disposal project, disguised as a cement kiln supplementary fuel project.

It is of interest that the company provided for an "independent" facilitator for the committee. The terms of reference as listed in the Report state that this facilitator had the responsibility for "gathering and organizing information, arranging communications with the media and the community, and drafting the final report." The "environmental" consulting firm of which the facilitator is a member, has a partner who has been a very public voice for the incineration of garbage in the Halifax-Dartmouth Metro area.

Bicycle burglars beware

To the editor:

Bicyclists know what they're up against. Thousands of bicycles have disappeared from the university neighborhood, hundreds from the campus alone. The stories are out there. Everyone who rides knows that at least one point or another, their seat, their wheel, indeed even the sacred headset might be plundered within minutes of leaving the bike unattended. Some decide to spend hundreds on locking devices of various description. Some just decide to chance it. Whatever their choice, they are forewarned of the almost inevitable.

Now it is only fair to give the criminal sewage who perpetrate this kind of cheap thievery; yes, it is only fair to give them now their FAIR WARNING. I intend here to encourage every reader to tell two friends: WE WILL STRIKE FEAR INTO THE ROTTEN AND FOUL SOULS WHO STEAL OUR BIKES FOR A LIVING. There will be, for the remainder of the school year; bikes locked partially, with their seats unprotected; their wheels left in jeopardy. They will be observed from the shadows. I myself, don't have too many friends, but most will happily lie in wait for the rat-shit scum to come along and remove a bike or any part thereof. (It is, of course essential to see that the property has, in fact, been ripped-off; suspicion just won't do.) The friends I do have are mostly violent by nature, and would have little trouble screwing a thief's tongue into a light socket.

And this is because most of my friends had their bikes ripped off, in whole, or in part, and have a real frustration to work out. Why, only today, a buddy's seat was pilfered from in front of the A&A building, and he's right there with me, saying "It's essential that we spray-paint the heads of these thieves a hot pink," and I replied "That's exactly what we must do."

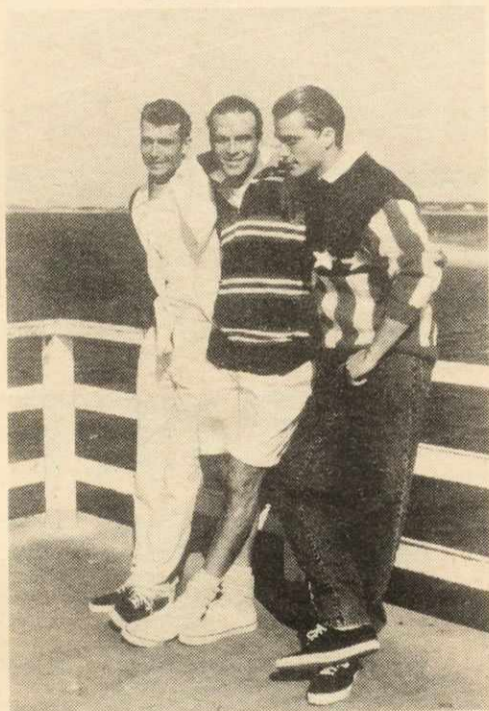
So I hereby petition all readers, and their two friends to invest in a can of PINK spray paint, available from any Canadian Tire store, and leave a conspicuous bicycle lying in wait, even just for half an hour, and see what happens. It will restore some confidence in your fellow humans to find out that nothing occurs. It will appeal to your baser instincts to get right down to the scalp of some little right-eyed bastard with a full can of Hot-Pink. It's not necessary to inflict any pain on the thief, and legally, the police don't advise it. I myself have been prepared to swing furiously with a kryptonite lock, ever since my wheels were stolen. I still wipe away a tear while I think about it. But don't get me wrong; I'll happily chew the throat out of the person I catch with my wheels.

So this is my call to arms. We must now rally out forces as pillars of the citizenry; environmentally friendly or too poor to buy a vehicle. Bike riders all. Sally forth with your fresh pink cans of enamel, glossy, or even latex (cheapo). Leave a trap. Not just once, but twice. Or three times. The pleasure will be yours to see the festering rat-shit of our urban world carried off in the back of a cop car, with only the hot pink of their skull bobbing and pleading their innocence in the rear window.

Keep riding

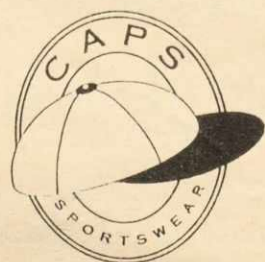
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