

We must recognize who our real allies are: not the wealthy and business class of any colour, but other working class and oppressed peoples. Together we can build a fightback that can win.

Paula Cornwall, International Socialists

Writer way off

To the editor:

John Cullen need not have come to King's before writing his vicious little diatribe; it sounds as though he had already formed his opinion well before he set foot in the Quad.

It is pathetic to see that he has not gotten over being expelled from private schools years ago, and has not progressed beyond infantile raving about Upper Canada WASPs, money, tradition, and all the other evils that beset us at King's.

It is obvious that he has not actually spoken with any King's students, nor do I expect would he, should he discover that the vast majority of us were not born into the money-soaked Upper Canadian WASP elite which he sees lurking behind every shadow here.

It might open Mr. Cullen's mind to spend a day or two at King's to see how we really live over here. From the tenor of his article, I fear that it would take more than the wrecking ball he wants to smash King's with to do so.

Colin Pye 3rd year B.J. (Hons) (pyec@is.dal.ca)



Looking at things realistically.

Residence sucks

To the editor:

What's the deal with the residence people writing in about how they are so hard done by? Let's look at things realistically. Residence sucks! I lived there in my first year, and I don't have anything good to say about the experience.

The male dominated Howe Hall is nothing short of a pit of misogynous rhetoric. It's surprising that something like this tee shirt thing didn't happen sooner.

As for the letter by John Killam, it sounds to me like a bit of pre-campaign clean-up on his part, in order to straighten out his reputation before the upcoming elections. If you haven't already guessed, it's my prediction that we will soon have another Howe Hall'er gunning for the head post of the DSU.

Just what we need.

Name withheld

We need Frosh Week

To the editor:

Everybody always gripes and complains about student apathy at Dal: how few people go out and cheer at varsity games, and how the voter turnout for Dal student elections is embarrassingly low. It seems that one of the few times when students actually get out and show some Dal spirit is Orientation Week, during which new students become acquainted with the university.

In the course of this one week each year, Dal truly comes alive. For anyone that has been through Frosh Week, they know it is a fabulous experience where friendships are formed, and lasting memories created. It is also the first opportunity that first-year students really have to feel like a

part of the Dal community. Moreover, Frosh Week is a time when students become acquainted with the school as a whole and with the city. In addition to this, the Shinerama component of Frosh Week gives the residents of Halifax the opportunity to see Dal students in a positive light while students are providing a valuable community service. For students from outside of metro, it gives them some time to get a feel for their new surroundings, and for local students, they get an opportunity to meet people from all areas and walks of life before being thrown into the harrowing experience of classes.

Unfortunately, these instrumental, formative days are soon to be over. School at Dal will become just that and no more: school. The Senate recently approved a motion to reduce Frosh Week to only three days, which effectively eliminates much of the time required for first-year students to become oriented on campus and meet people. Shinerama will most likely become an event of the past. It is most disheartening to think that future generations of Dal students won't be able to look back fondly on their Frosh Week because their first memories of Dal are merely of classes. The people who are making all these decisions are forgetting an integral part of student life at university. University is more than countless lectures and heavy text books. With a drastically reduced Frosh Week, a student's first steps will only be to class, and nowhere else. People think student apathy at Dalhousie is at an all-time high now, but just wait until orientation week becomes history. The elimination of orientation week assures the dissipation of the last remnants of energy, pride and school spirit here at Dal.

Alix Dostal

Read a book

Dear Editor,

I'm a little concerned about Daniel Clark. His two movie reviews (or were they opinion pieces?) — the first on Nixon, the second on Mr. Holland's Opus — make me wonder if my generation is learning everything it knows from the movies.

Mr. Clark's Nixon piece began well, with his recognition that not all of Oliver Stone's conception of the Nixon administration was factually correct. However, Mr. Clark proceeds to repeat a number of the movie's inaccuracies, while adding a few of his own.

For example, Mr. Clark asserts that Richard Nixon called his wife, Pat, "Buddy." If Mr. Clark had bothered to read even one single book about Nixon, rather than spending his three hours in the theatre, he might have discovered this to be a Stone fabrication.

Mr. Clark states that Nixon organized the Bay of Pigs invasion; while the operation was conceived under Eisenhower's administration, Nixon was not the sole or even primary planner. It is a well-known fact among those who have read books about either Eisenhower and/or Nixon that Eisenhower himself did not have full confidence in his vice president's abilities.

Finally, Mr. Clark said that Nixon helped bring down someone named "Alger Hess." Having heard the name in the movie, couldn't Mr. Clark muster up the energy to find out how to correctly spell Alger Hiss' name? The silver screen, like the television screen, is no substitute for research and independent thought. Mr. Clark's earth-shattering conclusion, that Richard Nixon was a complex individual, could have come from visiting a library rather than a movie theatre.

In the latest issue of the Gazette, Mr. Clark requires the services of (surprise!) another movie to validate his personal life experiences. He urges us to gain "insight" and "passion" from watching this movie, rather than, say, having a conversation with a close friend.

I eagerly await his next column, which will no doubt inform us that, based on "Outbreak" and "Twelve Monkeys," Mr. Clark believes that biological weapons research endangers the entire human race.

Lisa Desilets

opinions

Saving the whales and eating veal

The other day I happened to be in the Grad House (where else?) and I overheard a conversation that included a large number of topics. My reason for writing about this is that it seemed to me that everyone at the table was going out of their way to appear to be more of a bleeding heart than everyone else. It was a strange competition of who was involved with the largest number of causes.

As I listened, the discussion went through what could be considered the Who's Who of the disenfranchised. And what was most strange was that although some of their points were valid, and I actually hold some of those opinions myself, for the most part, the people involved in the discussion were sorrily uneducated, or completely misinformed, about the

causes that they felt so strongly. Strange as it may seem, we live in an age where people are defined by the causes with which they identify. I can't begin to tell you the number of times I've heard people say things like, "Oh that's So-and-So, she's a Such-and-Such activist."

I have had occasion to notice that some people won't even talk to other people before they know with which causes they're involved. This seems really strange to me because if their goal is to educate the rest of the world about the validity of their position, they should be talking to everyone.

Anyway, in case any of you want to know a bit about what I believe in, here it goes.

I do eat meat, and yes, I also eat veal. I don't have a problem

with the fur industry. Hell, I'd be wearing fur if I could afford it. I am pro-choice. I believe in gun control. I'm a socialist with some very minor socialist tendencies. I'm a small 'I' liberal, and a big 'C' Conservative, which probably makes me a red tory. I don't believe in censorship. I think Marxist philosophy is stupid. I'm not a Christian. I do drink. I think drugs should be legalised. I think prostitution should be legalised. I do believe in sexual freedom, but I don't believe in inter-generational sex. And finally, I think we should save the whales.

Well, I'm sure there's more, but I can't think of anything right now. If you think that I have enough in common with you, come up and say hello.

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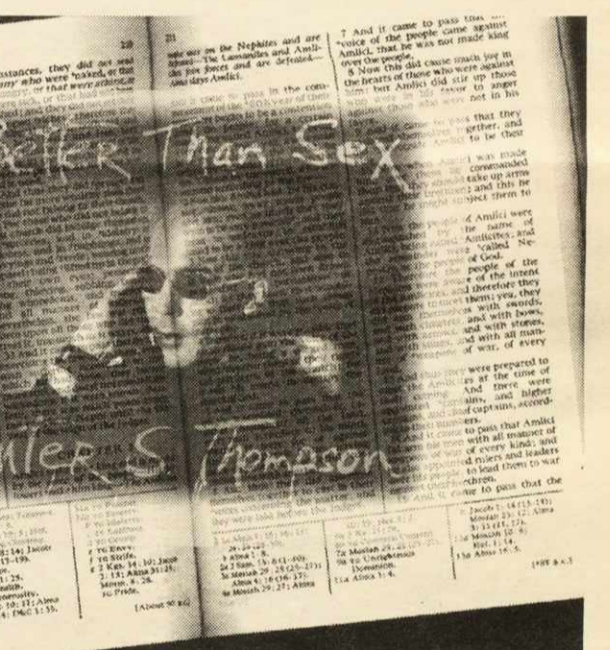
No more "stump the zealot"

The other day, as I dodged vicious phone calls from irate King's students, two gentlemen knocked on my door. We have all had this experience some time or another in our lives; it is the knock from God. At least once a year, some fanatic comes to my door and tries to peddle their religion. Usually this is the job of the Jehovah's Witness', but I was surprised that my visit came from the Mormons. The two guys were not much older than myself, and were dressed in a conservative, trench coat manner.

Most people say they are 'not interested' when that knock comes; however, I like to talk to them. It used to be that I'd play "Stump the Zealot," (with questions like: "O.K., if Adam and Eve were the start of humanity, wouldn't that mean they had to sleep with their kids to form an entire race, and isn't incest against church policy?") but now I like to hear what they have to say. I was not familiar with Mormon belief and I wanted to learn.

I drilled them with questions about what they do (no drinking, smoking, sex, music, T.V., or any other worldly pleasures); why they go door to door (they see themselves as missionaries; when they turn 19 they travel and spread their message); and, their belief (mainstream christianity with abundant prayer). I was raised Catholic and quickly outgrew it when I got my own mind. However, these guys were deeply religious people. They assume that their religion is right for everyone, and do not see anything wrong with trying to sell it to other people. In their eyes, I'm just a lost soul that will rot in hell for all of eternity. And that is where the problem lies.

Over the past one hundred years, religion has lost a whole bunch of popularity. With increased technology, more people believe in big business than some bearded man who preached about giving up all luxuries. I would not be surprised one bit if the christian church started taking out ads in the Globe & Mail looking for more priests (In the wake of AIDS, why not turn to the Lord?). My two Mormon friends were canvassing for new membership in their club, because too many people have decided to cash in on the Now, rather than waiting until death to get all the rewards. Are these people better persons because they have faith? And what is faith...someone once told me that faith is turning a blind eye to



"They essentially come to my house and tell me that my lifestyle is wrong and needs a-changin'. So would it be wrong if I knocked on their door and told them to go out and enjoy the carnal goodies of the 20th century?"

reality. That is the extreme sceptic's point of view, and I don't necessarily agree with it. I suppose they are happier than myself since I spend a lot of time worrying about these things, while they are already on the path to heaven.

The problem lies in perception. My parents taught me that Catholicism was right, and all other forms of religion were pagan fodder for the unintelligent. Meanwhile, some Jewish parent was saying to their child that all of my beliefs were twisted and sacrilegious. And what does this "I'm right and your wrong and that's that" bickering do? Causes wars, that's what. The Crusades, to be more pointed. How about World War One and Northern Ireland? They all boil down to religious squabbling. So how does a faith that preaches general goodness explain the fact that, in their eyes, all nonbelievers are blasphemous and dangerous? This is where my Mormon guests come in. They essentially come to my house and tell me that my lifestyle is wrong and needs a-changin'. So would it be wrong if I knocked on their door and told them to go out and enjoy the carnal goodies of the 20th century?

To me, travelling salesmen of the Soul are the lowest of the low.

JOHN CULLEN