

# opinions

## Limitless

Our lives are broken  
 Shattered into small fragments  
 Fragments of glass  
 The pieces pierce our flesh  
 and draw blood to the surface  
 As the blood forms a pool  
 we see our reflection  
 It allows for an interpretation  
 Although we are unclear of the implications  
 We must peel back the layers that  
 make the vision cloudy  
 To reveal the reality  
 and make the existence boundless

ANTHONY ROBERTS

BGLAD!

I arrived in Halifax on the sixth day of September. If you can't remember that far back, I will remind you of the condition of the atmosphere that day. I couldn't have wished for more utopian daylight... particularly because I chose to linger in the Public Gardens.

I made myself a cup of coffee and I lit a cigarette before I set out on my short jaunt to the gates of the garden. I began to walk, off the path, although I was well aware of my breach (it was not an act of rebellion). The air was fragrant with sweet balms, and I did feel soothed. This was the first time in four months that I had been free of obligations, other's expectations, limitations, renunciations... and the like. Now that I was walking through one of my most favourite places which has all the qualities that please my senses and comfort my mind, I was finally conscious of the fact that I felt so satisfyingly alive. I smiled. I made other people smile.

I went immediately over to the first flowers that I saw. I could hear the refreshing trickle of the fountain, children laughing, the quack of the ducks thanking people for bread and popcorn. Presently, I stood next to a floral colonnade. It was the most exquisitely unusual display of showy plants that I had ever seen. I was forced to touch them, and to smell them up close. Although my mother had taught me to name various flowers, I was unable to name any of these. I sat down, and then lay back. I was surrounded by flowers on each side. I then closed my eyes.

As I lay in the cool narrow leaves I begin to think about how fortunate we all are to have this place of privacy, safety, meditation, and study. I thought, I'd like to express gratitude to the human beings responsible for its rejuvenation, coordination, renovation, and orchestration. So thank you! I lay in that spot for a couple of hours as I read writings of enduring interest.

When I returned home I met with a friend who had been to the garden the previous day. She had a story to tell, and I shall tell it to you.

Avery went to the garden for the same reason everybody went. She wanted to relax, and perhaps drift off to sleep. She lay herself down in a similar place to the one I had chosen, but she refrained from closing her eyes. She was watching a man, and her ears were intent on hearing what he had to say. This man was a wanderer with no home... a roadster, a tramp, a piker, a hobo, a floater, itinerant, ambulant, and angry. Avery watched him and listened with interest. He was telling people who sat on the grass to "Fuck Off." She did not want him to tell her to do the same. To her dismay, he turned in her direction. She grew somewhat wary, but she kept her eyes open.

It was a hot day. She was perspiring in her t-shirt. This man wore a torn sports coat, and beige pants that were unclean. His short growth stubble demonstrated that he had recently shaved. He was still in a state of being worthy, if only to himself. The man approached Avery. She lay still. He was about six meters away when he spoke to her; "Can't sleep there... cops'll come and kick ya out." He walked on, and she closed her eyes.

Later I sat on my front porch, drinking tea and smoking a cigarette. I stared at the garden as the search light beamed around. Avery's story had evoked my thoughts. I tried to imagine this man's life as it was, and how it is today... Where will he sleep this evening? In a stairwell of a parking lot, a cardboard box, or perhaps a cemetery? Maybe he will not sleep. This man is angry because life has been unfair. We help to worsen his predicament. We continue to be unfair to him... the Public Gardens is his heaven on earth. The man is not violent. He is frustrated, confused, desperate, and alone. Sometimes, he needs to give expression to his condition of being. I think that we should remind ourselves that we all have the capacity for experiencing the feelings and thoughts of another. If he wants to sleep, let him lie in a state of calm and quiet... undisturbed.

Wise One of the Mountain

## Hoping to celebrate diversity

To the editor:

Well folks, it's Christmas time again! Of course, not all of you celebrate Christmas, but don't worry, your student union will enthusiastically celebrate on your behalf. The majority of Dalhousie Student Union councillors (your representatives) responded with a resounding No! to a motion raised at Sunday's meeting directing that the SUB discontinue the discriminatory practice of decorating the SUB for Christmas, and of purchasing and displaying a Christmas tree in the SUB lobby.

It is utterly inappropriate for a union representing all of the diverse constituents of the Dalhousie community to give such precedence to the beliefs of a single group. I am not suggesting that Christmas on campus be suppressed. There is a difference, however, between allowing all groups on campus the freedom to celebrate, and spending Union funds to celebrate a particular religious holiday.

The response to this plea for diversity varied from hostility to ridicule. The majority of councillors expressed disbelief at the concept that anyone would actually take offence to the

Union's celebration of Christmas. Some councillors attempted to differentiate between the Christmas tree, and the religious holiday it represents. Some tried to justify the celebration as a "tradition", the absence of which would have serious implications to staff and student morale. Still others claimed that not celebrating Christmas with


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Union funds in Union space would be discriminatory to those students with Christian beliefs. None of these councillors seemed able to recognize the fun-

damental inconsistency of spending Union funds on one religious celebration, and suggesting that individual societies be responsible for the handling of their own celebrations. This reflects our societal construct that Christianity is the "norm", and all other beliefs a deviation.

As member of the DSU, we must express our outrage at the Union's discriminatory policy. All of the Union's efforts to encourage, to celebrate diversity on campus, may be undermined by council's mishandling of this issue. Please, voice your concern to speaking to your DSU representatives, an by writing both to the DSU council and to the Gazette. don't be silenced by ignorance.

Dana James



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