

No one cares about apathy

And now, two messages from another angry young student.

First, to all the students who have the privilege of attending this beautiful university, fuck you.

There, I've said it. Not a very constructive way to make friends, but please take it personally. I'm talking to those ten thousand minus thirty students who couldn't be bothered to walk to Province House on noon Thursday, March 26 to let some people know that the rising price of education has to end.

Maybe you saw me. I wasn't a very good student protestor. I didn't yell, I didn't chant, I didn't tell the patrons of the cafeteria in the Student Union Building to stop stuffing their faces and join the fight. I just tagged along at the end of the line and half way to Province House I relieved a woman of her Freeze the Fees sign on a stick.

Imagine if all student protestors were like me. We'd all be staring at our feet, apologetically holding signs that read, "EXCUSE ME, I HOPE WE'RE NOT DISTURBING YOU BUT IT'S GETTING A LITTLE DIFFICULT TO KEEP UP WITH THESE TUITION HIKES AND IF IT'S NOT TOO MUCH TROUBLE, COULD YOU PLEASE DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT? OH, AND ONE MORE THING, EDUCATION IS A RIGHT, NOT A PRIVILEGE."

Fortunately, not all student protestors are like me. There are people with voices who aren't afraid of using them. There are students who are concerned with the direction that university education is taking and don't

Gazette gets results

To the editor:

I am very happy I decided to talk to the *Gazette*. Results are already showing. I received a letter from my head of department attesting the fact that the dean of arts was, without saying so officially, granting me in fact three weeks of paid maternity leave. I suppose I should be thankful... Who would, except in a third world country, want to go back to work ten days after giving birth, with a sore episiotomy, and when you spend half of your nights up? But it is a start, and it creates a precedent for anyone in the future with similar problems, and hopefully for a union that will make sure anyone else does not have similar problems...

As far as parking is concerned, is Mr. Louch's conscience bothering him? He probably forgot what he wrote to me (see *Gazette* March 11). Also, he told me that the committee was meeting only once a month, so an appeal would have been to no avail since the next one would have taken place after my child's birth, and possibly after the end of the school year. Last but not least, I did have a certificate from my obstetrician testifying that I had difficulty walking, but I did not have the time to send it since the decision was made the day I called. For Mr. Louch, inability to walk does not mean pain... Well, what can you expect?

Anyway, my son made a happy start in life, and his mother will never stop pointing at society's mistakes, for the sake of other people who should not go through the same treatment. Some may think equality for women is a "big" fight: it is, in fact, made up of "small" but necessary steps that we take not so much for ourselves only, but for others as well.

Martine Jacquot

mind doing silly things like yelling through bull horns and waving signs in front of Province House.

Unfortunately, thirty to fifty students from Dalhousie, Kings, St. Mary's and Mount St. Vincent is not deemed newsworthy by our local media. Therefore I first direct my anger at you, dear student. Perhaps if you had joined our march and there were three hundred or three thousand protestors, we would have received more coverage. As it stands, the only evidence that the protest took place was a 60 second blurb on a local news channel and a pretty colour photo on the front page of the *Daily News*.

However, it wouldn't be fair to simply blame students. If a cure for apathy were found and all the students took part in a protest, would the media be bothered with reporting the story? Student protests are passé. It's been done before. Now if we had murdered someone, that would be news. Besides, wasn't February Student Issues Month?

Of course, I can't forget the politicians. They lined up for their turn at the mike, said some nice things about education being an investment in the future of our country, spoke to a couple of reporters and by the time I worked up enough nerve to speak, they had disappeared.

But most importantly, I am angry with myself. I've been letting other people do the talking because I don't have the courage to speak up for myself. I want some answers from those people who decide how much money I should pay to go to university. I want to know how bad it has to get before students get a break. I want to understand the logic behind telling students that the only way we're going to sur-

vive in this world is by getting an education and then upping the price. If I am among the unemployed again this summer, how can my family afford to send me to university in the fall? Will I qualify for a student loan this year or do I have to wait until the mine my father works in closes down permanently?

There are at least ten thousand students here at Dal and I refuse to believe that there are only thirty students in Halifax who can't afford or simply don't want to pay another 10, 15 or 25% increase in tuition fees. Tuition hikes are not the only way to fund university programs, but with the lack of reaction from students, we're proving that it's the easiest.

Student protests may be unfashionable, but they are necessary. It's the first step students can take to show the public that people are being affected by tuition increases. Once the public, the politicians and the media realize that a lot of students aren't happy with the direction that education is taking, only then will we be taken seriously. Maybe then, students, faculty and government will be able to work for better access to education.

Kind of sounds too good to be true, huh? Well this and much more can be yours for the low price of signing a petition, voting in an election or taking part in a student protest.

So to those apathetic students with whom I've had the pleasure of attending Dalhousie, fuck you. As for message number two, to those of you who manage to make it back to Dalhousie in September, I hope I see more of you. And if you agree to carry the Freeze the Fees sign on a stick, I'll bring the popcorn.

Judy Reid



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