

editorial

Referendum? What referendum?

It's 8:10 p.m. and I'm about to beat the record for the fastest time to think up, type up and output an editorial.

But that should be no problem when you've got something on your mind. The thing is what I've got on my mind, most students should also have on their minds. They just don't know it.

As you can read on page 12, you (students) will have the opportunity to vote during the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) referendum in less than two weeks. The question is rather convoluted, but it boils down to basically this: whether or not you want to continue membership in the CFS.

You can look at it this way, \$4 (maybe \$6 and don't forget to include the consumer price index) in CFS' pocket or \$4 (maybe \$6 and don't forget to include the consumer price index) in your pocket. Or maybe you would rather decide by weighing all the pros and cons of being a member of this national student organization.

But I'm not here to debate one side or the other. There isn't enough time right now and we've run out of space in the paper. The point is why you don't know about the referendum that's to take place in less than two weeks.

Where are all those annoying and environmentally wasteful posters that usually plaster every single free wall space on campus during every election or referendum? (Not that I'm saying they actually help increase awareness or anything.) And how come an ad appears in the *Gazette* only in the last issue before the referendum?

Let me explain: I happened to look in my little daybook on Tuesday, blissfully thinking about the camping trip I'm going to be on during my week off from the *Gazette*, when I noticed that I had scribbled down that a CFS referendum is supposed to be happening during the third week of October.

Then it struck me: "Hey... that's only two weeks away." And our the next issue of the *Gazette* will be published after referendum is supposed to have taken place.

So I called the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) office and found out that — BIG OOPS! — there appears to be some confusion as to how this whole thing is taking place.

Hello.

This is supposed to be the referendum that the DSU has been trying to hold for the past three years. This membership question was felt to be important and significant enough to bring to a vote by all Dalhousie students. And, for those of you who don't know, this referendum was already cancelled and postponed from last year to ensure that everything was done "right" this year.

And now we're down to less than two weeks and what do we have? A big scramble at the last minute to pull off the biggest referendum to be held on this campus for some time.

Well, it's definitely not going to be a "big" turnout. Taking into account the general level of apathy and the fact that it's midterm time for many students, plus the not-much-time factor — oh yeah, did I mention the chief returning officer that was "missing" then found? — the DSU has got quite a job ahead of it to pull this one off.

So when's the campaigning period start? Next week, I was told. And are there any groups registered to campaign for either the 'yes' side or the 'no' side? No, I was told.

Well, at least they managed to submit a late ad for the *Gazette* (with last minute referendum date corrections before we went to press).

I guess we'll just have to wait and see how this one goes.

Lilli Ju



LETTERS

The Dalhousie *Gazette* welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should not exceed 500 words in length and should be typed and double-spaced. The deadline for letters is Monday 4 pm before publication. Letters may be e-mailed or submitted on Macintosh or IBM-compatible 3.5" disk.

Sex is a big deal

To the editor,

In response to the JOE & JO article on sexual activity, I would like to introduce a different perspective on sexuality and relationships.

True freedom is among the choicest of life's blessings. Unfortunately, it is something very often misunderstood by those who enjoy it and by those who do not. Some believe that freedom is the right to do what one wishes and one pleases — at any time and any place.

True freedom must accept certain governing principles. People who ignore this pendulum of conduct are threatening their individual decency. Within the framework of creation, individuals must live out their roles in accordance with their will of the almighty. That may sound like slavery, but actually it is perfect freedom.

With the experience I have had with young adults, the idea of sex and sexuality has always been a debate. Some students have told me things

like "sex is no big deal. It's just an everyday occurrence."

One guy admitted having 30 partners — this kid was 18!! Unfortunately, many of my university experiences have shown that these young adults are the only ones that have a monopoly on unadulterated sexual activity. We must think again that sex is no big deal.

Forget about pregnancy for a minute. Forget about the diseases you can get or the hurt you might feel after finding out that someone has just used you for sex. I think that the attitudes that some people have are bad news. One girl once told me that some in her high-school that slept together aren't even "boyfriend and girlfriend".

Do you know what this is? It's sex stripped of all feeling and emotions — sex as a recreational activity, just an act of momentary entertainment like having your favorite meal. It's reducing sex to a mere bodily function.

Human life is built around relationships and sex is a means to bond a

special relationship. But viewing sex only as a bodily function, teaches you not to really care about anyone else's feelings. It makes you give up lots of the things that make your life meaningful. And I'm not talking about your virginity. Worst case scenario: It's giving up the ability to be committed and stable in a certain relationship even through bad times. Makes you wonder why we are experiencing so many broken homes and failed marriages.

If you've learned not to value the feelings of others, it has to affect your relationship with family friends, employers and your community. If sex is "no big deal" you'll always be looking for something that is a "big deal". Casual, meaningless sex can make your life seem empty and dull because you'll feel you've done and seen everything.

People whose lives seem empty aren't usually motivated to work to make the world a better place. And people who don't care about the feelings of others aren't likely to respect their needs and rights. They're the ones looking out for themselves and what might bring gratification next.

At a Heidelberg conference, 800 sexologists were asked if they would sleep with the person of their dreams if the person has HIV and they depended on a condom for protection. One hand was raised. The speaker berated them for hypocrisy, teaching what they would not do themselves. Some of the same analogies can be made of some of this university's "free loving" sex advocates.

The chastity based programs I know of empower people to be in charge of their lives. No contraceptive can protect you from heartache and feeling used. If someone tells you that they need sex, what they really mean is that they need to use you for their own satisfaction.

So please think long and hard about sex. It is a big deal. In this game, the ones with the most points are definitely the losers.

H. Gibson.

Ronald Samson

Ad offends

To the editor,

I am writing to express my concern over the publishing of an advertisement for "My Other Brother Darrell's" restaurant in the September 29, 1994 issue of the *Gazette*.

My understanding is that the ad is an excerpt from their menu and is somewhat less offensive, and perhaps even funny, when written in its entirety. Unfortunately, as it reads in the *Gazette*, it is offensive and not all that funny.

In fact it borders on stupid and is blatantly sexist. One has to ask what type of clientele the restaurant seeks by boldly claiming that "Britig is a good table dancer... and Judy looks right cute in her Darrell's T-shirt".

The final line of the ad, for those of you who did not see it, refers to the Bobbitt phenomena with the warning that if you do not enjoy your visit to the restaurant to remember that "Ann has a big knife", once again undermining the issue of domestic violence.

Finally, one also must ask why the *Gazette* does not edit ads and views such as censorship.

Maybe I simply missed the humour in this ad but then again I do not refer to Andrew Dice Clay as a comedian either. Nonetheless, the restaurant has lost a lot of business due to this sexist and completely ridiculous ad, but more importantly, the *Gazette* has just as many confused and insulted readers.

H. Gibson.

Ronald Samson

the Gazette

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