

editorial

Happy Birthday!

An extra heaping scoop of peanut butter fudge ice cream. Staying in bed until 3:00 on a Saturday with a paperback and a mug of hot chocolate.

New lingerie and white wine.

A long, steamy bubble bath.

We all indulge ourselves from time to time. Something always tells us we shouldn't, but we do it anyway.

This issue of the *Gazette* is pure self-indulgence. We bought an ice cream cake and had our name put on it. We made T-shirts. We devoted an issue to ourselves.

Hell, we deserve it.

Think of it. Older than the *Globe and Mail*. Older than the A & A. Older than six provinces. Older than George Burns.

If there's one thing consistent in the *Gazette's* history, it's that it's never been good enough for everybody. People have always thought it should shape up. That hasn't changed.

Think of it. One hundred and twenty-five years of pissing people off.

And who would have it any other way? Student newspapers are educational gold. Where else can students write critically about anything in their world and have it read, edited, commented on, disagreed with, yawned at and discarded by thousands of other students? Where else do you get public debate that's as free and wide-ranging? Not in a classroom. Not in a corporate-owned, profit-driven newspaper or university public relations rag. Certainly not at a Board of Governors or a Student Council.

You could say, then, that student newspapers are one of the strongest bastions of academic freedom going. And volunteers do it all, and never expect tenure.

Sound pretentious? Sound like 125 years have gone to our heads?

Too bad. Self-justification is another indulgence of which we should all partake when we think we've got something important to say.

After all, to have lasted this long, we must have been doing something right.

Ryan Stanley, esq.

In 1922 the *Gazette* actually received up to 50 letters to the editor per issue. Of course the paper only came out 20 times a year. It's still a far cry from the 2 or 3 we receive now.



LETTERS

The Dalhousie *Gazette* welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should not exceed 300 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.

Bus beefs

To the editor,

There are certain experiences that we share as students and one I think is very important to students who live in places like Dartmouth, Bedford, etc is using the Metro Transit system. If you have never bussed it regularly then you will probably have no idea what I am talking about. But those of you who rise at an ungodly hour to catch a ridiculously early bus in order to make it to an 8:30 class will know all too well.

Taking the bus is a necessary evil that is sometimes made unpleasant by other passengers. Commuting is a stressful experience and one should not take it lightly. After observing the behaviour of some fellow travellers, I now firmly believe that one should have to obtain a license in order to take the bus. Anyway, this will probably never happen so it would make me feel a lot better if I could get a message to those of you who do not know proper bus etiquette. So here is my list of five things that I hate about taking the bus:

1. Headphones. I hate it when I have to listen to Black Sabbath through somebody else's earphones at 7:30 in the morning. Don't get me wrong, I like Black Sabbath as much as anyone, but the sound that comes out of somebody's earphones doesn't do Ozzy Osbourne justice. It may sound okay to the intentional listener but it sounds like a tortured squirrel to the person sitting next to him or her. And why so loud? Is it really necessary to listen to music so loud that one becomes oblivious to the outside world?

2. Perfume/Cologne. I don't know why some people don't know this, but it does not smell pleasant when you dump half a bottle of Escape over your body before you leave your house in the morning. At that dosage it should be called Run Away.

3. People who stick their legs out into the aisle. This is a stupid thing to do on a crowded bus and if you don't know the reason why you should be put to sleep.

4. People who refuse to move to the back of the bus. There are even signs on the bus telling you to do this! There's always that one moron who wants to talk to his friend in the second row and blocks the way to the back for other people getting on. What ends up happening is that those who get on after this guy get to sit on the bus driver's lap because there is no room (which tends to piss him off).

5. For God's sake watch those backpacks!!! I can't count the times that I've been knocked unconscious by some cheesehead who doesn't look behind him before throwing his backpack over his shoulder.

Anyway, I hope you print this so that those of who don't know these unwritten rules will take heed.

J.A.Stamp

Gone rabbit

To the editor,

Those are real rabbit furs adorning the necks of Dalhousie's Bachelor of Arts graduates in photos and convocation ceremonies. I chose not to wear the traditional rabbit-fur-lined hood because I couldn't feel proud about recognizing an event in my life such as this by putting a dead rabbit around my neck and saying "cheese", but that's just me. Although I was the only one of over 400 convocating BA graduates not to wear the gamey hood I was pleasantly surprised by fellow students who seemed to share my point of view.

This is not another tactic to pressure people into political correctness but rather a plea for freedom to claim some ownership of our shared ceremony. Our energy, time and tuition should entitle us to some say in the matter. Tradition is defined in most English dictionaries as an unwritten body of beliefs, facts, etc., handed down from generation to generation. As part of my generation's contribution to Dalhousie's tradition I would propose making a number of non-animal BA hoods available for those who choose not to partake of this custom.

Andrew Donald

Unearthly

To the editor,

Steve Vernon, in all his demonstrated wisdom, asserts that "women, to be equal, must bear equal blame [for rape]." I would like to know what planet Mr. Vernon has just arrived from. I would be delighted to buy him a one-way express ticket back.

First of all, he says that he is "not going to argue the rightness or wrongness of rape." What is "right" about rape? It is a horrible, malicious, inexcusable crime. It is fortunate for Mr. Vernon that he has opted not to argue, since his arguing skills and logic are weak.

Contrary to what Mr. Vernon says, entering a man's room does not mean a woman is to blame for rape. Mr. Vernon tries to argue that acknowledging the existence of crime renders the victim responsible. What planet, Mr. Vernon?

Claiming that "men are built for rape" is not only a blatant falsehood, but it is insulting to every man on this planet. Sure, men are physically stronger than women. Adults are also physically stronger than children. Does this mean that adults are built for child abuse? Oh, wait a second, let me qualify that. The adult must first be frustrated, then he or she can resort to violence. After all, "physical force is always a temptation." So if a child frustrates a parent, it should not be amazing that child abuse occurs. So goes Mr. Vernon's sick reasoning. What planet?

Furthermore, Mr. Vernon's implicit comparison of women to machinery made me positively ill. He has insulted both men and women; portraying men as strong idiots who have no control over their physical desires, and portraying women as mindless creatures who must take blame for being raped.

What planet, Mr. Vernon, what planet?

Suzanne J. Chisholm

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