

Fuming mad over fight for clean air space

by Heidi Radford

According to the recent report of the U.S. Environment Protection Agency (EPA), Dalhousie University (DAL) students who oppose smoking in the Student Union Building (SUB) have definite grounds for their concern.

The EPA reports that exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (ETS), can cause lung cancer. The report designates ETS as a Group A carcinogenic, a rating used only for dangerous substances (such as asbestos) known to cause cancer in humans.

The mounting evidence clearly supports the need for tighter restrictions on smoking in public places," said Alfred Munzer, M.D., spokes-

person for the Coalition on Smoking or Health. This news comes at a time when enforcement of Dalhousie University's non-smoking policy is being questioned. DAL Student Union Vice-President, Dennis MacNeil says numerous non-smoking students have paid a visit to his office in complaint of the lack of consideration by smokers who refuse to abide by the non-smoking restriction in certain areas.

The biggest complaint is when there is a smoker smoking in a non-smoking area who will not leave when asked," says MacNeil. "Usually when they are asked to move the smoker refuses, laughs or ignores the request." MacNeil says he expects students to abide by the regulations but at the same time he does not feel a non-

smoking ban is justified. "We have to look at our clientele. We service both smoker's and non-smoker's at DAL and we do not want to exclude either of these groups," explains MacNeil.

When asked about the rights of each group, James Lidington, a fourth year Commerce student held a different view of the problem. "Smokers should not be able to smoke wherever they want," says Lidington. "Non-smoker's are the majority in today's society and this should be recognized." The most controversial public place is the SUB cafeteria where the non-smoker's area is much larger than that of the smoker's. Smoking students do not think this is fair since the cafeteria is one of the only areas on campus which permits



smoking. The rest of campus is smoke-free.

"There is a definite lack of smoking lounges, especially for those who study late at night," says Andre, a DAL Music student.

But smokers have found loopholes. They say it is easy to smoke in campus buildings late at night because no one is around to enforce the policy. Should those who enjoy the art of smoking be forced to sneak a puff inside or stand outside in the cold? Brad, another DAL Music student says he is limited to where he can go

on campus to smoke and he would be upset if they took the few places designated for smokers away.

So what about the dangers of second hand smoke? The Nova Scotia Lung Association released information about the hazards of second-hand smoke. They warn that in 1985, 330 of lung cancer deaths that occurred in non-smokers were directly attributable to exposure to second-hand smoke. The U.S. Surgeon General has concluded that the separation of smokers and nonsmokers within the same airspace may reduce, but does not eliminate, the exposure of non-smokers to second-hand smoke. (Even with the DAL student Union's "smoke-eater" machines in the cafeteria and in the Grawood pub.)

As the problem continues, smokers are asked by the Student Union to respect the rights of non-smokers and smoke in the designated areas. Meanwhile, non-smokers will have to decide whether they wish to be exposed to the risk of the Group A carcinogenic.

Brad the smoker shakes his head at the issue and warns, "A McDonald's milk shake is pretty carcinogenic as well."

Wisdom in science

by Lisa Mitchell

Canadian Student Pugwash is a university-based educational organization concerned with social and ethical issues arising from science and its technological applications. By fostering discussion of these issues among students, scientists and the general public, it promotes the responsible use of science and deepens the understanding of students from all disciplines.

Canadian Student Pugwash (CSP) began as an outgrowth of the International Pugwash Movement, sparked in 1955 when Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein called upon the scientists of the world to meet in conference to discuss the threat of nuclear weapons. The first conference took place in Pugwash, Nova Scotia in 1957. Since then the informal movement has grown worldwide, and its interests have broadened to include the sources of international conflict and social responsibilities.

CSP began thirteen years ago as a number of local organizations on campuses across Canada and a national office to coordinate local and national activities and ensure continuity and consistency of the organization's programs and objectives. I first became aware of CSP three years ago. As someone who has been involved in the environmental movement and activist groups, I found CSP to be an oasis because it encouraged people to listen to all sides of an issue without judgement.

With tuition hikes at universities and funding cuts all over, CSP has struggled to survive both locally and nationally. Students appear to have less and less time and energy and governments and private foundations have less money to support the work of organizations such as CSP. However, the forum provided by CSP is important and deserves support.

Some campus groups have rallied together to pool their resources and provide that forum for discussion and alternative forms of education by hosting a regional CSP conference.

**Bertrand
Russel and
Albert Einstein**

One such conference is supported by three CSP groups and will be held from February 12-14 at McMaster University. The topic is virtual reality. If you are interested in the conference call Farah or Nancy at 1-416-627-2757.

CSP is a multi-disciplinary organization, so it will be a great experience regardless of your educational background. If you are concerned about financing your trip to Ontario, speak to the dean of your program (it has worked before) as there is often a limited amount of funds available to support student conferences. Finally, if you cannot attend the conference but you are interested in CSP call 423-4684.

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