

EDITORIAL

What is so entertaining about that scary combination? Sex and violence. Is it really what we all fantasize about in the backs of our animalistic minds?

The makers of *Basic Instinct* seem to think so, as shown by the title of their movie.

After movies like *Fatal Attraction*, *Dangerous Liaisons* and *Black Widow*, it took the blatancy of *Basic Instinct* to finally make society stop and question the trend.

The film has received a lot of publicity lately. For instance, *McLean's* featured it on its cover, a *Gazette* reporter critiqued it for this week's arts section and I am mentioning it here.

This all risks piquing the public's curiosity and boosting the film's success, despite the disapproval of most of the commentators. One friend told me that despite (or because) of a description she received of the movie being "sex and murder, sex and murder..." she went to see it. And loved it.

Indeed, most people do not pick up on the gravity of the impact of the message sent by such a film. It is just entertaining. It does not strike them as disturbing that such scenes amuse the human mind.

Unfortunately, sex and violence is not mere escapism. Though these movies portray women as the murderers, the message associates excitement with the combination of sex and force. It may even imply that the combination is natural.

Men force themselves on women, or other men. Women do not realize that it is their right to say no. Both parties do not recognize that this is rape. Society tells the man that his role is to be tough. It tells the woman she is to be submissive. If they do not enjoy this, they just don't know what good sex is.

The movie also runs the risk of saying that violating someone sexually is ok as long as there is no blatant violence.

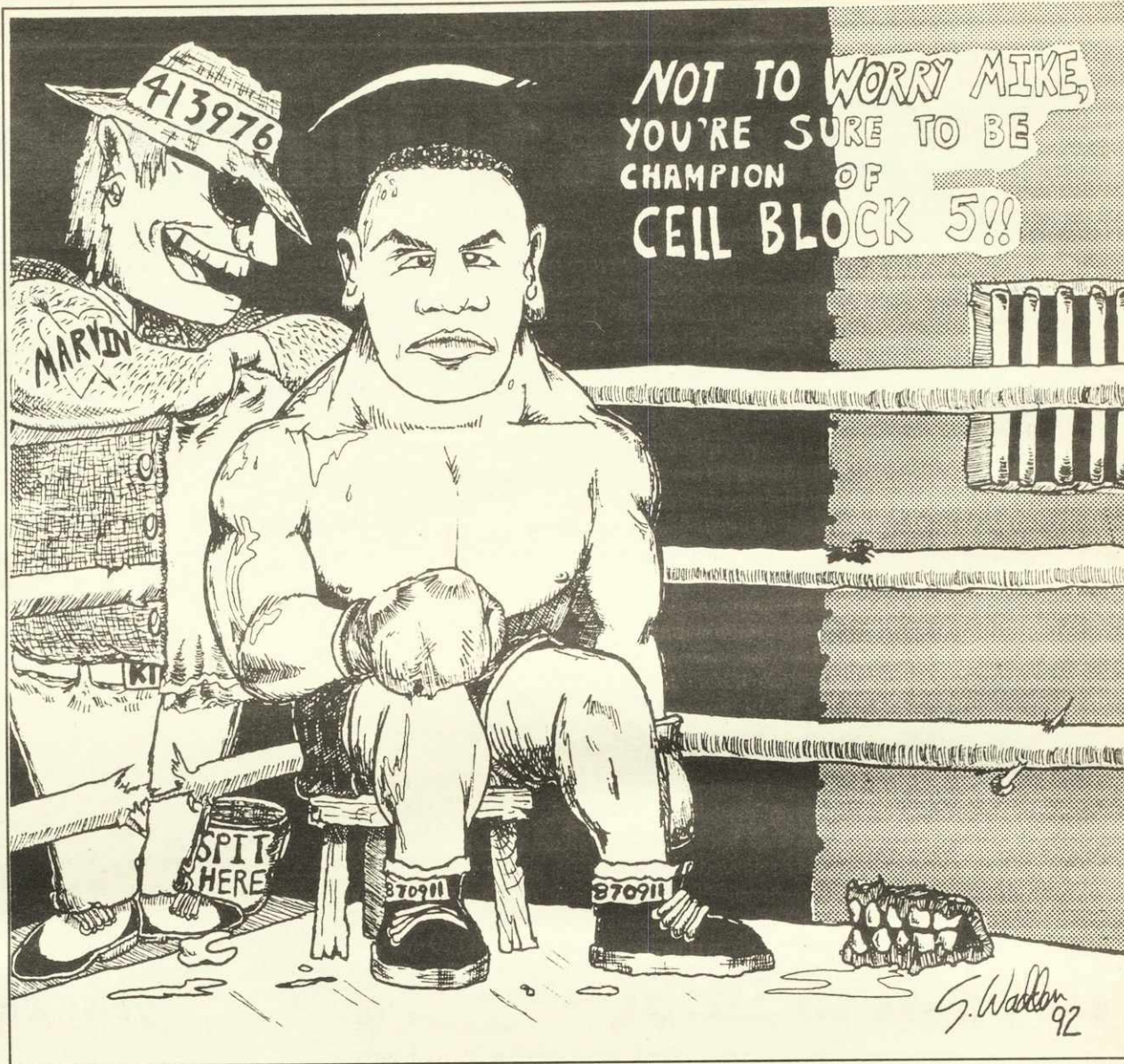
Mike Tyson is still bewildered that he is in prison. "There was no blood, no broken bones," he told the courtroom after his sentencing. William Kennedy Smith was eloquent enough to convince the court and the American public that the woman accusing him of rape asked for it.

It becomes apparent the movie industry is not the only culprit. All media in popular culture — television, music and print — contribute to the trend.

Only recently was I struck by how suggestive the name *The Sex Pistols* really is. It reminded me of an advertisement for holsters depicting a woman modelling a sample of their product. "Put your gun into something soft," read the cutline.

Perhaps this growing obsession with violence and sex is a sign of a times, a response to an age where venereal disease and AIDS puts added limitations on sexual adventure.

It is ironic the modern catch phrase is "safe sex."
Miriam Korn



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 Friday noon before publication. Letters may be submitted on Mac or IBM-compatible 3.5" disk.

Too many Dal News

To the editors:

I am writing in response to Irfan A Mian's letter concerning the excess printing of the *Gazette*. I tend to agree with the editor's note; as far as I know, most of the copies of distributed on our campus must be getting picked up and read, because I am not finding stacks upon stacks of them in the recycling bins which I empty on a daily basis. Allow me to introduce myself to you... I am your friendly neighbourhood recycling attendant. The reason I think the *Gazette* is actually being read comes from the comparison I make with other papers which are deposited in the bins, obviously unread. These other newspapers are placed in the bins in great quantities and are still bound with plastic strapping from the printing press. Every two weeks I find a few thousand copies of the *Dalhousie News* still in bundles; I also receive stacks and stacks of unread copies of the *Journal* and *Picaro*. Continually finding piles of unread papers from these two other schools leads me to wonder if our paper meets a similar fate on their campuses. I would like

to know how many of the 10 000 *Gazettes* are actually distributed on our campus and how many are being thrown out by our fellow universities. I am glad that Dal is at least recycling newspapers, even if they are being mass-produced in vain. I do not understand the theory that printing more could be cheaper than printing less. It makes me sad to see the amount of paper being wasted, and because of my job I have discovered there is a lot more paper being wasted than just unread newspapers.

Christa Bauer



Signs in residence

To the editors:

I have lived in Shirreff Hall

for two years. In this time I have observed relations and conflicts between female and male residents. I feel that members of Res. Council have to take an active role in solving gender problems. This cannot be done when people in authority allow signs to be produced which may offend certain groups of people such as women.

I was concerned to read the March 30 issue of the *Chronicle-Herald*. I was not concerned with the "brawl" but rather the types of signs being used by Howe Hall to advertise the events: "Huge House Party March 28... There will be lots of chicks." Secondly, these signs portray women as objects. The statement "there will be lots of beer" is comparable to saying there will be lots of beer. In this case women are being used in the same way as liquor, to entice men to attend an event. Finally, whether intentional or not, the message expressed is that women will be available. I believe these signs imply that there will be intoxicated women present at the party, so men attending should take advantage of it. With the problem

of sexual assault in today's society, it is unbelievable that signs for events are allowed to express an acceptance of this behaviour.

A second sign advertising the same House Party was posted at Shirreff Hall. I found it offensive as it stated, "There will be lots of big, ugly, hairy dogs there... No, I don't mean our sister floor!". To me, this advertising alludes to the Dragonslayer Award (an award presented to males in Howe Hall who sleep with the ugliest females). Some men at Howe Hall turn this Award into quite a contest and actually try to win it.

As a resident, I believe that members of the Res Council have a responsibility to all residents, to ensure that offensive material is not used to advertise events. People in authority have to be concerned with the message their signs portray and the behaviour their adds support. All three residences (female, male and co-ed) have to work together to create equality between members of the residences and try to end gender conflicts.

A Concerned Resident of Shirreff Hall

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before publication. The *Gazette* offices are located on the third floor of the SUB. Come up and have a coffee and tell us what's going on. The views expressed in The *Gazette* are not necessarily those of the Students' Union, the editors or the collective staff.