

editorial

What are you in for?

I've spent a good part of this year smirking.

You know, that cynical sort of half smile that is equal parts moral superiority, gratuitous cynicism and detached bemusement. Anytime I hear a complaint about someone or something, about a possible scandal brewing, before my hungry journalistic instincts kick in, I tend to smirk.

In my term as copy editor I've adopted a certain indifference to people who come to the Gazette with stories. I have to question motives and who is telling the truth. I won't say I'm a gullible person, but I've been burned before.

It's necessary in my position to question everything. In an ideal world, I'd be able to personally verify everything that is printed in the paper. But I can't do that, and so I have to be careful as to who I believe. That especially goes for stories that I hear from SUB hacks — those fine folk who spend more time than could possibly be healthy inside the Student Union Building.

Now, as anyone who has been to the Gazette — hell, who has even read the paper on a regular basis — would know, we spend a little too much time inside the SUB: physically and topically. We are in the SUB all the time and the easiest stories to write are the ones you only have to go up or down a few flights of stairs to get. And sometimes, if you want to make that extra effort, you can ensure that one of your sources is on the way to the Tiger Trap for a Caramilk bar and some Twizzlers.

Everytime we hear about some screwup in this building, we get very excited here at the Gazette, and conspiracy theories abound. I myself have it under certain authority that one or two VPs are actively involved in the UFO cover-up and at least one holds court nightly in a house of debauchery. OK, so I lied.

I am gullible.

This paper has critically examined, as it rightly should, the actions of the DSU executive and council, and let Dal students in on

some things they otherwise wouldn't have known.

Admittedly, our coverage outside of the SUB has been not as comprehensive. If we could have offices and convenience stores in other portions of campus I'm sure that would encourage reporting of those areas.

As it stands currently, we spend a lot of our time at the paper trying to figure out how to make people involved in student politics look bad. We do it journalistically, and ethically, but it still feels pretty good to have something blow up in someone's face.

And it seems that a lot of the time the DSU hacks are always trying to cover up that which would make them look bad.

So for most of the year these two opposing forces have very politely, with a great deal of smiling, charm and first name-calling, butt heads.

As I wind up my term here at the paper, and look back upon the year gone by, I begin to wonder whether that partially unchecked hostility was worth it. Or deserved.

There is a lot of shit going on in this building and, as much as I want to, I couldn't ever know even half of it. But for every dirty deed, there are at least two done unselfishly for students like yourself.

The simple fact of the matter is that the vast majority of people who are in and out of the SUB in a rush on a daily basis are doing what they are doing for nothing more than personal satisfaction. The vast majority of these people are never compensated for the time they put in, and in many cases go unthanked by those who benefit. The vast majority of these people enrich the life of this university a thousand fold and go unnoticed in the commotion.

This includes those people that organize charity events, or who endure endless meetings and committees, and those who spend hours helping other students in the simplest of ways.

This also includes every person who has ever written anything for the Gazette. I am one of the fortu-

nate few who get a half decent salary for the work I do. The rest of the people who give their time to the paper get little or no compensation. These people spend hours on end writing and editing and working with writers editing, dashing into the office in between classes and often missing them when work needs to be finished. The fact that people want to come back next year and do this some more is simply astounding.

I have enjoyed my time at the Gazette for the last two and a half years. I may be back next year, but not in any official capacity. I am surprised and extremely glad that there are so many people in this office who still have unbridled enthusiasm for the newspaper business and will be able to inject the paper with some of that energy. People who will stay up all night or take a lower grade for the paper are in abundance. The volunteers at the Gazette are as dedicated and selfless as any other.

People throughout the SUB and the university keep volunteering their time when they don't have to, and things are somehow getting done.

Given the unselfish nature of these people — who are often lumped in collectively in the Gazette's bashing of the DSU and other organizations — I would like to personally thank them for everything they've done for the students, whether those students know they've been helped or not. The hard work is appreciated.

Now, while I recognize that the Gazette is, in its own way, working towards the same end as organizations like the DSU, we will still keep our critical stance. The Gazette is committed to giving the students of this university a voice, through the paper that the students own, operate and publish.

I know that students are hungry for the truth. The Gazette is ready to keep giving it to them.

Have a good summer, and keep your eyes open.

TIM COVERT

letters

New possibilities for football money???

I think Brad Mackay has been in his office too long. After the football program was rejected by the Board of Governors he was questioned as to what was going to happen with the money (Gazette, March 20th). He responded with, "Students have already made a massive contribution to that project: the money could be used elsewhere."

Hello? Earth to Brad but I believe I voted in last year's referendum to contribute \$10 to a potential Dal football team. I don't recall voting for providing new revenue for an already ineffective DSU. I want my \$10 back. They can feel free to deduct it from my library fines or the money I owe student accounts. Even the notion that this money can be used elsewhere sickens me. Isn't that some sort of breach of contract? If I agree to provide money for a specific venture and then the venture fails but the money is still there, shouldn't I get my money back? If you mail order a book but it is unavailable it is against the law for them to just send you a different book and hope you're happy with it.

This same rule applies to the DSU. Give us all our money back. We agreed to support a football team and nothing else. If you need more money then hold another referendum but don't you dare try to squeeze us out of money that wasn't meant for you. The DSU is responsible to spend our money where we voted it could go. If they can't do that give us our money back!

Jeff Ohlhausen

Dear editor:

I am writing in reference to the article "No referendum, no decisions" by Monica Gillis published in the March 20th Gazette. A more lazy and haphazard article I have not seen in a long time. Ms. Gillis clearly did no research for the article as it is filled with misrepresentation and out and out lies.

She asserts that, "The failure was a result of council's inability to come to a clear understanding of the referendum question process." This is not true. Council followed the referendum procedure correctly, and passed the questions on to CRO Jenny Riordan in plenty of time.

She asserts that, "The referendum questions were not given to CRO Riordan until after the nomination period opened." This is also not true. Council passed the questions February 16th, before nominations opened.

The DSU constitution states that it is the responsibility of the CRO and the Elections committee to word the question once the subject has been passed onto them. The questions were passed on the 16th, and assertions that the CRO did not receive the questions until the 11th are certainly not true.

In the end the fact that the referendum questions were delayed will actually be of benefit to students, because circumstances forced council to alter the questions so that students will be the ones who save. The most ridiculous thing is that Ms. Gillis was able to misrepresent the facts so blatantly.

I can't help but wonder where the editorial structure of the Gazette broke down to allow this flagrant abuse of journalistic powers. The fact that Ms. Gillis is dating the Deputy CRO only makes things worse. This is a conflict of interest of the worst degree and forces me to believe that she concocted this fairy tale to protect him.

D.R. Clark
DSU Councillor

This is the Gazette's second last issue for this year.

Our last issue will be published next Thursday, April 3rd.

The Gazette will publish again in time for Frosh Week in September.

the Gazette

the Dalhousie Gazette

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The Gazette welcomes letters to the editor and commentary. All letters will be printed up to four per week. The printing of additional letters will be at the discretion of the Opinions Editor.

Letters may be edited for length above 300 words and we reserve the right to edit commentary.

All submissions must be typed double-spaced on paper, e-mailed, or on a Mac or IBM 3 1/2 inch disk, in a WP version not greater than Word 6.0 or equivalent.

The deadline is Mondays at 4:30 p.m.

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