

*Seasons GREETINGS  
from all of us  
at The Gazette*



## Reflect for more than just a week

The Week of Reflection is over. The test now is that we, not just women but including men, not only reflect but also commemorate, the memory of, not just the 14 female victims of Marc Lepine, but all of the products of frequently misogynist social structures, political and other institutions, who have been sexually assaulted in their lives, not just last week, but every week. Indeed, sexual assault occurs daily in our Canadian society and its awareness is not limited to one week of reflection.

On your way downtown on a Thursday night, to the pubs and bars, of course, one in every four women will feel these emotions. True, some might have recently failed an exam or perhaps passed an assignment in late. However, every six minutes, one in every four women will be sexually assaulted. By the time you reach Jerry's Pub from the Dal Sub or Residence, three women have been raped. By the time you stumble into J.J.'s, four, five, perhaps even six women have been raped.

Some will suggest that men are sexually assaulted too. However, 90 per cent of sexual assault survivors are women. Of the remaining 10 per cent, 70 per cent of these men were raped under the age of 13.

Sexual assault happens all too often and it is a non-discriminating reality today.

84 per cent of these horrid crimes are committed by people that the survivor, perhaps even you, already know.

For these results and in an attempt to establish awareness, trying hard to prevent these crimes from occurring, the Dalhousie Sexual Assault Education Team is available to speak to any campus group, council, class and/or other bodies; if so desired.

Most guys reject the thought, as I did, that we, 'normal' guys, are capable of sexually assaulting women. However, guys are taught from a very early age to be self-centred and single-minded about sex. Men commonly view women as objects from which sex is taken and not shared. However, when shared between consenting adults, sex is an awesome experience.

But when a woman says no, guys, we have got to stop there! Sexual assault is a crime and it affects everybody.

What happens now? The first step is to clarify your intentions and your signals. If, for example, you are attracted to Jenny or Mike, tell them

openly and simply. In spite of the existing awkwardness, perhaps it is best if you ask to kiss either Jenny or Mike. If you receive a rejection, and if you get them as many times as I do, you must learn to accept them, without resistance or aggression. Although the rejection may be upsetting or disappointing, a simple rejection is much easier to deal with than an explanation to your parents or others, as to why you are being charged with rape. Indeed, I am confident that a rejection is easier to deal with than serving up to 15 years of your life behind bars, in jail, serving time.

Not every time you ask for a kiss will you be, nor have I always been, rejected. Indeed, when your friend or partner is comfortable, she may just say yes and the two of you will enjoy that moment. Warning: if a woman says no or stop, listen to her. This is not her way of intending to seduce you. Rather, it is her way of saving your ass from spending time in jail.

Let's work together in an attempt to prevent rape from happening to someone you know, perhaps even yourself.

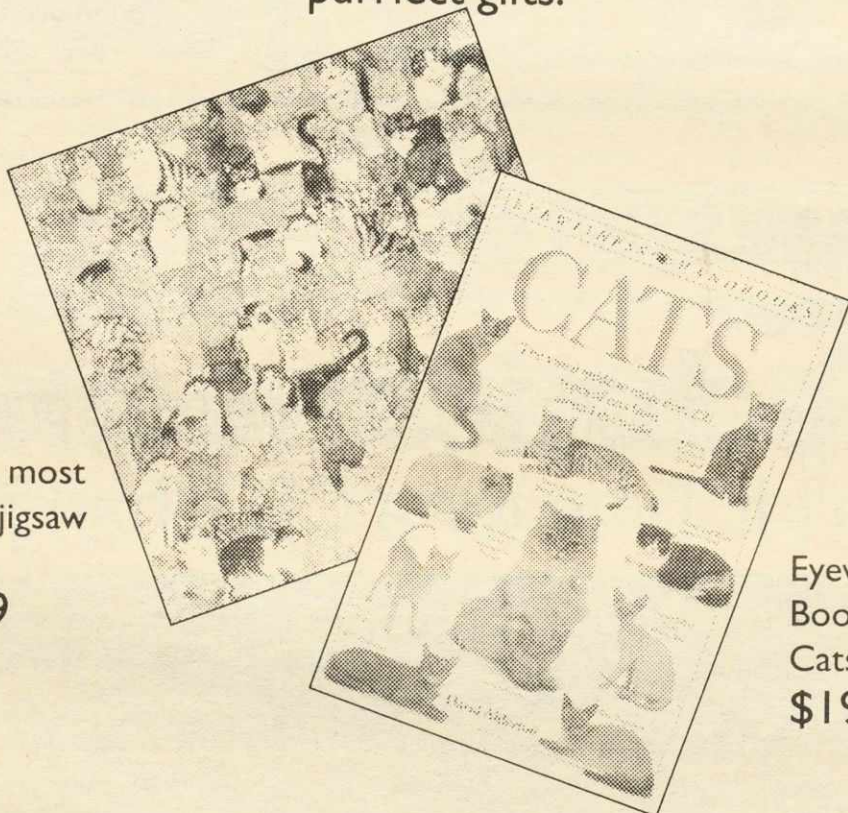
The Dalhousie Sexual Assault Education Team is available through contacting L. Carry at 494-1137.

These opinions are Adam Block's and they may not be shared by other members of the team.

Adam Block

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