

Achieving a balance

by Judy Reid

Until recently, this year's reporters, photographers, editors, cartoonists and entire staff of the *Gazette* all had one thing in common.

They are all white.

When asked why racial representation on the *Dal Gazette* is important, Sean Foyn, a Dalhousie student simply answered, "Shiny happy people." This title of an R.E.M. song was the headline accompanying a photo of a group of black students in the September 10, 1992 issue of the *Gazette*. After publishing the article, the *Gazette* received complaints that the headline was offensive. "Black people are always supposed to be these smiling, happy, dancing people," Foyn explained.

This is not the first incident that the *Dal Gazette* has angered black students with their printing decisions. The 1991 Afro-centricity Supplement printed on February 28, was probably the most picked up issue ever of the *Gazette*. But Tracy Ash, a third year Arts student argues that the *Gazette* staff's decision to run the controversial "Gay Man's Guide to Erotic Safer Sex" in the same issue as the supplement, completely sabotaged all the work she and other students put into making the Afro-centricity Supplement. Ash believes that the supplement was completely ignored as debate centered on the safer sex article soared.

When asked if such an error in judgement would have occurred had a black student been on the *Gazette* staff, she adamantly answers no. "A black student would have picked up on it right away."

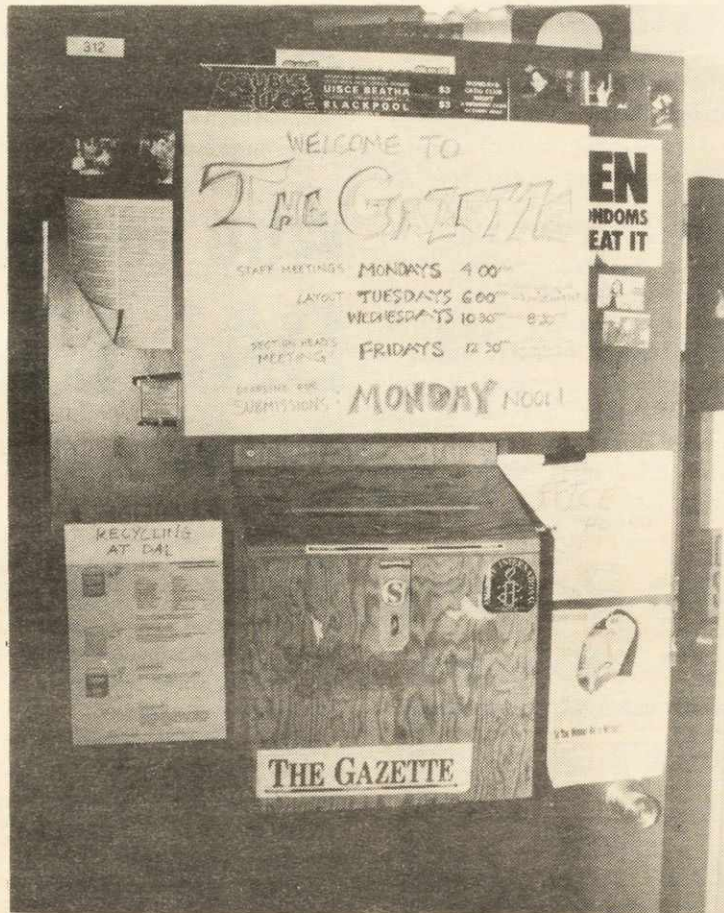
Lynn Atwell, Dalhousie's International Student Advisor as well as Advisor to Students with Disabilities, says that the lack of representation of international students on the paper is shown in the stories that the *Gazette* does not cover. "Does the *Gazette* write issues on Bosnia? It was reported that 22 000 women were raped. Is this not worth the *Gazette* talking about?"

Jenn Beck, co-editor of the *Dal Gazette* sees the consequences of a paper that doesn't have proper representation on staff. "There's going to be a bias within the paper. And that bias is of a white middle-class Anglo Saxon."

But if racial representation is important, why aren't any of the *Gazette* staff people of colour? "A lot of organizations are not designed to make people feel comfortable," explains Tracy Ash. "Coming up against a whole crew of whites, it's going to be your instinct to back off."

"What does the *Gazette* want to do with these students? You have to have some kind of planning. There's going to be some direction," says Lynn Atwell. "Maybe the students don't join the *Gazette* because it just doesn't relate to them."

When asked why the *Dal Gazette* isn't racially representative, Sean



Open sez-me!

Foyn answered, "I think that question is best answered by the staff members of the *Gazette*."

Miriam Korn is not sure what is keeping people out of the *Gazette*. "Maybe we still haven't made enough of an effort," she admits. "We thought of writing letters to all the societies but it's been done in the past and it didn't seem to work."

Ash feels that ensuring representation is the responsibility of the individual. "If we want to be represented we have to get in there and get the information. You have to dig your heels in and get your views across." She adds, "But it's up to the students

up Tuesday nights to put together the pieces which make up the paper).

"Interaction of the staff is needed," states Tracy Ash. "You can't write something and put it in someone else's hands and expect it to come across exactly the way you expected."

"As a staff member you have so much more control on the way the paper is run. The casual writer has limited power," says Beck. "A staff member can lobby for anything."

Korn too thinks that joining the *Gazette* and communicating with other staff members is necessary. "It is a forum where people can present their ideas and get feedback." She

continues, "It's not supposed to sound like one lone person presenting their case to a jury of *Gazette* staff."

So how can the *Gazette* encourage people of colour to contribute to the paper? Sean Foyn suggests an information package to be made available to interested students and at the very least a full page ad in the *Gazette*. But he questions what the *Gazette* means by 'representation'. "It's not enough to have one black person on the paper and say the paper is racially representative."

Lynn Atwell stresses the importance of putting out a paper that makes students react. "If you're trying to be over politically correct, then you'll have nothing to say, then your paper is neutral. You have to be daring without being offensive," says Atwell.

Korn hopes the Open House that the *Gazette* is hosting from 2pm to 5pm on Thursday, January 13 will encourage students to take part in the *Gazette*. "Open House is a way for people to drop in and check out the *Gazette* without commitment."

DAL PHOTO: GEOFF INESON & MICHAEL GRAHAM

Graduation Portraits

423-7089

422-3946

982 Barrington St. (South of Inglis)

SUPER SAVINGS ON PACKAGES

with this coupon until Jan. 30, 1993

Your choice of one package from four poses and previews

59⁹⁵ + taxes

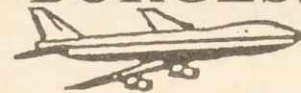
2 5x7
8 4x5

2 5x7
4 4x5
8 wallets

1 8x10
2 5x7
8 wallets

You must have this ad with you. One ad per person.

BURGESS TRAVEL AIR FARES



TORONTO	from 199	AMSTERDAM	from 489
VANCOUVER	from 711	LONDON	from 538
CALGARY	from 677	MYRTLE BEACH	from 429
CALIFORNIA	from 647	CANCUN	from 559
BOSTON	from 223	SINGAPORE	from 1589

The above fares are subject to availability and advance purchase rules. The fares vary according to departure date and are in effect Jan. 4/93. Fares are subject to change without notice.

UNIVERSITY BREAK WEEK

FEB. 20/21 1993 DIRECT SUN SPOTS

Bermuda	air only 321	pkg 649	ppdbl
Jamaica	air only 549	pkg from 830	ppdbl
Cuba	Punta Arenas	hotel from 759	ppdbl
Orlando	air only 459	air, hotel, car	from 685 ppdbl

Halifax 425-6110

1505 Barrington St. Maritime Centre

New Toll Free In N.S. 1-800-421-1345

Liverpool 354-5400 Bridgetown 665-4812

OPEN SATURDAY 9-5

2 DOUBLE DEUCE ROAD HOUSE

1560 Hollis Street around the corner from Maritime Centre

COOL BLUE HALO + CHAZ RULES
Thurs., Fri. Jan. 14, 15th \$3

MONCTON'S MONOXIDES + CHAZ RULES
Saturday night \$3

MONTREAL'S RISE + DEEP WOODS
Thurs., Fri. Jan. 21, 22nd \$4

Open Stage every Tuesday!
Featuring the Double Deuce house band
BRONCO

Every Monday CKDU 97.5 FM club night!