

The Letters/Opinions section of the Gazette is meant as a campus forum for all Dalhousie students. The opinions expressed within may not necessarily be those of the Gazette staff or editorial board. We welcome all submissions, but reserve the right to edit for style and content. It is the Gazette's mandate not to print racist, sexist or homophobic material.

Limited careers control job fair

Oh, where have all the Arts jobs gone?

On October 5th, I set off to the First Annual Halifax Joint Career Fair with a folder full of resumes, hoping to find information on career possibilities in many fields that I was interested in. Unfortunately, it was a complete waste of my time.

I guess I must have walked past the sign reading "Attention Arts and Science Students: Please F*** Off" without even noticing it.

It took a mere fifteen minutes for me to realize that the companies with booths at this career fair were only interested in hiring commerce, computer science and engineering students and graduates. It is without debate that these three fields are currently booming, but they are certainly not the only career choices available for students. It is possible that jobs in these fields are the most abundant because they are not the

most interesting and appealing career choices for many of us.

This non-equitable representation of a wide variety of fields is both astounding and offensive. For starters, although most of the booths were representing the three aforementioned fields, it would be ridiculous to say that most students are doing studies and preparation for these fields. The whole point of such an event is to show students the wide variety of opportunities available for summer employment and a career following graduation, which this fair certainly did not do.

Secondly, the idea that a Science or Arts degree is useless for a career in industry is preposterous. I found only a few booths interested in science graduates, and most of those were directed to environmental science and biology.

Strange, I thought that biotechnological industries were also booming, yet not one biotechnology company was at the fair.

Arts students were seriously shafted at the fair. There were a few employment opportunities for people with "any bachelor's degree", but if there was so much specialization represented for the field of computer science, then where were the according specialized career opportunities for Arts students? There were no

booths from the media, film, publishing or Fine Arts. So many industries were completely ignored in this fair that it was essentially a case of false advertising. If a general career fair is going to be held, ideally it should represent more than just three careers. Possibly the most frustrating aspect of the fair is that it was hosted partly by our university, using our money, but only represented the interests of a small percentage of students. This misrepresentation is

thoroughly frustrating and disheartening. As students educating ourselves in a diverse range of studies, we need to ask ourselves why our tuition rises astronomically every year to fund such useless, biased events as the Halifax Joint Career Fair.

JANET FRENCH

An utterly useless Chemistry, Biochemistry major

Women defending themselves, again!

The annual Take Back the Night march took place Sept. 18 at Grand Parade Square. Since that night we have been asked a number of times to justify the exclusion of men from the march. We have also been asked how violence against women differs from violence against men. A recent article in The Picaro, Mount Saint Vincent's student newspaper, attacked the motives of women attending the march and feminists in general. This article is an attempt to clarify the differences between violence perpetrated against women and violence perpetrated against men in order to understand the need women feel to Take Back the Night alone.

Violence under any circumstances is unacceptable. Men are victims of violence and we, as women, do not want to demean this fact, only to understand the ways in which violence against women is different. And it is. Violence against women is different because we live a patriarchal society. What does that mean? Women and men are not equal in society. Even though formal equality is there, substantive equality is lacking. How is substantive equality lacking? Women are people, equal before the law and yet societal institutions have failed to implement that equality. The realities of women's lives are that women are not equally represented in positions of power; women are paid less than men for work of equal value (as determined by a recent Human Rights Tribunal ruling); women's history is not represented in school curriculums; "feminine" attributes are not valued by society, and our justice system treats issues such as rape, domestic abuse, stalking and sexual harassment as "women's issues" and refuses to address the systemic nature of the problem.

Violence perpetrated by men on men lacks the power dynamic which is created by a patriarchal society. When women are victimized it is often the

combination of physical assault with economic, emotional and sexual dominance. Male on male violence is often a battle of physical strength, as the courts like to put it, a "bar room brawl" mentality. Domestic violence against women has only recently been understood by law as criminal behaviour. It is not a private affair, it is the result of a patriarchal society which condones violence against women. If you're not following what we're saying, start by looking up the phrase "rule of thumb".

Violence against women is different because if a man is attacked he does not get asked "What were you wearing?", "What were you doing there?", "Why were you out that late?", "Why were you alone?" or "What's your sexual history?" And the list goes on. Perhaps more importantly, the reality is that men are rarely attacked sexually. And if it occurs, it is most likely a case of male on male violence which does not have the same patriarchal dynamic as male on female violence. The reality of violence against women is that research estimates that one of two females has been the victim of one or more unwanted sexual acts. Those are your numbers. There is your violence.

Results from a recent Gallup poll indicate that 50 percent of women are afraid to go out after dark in their own neighbourhoods. This is another distinction between violence against women and violence against men: fear. One of the first critical aspects of violence is intimidation. Women do not walk alone at night because they do not want to be attacked — this is an important aspect of violence against women because women are forced to take responsibility for the acts that men may or may not perpetrate against them. Women are made to feel responsible for actions that men may or may not commit against them rather than demanding the substantive equality and social change necessary to remove their fear. This is the whole point of Take

Back the Night.

Take Back the Night is twenty years old and is a global event. It is an affirmation of women's commitment to fighting for environments where we can work, live and play safely. The are several reasons why the march is women-only. The night is one where women's voices, which have historically been silenced, can be heard. Every other night of the year women are forced to rely on the implied protection of a male companion in order to feel safe. The women marching to Take Back the Night are angry. They want to be able to walk alone at night and they do not feel they are able. Individually these women want to be free to live without fear.

Women banding together in protest of a situation that uniquely affects them is both empowering and necessary. It is empowering to be amongst 200 women demanding the realization of the equality which we have supposedly been granted. It is women demanding the privilege that men are currently afforded, that is, to be safe and without fear. It is necessary that women walk alone so that they can realize that they are able to walk alone. Women must walk alone in order to claim the individual right to be safe at night. You are not just walking among a group, you are walking among a group of women that share the same fear you have. You, as an individual, are claiming the right to personal safety. Walking alone amongst a group of women you are claiming not only the right to walk alone every night but the right to live free of the systemic violence that permeates women's lives in a patriarchal society.

Funny how women getting together one night to protest the atrocities that they face daily causes such a stir. What's everyone so afraid of anyway?

CHERIE BENOIT,
HEATHER FERRIER,
KIRSTI MCHENRY,
PATTY THOMSON.

The perils of the free market

Democracy = one person, one vote. Free Market = one dollar, one vote.

As world currencies and markets crash, we are being told who to blame. Stockbrokers and the rich are assured their monetary status will remain strong while there is little support offered to the poor. The human greed inherent in capitalism-as-religion will force society into two niches — those who can pay and those who can't.

It is, to many down here on the ground, rather disturbing how increasingly hard it has become to survive in today's market economy. No matter how much the economy grows or will grow, the ability to pay for this growth does not seem to increase by the same margin. Canada may be the number one nation in which to live, but only if you live in a big house in Toronto, Burnaby, or Oakville.

What bothers some of us is that a market-driven economy is just that — market-driven. The market (not plural, as it does act as one) determines everything from government policy to minimum wage rates. It always seems out of the people's control. And yet, it is indeed operated by someone.

Stockbrokers.

More than just brokers though, it's the greed that drives them. Stockbrokers will buy and sell on a rumour, any rumour. They will react simply because they *must* make a profit, either for themselves or others, at all costs (or rather no costs). The economy seems out of our control because it is. We did not elect a handful of animal-like greed-machines to assist our lives. If you

don't play the stock market you will get left behind, so they say. But seriously, how many of the poor in both Canada and the rest of the world have money with which to play.

But I digress. We have lost fundamental control of a human creation, not some ethereal or eternal spirit which has and will exist for all time. Many "expert" economists say we cannot impose controls on the market. Perhaps we cannot restrict it, as it is; however, we can shut it down.

And what I suggest is markets shut down until the middle of next year. This will give time for countries like Japan and Russia to overhaul and stabilize their economies, without having to worry about panic investors.

Russia already tried it.

They halted trading of the ruble on international markets for a few days to keep it from dipping too low. Currencies or stocks can't dip if they can't be traded.

Malaysia has taken this one step further. They have halted all exchange of their currency around the globe and have imposed strict limits on the influx of foreign currency. Many say this may set a dangerous precedent. Perhaps it is the only choice.

The rich get richer and the poor get poorer and the abyss betwixt the two grows ever larger. There is a lack of understanding or sympathy toward either side while all the time, suffering increases. In the past, this has set up for revolutions. An anti-capitalist revolt may be an inevitable result.

TRISTAN STEWART-ROBERTSON

I headed off to a dreaded lunch at Grandma's house. This was a yearly event, sponsored by my unflinching ability to be manipulated by guilt. Do you ever notice the quirky little comments made by your grandmother? The subtle yet undeniable statements enclosed in a terrible cliché aimed directly at your life? I think it must be a pre-requisite to being classified as a full-fledged grandmother. I believe there is a school for this type of thing. I arrive at her house, precisely at the stroke of 1:00. "You're late," she says. I smile. "Sorry, I got caught up in traffic." A lame excuse, but **who wants to argue** with a woman I only get to see once a year? "What is new," she wants to know. I show her an article I had written for a weekly paper. She reads it or at least pretends to. "Everyone is gifted dear, some people just open the package later than others," she said with a smile, filled with ultra-bright dentures. **I am sure she meant that I had opened the package sooner.** She has fixed these little finger sandwiches, filled with baloney processed with bits of macaroni and cheese. The condiment of choice is mustard. I have no idea what baloney is, nor what it is doing with macaroni and cheese. The mustard is anyone's guess. I gingerly pick up a tiny morsel dreading the moment it will be forced upon my pallet. "So did you like my article?" I inquire, feeling the need to extend the moment of suspense for my mouth. "Don't feel bad dear, **a lot of people have no talent.**" She again gave me that denture friendly smile. "Would you like some tea?" Isn't it funny how after you are insulted by your grandmother, she wants to feed you. I put the sandwich down. She continues about various other things, trivial in the general scheme of life, but important if you are single, wearing diapers and 85 years old. She tells me about a new man at her singles club. "He's so dark and handsome," she muses. "**yeah, right.**" I think, "**When it's dark, he's handsome.**" But I keep my opinions to myself. "How's school dear?" I tell her about a mistake I had made on a recent French exam. "Oh, well dear, that can happen to anyone, but **it happens to the stupidest people first.**" Followed by a pat on the head. "**Huh?**" **Another point for Grandma.** So with Grandma I have no outlet, nowhere to express what only comes out in murmured groans over stale tea. But there is the Gazette, and there is an **opinions section** and that's for me to express myself, for all to express themselves, to write what Grandma's ears could never handle. **Gazette opinions. My relief, my solace, my vented frustration.**