

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.

Poorly done horror flicks: an accident?

I am, by my own admission, a movie freak. Any given weekend you can be sure to find me at the Bayers Lake Multiplex or the Empire Bedford taking in a flick with some friends.

Something about sitting in darkness and watching the action on the big screen brings out the kid in me. I have seen *Pulp Fiction*, *Tales From the Crypt: Demon Night*, and *Scream*. Rest assured they have all had a wonderfully healthy influence on yours truly as a human being.

Still, for all the good movies there will always be the legions of clunkers. For every *Aliens*, an *Alien 3*, for every *Ghostbusters*, a *Ghostbusters 2*. I recently saw two films over the weekend that struck me not only for their overall cheesiness, but also for the fact that barring a few minor differences, they are the same freakin' movie.

Dean Koontz's *Phantoms* is a movie about a bunch of people trapped in a deserted small town menaced by a monster. *Deep Rising* is a movie about a bunch of people

trapped on a deserted ocean liner menaced by a monster.

Phantoms has a handsome hero. Ditto *Deep Rising*. *Phantoms* has some babalicious eye candy for the 13-21 male set. *Deep Rising*? Yep.

Both films feature a monster brought to us by the latest in digital technology and offer us a wide variety of special effects and gore guaranteed to put some people off their popcorn.

On Friday my friends and I saw *Phantoms*. It was an alright flick, more a renter than a movie you'd spend six toonies on. A couple of days pass and we went to see *Deep Rising*. I sat down with my popcorn, prepared to be amused by this *Alien* meets *Titanic* rip-off. So I watched it. Fifteen minutes in, it hit me. I'd seen this movie before. It had been *Phantoms*.

What the hell is this? Don't people catch on? What kind of system allows two movies to come down the pike that are both basically *Alien* with the serial number filed off? When I plunk down my hard earned

\$8.75 (and man, if that isn't a royal rip-off I don't know what is) and buy my two tonne popcorn and drum of Pepsi, I sit down to be entertained by something new!

Original concepts, new visions, cool stories. I don't just go to a movie to see the special effects or to watch with glee as people get whacked left and right (although some heavy breathers behind me were clearly getting their jollies).

I don't want to watch the same pablum over and over again. Why don't they adapt great works of literature and not some out of date sixties television show with an unhealthy following (see *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*, I don't care how much you love that pyjama wearing bunch, there's no way you can justify that turkey).

Why does Hollywood feel the need to take the easy way out, to go for these cliches which only became cliches because idiot filmmakers grind the ideas into the dust. Then it came to me. Hollywood thinks I'm dumb.

Now I'm no science or engineering major, but I'd like to think I didn't just fall off the fuckin' turnip truck either. I know a con when I smell it. And this gave off such a monumental stench that I had to set it down on paper so somebody out there hears what idea I got in that

darkened movie house, with two hours of my life draining away forever.

Hollywood makes stupid movies because Hollywood thinks that we're stupid. Don't forget to save me an aisle seat. I might need it.

S. DOOKS

AFRICAN HERITAGE MONTH CALENDAR CONTINUED

Wednesday, February 18

- 10:00 am
African Nova Scotian Artists and Performers
@Halifax North Memorial Public Library
- 10:30 am
Black Athletes
@Captain William Spry Public Library
- 11:00 am -5:00 pm
"In this Place...": An exhibition of Black Art in Nova Scotia with performances by Voice Black

- Theatre Ensemble.
@Anna Leonowens Gallery, 1891 Granville St
- 2:00 pm
Leeza's Trip to Freedom Puppet Show
@Halifax North Memorial Public Library
- 7:00 pm
Public Speaking Contest for Junior and Senior High
@Dartmouth North Community Centre

- 7:30 pm -9:00 pm
Black art and Creativity in Nova Scotia: A discussion with African Nova Scotian Artists.
@Anna Leonowens Gallery, 1819 Granville St.

Thursday, February 19

- 7:00 pm
African Heritage Month Celebrity Quiz VIII
@Halifax North Memorial Public Library

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People with Special Needs

A couple of weeks ago, I attended a 3-hour workshop known as The Interprofessional Learning Module on Disability held in the Dentistry building. As an International student, I was there to learn about problems that people with disabilities are facing and to discuss what health professionals can do.

Ironically, I came from a country which (I believe) has not been very keen on disability issues. Although the population with disabilities is high in Nova Scotia, and different social service departments are fighting for shrinking resources from the government, many public buildings are accessible to people with physical disabilities. And there are people who care enough to hold workshops or seminars like this.

I used to believe that people with disabilities in Singapore were being reasonably taken care of. To say it more accurately, I had never thought of their well-being. Despite the fact that a junior school next to my house in Singapore was replaced by a learning institution for the physically handicapped at least five years before I left for Canada, I had never seriously thought of how strange that I seldom see those students.

That was what I was accustomed to believe: that people with disabilities get their education in special schools designed specifically for them and they stay at home while not schooling. I had never thought of them as abnormal, but; at the same time, I had never realized that they

are like anybody else: wanting to move around, socialize, go to theatres, and have fun.

Unlike here, most buildings back home are not wheelchair accessible. Maybe this is one of the reasons why it is rare to see people in wheelchairs moving around in buildings, parks, or streets. The immediate family usually ends up as the sole caregiver for the rest of their lives.


Recreational programs are generally segregated instead of integrated as children with special needs attend special schools. To me, they live in a separate world from able-bodied individuals. Because of lack of contact and awareness, misconception always results. Many of us see them as either piteous and helpless, or troublesome and disturbing. If Nova Scotians need to be further educated to learn to accept people with various abilities, Singaporeans have a lot more to learn.

I feel fortunate to be exposed to the disability issues and the challenges that health professionals face in Nova Scotia. In Singapore, the health professionals will have to work together to create public awareness and acceptance. Hopefully one day, the people with disabilities in my hometown would be just a little more fortunate — to be able to walk into buildings without physical difficulty and strange looks from those who think they are so normal.

HELEN LEE

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