

Victims of what ?

Although more and more students are finally recognizing that the demands of the striking DFA actually coincide with our own interests, students are still, for the most part, insisting on portraying themselves as the passive, suffering victims of the strike.

This strike is a last-ditch effort by the DFA, an association which represents most of our faculty, to maintain a high quality of education at Dalhousie. Letting Dalhousie continue on its downward trend would victimize us to a far greater extent. What factors are stopping students from recognizing this? Why are we not taking a more active role in supporting the faculty if we realize that their demands so closely coincide with our interests of getting a good quality education?

Two reasons seem to stand in the foreground. Students are against the strike because it means we will probably lose out on several weeks of classes this term. This is not fair, because we have all paid our tuition fees in exchange for x hours of class time. We have paid to be educated, and instead we are sitting at

home. This view is extremely narrow-minded, however, and if we protested the strike for this reason, we would be contradicting our own interest in our quality education.

The second reason students are having trouble actively supporting the faculty strike is that, although we may recognize the demands of the DFA as valid, we wonder how we can support their asking for higher wages when it is evident that Dalhousie is strapped financially. The board of Governors is saying they simply don't have the money.

So we turn to the government. Everyone blames the provincial government, because they are funding the university to a large extent. Lack of government funding is certainly a problem here, and surely everyone would agree about that. But this is *not* the main reason for the DFA strike, so it's pointless for Dalhousie students and administration to blame this strike on the government.

The DFA believes that the board can grant their demands with the money they already have. In the past two years, Dal-

housie's faculty has been reduced by approximately 50 members. Dalhousie also got an increase in its operating budget (the budget out of which salaries are paid) from the provincial government. The DFA is protesting the allocation of the money Dalhousie has.

"When we asked whether or not the Board has enough money, we aren't just asking, 'Have they saved enough through attrition?', or 'Did they get enough in their operating grant increase?'. We must also ask whether their priorities for allocating the money they have available are correct," says DFA executive member Duncan MacIntosh.

The Board works with two separate budgets, the capital budget and the operating budget. They also determine, to a large extent, the money that goes into each of these budgets; in this way, they are determining Dalhousie's priorities. Sure, we may have a lot of nice new equipment, buildings, and flashy exterior gleam. But what's more important in terms of our education, buildings or faculty?

"The faculty won't come if their salaries aren't any good, no

matter how pretty the god-damn buildings are," says MacIntosh.

Although we look around campus and see a lot of money being spent on new buildings and Dalhousie's exterior image ('Dal Days', high-quality promotional flyers . . .), the Board is saying they simply don't have the money to meet the DFA's demands. This is their bottom line, yet, as David Williams, DFA president, rightly says, "There is no bottom line. They make it up. And so would we, for that matter, if we were running Dalhousie."

"Nobody enters academic life to make a fortune, but nobody likes being taken for granted as a sucker," says law professor Ian Townsend-Gault.

Both Dalhousie faculty and Dalhousie students are victims of the present situation at this university. The faculty is protesting their victimization by striking. It doesn't make sense for us to depict ourselves as victims of their protest. We should be acting together.

Ariella Pahlke



A misguided captive.

Photo: Ariella Pahlke

Letters

Sent us a letter but haven't seen it in print?

Then it was single spaced, handwritten, or didn't contain your name and phone number for verification. Please make sure your letters conform to our letters policy. If you want to resubmit your letter and we have your original, drop by the Gazette offices and we can give it back to you. Thanks.

Laurie Cormier, Fonda E. Diggs, and Dal Theatre Students:

Your letters were single spaced. If you want to send them back double spaced, we'd be glad to print them.

Unseen hands

To the Editors:

As a fellow student and employee of Dalhousie University, I feel the necessity to comment on an issue which has perplexed me for sometime. This issue is based upon a sense of awareness which I feel the administrative representatives of Dalhousie have neglected in communicating to the student body, concerning recent renovations and changes to various buildings within the confines of the University. It is my impression that these representatives have

made very little, if any, attempt to convey details to the students concerning such changes. It is therefore my intention through this letter, to address this issue so that as students you may become aware of the work being done, how it benefits you, and also to be able to identify with the labour force that performs the work.

The past year has witnessed many successful renovations and changes throughout the campus of Dalhousie. Examples of this would be the renovation of the Department of Registration in the Arts and Administration Building, which is designed to simplify the registration process for all students. Another example and perhaps the most popular of all would be the newly constructed Grawood Lounge in the basement of the Student Union Building.

There was also the construction of a wheel chair ramp at the Economics Department and a new elevator in the Arts and Administration Building which exemplifies Dalhousie's concern and commitment for providing accessibility to the handicapped.

However, if a poll were to be taken among the fifteen thousand or more students who attend Dalhousie, querying them as to what labour force was responsible for such changes, my feelings are that the majority of the student population, despite their intelligence, would fail in their attempts to identify those who implemented and performed the tasks necessary to bring about these changes. With this in mind, we therefore find it necessary to identify these people for you.

We are Dalhousie's Physical

Plant employees, members of an international trade union, comprised of carpenters, electricians, plumbers, pipefitters, painters and boilermakers. We are hard-working, respectable and respected member of Dalhousie's varied population. We have a say in the work we perform, the pay we receive and the conditions under which we perform our daily activities. Our responsibility to you as students, is to maintain the environment in which you learn, study, eat, sleep, exercise and celebrate in.

As tuition-paying members of this University's population, I feel students have a privileged status. They deserve to be informed of all issues relevant to the environment in which they learn, for it is through this information that awareness develops.

S. Vaslet

Physical Plant Employee

AIDS won't disappear

To the Editor:

We already know the dangers of the AIDS virus, and hopefully by now we know how it can and cannot be transmitted. But there are two interesting points that have not yet been exploited by the media AIDS scare that I'd like to point out:

First of all, there are American scientists who say they know how to find a cure, but the money is being spent to supply beds for those already afflicted (or on

nuclear weapons, take your pick), not to find a cure. Its really quite simple, according to a documentary aired this summer on NBC: what needs to be discovered is the right frequency to destroy infected cells without antagonizing healthy cells. Treatments would be similar to chemotherapy, the method shown to be quite effective in treating cancer patients.

Second of all, AIDS is a virus, and viruses mutate more quickly than any other cells in the body. This is why we have not found a cure for the common cold, and why we can have the flu a few times a year, but every time it's a different strain. There are viruses similar in structure to HIV that have been isolated, yet they do not have the same effect on the body or its immune system. In fact, scientists who isolated these strains have no idea what they do, or how to treat them. They haven't even been named yet, which is most likely why we hear so little about them.

As if AIDS isn't frightening enough, now being carried by five out of ten people in Central Africa, with cases reported in probably every country world-

wide, there is now even more to worry about. Stay informed.

Cigana Raven

Sparring sportswriters

To the editors:

A few weeks ago some guy named Brian Lennox wrote an article in the Dal Gazette sports section called "Sportswriters uninformed." This article was basically a compilation of cheap shots and condescending remarks, directed at a columnist who wrote an article in the SMU Journal, that had obviously rubbed this guy the wrong way. I was that SMU columnist who wrote the article that Lennox took exception to. My name is Hugh Smilestone and I write a weekly opinion column in the SMU Journal called "Hugh's Views". Now, I'm not gonna stoop to Lennox's level by hurling a bunch of insults at him.

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Meet in the council office
Thursday, Nov 10 at 6:45 pm

Help put the push on government for funds