

The bucks start here

Fact 1: Debating can be fun.

Fact 2: Marijuana can be fun.

Then why is the debate over marijuana legalization so tiresome? Because both sides are missing the boat.

Whether you are a neo-hippie or a devout conservative, chances are that your arguments are based on ideological beliefs; and that solves nothing. Both sides have been arguing their half-truths for decades.

"Pot will solve our environmental problems."

"No hippie, pot legalization will turn our children into roving bands of delinquents."

These ideological points of view are based on misinformation and are as pointless as arguing the existence of God. It always results in a stalemate.

So how can Canadians solve the marijuana problem? We have to look first at what makes Canadians pay attention.

Money.

Social issues like health care, student issues like tuition, and government issues such as the deficit all succumb to the bottom line — no matter what type of slant

supporters place on them.

Whether your belief-set can be categorized as "hippie" or "teetotaler", money is a fundamental concern for every Canadian. My version of morality may not agree with yours, but it still costs us both \$8.10 for a six-pack.

Right now, while marijuana remains illegal, pot activists are

expanding.

No, legalization will see budding entrepreneurs capitalizing on a new vice with enormous marketing potential.

With this in mind, legalization should be viewed through the calculated bi-focals of economics. You can bet your bong that the government's sole interest in

legalization lies in how much money is to be made or saved at the end of the day.

So let's be realistic. Look at marijuana as a potential commodity for Canada. Prohibition is an expensive program to run. Can we save money if it's legal? Can we make money if it's legal?

If, after adding up the cost of health, regulatory and taxation factors, the number crunchers decide that, "Indeed, pot will boost the economy and supplement the government's revenue," then by all means, start selling. Besides, we need an edge to make us more competitive in world markets.

But if the books don't balance, then why bother? It's not like pot is hard to find.

JOHN CULLEN
AND GREG MCFARLANE

Editorial

enjoying a golden age. If they win the war on the War on Drugs, the happy-idealism behind their cause will be shattered like the elephant man's mirror. The government and large corporations will control the 'holy' herb. Legalization will not see business people sinking into their La-Z-Boys with a fat J, inviting their more liberal relatives over for hash brownies and pie. Nor will it see an influx of unwashed children sleeping on the sidewalk. Marijuana will never stop nuclear waste from entering the water supply, steel mills from clogging the air with toxins, or landfills from

Letters

DSU — A job well done

To the editor,

There is nothing more fulfilling and enjoyable than a good bit of gossip as we spend the evening chauffeuring people in the Tiger Patrol van. The other night, as we complained in the van about the trials and tribulations of student life, it suddenly dawned on us that this year has been the first time in a while that van gossip, and gossip more generally around campus, has not turned to whining about the shortcomings of the DSU executive.

For anyone who is familiar with DSU politics, you will agree that this relative silence is pretty revolutionary. The five executive, Chris, Bridgette, Ted, Kevin and Terence, have taken huge steps this year to rejuvenate legitimacy and accountability in the DSU.

From working countless hours a week, to organizing events, to lobbying for students, to initiatives to help ice storm victims, it is impressive to see a group of people who are not in office just to beef up their resumes. For once, scandals do not abound in the SUB about how some executive member has abused their power, or sat and festered apathetically.

Of course, this is not to say that the executive is infallible. However, with such obstacles to overcome as the DalTech merger, they have managed to handle difficult situations with considerable success.

Let it be known that we are not writing this to get brownie points from the executive. We are certainly the farthest thing from DSU executive lapdogs; if we were disgruntled in anyway, we would undoubtedly be the first to raise a fuss, or at least to gossip about it profusely. We just want to commend those executive on a job well done. We especially appreciate Bridgette's support of student security, particularly Tiger Patrol's pursuit of a new image (Yay, new jackets!).

However, do not take our word for any of this. Go up and see the DSU executive for yourselves.

After all, we students do pay their salaries. We assure you, they would definitely love to have you in for quality time.

ALIX DOSTAL
AND DEAN NAUGLER

Meaning behind the words

To the editor,

It would be easy for some to misconstrue Dan Clark's article "The leper without leprosy: society and obesity". To the ignorant it will seem that Dan is making a plea to women — that by expressing the anger he feels towards his situation he is in fact asking for pity, crying out to get laid. Others will respond by saying out loud to the article "Just lose some fucking weight buddy", and others will simply overlook it as another piece of journalistic bullshit.

But if you would just stop and listen, take a minute from your cool, self-absorbed life, you may be able to catch the meaning behind the words.

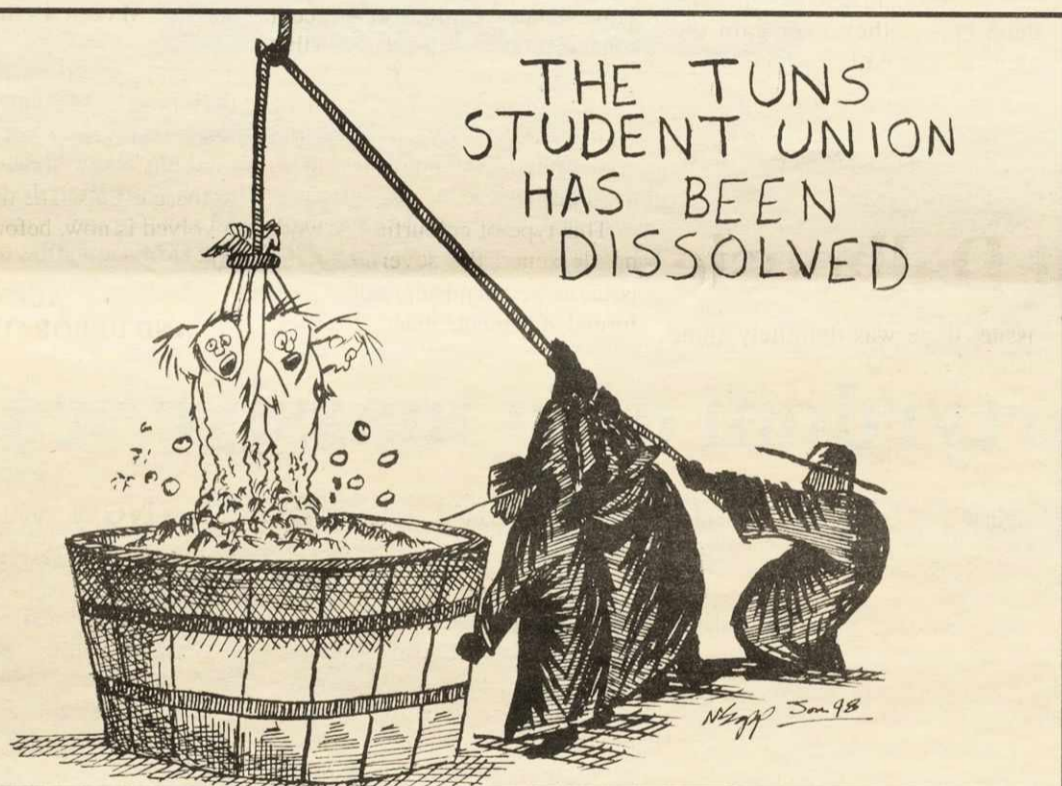
We all hide. We all have facades and habits which we use to hide or deal with our fears and insecurities. We are constantly searching for who we are, where we fit in, and what better way to hide from these questions than by getting high everyday or pretending to be someone we're not.

Dan doesn't want to hide anymore. He doesn't want to wake up everyday worrying about who he is. Imagine the strength it takes to admit to your entire school that you are fat, that people snicker when you pass by, that some even have the audacity to comment out loud on your appearance.

Very few of us would ever be able to make these public admissions, as we are not yet comfortable enough with ourselves to say "fuck you" to those who hammer into our self-worth and confidence.

So Dan, I applaud you. You have without a doubt proven that your sense of self surpasses the superficial judgements our society makes of you.

FIONA SILLERS



THE DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

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The Gazette welcomes letters to the editor and commentary. All letters will be printed up to four per week. The printing of additional letters will be at the discretion of the Opinions Editor. Letters may be edited for length above 300 words and we reserve the right to edit commentary.

All submissions must be typed double-spaced on paper, e-mailed, or on a Mac or IBM 3 1/2 inch disk, in a WP version not greater than Word 6.0 or equivalent. The deadline is Mondays at 4:30 p.m.

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February is African Heritage Month

and the Gazette is looking for our readers' help in celebrating the achievements, history, and culture of black people.

The first week in February we will be publishing an African heritage supplement. We welcome all submissions of poetry, photos and feature articles to the supplement. Call 494-2507 or come to the office room 312 SUB