

Shift the Paradigm Collective

# Culture jam

Shannon Hardie

Have you ever considered the thought that our education system from primary through high school might have stunted our natural learning process? That we might have spent those 14 years of our lives just intaking and regurgitating what the teachers wanted us to learn? That they spent more time telling us that our methods were wrong instead of letting us and possibly figure things out for ourselves?

That perhaps we have all been manufactured into pieces of the machine, educated correctly in order to play the game? That we don't question too much, we accept more than we spit out, and in effect learning has come across as a struggle, resembling more work than pleasure?

That may explain our uncontrollable need for entertainment. Since learning has become a struggle, and incentives that once mad us get up and experiment now seem so infantile, entertainment has become the almighty escape.

We depend on media which depends on consumerism, and we have been created into the tiny parts that run this vicious cycle. We would rather watch 90210 than question our society's moral values. The many mid-afternoon soaps are more interesting than challenging manufactured rumours about national debts and diseases.

"Hmmm... Trilateral Commission, the Dark ages, a great depression, overpopulation and the exhausting of resources... Let's change the channel." If only it was that easy to change.

There's a great project a group of us have got our hands on right now, called the *Adbusters Cam-*

*paign*. We like to question the structures of our society. We enjoy digging a little deeper than we "should." This campaign is structured around media, and through advertisements on television and through various forms of information and paraphernalia we're trying to get our messages across.

"We will take on the archetypal mind polluters — Marlboro, Pepsi, Budweiser, Benetton, McDonald's, Coca Cola, Calvin Klein — and beat them at their own game.

We will uncool their billion-dollar images with uncommercials on TV, subvertisements in magazines and anti-ads right next to theirs in the urban landscape.

We will take control of the role that the tobacco, alcohol, fashion, cosmetics, and fast-food corporations play in our lives. We will hold their marketing strategies up to public scrutiny and set new agendas in their industries.

We will culture jam the pop culture marketeers — MTV, Time-Warner, Sony — and bring their image factories to a sudden, shuddering halt.

On the rubble of the old media culture, we will build a new one with a non-commercial heart and soul."

If you'd care to join our group, we call ourselves the Shift the Paradigm Collective, and we'd be really appreciative of any new energy. We're looking for people, so hopefully this article will catch the interests of a few of you.

We meet now on Monday nights at 7 p.m. at the Grad House. Our first fundraiser will be held on Thursday, Nov. 24 at the Khyber Café with a night of Acid Jazz. Money raised will go towards the airing of Adbuster television commercials in Halifax.

Name: Wayne Cross  
Job description: Director of Office Services, and Manager of Right Type and The Corner Pocket

What's the best part of your job? Getting up in the morning, I suppose (laughs). I do enjoy coming to work. It's a bit hectic in September; in fact, this past September was probably the worst in my 25 years — a lot of headaches — but we managed to survive.

What job-related nightmares stick out in your mind? The student directory is a nightmare. It's been a nightmare for the past 20-odd years. I think this is the last one. I'll still get the book ready to be printed, but it will be printed somewhere else.

How would you describe yourself? I'm a pretty easy-going guy, I get along pretty well with everyone, and I'm not afraid of hard work.

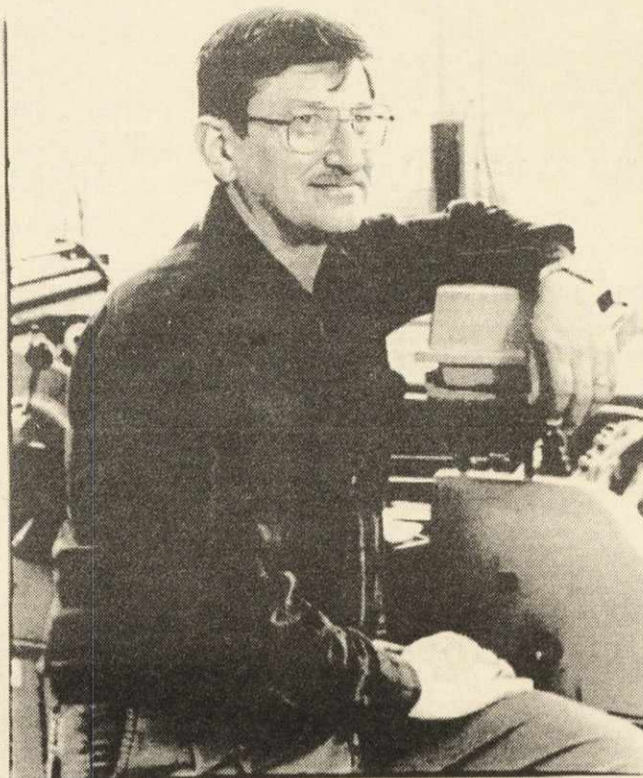
Where were you brought up? Tancook Island, an island in Mahone Bay. Then, after high school, I came to Halifax and worked at CBC for a few years. And I've been here ever since.

You've just celebrated your 25-year anniversary here at Dalhousie. How did the university recognize this accomplishment? They gave my wife and I \$2500 travel gift certificates, which we used to go visit my wife's mother and four sisters and one brother, whom she had never met, in Ohio and Indiana.

What's it like working with kids? Great — every year you get a new bunch of kids.

Some of the employees have described you as a father figure... I've managed

## Dal Profiles



You're currently working on the Student Directory; how are things going with that? Well, not great. I'm having problems with one of my pieces of equipment - it's 25 years old and it's worn out. [Ed. note: student directories are now available]

Do you have any children? Yes, I have four, aged 21-25. They're all working and out of the house... thank God.

After raising four children, what have you learned? Well, my wife always kept a close eye on them. They didn't like it too much, but we got them out on their own and they never got into any trouble. There were curfews and they were never allowed to take the family car. My wife was always more suspicious than I was.

What do you do in your spare time? My wife and I love camping and walking. We usually spend a couple of weeks camping in PEI each summer. That's what we plan to do when we retire.

Do you watch much TV? Yeah, I like Star Trek and I like cop stories. There's a couple of good medical stories on now. I don't care for the half-hour sitcoms.

What sort of music do you listen to? Country — Alan Jackson. George Jones is my all-time favourite.

Have you ever met anyone famous? Well, I'm not sure if you'd consider him famous, but Pierre Trudeau was here in the early '70s.

by Tim Richard



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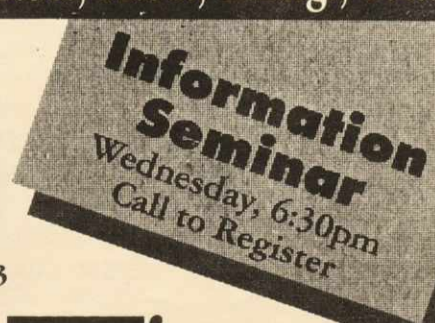
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