

## Words and phrases that should be eradicated from the English language

I don't know if the Dalhousie public has been speaking much English lately, but from walking around campus I haven't heard any. Dal has a reputation as being a top

school but to hear the student body speak you'd think that the school is attended by the vast majority of rejects from clown school.

Here are several of the more

upsetting words and phrases that students should line up to receive mandatory beatings for saying.

**Whatever** — This is a phrase that has been appropriated from

Californian "Valley Girl" speech. You remember the "Valley Girls" don't you, the authors of such brilliant exclamations as "Oh Mah Gawd!", "Gag Me With A Spoon",

and "Grody". Really, what does it mean? I rode in an elevator today that seemed like it would stop somewhere in between floors so I responded with a mild vulgarity spoken under my breath. The girl sharing the elevator let out a loud "whatever" as we disembarked. What did she mean by that? Was she offended by my guttural speech? Was she too perturbed by the elevator's malfunction?

I think that she had nothing to say but felt she had to say something... so "whatever." Let's just place a general moratorium on phrases that originate in California, or at least force a therapeutic enema on the speaker of any Californian slang. Think for a second, "whatever" was used by characters in a movie *Clueless*.

**To be honest** — This one is used frequently by my fellow business students. Does this mean that the rest of the time the speaker is lying but has decided to grace the listener with a few precious seconds of truth? "Well, you look like an intelligent, trustworthy person, Zeke. Here's ten full seconds of truth." Did you ever notice that the truth that follows is the most useless, inane piece of information that you have listened to? The typical use is something like "To be honest, my friend, I really have to go buy a bagel. I must have a bagel... now!" If not, it's usually followed by an insult, such as "To be honest, that shirt is ugly." You know, on second thought, maybe "To be honest" isn't so bad because at least it might indicate to me when I should listen, so I can spend the rest of my time thinking how they actually get the Caramilk in the Caramilk bar.

**I had this whole conversation** — This phrase might apply if the story being related had to do with a year long intensive study of Phoenician scripture. At least then it might refer to some complete conversation worth listening to. This is true because the phrase implies that the speaker will give every possible detail that could be relevant to the conversation, or at least an official transcript. Unfortunately, the speaker is usually incapable of picking out his/her socks in the morning, much less recalling details of conversation. Another situation that can apply to this phrase occurs when the speaker has nothing of importance to say, and attempts to use "I had this whole conversation" as a crude inducement for listening. At this point, I generally begin to mentally calculate Pi to thirty decimal places.

**I don't mean to stereotype but...** — This obvious admission of a speaker's inability to articulate, is usually followed by some racist comment or at least an enormous generalization. This is the kind of phrase that dog breeders look for when they decide which cute little puppies won't ever get to mate. The speaker should probably just directly say "I am a bigot. Here are my views..."

If these changes can be successfully implemented I am confident that Tom Traves won't have to lock any more students away in the LSC when Maclean's Magazine comes for its annual review.

MICHAEL HOLLINGER,  
TIM MANKIEWICZ  
AND JAMES SERNYK

## What happened to my history?

My history passed by me in October, and I didn't even recognize it. October was Women's History Month. I didn't know, and from what I've heard no one else did either. Why, I ask? Is it that no one is interested, or are they too busy?

It bothers me to think that these things could be true. I took it upon myself to find out what exactly Women's History Month was, and how it was celebrated in Halifax. So I went to the most obvious place, the library, to search for any recent articles on Women's History Month. There were none.

As I left the library I found an advertisement for a movie in the SUB hosted by the Women's Studies Society and the History Society for Women's History Month. This gave me the idea to stop by the Women's Studies Department at Dalhousie to see if they had any facts.

They were in the middle of moving their office across the street, but a sweet lady (who I think runs the office) took some time to call

the women's centre and others she thought might have some off-hand information. Nothing. No one had anything. She remembered getting a single flyer, which she still had somewhere at the bottom of one of the boxes, and told me to return at the end of the week when it was unpacked.

I was dumbfounded. Why did no one know about this, not even places that I had assumed specialized in stuff of this nature? I had so many questions I wanted answered and I couldn't find any help.

The idea that Women's History Month was going unrecognized, especially by women, ate away at me all week. Was Women's History Month going to turn out like Earth Day or World Hunger Day, or possibly National Coming Out Day? These dates honouring the protection of the environment or the prevention of famine and homophobia have dropped out of sight since the fervour surrounding the issues has died down. Does this mean that a recognition of the

environment or famine or homophobia isn't important anymore? What about women's history? Is it not worth honouring?

Well, I did go back to the Women's Studies Department, and she did have a single flyer for five women speakers coming to Mount Saint Vincent University, speaking about various topics under the heading "Women in Science and Technology".

All of the events had passed by the time I read the flyer. But, there was a number on it for more information. At last, I thought, someone advertising answers for my questions! I called and was directed to the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women. It was there that I actually received some of the information I had desired.

This is what I was told. Women's History Month is actually Canadian Women's History Month. It was set up in 1992 by the Canadian Advisory Council of the Status of Women as a celebration of the history of Canadian women.

October was chosen because of Person's Day on October 18. Person's Day commemorates the triumph of Canadian women in 1929 to be seen as persons under the law by the British Privy Council. I was pleased to finally find out about Canadian Women's History Month, but still upset at the paltry attempt at recognizing its significance.

I was particularly bothered by the lack of interest on the part of Dalhousie and the Women's Studies department. It could be chalked up to the business of the move across the street, however, given that Women's History Month is all month, this is a limited excuse. The memorialized month is only five years old, and obviously has not yet been successful in helping people remember the importance of women's history. Hopefully in the near future, the Women's Studies Department, Dalhousie, and Halifax can put a greater emphasis on Canadian Women's History Month, even when the supposed fervour dies.

ERINN BETH LANGILLE

## Why All Students Should Support Postal Workers

Those students who are struggling to get by, working day and night just to survive, are intimately aware of the class nature of post-secondary education. Universities are becoming increasingly inaccessible as tuition goes through the roof and jobs for students are ever harder to find. Higher learning is soon becoming the preserve of the very wealthy, with the rest who aren't born into monied families effectively squeezed out or saddled with a truly massive student loan to pay back.

While government leaders at all levels and of all stripes have the audacity to maintain that cuts to post-secondary education don't affect accessibility, they equally assert that students have no shared interest with workers in unionized workplaces.

Workers at Canada Post, represented by the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, are currently engaged in the fight of their lives. Canada Post, a corporation which made a record \$112-million last year, wants to eliminate 400 workers from its payroll. This comes soon after the single largest layoff in Canadian history when the corporation eliminated the jobs of 10,000 admail workers last January. Next year, Canada Post would like to make \$200-million in profits and aim to do it by eliminating thousands of jobs from our communities and devastating the lives of thousands more. The Union wants some of those profits reinvested in communities in the form of more jobs and better services.

But what does this have to do with students here in Nova Scotia?

The regular workings of market capitalism are putting decent-paying jobs on the endangered

species list. As every year passes and we stumble from recession to recession, the so-called "natural" rate of unemployment creeps higher and higher. Politicians and pundits claim we must adapt to the "new economy" and endure a mass unemployment rate of 14%, not if, but when the next recession hits. For us, the next generation of

burger-flipping university grads at Dal, the implication is clear — fewer jobs and poorer working conditions, if you do find work.

Postal Workers, like the 126,000 striking teachers in Ontario, are in the forefront in the fight for jobs and preservation of social programs in this country. Organized workers have the power to stop the corporate

agenda and create real employment for all of us. The math is simple. If they win, we all win.

Over the last 10 years student organizations and trade-unions have worked closely to forge a vision of the type of society we want to be a part of. We all must struggle to ensure that everyone has

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## When You Gonna Wake Up?

God don't make no promises that He don't keep.  
You got some big dreams, baby, but in order to dream  
you gotta still be asleep.

When you gonna wake up, when you gonna wake up  
When you gonna wake up and strengthen the things  
that remain?

Counterfeit philosophies have polluted all of your  
thoughts.  
Karl Marx has got ya by the throat, Henry Kissinger's  
got you tied up in knots.

When you gonna wake up, when you gonna wake up  
When you gonna wake up and strengthen the things  
that remain?

You got innocent men in jail, your insane asylums are  
filled,  
You got unrighteous doctors dealing drugs that'll never  
cure your ills.

When you gonna wake up, when you gonna wake up  
When you gonna wake up and strengthen the things  
that remain?

You got men who can't hold their peace and women  
who can't control their tongues,  
The rich seduce the poor and the old are seduced by  
the young.

When you gonna wake up, when you gonna wake up  
When you gonna wake up and strengthen the things  
that remain?

Adulterers in churches and pornography in the schools,  
You got gangsters in power and lawbreakers making  
rules.

When you gonna wake up, when you gonna wake up  
When you gonna wake up and strengthen the things  
that remain?

Spiritual advisors and gurus to guide your every move,  
Instant inner peace and every step you take has got to  
be approved.

When you gonna wake up, when you gonna wake up  
When you gonna wake up and strengthen the things  
that remain?

Do you ever wonder just what God requires?  
You think He's just an errand boy to satisfy your  
wandering desires.

When you gonna wake up, when you gonna wake up  
When you gonna wake up and strengthen the things  
that remain?

You can't take it with you and you know that it's too  
worthless to be sold,  
They tell you, "Time is money" as if your life was  
worth its weight in gold.

When you gonna wake up, when you gonna wake up  
When you gonna wake up and strengthen the things  
that remain?

— Bob Dylan

— Submitted to the Gazette by Corinne Hewson.

— Corinne is interested to know if this song, or  
artist, has any special meaning to you. Messages  
for Corinne can be dropped off in the box on the  
door of the Gazette office, room 312, SUB.