

SCIENCE & ENVIRONMENT

Guerilla Theatre raises campus Eco-Awareness

BY LEIGH DICKSON AND JENNIFER LAMONT

You're sitting in a campus coffee shop drinking a cup of coffee. Suddenly people in black are approaching from all directions. They are all moaning and weeping. You find yourself in the middle of a eulogy for the styrofoam cup you are almost finished drinking from.

You have become the star of an eco-action skit promoting the use of reusable mugs. You have been ambushed with guerilla theatre.

With unscheduled, attention getting skits, guerilla theatre became popular in the 1960s as a means of arousing interest in a particular issue.

The skits are a new project of Eco-Action, a student-run organization dedicated to furthering environmental causes. Eco-Action is a working group under the Nova Scotia Public Interest Research Group (NSPIRG).

Dave Redwood, a member of Eco-action, says that the guerilla theatre skits are a part of their aim to fulfil NSPIRG's mandate of "translating research into social

action".

Right now the group is trying to work out skits that will capture people's attention. Redwood says that their goal is to remind students, in a humorous way, about environmental issues.

The skits make the group more visible to Dalhousie students and are a way to get people's attention without preaching, said Sarah Adamowicz, a member of the theatre group.

"[The skits] are letting people know we're doing silly, fun stuff

for a good end," said Redwood.

In addition to the skits, Eco-action is also doing work behind the scenes to make Dalhousie more environmentally friendly. Presently they are lobbying the physical plant to install more bike racks and increase the composting on campus.

The group is also in the process of putting together a guide of the four R's: reduce, reuse, recycle, rethink. The booklet will hopefully be distributed to the student population at a later date.



Eco-Action brings guerilla theatre to Dalhousie. Photo by Lisa Verge

Tree rings tell age-old climate tales

BY ABRA RYN

VICTORIA (CUP) — Tree ring research being conducted at the University of Victoria is providing valuable information about climate change over the past millennium and into the far future.

Geography professor Dan Smith and a team of graduate students and assistants have been conducting research in this area since 1992, collecting 5,000 core samples from over 50 sites on Vancouver Island for the University of Victoria Tree Ring

Laboratory. Several student projects have emerged from the research.

One project involves comparing tree rings, whose growth reflects annual changes in weather, with other weather records to understand and predict future climatic changes. Information from this and other projects will provide experts with data on where and when to plant and harvest certain tree species for centuries to come.

The tree ring samples, which are air-dried before their image is scanned into a computer and enlarged, and are also

being used to understand climate changes in the past.

The tree ring data reveals the historical activity of the El Nino weather event, for example, which is once again wrecking havoc with global weather systems. Further research could explore what impact this event has on temperature and the environment.

"The information from these projects will help researchers get a handle on climate," Smith said.

Another project involves dating a glacial advance which took place on

Vancouver Island between 1718 and 1818. The tree rings of stumps that were once covered by glaciers have been cross-dated to core samples from living trees, and information about miniature Ice Ages in the past millennium is being uncovered.

"It's really neat to think that we are working on a time scale beyond the written record, sometimes dealing with trees over 1,000 years old," said Zeev Gedalof, a University of Victoria grad student working with Smith.

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