

Women speak out against war

by Jennifer Seamone

Last Wednesday the Dalhousie Women's group and the Voice of Women held two "Women and Peace" forums featuring guest speaker Maude Barlow.

Barlow is a visiting Professor at the University of Ottawa, and one of several women from around the world who embarked on a "Journey to Baghdad" a few days before the war began in an attempt to negotiate for peace on behalf of the women of the world.

Barlow's speech, and others at the forums concentrated on the effects of war on women and children. "Women and children bear a

disproportionate brunt of the war and women have to be concerned about the cost of the war, not just economic but also psychological", said Jane Arscott, a Political Science Professor at Dalhousie.

Canada's role in the Gulf War came under sharp fire from Barlow who said Canada has come dangerously close to losing its traditional peace keeping role. As Canadians we must think very carefully about what we want our role to be now and in the future, she said.

We have supported dictators and regimes that were violators of human rights in the past, anti-women countries who take billions of

dollars out of their countries, and away from their people, she said.

"Kuwait reserves citizenship for only a small elite group and has many human rights violations, women are oppressed and only men can vote," she said.

Barlow said the reason Hussein had the power and technology to invade Kuwait is because America and the West gave it to him.

The entire history of the region is of betrayal and abuse, said Barlow. Canada could have played a different role in the United Nations, instead of serving American interests. Military and economic sanctions would have worked, she said.

Barlow downplayed the differences between men's and women's attitudes towards war. However, she said, "close to 90 percent of the people I talked to said men and women look differently at war... But the thing that we have to re-



Dalhousie photo: Ian Mardon

Maude Barlow, a member of the international group of women who set up a peace camp in the Gulf and an outspoken critic of the 1989 Free Trade Deal, spoke at a forum on "Women and War" last week.

member is that those are people down there (in Iraq) and the greatest casualties of war are civilians."

According to UNICEF, 84 percent of casualties since World War Two have been civilians, said Barlow.

"Every Iraqi I talked to had lost someone in the Iran/Iraq war. People did not want war, they were just resigned to death," said Barlow as she described the rapid change in atmosphere in Baghdad as people realized war was inevitable.

Chem building under renovation

by Mary Jane Hamilton

By the beginning of the fall term in 1991, about 4.5 million dollars is expected to have been spent on renovations at the Chemistry Building at Dalhousie University.

The work is being done by "some of Dalhousie's own tradesmen" and outside contractors, says Jim Sykes, the university architect at Dalhousie.

The building will be used for research. A few years ago, a chemistry podium was designed for undergraduate teaching. This cost about 9.75 million dollars of a budget to be spent on chemistry facilities. The remainder is to be used to renovate.

One and a half million dollars was used in various places of the

building in the fall of 1990, says Sykes.

Another third of the remaining 4.5 million dollars of the budget will be spent on a total renovation of the fifth floor infrastructure.

The one-third remaining will be spent on laboratories, lower floors, elevator and windows.

Sykes says it is going quite well although it is "a disturbance for those who walk by... It is creating some mess outside [but] this is to be cleaned up in the spring."

A second-year engineering student says there is a lot of dust and noise coming from the building. "I think it's a hassle," he said. "There are classes going on. I think they should do it during the summer. Winter isn't a good time. It's the Regular Session and there are a lot of students around."

First Nations' culture ignored

Learning on the moon

by Jeff Harrington

HALIFAX (CUP) — When Mohawk Patricia Monture couldn't decide whether or not to go to law school, she went to see her elder. He told her a story, perhaps two or three hours long. When he had finished, she knew she had to go to university before she could fight for justice for her people.

"First, I had to learn how to talk honky," she said recently.

Now a professor of law at Dalhousie Law School in Halifax, Monture is one of an increasing number of First Nations people who recognize that getting a university education is an indispensable if often unpleasant step to attaining self-determination.

"Canada is not making an effort to talk to us. We're the ones who have to do double-time and learn how to talk to them," she said.

But while talking and acting honky may come easy to English and French Canadians, it's obviously quite unnatural for First Nations people like Monture — who doesn't consider herself Canadian, by the way. Never mind learning to talk like a lawyer.

First Nations people learn in a

different way than the dominant Euro-Canadian society's mode of education. An elder in a Micmac community doesn't lecture the children or scold them if they do something wrong — it is their responsibility to approach their teacher, and then watch and listen.

"We'll watch something long enough and memorize it and go away and try it until we get it right," said Jean Knockwood, a native education counsellor at Henson College in Halifax.

For eight years, Knockwood has helped aboriginal students cope with a system that has little inkling of the cultural differences that can make university an alien place. She holds regular writing and study workshops to help students become familiar with the ways universities work.

"You don't have to alter their learning style, their cultural beliefs or how they see the world," she said.

Unfortunately, many non-native teachers at all levels judge First Nations student by their own values, equating shyness with disinterest, or silence with stupidity. The result: "streaming" into non-academic or vocational courses, appalling dropout rates (20 per cent

complete high school — 75 per cent is the Canadian average) and low participation at the university level.

"I don't think our students are failing because they're stupid or inadequate. They're failing because the system is failing them," said Wendy Hull, chair of the Aboriginal Students' Association at Dalhousie University.

As well as hiring more First Nations faculty — Dalhousie has two out of 760 — and staff, Hull feels schools and universities must alter their curricula.

"I'm tired of having to listen that residential schools were good for my people," she said.

And all teachers must be taught — not by non-natives — that a meaningful education for First Nations people involves the mind, body and spirit.

"In your dominant society, we're looked on as quitters. But most people don't make it because they aren't spiritually whole — they don't have the right support."

Now 35, Hull will graduate with a degree in political science this spring, ready to change things.

"(University) education is not important to me in my life. But it is important when we start dealing

• continued page 7

HETEROSEXUAL QUESTIONNAIRE

- 1/ What do you think caused heterosexuality?
- 2/ When and how did you first decide you were heterosexual?
- 3/ Why do you insist on flaunting your heterosexuality? Can't you just be what you are and keep it quiet?
- 4/ If you've never slept with a person of the same sex, is it possible that all you need is a good gay lover?
- 5/ To whom have you disclosed your heterosexual tendencies? How did they react?
- 6/ Would you want your children to be heterosexual, knowing the problems they'd face?

Gay and Lesbian Supplement / p. 9-14