

## CROSSCANADA

## Sociology teacher plays charAIDS

MONTREAL (CUP)-A sociology teacher at Montreal's Dawson College has come under fire for using course material which teaches students that heterosexuals are unlikely to get AIDS. In Marc Grenier's class, students are taught if they're intravenous drug users, blood transfusion recipients or gay, they are at a high risk of contracting HIV, the virus believed to cause AIDS.

That contradicts assertions by AIDS educators and activists that the virus is contracted through high-risk behaviour and not because one is a member of a particular group. "All you need is someone who has the virus and a way to get it into your bloodstream," said Karen Herland, an assistant education and prevention coordinator of a Montreal AIDS awareness committee.

Grenier's choice of course material has angered some Dawson students. "How can you tell people they're not at risk? That's really frightening to me," said Robin Hand, a second-year social sciences student. "It's really dangerous because it's misinformation taught as fact in a respected institution."

## Scare tactics at Laurier bomb

WATERLOO (CUP)-Wilfrid Laurier University is the latest school to be the target of bomb threats. Students, staff and faculty were evacuated from campus buildings November 9 after the school's central switchboard received an anonymous bomb threat late in the morning.

The buildings were completely evacuated by mid-afternoon, and locked until the next morning. Campus security officers and student volunteers searched the buildings, but found no bombs.

The bomb threats came just 10 days before an emergency communication system-developed to deal with situations like this-was to be put in place. "We will have a system in place, so that students who had to stand outside in the cold on Monday, will know faster," said Lorna Marsden, the university's president.

"Ninety-nine per cent of the time it is a hoax. If you don't do anything and something happens, then you risk people's lives. This way, a lot of people were inconvenienced but nobody was hurt," said a security officer.

## Is there a doctor in the blouse?

TORONTO (CUP)-Female enrolment at Queen's University's medical school has increased dramatically this year. In 1991, the first-year medical class at the Kingston, Ontario university was 35 per cent female. This year, the figure is 55 per cent.

Duncan Sinclair, vice-principal of Health Services and Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, said he is pleased with the 20 per cent increase. "There is in the entering class now, I would say, a balance between the sexes," he said. "There have been, for some years, proportionately more applications from women and more offers to women applicants."

"This year there were more qualified women applicants who accepted our offer of admission than in the past," he said.

Sinclair said an interview and a requirement that students have a prior university degree were new application requirements at Queen's this year. However, he said he didn't know whether the changes in the application procedure account for the increase. Out of 1,241 applicants, 556 were female. At the other end of the province, the University of Toronto's medical school continues to enrol proportionately more men than women.

However, McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario has maintained a ratio of 60-70 per cent female students in its medical school over the last five years.

## news

Dal students learning from

## North End law

by Chantal Saxe

The Dalhousie Legal Aid Service is located at 5557 Cunard Street in the North End of Halifax. Despite the seriousness of the subjects handled there, it is not a gloomy place. When you walk in the door you are greeted by the chatter of children from the Children's Development Centre which is located on the ground floor. Upstairs at the legal aid clinic, people are energetic and busy, reflective of the intense demand for services that Dalhousie Legal Aid is faced with everyday.

The Dalhousie Legal Aid Service opened in June 1970, two years before the Nova Scotia legal aid system was established. According to Rollie Thompson, executive director of the Dalhousie Legal Aid Service, the Dalhousie method of service delivery is far more community-oriented than the Nova Scotia system. Nova Scotia Legal Aid uses the "staff-lawyer system" in which a public commission employs salaried lawyers who are appointed by the government and the Barrister's Society. The Dalhousie Legal Aid Service operates by the "community law office" model which involves a board composed equally of community and legal members. This means lawyers, community legal workers and law students all work together to deliver services.

While Nova Scotia Legal Aid focuses "almost exclusively" on family and criminal law, the Dalhousie clinic deals mostly with poverty law cases (dealing with matters of social assistance, unemployment insurance, landlord-tenant conflicts, immigration, Canada Pensions, and human rights) "rights often get left out of Nova Scotia Legal Aid, and often get left out of legal aid systems everywhere."

While the Dalhousie Legal Aid Service would prefer to broaden its scope of legal coverage, the harsh reality of increasing service demands combined with a limited budget often dictates that the opposite occurs. Thompson regrets that "Every now and then we have to...cut back to situations where people are bleeding the worst."

Nevertheless, the Dalhousie Legal Aid Service prides itself on serving the community in a way that goes further than simply arguing individual cases. According to Thompson, "We've always seen it as part of our mandate to not only represent individuals... but to argue test cases before the courts and ...more importantly, to organize around legal issues, to educate the low income community... and also encourage in the creation and organization of groups and coalitions to address a variety of issues that have law as part of it."

In 1986, this "activist" side of the Dalhousie Legal Aid Service caused the government to withdraw around \$80 000 of its funding (about one-quarter of its total budget) for what it



termed the clinic's "persistent criticisms of government social policy." Thompson stresses that the Dalhousie clinic was part of a coalition of other groups and organizations who were also critical of the government's decision in the early eighties to take family benefits away from unmarried mothers as well as of the policy of excluding fathers of dependent children from family benefits. Thompson says "it's not exactly like we were some out-in-left-field critic of government social policy", but he, nevertheless, asserts that the Dalhousie Legal Aid Service plays a crucial role in fighting for the rights of the under-represented that he is not willing to compromise.

"The doctors have lawyers who lobby on their behalf and speak on

their behalf, organizations of truckers, municipalities, bottle dealers- you name it- have lawyers come forward to speak on their behalf to politicians, to lobby them, to try to get the law changed their way. Its exactly the same that we're doing, we're just doing it for poor people.... or for disadvantaged groups who aren't quite so popular." Says Thompson: I don't mind one bit being called a "persistent critic of government social policy. That's our job."

The efforts of Dalhousie Legal Aid Service are widely felt in the community. Community and legal workers from the clinic were actively involved in the founding of Bryony

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## Go to health!

by Lorna Campbell

This year marks the thirteenth anniversary of "For the Health of It," an annual benefit variety show by the Health Professions students at Dalhousie University. It will be held at the Rebecca Cohn auditorium.

Six schools are involved in the production: Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Pharmacy, Health Services Administration and Human Communications Disorders. No doubt this year the audience will be provided once more with a fun-filled evening of great entertainment. There will be a number of awards concerning the event given to the schools in areas such as best costumes and props, best choreography and of course best show over all.

The Steering Committee chooses

an organization to which all proceeds of the show are donated. This year the Spina Bifida Association of Nova Scotia will benefit by the money raised by the efforts of the students. Last year, approximately \$2600 was raised for the Stephan Russell Memorial Fund.

This year's show date is November 20 at 7:30. Tickets are \$5 for students and \$7 for non-students, sold at the Cohn box office during regular operating hours and will be sold at the SUB, the Law Building, and the Tupper Link at lunch hours on a number of days before the show. The show has traditionally been sold out so buy your tickets early to avoid disappointment. Come out and support "For the Health of It" '92 and the Spina Bifida Association of Nova Scotia.