

etc. If these are *some* of the issues covered by my student paper well I'm fucking proud to have it. It says a lot for a university paper that can take a stand on issues that are beyond the "normal media realm." Isn't that what university is about? Taking a few risks? Expressing and developing ideas and opinions that may or may not be held by the majority?

As for your comment that the Gazette does not cover "general campus concerns", what do you call strike coverage, student aid, international student concerns, sports, SUNS and campus elections? Do you say BULLSHIT to those concerns? I see them weekly in the Gazette. Perhaps we may have to take off our "rose-coloured glasses" before we do smell the coffee.

Don't worry Ms. Logan, when we enter the real world we will have lots of time to conform to the NORMAL. We can become yuppified to our little heart's content.

Well, I think I've said my little piece, however incoherent it was. Now I think I'll just turn on CKDU and listen to some ALTERNATIVE music and then maybe stop, tune out, and turn on to yoga or hinduism or some shit like that. . .

Yours sincerely,  
C. MacIll'losa

P.S. Ah, the commerce student always concerned about funding.

## Propaganda

To the Editors:

This is a letter of complaint about the quality of journalism found in Dalhousie's Gazette.

Access to a printing press implies certain responsibilities, and among those responsibilities are balanced and knowledgeable reporting. If a Gazette reader has the patience and stomach to wade through page after page of gay/lesbian propaganda, articles about the plight of male prosti-

tutes and feminist harangues, then he or she has at least the right to expect balanced reporting about non-controversial issues. In this regard, the Gazette recently shot itself in the foot.

Not long ago, the Dalhousie Theatre Dept. and the Music Dept collaborated for the first time in a production of the musical *Little Mary Sunshine*. I can say, as a musician in the pit orchestra and one who has played in many professional productions, that this was one of the best presentations I have seen. Good acting and good direction and choreography by internationally-known Alan Lund resulted in consistent audience laughter and several standing ovations throughout the week of its run.

This "review" completely misunderstands the intent of the show. All of the actors, musicians and crew whom I spoke to felt a sense of embarrassment on behalf of a "reviewer" who obviously failed to understand the show's broadly ironic humour. *Little Mary Sunshine* is an hilarious pastiche of the musical genre. But the Gazette "reviewer" apparently saw the production as a serious piece of social comment which did not promote her own political opinions of the proper roles of men and women in society. To put a finer point on it, she missed the joke — and there is nothing more pathetic than someone who doesn't understand the laughter of those around her.

There are also a number of other irritating aspects of her "review": she admits she did not stay past the intermission; the article's sarcastic and malicious title ("In Memoriam"); its ungrammatical use of English; and the peculiar effrontery of a student organization "trashing" the efforts of another Dalhousie student organization (while the local commercial newspaper had nothing but praise for it).

Having said all this, I will come to the main point: that the

insult herein is not to Dalhousie's Theatre Dept., but to journalism in general. To be a journalist, and a publisher of journalism, implies the responsibility that a "reporter" understand at least the most basic knowledge of the activity reported on. License to print ought not to be a license to be in complete ignorance of what you are writing about.

As an Honours English student at Dalhousie, I resent every penny of my student fees which goes to the Gazette, and I suggest that until a more fair, balanced and knowledgeable staff can be assembled, the Gazette should advertise itself as a gay/lesbian feminist lobby, and refrain from comment on artistic matters.

Respectfully yours  
Roy McDonald

## Caribanza. . .

To the Editor:

I am submitting the letter that follows this one in order to explain my absence from the Caribanza '89 performance, despite the fact that my name appeared on the program. Many persons who know me were quite puzzled when I did not perform. Thus, I am obliged to make public my reason for refusing to participate. This decision was based on the presence of a skit "Island Rumours" in the show. This skit purported to demonstrate how information is distorted as it passes from one person to the next in the form of gossip. But the skit (despite a disclaimer that it was not meant to be offensive, and changes that were made on the day of the show to counter and nullify any objections) presents a background and context that is denigrating to Caribbean people. Therefore, the objections (which were presented in the form of the letter that follows on the day of the performance) are not only valid but essential to put forward

and defend. The content of that letter goes beyond explaining why I did not participate, it embraces a principle at the heart of all peoples struggling for emancipation in all spheres of life.

I would greatly appreciate if this covering letter was also published.

Sincerely,  
Isaac Saney

## . . . 1989

Dear Fellow Students:

At a time when issues and trends of deep concern and far-reaching importance are developing and taking place in the Caribbean, it becomes increasingly necessary for self-respecting persons, with pride in our culture, to uphold the simplest and most fundamental norms of dignified and cultured behaviour.

On this basis, therefore, it becomes impossible for the undersigned to, in good conscience, participate in Caribanza '89.

The Caribbean has a rich and dynamic history which has always been reflected in our culture. But a specific portion of Caribanza '89 openly makes a mockery of this and furthermore, even goes so far as to openly promote a degraded, distorted and perverse caricature of the Caribbean life and ethos. This portion, in the form of a skit, portrays the people of the Caribbean in a way that is not only an insult and affront to all Caribbeans within and outside the region but is an assault on the sensibilities and intelligence of the Canadians and other international students. The skit depicts Caribbean life as one focussed around drug pushing and teenage pregnancies and projects the view that this is the main thread running through our society. The islands are presented as one big shanty town whose inhabitants are morally and cul-

turally degenerate.

This is a slander against the people of the Caribbean. Our culture is not an Air Canada poster nor are our people a shiftless collection of whoremasters and drug dealers. The people of the islands have given rise to a profound, fertile and multi-faceted culture that is admired on the world scale. Our calypso, our reggae, our steel pan, our authors, our poets and scholars have enriched the treasury of world culture.

The Caribanza Ideal is a worthy and essential one. We want our Canadian friends to come and see and appreciate the culture of the different islands, each of which has its own merit. Our Canadian friends can realize that peoples have a different history, different historically developed character and problems and often different cultures with which they may not be familiar. They want to learn about and understand us and our way of life, our joys and our tribulations. In the same spirit, it is incumbent upon us to acquaint ourselves with the joys and tribulations of the Canadian people, their culture, their history, their future. In this way cultural events can serve to bring people of different parts of the world together. But the presence of this skit in Caribanza '89 can do nothing to further this process: it negates and retards it in the worst way.

This causes me the deepest pain. And it is equally painfully necessary for me to declare that I cannot associate as a performer in Caribanza '89. And through this decision I am affirming a stand of principle. When we came to Canada to study, we did not leave our dignity at home.

These concerns were raised with the organizers — not as vigorously as they should have been — but this does not detract from the necessity for a resolute stand.

sincerely,  
Isaac Saney

## OPINION

# We do not own the freshness of the air

by Charlotte Rasmussen

Science and technology are the basis of western civilization. With the relentless pursuit of knowledge, we have overlooked the long-term effects of our actions in favour of the short-term benefits. Our attempts to master nature have come back to haunt us. Our interference with the natural processes, from the use of pesticides to clear-cut logging, has produced effects far different and more serious than ever anticipated by the western world. But these effects were anticipated by other peoples. Did we listen?

In 1855, Chief Seathl of Duwamish tribe in the state of Washington dictated a letter to the President of the United States. It reads:

*The Great Chief in Washington sends word that he wishes to buy our land. The Great Chief also sends us words of friendship and goodwill. This is kind of him, since we know he has little need of our friendship in return. But we will consider your offer, for we know if we do not do so, the white man may come with*

*guns and take our land. What Chief Seathl says, the Great Chief in Washington can count on as truly as our white brothers can count on the return of the season. My words are like the stars — they do not set.*

*How can you buy or sell the sky — the warmth of the land? The idea is strange to us. We do not own the freshness of the air or the sparkle of the water. How can you buy them from us? We will decide in our time. Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clearing and humming insect is holy in the memory and experience of my people.*

*We know that the white man does not understand our ways. One portion of the land is the same to him as the next, for he is a stranger who comes in the night and takes from the land whatever he needs. The earth is not his brother, but his enemy, and when he has conquered it, he moves on. He leaves his fathers' graves behind and does not care. He kidnaps the earth from his children.*

*He does not care.*

*Our children have seen their fathers humbled in defeat. Our warriors have felt shame. And after defeat, they turn their days in idleness and contaminate their bodies with sweet food and strong drink. It matters little where we pass the rest of our days — they are not many. A few more hours, a few more winters, and none of the children of the great tribes that once lived on the earth, or that roamed in small bands in the woods, will be left to mourn the graves of a people once as powerful and hopeful as yours.*

*One thing we know which the white man may one day discover. Our God is the same God. You may think now that you own our land. But you cannot. He is the God of man. And His compassion is equal for the red man and the white. The earth is precious to Him. And to harm the earth is to heap contempt on its creator.*

*The whites, too, shall pass — perhaps sooner than other tribes. Continue to contaminate your bed, and you will one night suffocate in your own waste. When the buffalo are all slaughtered, the*

*wild horses all tamed, the secret corners of the forest heavy with the scent of many men and the view of the ripe hills blotted by talking wives, where is the thicket? Gone. Where is the eagle? Gone. And what is it to say goodbye to the swift and the hunt, (it is) the end of living and the beginning of survival.*

*We might understand if we know what it was that the white man dreams, what hopes he describes to his children on long winter nights, what visions he burns into their minds, so that they will wish for tomorrow. But we are savages. The white man's dreams are hidden from us. And because they are hidden, we will go our own way. If we agree, it will be to secure the reservation you have promised. There perhaps we may live out our brief days as we wish.*

*When the last red man has vanished from the earth, and the memory is only the shadow of a cloud moving across the prairie, these shores and forests will still hold the spirits of my people, for they love this earth as the newborn loves its mother's heartbeat.*

*If we sell you our land, love it as we've loved it. Care for it, as we've cared for it. And with all your strength, with all your might, and with all your heart — preserve it for your children and love it as God loves us all. One thing we know — our God is the same God. The earth is precious to Him. Even the white man cannot be exempt from the common destiny.*

*His fathers' graves and his children's birthright are forgotten. His appetite will devour the earth and leave only behind a desert. The sight of your cities pains the eyes of the red man. But perhaps it is because the red man is a savage and does not understand.*

*There is no quiet place in the white man's cities. No place to hear the leaves of spring or the rustle of insects' wings. But perhaps because I am a savage and do not understand — the clatter only seems to insult the ears. And what is there to life if a man cannot hear the lovely cry of a whippoorwill or the arguments of the frogs around a pond at night? The*

Continued on page 12