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# DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

NORTH AMERICA'S OLDEST CAMPUS NEWSPAPER *EST. 1868*



PHOTO BY KARLA RENIC

## Reckoning with a racist legacy

Report on Lord Dalhousie's History on Slavery and Race, helmed by Afua Cooper, sees the light of day

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

### Finding faith in humanity after a natural disaster

Dear Reader,

Some weather we've had, eh?

For real, though. Hurricane Dorian hit Nova Scotia on Saturday, Sept. 7 and the damage was no joke. Unless you're still somehow without internet, you've no doubt seen footage of a construction crane falling on a building in downtown Halifax. Fortunately, no one was injured.

Power was knocked out across the province. My partner and I were without power in our apartment from Sept. 7 until the evening of the 11th. Over these few days, there were many times I wanted to scream in frustration. But in the grand scheme of things, I know we were lucky. We were able to stay at my mother's, eat hot food and have warm showers. My deepest sympathies go out to the people who had to evacuate their homes after the crane accident. I'm so sad for farmers who lost their crops. My heart breaks, too, for the devastation in the Bahamas.

Fred Rogers famously said, "When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.'" Following Dorian, you didn't need to look very far. Cleanup crews worked tirelessly. Businesses opened their doors to allow folks to shower and charge devices. People offered spare fridge and freezer space to friends. Perhaps most notably, local Bahamians (including Chaz Garraway, secretary of Dalhousie University's Caribbean Connection) have been collecting donations to aid relief efforts in their home country since the beginning of the month. If you'd like to be a helper, too, I'd encourage you to check out @dorianreliefhfx on Instagram to find out more.

*Rebecca Dingwell*

- Rebecca Dingwell, Editor-in-Chief

# Looking back in order to move forward

Panel on Slavery and Race explores Lord Dalhousie's legacy of racism and anti-Blackness, recommends ways to address racism at Dal

BY KARLA RENIC, NEWS EDITOR

On Sept. 5, Dalhousie University made history by officially acknowledging the anti-Black racism imbedded into the institution by its founding father George Ramsay, the ninth Earl of Dalhousie.

A reception was held in honour of the completion of the Report on Lord Dalhousie's History on Slavery and Race, commissioned in 2016 by Dal's Senate Chair Kevin Hewitt. Its mandate was to conduct historical research on racism and anti-Blackness in Dalhousie, Nova Scotia and the Atlantic Canadian region.

It took three years to complete.

The report states that prior to the commission, in 2015, "for Black people as a whole, Dalhousie University was an unwelcoming place." Students have experienced racism in classrooms, racist graffiti was found on campus and Black faculty were insecure about tenure.

"Racism has persisted since the university's beginning and continues to cast its shadow over the campus today," reads the report.

### A long time coming

Lead researcher and panel Chair, Afua Cooper, said "it feels great" to have the report finally out. "I'm very proud of it. I feel like I've done a great thing that really is beyond me."

When the panel started, "I felt that we would be able to do it in no-time, but once we started to do the research [...] I knew it's not something that you can just do in six weeks. We were tasked to engage history — and that's what we did. It takes time to put pieces of evidence together that make sense and to write these things," Cooper said. "It really takes time."

Cooper's note from the report states: "the work that went into researching the project and writing the report was hard labour, but it was a labour of love, underscored by a deep commitment to racial justice."

The report was a transatlantic research mission. Among other topics, it examines slavery in Scotland, legal regimes involving slavery, the arrival of Black refugees and files like letters written by George Ramsay that show his anti-Black views.

The report ends in 13 recommendations to Dalhousie under subtitles "Regret and responsibility," "Recognition" and "Repair."



AFUA COOPER WAS THE LEAD RESEARCHER AND PANEL CHAIR FOR THE REPORT ON LORD DALHOUSIE'S HISTORY ON SLAVERY AND RACE. PHOTO BY KARLA RENIC

For the future of the university, Cooper's hopes are that these recommendations are accepted and realized.

The first recommendation requested a formal apology from Dalhousie to the African Nova Scotian community. It states "this apology would include the sentence 'we are sorry for the university's and its founder's connections to slavery and for the anti-Black racism that continues to occur at Dalhousie University and throughout the province.'"

### The apology

During the event on Sept. 5, Dalhousie's interim president Teri Balser said:

"Today, on behalf of Dalhousie University, I apologize to the people of African descent in our community. We regret the actions and views of George Ramsay, the ninth Earl of Dalhousie, and the consequences and impact they have had in our collective history as a university, as a province, and as a region. Further, we acknowledge our dual respon-

sibility to address the legacies of anti-Black racism and slavery, while continuing to stand against anti-Black racism today."

Balser also said that the recommendations made by the report are "critical in informing our path forward."

Afua Cooper noted that there is still a long way to go. "The president has apologized," she said. "Another recommendation was creating more scholarships for Black students. The president has done that with the Sankofa Scholarship."

"That is all very positive, but there is still long-term structural work that needs to be done."

Hiring and retention of Black faculty, creating an institute of African Nova Scotian studies and an African Nova Scotian research centre were also on the list.

"The most important thing is that you need to shift the culture, the culture of whiteness. The real work is in the action. I am confident that the interim president and the incoming president will realize the recommendations," said Cooper.

# Dal's Cuba program loses its pioneer and pilot

The woman who started the longest running academic relationship between Cuba and Canada has retired

BY LANE HARRISON



MARIAN MACKINNON CAME TO DALHOUSIE IN 1989. AFTER 30 YEARS IN THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, SHE RETIRED AT THE END OF THE PREVIOUS SCHOOL YEAR. PHOTO PROVIDED BY MARIAN MACKINNON

After joining Dalhousie University in 1989, Marian MacKinnon retired at the end of the last school year. A 30-year staff member of the faculty of Arts and Sciences, MacKinnon spent the majority of her time in the department of International Development Studies. She left behind a legacy of impacting people and their education.

A lot of this impact was done through MacKinnon's Cuba Intensive and Cuba Semester programs. Since 1997, these programs have given Dalhousie students the opportunity to travel to Cuba, immerse themselves in its culture and learn about its history and development.

The idea to have such a program began in 1996. Students who studied international development approached MacKinnon about the possibility of studying abroad.

"I thought, well, we have Cuba. That's not too far away. And it may not cost too much. And we have an expert on Cuba in the Spanish depart-

ment — John Kirk," says MacKinnon.

With the help of former student Shelagh Savage, the program came to life. Savage was working with Canada World Youth, a non-profit organization built on teaching Canadian youth about other cultures through international volunteer opportunities, with a project in Havana.

Savage and John Kirk travelled to Havana and made contact with the Faculty of Latin America Social Sciences (FLACSO) at the University of Havana and the Cuban Women's Federation, who could provide students with accommodation, says MacKinnon.

With the relationships created, Dalhousie stu-

dents were in Cuba — for the first time — in the spring of 1997. Having paid for her own trip, MacKinnon was there with them. Maintaining these relationships was the most important part of the equation, she says. "It allowed me to return to Cuba for the next 21 years."

Both Cuba Intensive and Cuba Semester programs are hosted by FLACSO at the University of Havana. In the intensive program, students take a 10-day course on Cuban culture, laws, healthcare and agriculture. A part of the education includes visits to places like the Cuban Federation of Women, an urban farm, and an eco-village.

## A dedicated leader

Associate Professor Robert Huish, who led the trip with MacKinnon between 2012 and 2018, said: "where we send [FLACSO] students, they send us faculty members. And that's something that most programs do not take the time to invest into at other universities.

"It fostered a lot of deep relationships between Dalhousie faculty and students and our Cuban partners, and that, that really is all the mechanics of Marian [MacKinnon]."

The costs for FLACSO faculty to travel to Dalhousie were taken out of the program's bud-

get, which meant that as student participation (and the amount of program money) fluctuated, MacKinnon would always ensure that her Cuban colleagues could visit Dalhousie, she says, driving them to and from the airport each time they did.

"She had the ability to make sure that those relationships are strong and fostered," says Huish.

"It's essential when you're working with another culture, to be able to offer them something for all their hard work. You know, it's really, re-

ally important. And, you know, you have to have that to make things work," says MacKinnon.

That care and attention did not go unappreciated by those at FLACSO in Cuba, who sent MacKinnon emails of concern as hurricane Dorian made landfall in Nova Scotia.

Reynaldo Jiménez Guethón, former director and current academic coordinator of FLACSO Cuba says: "I think, with great joy, that spending more than 20 years of work, meetings, receptions in airports, sharing FLACSO Cuba and my family with Marian has been an unforgettable thing for our lives."

MacKinnon's dedication to hold such strong relationships with the Cubans was simply the tip of her leadership abilities, says Huish.

"I remember one time we had arrived in Havana, at the hotel that we were staying at, and we had just come off the flight really late at night. And we have 45 people in the lobby. The front desk tells us 'sorry, the hotel is full, but we're going to put you in another hotel just down the street.' The other hotel was not even close to what we needed. This place was still under renovation, electricity wasn't in most of the rooms ... Marian was able to not only convince them that we will not be staying in that other hotel, but that in fact, that there are spaces at the hotel we originally wanted to stay at."

"She was able to handle logistics in a way that always put students first, to make sure that the experience was the best it could be for the students, even if it took a lot of personal toll and effort on her part," he says.

It is through these displays of leadership from Marian MacKinnon that the Cuba Program was able to operate for over two decades and receive an award of recognition from the Canadian Ambassador to Cuba.

As the program prepares to continue on without her, it is clear that she will be difficult to replace.

"For the program to run, you have to have people that are dedicated. I was dedicated. It was the love of my life," she says.

**"She was able to handle logistics in a way that always put students first, to make sure that the experience was the best it could be for the students."**



# Living with Crohn's

Dal student Jason Isaacs was one of 10 students in the country to receive a scholarship from Crohn's and Colitis Canada

BY KARLA RENIC, NEWS EDITOR

Jason Isaacs is 26 years old and studies clinical psychology at Dalhousie University. He has dedicated his work and research to something he's dealt with for most of his life – pain killers.

"I've had stomach pain and abdominal pain for most of my childhood," says Isaacs. He has always had dietary issues; dairy, wheat, sometimes even raw vegetables or too much exercise would give him pain.

"The doctors thought it was a bit more psychologically based so I was first diagnosed with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)." Then, they started to realise that many of his symptoms were unaccounted for.

According to a report by the Canadian Society of Intestinal Research, IBS is a chronic illness that causes abdominal pain, bloating and altered bowel behaviour. "It is the most common gastrointestinal condition worldwide," but only 40 per cent of people with symptoms seek medical attention.

A press release by Crohn's and Colitis Canada states that 270,000 Canadians suffer from IBS, one of the highest rates in the world. This number is expected to rise to 400,000 by 2030.

## An unexpected diagnosis

"A symptom that is a bit less known with IBS," Isaacs says, "is that it often affects the brain and body on a very biological level." Isaacs had a relatively late growth spurt.

"I went into the medical procedure for diagnosis, as the gastroenterologist told me, 'just for assurance sake, a small percentage of people who had that type of symptom tend to have something underlying, like Crohn's.'"

Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis are two main forms of IBD (inflammatory bowel disease), according to Crohn's and Colitis Canada. These illnesses "disrupt your body's ability to digest food, absorb nutrition, and eliminate waste in a healthy manner." Symptoms include severe abdominal pain, sores, fatigue and weight loss.

At 21 years old, Isaacs was diagnosed with Crohn's disease. "It turns out I was that small percentage."

He remembers the day he got diagnosed. He was feeling "a mix of surprise and shock and relief," he says, "but I think the relief came a bit later." Having an explanation after years of struggle was helpful; "it provided a way forward."

Isaac's disease is now the norm for him and his family. "My mother has always been my mentor and hero," he says, "she held it together very well." She was also diagnosed with ulcerative colitis at a young age.

Nonetheless, it hasn't been an easy road. "My pain levels actually went up over the last few years and there have been times where I've had to stay home from classes," he says. "I have to stay away from higher activity social events, anything more than watching a movie with friends."

"I think maybe two or three times a year, it goes to the extent where the pain might last for two weeks at a time. It's really impairing," he says.

He says that he is lucky that people around him have been receptive to his illness and help him out whenever they can.

## Staying involved

During his four years in clinical psychology, Isaacs had been studying gaps in healthcare, particularly gastrointestinal illnesses. His dissertation discusses prescription pain killers among youth and adults. "A huge part of IBD is pain."

This year, Jason Isaacs was one of the 10 Canadian students awarded up to \$5,000 in scholarships from Crohn's and Colitis Canada and the AbbVie IBD Scholarship Program.

Jenn Ackerman, the Child and Youth Programs Coordinator at Crohn's and Colitis says the scholarship is awarded to students who suffer the symptoms of IBD and exhibit academic excellence and community involvement.



JASON ISAACS, A CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY STUDENT AT DALHOUSIE, WAS ONE OF THE 10 CANADIAN STUDENTS AWARDED UP TO \$5,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS FROM CROHN'S AND COLITIS CANADA AND THE ABBVIE IBD SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM. PHOTO BY KARLA RENIC

This scholarship is meant to increase students' wellness. "Many students in our community say that stress is a trigger for their IBD and one the sources for this stress are financial issues. By having extra time and not needing an extra job, they have time to take care of themselves."

"Jason really identified that he is able to maintain a high level of wellness during his studies," Ackerman says. "After he was diagnosed, he has been researching gaps he saw in healthcare that are linked to his illness. He stays involved with the community."

For Isaacs, this scholarship means that he is able to have a community of people who recognize that IBD is such an important area to research. Being a researcher in grad school, most of his living comes from scholarships. Clinical psychology, he says, is a heavy workload and limits the ability to seek jobs. "This additional source of income makes a huge difference in my ability to live and pay rent."

Isaacs has applied for the scholarship several

years in a row, but this was his first time receiving it. "I'm glad that I've had the opportunity for this to exist, even though I haven't gotten it in the past," he says. "I've always found that gastrointestinal illnesses have been quite under researched and underfunded," he says.

"Having a platform where money, that has been recruited through fundraising and through research, can be given back to people who are furthering their education [...] I think it's a wonderful thing."

Isaacs is motivated to contribute to research on Crohn's, colitis and other chronic illnesses after his studies with a focus on pain killer prescription.

Relating to his own diagnosis, he says he knows what answers can do for people. Isaacs says he hopes to be a clinical psychologist and help people with emotional and psychological adjustment to chronic illnesses. "What I really want to do is give people that glimmer of hope to carry on with their day."

# Fighting the rising opioid crisis

## Overdose response toolkit released by the Canadian Mental Health Association

BY KARLA RENIC, NEWS EDITOR AND DARCEY NEALE

*Editor's note: This article discusses drug abuse, the opioid crisis and overdose.*

A national report released in June states that 4,460 deaths occurred in 2018 due to opioids. In Canada, 20 per cent of accidental opioid-related deaths (most commonly accidental overdose) happened to people aged 20 to 29. In Nova Scotia, this number was higher at 25 per cent for the same age group.

"Young Canadians aged 15 to 24 are the fastest-growing population requiring hospital care from opioid overdoses," according to the report.

The Canadian Mental Health Association's (CMHA) launched the Carry-It Toolkit on Aug. 31, just before the start of a new school year. It is an online resource designed to inform campus faculty, nurses and students on how to respond to an overdose situation safely.

"If you care, we ask you to carry it," reads the slogan for the Carry-It Toolkit.

Sara Rodrigues, National Senior Research and Policy Analyst at the CMHA, said there is an increase in Canadian campuses taking the opioid crisis seriously. According to the campaign's press release, 81 per cent of Canadians have witnessed drug use on campus, but more than half would not know how to respond.

The online kit includes, among other things, a 101 on opioids and naloxone, a campus protocol, guides on safe drug use and facts about opioid myths.

Naloxone is one of the main focuses of the campaign. In Canada, it comes in two forms: nasal spray (Narcan) and an injectable. According to the toolkit, it is a temporary antidote to an overdose crisis that can be administered with the proper training.

"Naloxone is an essential part of your First Aid Kit," the toolkit says. "It will save

lives."

The toolkit contains a detailed approach to administering naloxone to an individual in crisis. It also contains a protocol template that helps facilities design effective ways to incorporate education on identifying and responding to an overdose into a campus community.

### Overdose response on campus

Rodrigues said CMHA saw a need for campuses to have access to a resource with recommendation for a formal campus protocol, "especially something that involved the entire campus community in overdose [prevention] and response ... [One that] supports broader education and access to the naloxone kits," she said.

At Dalhousie University, naloxone administration training is not a mandatory requirement of coaching all resident assistants (RAs). However, senior residence assistant Hannah Parks said there is an increase in both students and RAs being trained to administer naloxone this year.

"A lot of us now carry our own [...] but I definitely think a larger student population having the training would be beneficial," said Parks.

Rodrigues said that an issue faced by the CMHA during their research for the Carry-It Toolkit was the lack of data on campus overdoses. Many overdoses and related incidences go unreported to campuses and campus security. The main reason, she explained, is a student's fear of reprisal.

Parks said "it is sad to see when [students] don't get the support they feel like they need. Sometimes that can just be a communication barrier or a lack of staff." She also said many people are in support of increasing funding for mental health services on campus.

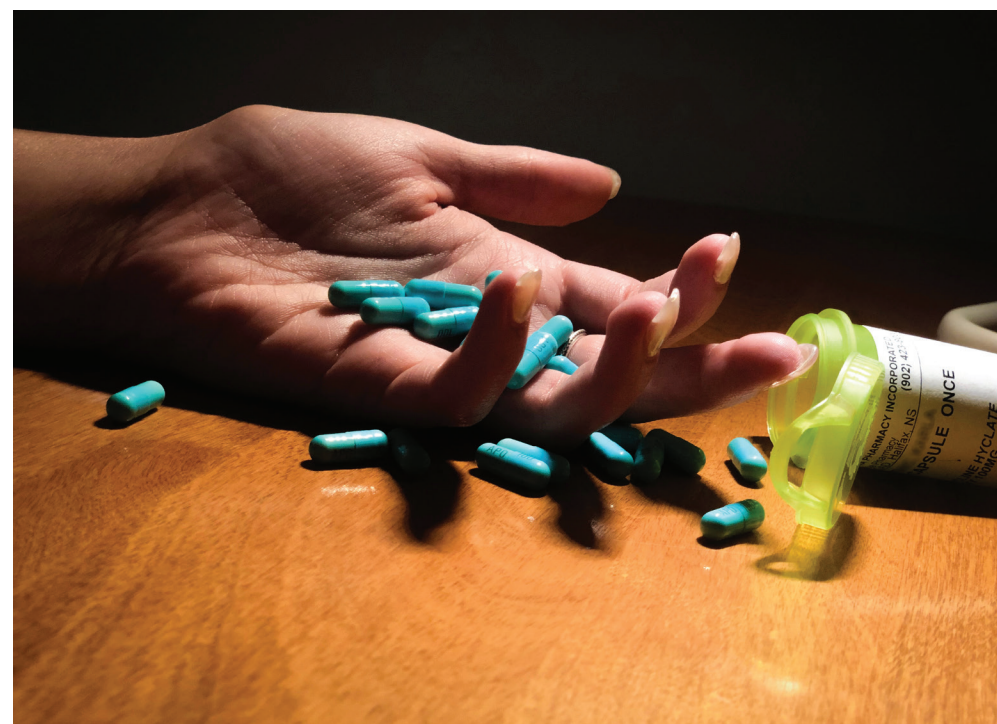
According to CMHA reports, the organization recommends that university faculty is trained to recognize signs of mental illness, including risks of drug abuse. The report also suggests incorporating antidote administration training, as well as spreading the word about Carry-It to students.

*Naloxone is available over the counter at most pharmacies and free of charge to anyone at risk (including friends and family). It is also free for individuals that are most likely to witness and respond to an opioid overdose. A complete list of Nova Scotian pharmacies participating in the Take Home Naloxone Program can be found on [nsnaloxone.com](http://nsnaloxone.com)*

*If you or anyone you know is at risk of an opioid overdose, you can refer to the Opioid Treatment and Recovery Program by calling 902-893-4776.*



A SCREENSHOT OF THE CARRY-IT TOOLKIT FROM THE CAMPAIGN'S WEBSITE.



ON AUG. 31, THE CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION LAUNCHED THE CARRY-IT TOOLKIT. THE TOOLKIT WAS CREATED FOR POST-SECONDARY CAMPUSES TO PREVENT AND REACT TO OPIOID OVERDOSES. PHOTO BY KARLA RENIC



# Pleasure politics

## A response to Doug Ford's sex-ed plans

BY MAYOWA OLUWASANMI

As the film *Mean Girls* famously said: "Don't have sex. Because you will get pregnant and die."

Despite the obvious joke in this, Ontario's Ford administration seems to have adopted this view in stride. Doug Ford's provincial government has made drastic changes to the sex education curriculum adopted by the Ontario Liberal Party in 2015. That curriculum was an updated, progressive one that dealt with relevant issues surrounding sex and gender. Influenced by right wing and religious fears, the premier has disregarded the obligation of professional and educational actors to educate students about biology, sexuality and consent.

Ontario's sex-ed curriculum has come under fire in the past by these conservative groups, who claim it indoctrinated youth into liberal mindsets or circumvents religious beliefs. The changes affect the ability to educate students about multiple gender identities, gender fluidity, consent, mental health and other important issues. To many, this is a massive step backwards. These plans will have adverse effects on students, both in the classroom and real life.

### Changes will negatively affect students

The sex-ed curriculum was introduced to foster informed, progressive students within a supposedly progressive province. By adhering to right-wing and religious fears, Ford's administration fails its student populace. Ford's revised curriculum harms LGBTQ2S+ and gender non-conforming students. Those with different sexual and gender identities are entitled to informative, safe spaces within their school. The previous curriculum normalized sex and gender for its students. This would have far-reaching effects beyond the classroom, particularly on mental health and de-stigmatization.

According to the Canadian Mental Health Association, transgender and non-heterosexual people are "14 times more likely to attempt suicide" than cis-hetero individuals. Normalizing sex and gender beyond its limited current scope is vital. Educators, who have an ethical and professional responsibility to shape tomorrow's world, cannot do so without a proper curriculum. Changing the curriculum puts rights at risk.

Sex education does not exist to go against religion or advocate for sexually active lifestyles. According to non-profit Advocacy for Youth, informative sex education has helped increase the use of condoms and contraception. This statistic derived from research on sexual education programs which showcased that sex-ed led to more informed and responsible students. There is no greater strength than an educated populace who can make knowledgeable decisions. Education gives students the tools to articulate and advocate consent, their bodily autonomy and identity.

Ford's changes are also incredibly antiquated: religious fears influencing policy and believing that school is the monopoly on education reflects on how out of touch the Ford administration is. The onus was placed on schools to make students both informed and tolerant of various sexualities, genders and issues. In today's digital age, the internet and its unregulated information puts students at risk of consuming inaccurate or hateful rhetoric.

### Students have a right to know

Ford's concerns, even with sex education, are political. Although he has no educational or health background, any advice or concern expressed by educational and sexual health experts were ignored. The safety of LGBTQ2S+ students are instead usurped in favour of forces that should have no sway. Ford's policy is a populist one, particularly framing the Ontario education system as a sector that must answer to the demands of the "people" (concerned parents). Such maneuvering will only have harrowing effects on social stigma, mental health and the very lives of students.

The lines between concern and fear-mongering are blurry. Sex-ed should not try to please everyone. The state should not operate according to subjective morality. It is not the job of the state to tell us "Don't have sex. Because you will get pregnant and die." Instead, policy making should operate within what is expected in a free and democratic society. Religious dogma and political opinions shouldn't sway the established rights of the populace. Students, simply and unquestionably, have a right to know.



ONTARIO'S CURRENT SEX-ED CURRICULUM WAS CRITICIZED BY CONSERVATIVE GROUPS WHO CLAIMED IT PUSHED YOUTH INTO LIBERAL MINDSETS OR EVADES RELIGIOUS BELIEFS.

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# Canada needs proportional representation

## Things are not as equal as they appear

BY WILLIAM COOPER



SINCE CANADA DOESN'T HAVE PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION, THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT TENDS TO ALTERNATE BETWEEN LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE.

Canada is not as ideologically divided as it might appear. In the last five federal elections, between 30 to 40 per cent of Canadians voted for the right-of-centre Conservative Party. The remaining 60 to 70 per cent voted for one of the four left-of-centre parties. We are predominantly a nation of lefties.

### Conservative consolidation

So why do we keep oscillating between right-of-centre and left-of-centre governments?

To answer this question, we must look back to the 1990s, when the Liberals reigned supreme and right-leaning voters were split between the two right-of-centre parties: the Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservatives. Somewhere around this time, these centre-right parties realized that neither was capable of defeating the Liberals in an election, and they launched a campaign to “unite the right.”

In 2003, they merged to form the Conservative

Party of Canada, and since then, under Canada’s “first-past-the-post” electoral system (FPTP), the Conservatives have won three of the five federal elections. The 60 to 70 per cent of us who split our votes between the four major left-of-centre parties, meanwhile, have been left out in the cold.

In 2015, Canada appeared poised for change. Fearful of another four years of Harper Conservative rule, left-leaning voters adopted the Conservative strategy and gave their support to a single party: the ascending Justin Trudeau Liberals, who were running on a platform that included calling a referendum on proportional representation. The Liberals won the election with a large majority and an unprecedented increase of seats but soon after they were in power, they reneged on their election promise.

The justification Trudeau gave for this was that he feared proportional representation would allow “fringe groups” to hold the balance of power — the implication being that left-leaning voters

would no longer feel obliged to vote strategically for the Liberals as the biggest left-of-centre party, and would instead cast their votes for smaller parties (like the NDP or the Greens). This would lead to an erosion of the Liberal base, and likely mean that in order to govern, the Liberals would have to share power in a coalition.

### A political quagmire

This leaves us in a political quagmire, vacillating between Liberal and Conservative governments, each working to undermine the perceived progress of the opposition. According to the Canada Poll Tracker, in the October 2019 federal election, left-leaning Canadians will again split their votes between the four major left-of-centre parties, and hereby hand another victory to the Conservatives. The chance of the Conservatives ever calling a referendum on electoral reform is virtually non-existent, as no one benefits more from the status quo than they do.

Even if a referendum were called today, there is no telling which way it would go. Prince Edward Island recently held a referendum on whether or not to adopt Mixed Member Proportional Representation (MMP) and 50 per cent of Islanders said “no.”

The problem seems to be that most Canadians do not really know what proportional representation is let alone why we need it. This made it easy for the red and blue campaigners in PEI to scare the public off the idea with a few well-placed signs bearing cautionary slogans like “MMP is confusing and complicated” and “Don’t know? Vote no.”

### The cornerstones of democracy

Some of what detractors say about proportional representation is true. It will probably lead to a rise in the number of special interest parties and coalition governments, which will make it more difficult to push through legislation without considerable negotiation and compromise. But negotiation and compromise are the cornerstones of democracy, and history has shown us that coalition governments can be extremely productive.

For example, it was the Pearson Liberal minority government working with the NDP that gave us public healthcare, the 40-hour work week, the Canada Pension Plan and our current Canadian flag. Proportional representation will require our political parties to work together and hold each other accountable. It will also lead to greater voter turnout, political engagement and representation of marginalized groups, allowing left-leaning Canadians to vote for the party and candidate of their choice without fear of handing another undeserved victory to the right.

Proportional representation is not going to be offered to us. We must stand up and demand it. When the referendum is held, we must be ready to respond to misleading propaganda with facts and reason. There should be no doubt in anyone’s mind that proportional representation works. Over 80 per cent of OECD countries use some form of it, including some of the most stable and successful democracies in the world.

It is time to put an end to the Liberal-Conservative stranglehold on Canadian politics. Now more than ever, with the unprecedented worldwide ecological and economic challenges we face, we need a stable and truly democratic democracy.



# Why we still need feminism

## There is a lot of work to do

BY HANNAH BING

Feminism is the notion that women and men should have equal rights under the law and under society. It's a dirty word, surrounded by stigma to the point where people will refuse the name strictly because of the connotation that follows it.

Some claim they do not consider themselves a feminist, they just believe in equal rights. But at the core, that is feminism. If you believe people should be equal regardless of sex and gender, you have to subscribe to some type of feminism.

I often hear people say that they perceive feminists as if they believe they are above men or are “man haters” and that every feminist subscribes to this radical approach. However, as a feminist, I and every other feminist I know subscribe to the controversial idea that all people despite sex and gender deserve to be equal.

Another common rhetoric to oppose feminism is that we do not need it anymore. Women have the right to vote, we can get a credit card without our husbands' signature, we can work and we can wear pants, so we are done — feminism has done its job. I am not only a feminist for myself. I am a feminist for everyone.

Feminism was, at one time, only for white women. Women of colour were given these rights much later. The last province to give women the right to vote was Quebec in 1940, but the right to vote did not come until 1960 for Indigenous women. In my 20-year life span, I have not lost the right to vote as a woman, birth control has been legal in Canada and I have had the right to work. The same cannot be said for the women who came before us and the same cannot be said for women now who live in other countries.

### Reinventing feminism

Although my basic rights have always been rights for me, there is a lot of work to do. I am grateful for those who fought for those rights and gave them to me, but I want to reinvent feminism.

Feminism is nothing if it is not intersectional. This is not just about the white women in this country, it is about everyone. It is about women of colour and transgender women. It is about every person (including men) being able to talk about their feelings. To me, it is primarily about breaking down barriers: people who identify as male can wear makeup, all children's toys are unisex and gender stereotypes are thrown out.

Katherine Whipple, a third-year contemporary studies and psychology student at the Uni-



FEMINISM IS THE IDEA THAT ALL PEOPLE, DESPITE SEX AND GENDER, DESERVE TO BE EQUAL. CREATIVE COMMONS

versity of King's College says she needs feminism because “as a woman I still get followed around in public by men during the day and at night. They see me as a sex object and they have the idea that it is OK for them to do it.”

Hayley Frail, a third-year BA student at Dalhousie University, has her own reasons for needing feminism, saying, “I am a feminist because when I work as a photographer at different music shows

I am almost always the only female on the frontlines taking pictures up close. Most women don't

feel like they belong there because it is male dominated.”

The truth is that we still need feminism because women are 60 per cent less likely than men to move up from middle management to executive positions and because one in four North American women are going to be sexually assaulted in their lifetime.

Feminism is about supporting and empowering people.

It is about birth control access, gender-based violence, people with disabilities and other mar-

ginalized people. It is about the overwhelming statistic that women are 50 per cent more likely to get misdiagnosed by a doctor than men are, because women are often seen as dramatic or hysterical when describing symptoms.

So do we still need feminism? The answer in short is that while I don't hate men, I hate the society that sets up toxic masculinity. I hate how that can leak into our daily lives and how it has become a fundamental structure in the legal system and society. We still need feminism because women are still being killed, sexually assaulted, misdiagnosed, given limited access to specialized healthcare and glossed over in jobs with a male dominated team because they are women.

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**While I don't hate men, I hate the society that sets up toxic masculinity.**

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# Climate change's existence should not be a debate

## Elections Canada neglects to differentiate fact from opinion

BY ISABEL BUCKMASTER, OPINIONS EDITOR

It's 2019 and Canada is determined to keep its citizens trapped in their climate change comfort zones, slipping back into its well-worn shirt of denial just in time for this election. During a time that should be concerned with the state of our earth's climate and what our country can do to combat it, one person's blatant denial of fact was all it took for our government to revert to their old ways.

Elections Canada has declared that they will not be making a distinction between facts and opinions surrounding the topic of climate change during the 2019 election. Translation: any discussion about man-made climate change during the debates will be viewed as an opinion rather than fact.

On top of this, if groups spend more than \$500 during the election period to promote concerns about climate change and potentially other science-based issues, they are being forced to register as a third-party organization. This restriction forces all environmentally minded campaigns through a heavily drawn-out, expensive process. Not only is this decision redundant, but it is a pointless and disappointing political dance around the real issue. It isn't that Elections Canada is saying man-made climate change doesn't exist, it's that they're choosing not to defend advocacy.

Climate change should be placed in a neutral role when brought up in the election. Since the topic is generally agreed upon across the main parties, rather than disputing its position in the debate, the discussion revolves around plans of action or neglect. However, because of the position of a new, up-and-coming party, the existence of climate change has been called into question and made the issue entirely political. This has spurred Elections Canada's decision to classify climate change and potentially other science-based debate topics as partisan.

### One person was all it took

All it took was one person to throw off the bal-



ELECTIONS CANADA WILL NOT DISTINGUISH BETWEEN FACTS AND OPINIONS ON THE SUBJECT OF CLIMATE CHANGE. IF MORE THAN \$500 IS SPENT ON PROMOTING CONCERNS ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE, GROUPS MUST REGISTER AS A THIRD-PARTY ORGANIZATION.

ance: Maxime Bernier. Leader of the People's Party of Canada, a far-right political party just over a year old, Bernier's campaign is filled with anti-environment messaging. From promises to withdraw from the Paris Accord to an emphasis on growing Canada's oil and gas industry, Bernier's stance stands on nothing but his own ego.

Elections Canada's decision to turn their back on vital fact in favour of one party's campaign is more than disappointing. It serves as a window into our government's relation to climate defense and whether we can trust that the information they present us is truly without bias. It is a battle that can be likened to a debate between scientists and a single anti-vaxxer; just because the facts are there doesn't mean that everyone will choose to follow them. However, this is not a valid excuse for our

government to turn their backs on crucial fact.

### Warped information

The reason behind the weak defense could be as simple as selfishness. Former Natural Resources and Finance Minister Joe Oliver, previously a member of Stephen Harper's cabinet, has become a climate change soothsayer. Spreading the message that Canada will benefit from climate change in the end, he cites a recent report from Moody's Analytics that sorts countries into winners and losers based on economic models. According to this study, there is a chance that with a longer growing season, Canada's farmers could stand to come out on top while the Indian economy dramatically shrinks.

Of course, from his position on the board of High Arctic Energy Services (an oil drilling company, with investments reaching hundreds of thousands of dollars), there is additional padding to brace his flimsy stance. On further investigation, Bernier does not have to disclose the donors to his party but started his race with \$350,000 from several locations. While I don't doubt the sincerity behind both men's platforms, I'd much rather have it from someone absent of bias that has caused this issue in the first place.

The irony that basic fact is being discounted because of one person's biased opinion of climate change is entirely offensive. It is an affront to everything this election should be about. We cannot just sit back while our officials benefit off the detriment of warped information and pipe(line)



# Pursuing a PhD with ADHD

Dalhousie won't say you can't, but you are cordially invited to spend tens of thousands to find out for yourself

BY TRAVIS RUFF



IN SEPTEMBER 2018, TRAVIS RUFF — WHO HAD RECENTLY BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH ADHD — RETURNED TO DALHOUSIE TO PURSUE A DOCTORATE DEGREE.

In September 2018, I was returning to Dalhousie University as a mature student after having obtained a bachelor of science in psychology in 2006. I was still living with the regret of my first time at Dal, marred by poor performance and paying the price for *thinking* about doing some work instead of doing it.

I promised myself that this time around, Dal had to be worth the money and time. Luckily there were some key differences to aid in this project. This time I was in my late 30s, I had more ambition, an intense desire to improve understanding, and most importantly, a cognitive disability.

The disability was not newly acquired, but my diagnosis was. I was reassured by my psychologist and career counsellor that the university has accommodations for students with ADHD inattentive type to remove the associated barriers to

learning and performance. Naively, I moved forward believing the only thing that could cause me to fall short was losing motivation.

## New accommodations

My accommodations began with a 50 per cent extension time for exams in a quiet, isolated room, an offer of a note taker, some note taking assistive technology and a text to speech program downloadable from Dal's website. The extra time on exams would later be increased to double. This extra time and solitary room were integral. I declined the note taking offers and opted to record lectures when allowed, using the lackluster speech to text software where applicable. During my meeting with the accessibility office to go over those items, I asked about other barriers that may pop up and was kindly suggested to bring issues

back to them as they unfolded.

In October, I would benefit from a government subsidized Psychoeducational Assessment. I had been frothing at the mouth for this document as I believed the results would be the justification for a new plan that would make all my problems manageable. To my dismay, it made no difference. The assessment found that my processing speed is in the fourth percentile and I'm in the 18th percentile for reading fluency with an extra note regarding struggles with ambiguity.

As the year moved on, I found myself in a panic. I was not in control of my success. On one hand, I had my motivation and intellectual aptitude. On the other, I was consumed by distraction where swaths of time combusted into the ether, hobbled by my unique inability to make decisions efficient-

ly, too often locked out of the academically useful part of my brain, and falling victim to the outcomes of time blindness.

Those problems may not have been dire if I wasn't also incredibly slow. It seemed to me that a student couldn't have my afflictions *and* be as slow as me cognitively. Conversations with the various interested offices on campus weren't particularly fruitful apart from the vice-provost (Student Affairs).

## Hampered academic success

Dr. Ivan Joseph gave me more than a half hour of his time in the late winter semester. My main point was that, without evidence beyond my own anecdote, I was convinced that some number of students at Dal may be unnecessarily hampered in their pursuit of academic success due to cognitive disability and that current accommodations only fill a fraction of the potential pitfalls. Realizing our meeting was primarily a ramble, I said I would send an email with ideas outlining my thoughts on how the university could improve outcomes.

Over a month passed before he got back to me. What I got was a phone call breaking down every point I made, its feasibility and what he was trying to do about it.

For the two items under Joseph's purview, there was tangible movement. But a short series of items I felt were the most helpful, I got a strange response: the implementation of my ideas would be seen as a violation of academic freedom. Joseph mentioned he would investigate getting me an audience with the Senate but when I advised that I had not intended to be at Dal this year, he feared that may cut short any appeal for them to meet with me.

With no conclusion in sight, Dalhousie remains a place of academic disappointment for those with ambitious goals and ill-suited cognitive deficits. However, if you have delayed sleep phase syndrome and always need to take a nap midday and hate sleeping on the couches in the McCain, thank your VP (Academic Affairs) for the upcoming option to book a bed, generously set aside in a dorm for students in need like you.



# Who the heck was Joseph Howe?

## The charming journalist-turned-politician made his mark on Nova Scotia

BY SAM GILLET



JOSEPH HOWE LIVED IN HALIFAX FROM 1804 TO 1873. THIS STATUE IS LOCATED ON HOLLIS STREET IN DOWNTOWN HALIFAX. PHOTO BY SAM GILLET



DESPITE BEING AGAINST CONFEDERATION, HOWE BECAME A FEDERAL MINISTER AND PROVINCIAL SECRETARY IN 1869. IN 1873, HE BECAME THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF NOVA SCOTIA. PHOTO BY TOPLEY STUDIO, LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

The name Joseph Howe appears on a number of different buildings, parks and statues in the Halifax Regional Municipality. But who really is the man behind the name?

Alive from 1804 to 1873, Joseph Howe lived and died in Halifax. He was known for his way with words in his speech and writing, which helped him earn his reputation as a feisty reporter.

### A journalism legend

After becoming editor of the *Nova Scotian* newspaper in 1828, he published a letter claiming that local politicians and police pocketed over £30,000 in taxpayer money. It was a scandalous subject, but being critical of the government in the papers was even more shocking an act. He was charged with criminal libel: a serious crime in the day.

In what might still be the biggest trial in Nova Scotian history, Howe used his infamous powers of speech to win the case. He was a charmer, and during the trial used some silky lingo and turns of phrases such as challenging jurors to “leave an unshackled press as a legacy to your children.” While that didn’t immediately change the libel laws in place, it set a major trend in motion towards freedom of the press in Nova Scotia and Canada as a whole.

The son of the judge presiding over Howe’s trial was so rattled by the result of the trial that he challenged Howe to a duel by revolvers at Point Pleasant Park. When Howe’s opponent missed his

shot, Howe fired his own gun into the air.

### Joining politics

For much of Howe’s life, Great Britain controlled almost all aspects of life for the colonists who lived in Canada. So, after journalism, Howe’s next project was political: he was elected as provincial secretary of Nova Scotia, and his main goal was responsible government.

In other words, Howe wanted citizens to have more say in how their colony was run and by whom. Though progressive for the time, this excluded a wide range of people who lived in Nova Scotia, such as the

Mi’kmaq whose society had flourished in the area for thousands of years prior to colonial rule.

Howe kept busy advocating in Great Britain on behalf of Nova Scotia. He wanted a better tax system, easier exporting of goods like fish and lumber and better representation in London.

Howe also had a thing for railways. He campaigned for a railway commission that would link Halifax, Windsor and Truro.

He hated the idea of Canadian confederation (which was kind of a big topic at the time) as he was a fierce loyalist to England. He also thought it might make Nova Scotia a little less independent. In the end, his opinion had little effect at the 1864 Charlottetown Conference in Prince Edward Island, which set confederation in motion.

To make a long, tedious story about angry men shorter, Howe basically ranted and raved against confederation to Canada’s overlords in London to no avail. He did, however, eventually become a federal minister and provincial secretary in 1869 where he continued to rant and rave about confederation’s evils with gusto.

Howe was known as a loud-mouthed politician who rarely flew under the radar. But he also pursued poetry, writing beautiful words about town clocks, country life and even Sable Island.

In 1873, Howe became lieutenant governor of the home province he loved. Just a few weeks later, he died.

### Memory of a man

Today, it’s hard to walk more than a few blocks down the streets of the municipality without running into Howe’s name. There’s Joe Howe Park in Dartmouth, a statue of him in downtown Halifax and even a waterfall named after him in Truro.

But Howe Hall – that Dalhousie University residence building on Coburg Road? That’s named after a Clarence Decatur Howe, Dal’s first chancellor.

Nonetheless, Joseph Howe’s commitment to Nova Scotia and famous battle for the free press have cemented him in Halifax history.

*“Who the heck?” is a rotating history column in the Gazette’s Arts & Lifestyle section, reporting on the namesakes of buildings and institutions on campus and around the city. Have an idea on who we should feature next? Contact [arts@dalgazette.com](mailto:arts@dalgazette.com).*



# The Matrix turns 20

## How the 1999 film about technology and society remains relevant today

BY ALEX RINCON



THIS YEAR, *THE MATRIX* IS CELEBRATING ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY. THE SCIENCE FICTION FILM FEATURES KEANU REEVES, CARRIE-ANNE MOSS AND LAURENCE FISHBURNE. PHOTO BY ALEX RINCON

It may come as a surprise to some that *The Matrix* is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. Few films have had such a lasting cultural impact, and its lessons are still important today.

Even those who have not seen the 1999 film may easily recognize its stylistic choices thanks to the countless action-film tropes it popularized: characters wearing tight leather shirts and trench coats, slow-motion action sequences and reality-bending digital special effects.

Those who *have* seen the film will know protagonist Neo (played by Keanu Reeves): a computer programmer and hacker who feels out of place in the world and is continuously puzzled by his repeated online encounters with something called “the Matrix.” When mysterious agents catch up to his illegal online activities, Neo meets Morpheus (Laurence Fishburne), a mysterious man

who will lead him to discover that the world he lives in is an illusion created by machines of the future.

### Social media and society

One might think that a two-decade old film about the evolution of technology may not age well in terms of the relevance of its story. But in fact, it is just the opposite. Sure, the technology used in *The Matrix* looks dated to today’s viewers. But the way in which technology is used in the film delivers a message about the internet age that is as relevant today as it was back in 1999.

Stephen Snobelen, a history professor who teaches a course called Science Fiction in Film at the University of King’s College, explains

how certain elements of the film’s plot mirror the social media oriented society of today.

“People on Facebook and [other] social media try to curate the way that their lives are depicted,” Snobelen says. “These sorts of things are touched on in *The Matrix* in that there is a difference between the gritty physical world that we live in with our bodies and this hyper-real but digital virtual reality that we inhabit when we go role-playing online.”

The internet of today has become more than

an information super-highway as it was depicted in *The Matrix*. Much like the concept of the Matrix itself, social media has become a means through which people can experience and interact with a world that seems out of reach for many in real life.

### Living an illusion

One of the film’s characters, Cypher, poses a question in the film that has become increasingly relevant to today’s world: why conform to leading a dismal life in the real world, when you can attain a perfectly convincing virtual illusion of happiness?

“There are a lot of people in today’s society that are facing that [problem],” says Snobelen. “They may be socially deprived or economically deprived. They may have troubles their relationships in the real world, so they inhabit these digital worlds because they seem brighter and happier. *The Matrix* hints at those things that are to come.”

That is not to say, however, that humans are now controlled by the technology they created. Whether or not that is or will ever be the case is entirely up for debate. The film only brings the debate to light. Like Snobelen says, “*The Matrix* is one of the starting points of the discussion between our embodied lives and the kind of lives that we project into the cyberspace.”

It will be interesting to see how this discussion could be continued, as a sequel to the Matrix trilogy, directed by Lana Wachowski, is now in the works. How will the new film further analyze the complexities of the relationship between man and technology? Reality and illusion? How will these ideas conform to modern notions of technology?

Audiences will have to wait and see how the new film will fit within the technological development of today’s world, and if it will be any good at all.

**Social media has become a means through which people can experience and interact with a world that seems out of reach for many in real life.**

# Self-reflection in the modern world

Jia Tolentino's *Trick Mirror* turns her readers inward

BY NELLY BATEMAN

If there's any book worth picking up before the flood of course readings, midterms and assignments begin, it's Jia Tolentino's first collection of essays — *Trick Mirror: Reflections on Self-Delusion*.

Through nine essays, Tolentino, a 30-year-old staff writer at *The New Yorker*, considers what it means to be self-aware in the 21st century.

Tolentino reflects on how it's been worthwhile “just trying to see clearly, even if it took [her] years to understand what [she] was trying to see.” This statement is the best way to understand why students should read *Trick Mirror*. Tolentino's insights are crucial to finding comfort as a student, no matter what point one is in their degree.

## Being part of the system

In her third essay, “The Story of a Generation in Seven Scams,” Tolentino writes that since the 2016 election of Donald Trump, she has “felt so many times that the choice of this era is to be destroyed or to morally compromise ourselves in order to be functional.”

Tolentino uses the example of shopping on Amazon: despite knowing about its horrific labour practices, she still shops on the website because it's often cheaper than shopping at a store. As a writer, she doesn't always have the money to shop elsewhere.

What's interesting in this example is that Tolentino never slips into a self-deprecating tone. She does not blame herself for being complicit in a system that she has had no choice but to participate in.

In another essay, “Ecstasy,” she writes that “to articulate [a] desire to vanish” — a desire to exist outside of mainstream culture — “is always to reiterate the self once again” as part of that culture. In other words, her

profession as a writer complicates her desire to remove herself from the systems she makes a living commenting on. In order to comment on the horrors of morality in the 21st century, there needs to be horrors of morality in the first place.

Tolentino's recognition of this double-bind demonstrates the self-reflection seeped into this book: one that seeks to understand the consequences of existing in the world without drowning in either narcissism or self-hatred. A demonstration of this kind of honest self-reflection is a true revelation, especially for students.

## The internet and pressure to save the world

About the internet, Tolentino says there is “no limit to the amount of misfortune a person [can] take in” online. She says this generation has not been given a way to “calibrate” the information they receive online, or in other words, “no way to teach ourselves to separate the banal from the profound.” For example, receiving a poor grade on an essay can feel as disastrous as reading a Twitter update about forest fires in the Amazon rainforest.

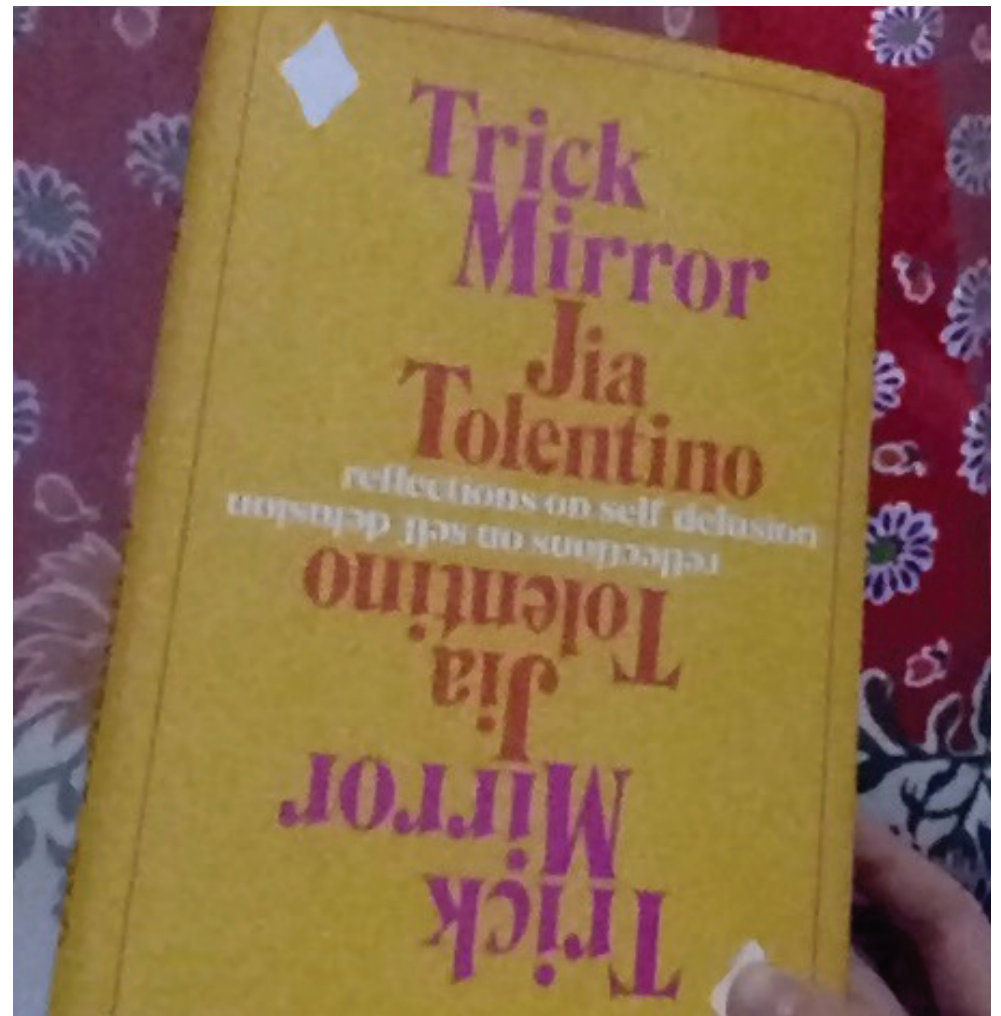
This illustrates a larger problem that underlies Tolentino's book: the current generation is faced with the dilemma of trying to balance their personal, solvable problems with the pressure to resolve complicated, international crises.

In the face of this problem, Tolentino ends *Trick Mirror* on this note: “the

more I try to uncover whatever I'm looking for, the more I feel that I'm too far gone.” This sentiment highlights perfectly the critical insight Tolentino has for students who struggle with this generation-wide dilemma.

As people turn inwards, they face the pos-

**Tolentino suggests there is still value in simply trying to know oneself, and doing so can be a useful step toward a better understanding of the world.**



JIA TOLENTINO'S FIRST COLLECTION OF ESSAYS URGES READERS TO LOOK INSIDE THEMSELVES FOR ANSWERS. PHOTO BY NELLY BATEMAN

sibilities of being horrified or horrifyingly fascinated by what they see. Despite this, Tolentino suggests there is still value in simply trying to know oneself, and doing so can be a useful step toward a better understanding of the world at large. That is, so long as people remember “in the end, the safest conclusions might not actually be conclusions.” In other words, there may not be simple answers.

The solutions to catastrophes like environ-

mental collapse and political isolation may not exist in the simple ways society wants them to. But as long as people keep attempting to understand themselves within this increasingly complex world, Tolentino suggests they have done all they can.

There is at least comfort in the fact that no one is in this self-reflection journey alone. As *Trick Mirror* shows, even someone as intelligent as Tolentino can struggle with navigating the complicated world of today.



# Talking about women's issues

## A King's student's recent play gives voice to a variety of women

BY ELIZABETH FOSTER



THE CAST OF *WOMEN'S ISSUES* AFTER THEIR LAST PERFORMANCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KING'S COLLEGE'S PIT THEATRE. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: JAMES ERSIL, MARLEE SANSOM, ADRIANA LOEWEN, KATIE CLARKE (PLAYWRIGHT), DAVID WORONER AND GEORGIA NOBLE IRWIN. PHOTO BY SAM SEDGWICK

On Sept. 6, *Women's Issues* finished its official run at the Halifax Fringe Festival. The play, borne out of writer Katie Clarke's desire to understand people with vastly different perspectives, highlights modern struggles women face.

Set during a support group session in a church basement, *Women's Issues* tells the story of four women of varying identities: a conservative housewife, an ex-Navy gym teacher, a Black businesswoman and a self-defined butch lesbian. All possessing different world views, these women express their individual traumas in monologues throughout the play.

### The process

Clarke, a University of King's College student and published writer, began her journey with *Women's Issues* by watching interviews with women who had voted for Donald Trump in the 2016 United States election. Clarke says she was trying to un-

derstand how these women could overlook Trump's anti-feminist rhetoric when voting for him. What she found ended up being the basis for several characters in her play.

"There were lots of things that shocked me," says Clarke about researching female Trump supporters. "A lot of women were anti-abortion ... [they had] that kind of 'every woman for herself' mentality. I was trying to understand the ways in which people come from different spaces and backgrounds that brought them to where they are, and how that feeling of self-protection happens."

Clarke sat down to write her play in May 2018.

"I went through so many iterations of 'how do I even have this conversation? I want to do a support group, but I don't want to have them talk to

each other. I don't want it to be trope-y'... I think the turning point was finding the medium where [the characters] would talk out to the audience," Clarke says. "I wanted to highlight this idea of

feminized folks who don't have solidarity, and the way society suppresses feminine solidarity while it's pretending to uplift it."

### Having different voices heard

Clarke didn't want her voice to be the only one heard in *Women's Issues*. So, once she assembled the cast, each actor added their own personal feelings and perspectives.

"The unique thing about this was how Katie wrote a lot of complex perspectives that one human could not possibly authentically write," says one cast member, Marlee Sansom. "So, instead

of trying to write, she just asked. I would write a lot of my monologues and then Katie would edit, and we'd go back and forth. It was super collaborative."

Another cast member, James Ersil, says they had a similar experience. Ersil plays Jo, a character who questions their gender identity.

"We talked about my personal experiences with coming out, and the pressure that society puts onto lesbian women," says Ersil. "Having the space to share my own feelings and making them into my character's was really interesting."

For some of the actors, it wasn't about including their own experiences, but rather learning to embody someone else's. Adriana Loewen and Georgia Noble Irwin both played conservative minded characters.

"The hardest part was finding a way to rationalize myself into those monologues," says Loewen. "Words coming out of your mouth isn't enough. You actually need to be able to embody that reasoning. That was really challenging, and it led to a few conversations that we had at my kitchen table trying to figure out how my character could feel this way."

Irwin says she enjoyed the challenge of trying to understand her character.

"I found it really interesting. One of the things Katie says a lot is the reason this play is so important is it's giving a voice to the people we don't really want to listen to, or that we don't want to give validity to," Irwin says. "I think it's important to try and understand them."

### Audience perception

Clarke mentions how last summer, she spent her time working at a non-profit women's rights organization in Vienna, Austria. She says the right-wing presence was much stronger in Vienna than it is in Halifax.

"I was thinking if this show was done [in Vienna], how completely different the reaction would be," says Clarke. "I think in different places [the play] would take different forms. It would mean different things."

*Women's Issues* was first performed at the University of King's College Infringement Festival.

"I think in some ways, the show was a bit sheltered when we put it on at [King's] Fringe because it exists within the King's community which is an incredibly accepting community," Clarke says, "which I'm so fortunate to have."



# Law student wins Blue Nose Marathon

## Cal DeWolfe qualified for Boston

BY SARAH MOORE, SPORTS EDITOR



ON JUNE 9, CAL DEWOLFE RAN THE SCOTIABANK BLUE NOSE MARATHON, HIS FIRST-EVER MARATHON. PHOTO BY STOO METZ

Cal DeWolfe ran in his first ever marathon on June 9. And he won.

Going into the Scotiabank Blue Nose Marathon, he wanted to qualify for the Boston Marathon. He's wanted to run that race since he was in junior high.

To qualify for Boston, he needed to run the race in three hours. At the Blue Nose Marathon, DeWolfe blew that away with a time of two hours, 34 minutes.

"I was further under the standard than I thought I was going to be [...] so I was pumped about that," he says.

The law student is no stranger to high level running. He ran cross-country and track and field for the Dalhousie University Tigers in 2017-2018, and competed for the St. Francis-Xavier University X-Men for the four years before that while he

got a degree in philosophy.

During his cross-country career, he was a dominant athlete. DeWolfe won the Atlantic University Sport (AUS) cross-country championships in 2016 and earned a bronze medal in 2017 while running for Dal.

### Lessons from varsity

Running as a student-athlete, DeWolfe says, helped prepare him for training for a marathon. Small things, like knowing when something is starting to hurt in a way that would lead to an injury, as opposed to just soreness from training, make a big difference.

Another thing he gained was confidence and mental toughness — "knowing when the pain of a race is something that can be pushed through and when [...] to back off the pace," he says.

DeWolfe also gives credit to the base from a high volume of mileage he accumulated during his five years as a student-athlete, even though he ran very little during the 2018-2019 season.

"I underestimated how much all those years before would carry over," he says. "Even though I was just focusing on school for a year, it was all there below the surface and then just a little running brought it back."

### Miles and miles

Training as a varsity athlete for a ten kilometre race, DeWolfe would run anywhere from 120-145 kilometres each week.

Perhaps counterintuitively, his training for the Blue Nose Marathon, a 42.2 kilometre race, was a much lighter load, 75-80 kilometres a week at the most.

"When you get sucked into a more competitive running stream [...] people almost make fun of marathoners in that it's a really weird culture," says DeWolfe.

Despite higher training load for varsity athletes, running a marathon in the off-season is generally viewed as "ridiculous," he says, "probably because it would leave you tired for the season."

After he was finished competing at the varsity level, it was the perfect chance for DeWolfe to try his hand at the longer distance.

"The nice thing about being done with cross-country running, as opposed to any other varsity sport, is there are still chances to compete [at a high level] once you're done," says DeWolfe.

He did much of his marathon training on his own, but did some workouts with the Halifax Roadhammers, a running club led by former varsity athlete Lee McCarron.

### Ode to X

DeWolfe ran for the Tigers in 2017-2018. In the

four years before that, he competed for the StFX X-Men. Living in a house with his teammates, he developed friendships that have lasted far beyond his years at the university.

Running in the Blue Nose Marathon, the words "18 Greening" were scrawled on his shirt with Sharpie — partly as a joke, representing the run-down house on Greening Drive in Antigonish where he lived for three years, but also as a testament to the tight-knit running community he is a part of.

"Those guys who I lived with were the ones who I put in the most work with for sure, hands down, in the entire time that I've been running," he says. "Those guys are the reason why I'm any good at all and why I still care about the sport."

"It's so easy, I think, after a varsity career to just look past it and move on to other things but it's because I was so tight with those guys [...] that I still have a connection to the sport," he says. "There's something about running that brings people together."

### After Boston

After he runs in the Boston Marathon next April, DeWolfe doesn't have any concrete plans to keep competing, as he'll start his articling year after finishing law school and wants to focus on his career.

Working at Stewart McKelvey law firm this past summer, however, DeWolfe says he met several senior lawyers who still run quite a bit.

"They kind of gave me the idea that it's possible [to keep running], if I can be organized enough and disciplined enough so if I can manage my life as well as those people do then I'd love to," he says.

**"Even though I was just focusing on school for a year, it was all there below the surface and then just a little running brought it back."**



# Paddling in Peru

## Nova Scotians shine at Pan Am Games

BY SARAH MOORE, SPORTS EDITOR

Four Dalhousie University students medaled in canoe/kayak events at the 2019 Pan American Games in Lima, Peru this summer.

Alexa Irvin, who is taking a master's degree in community health and epidemiology, and Anna Negulić, a kinesiology student, were on the four-person team that won gold in the 500 metre kayak sprint.

Craig Spence, studying statistics, earned a silver medal in the two-person canoe 1,000 metre sprint. Finally, Jacob Steele also collected a silver medal for the two-person kayak 1,000 metre sprint.

### Taste of fame

For Steele, this was his first time competing in an international multi-sport competition.

"There was a lot of local Peruvian people who actually came out to watch our events and to cheer us on and watch the races," he says. "That was really cool because we often don't race in front of very big crowds."

It made for an exciting atmosphere. Having that support for the sport, even though it wasn't necessarily for Team Canada, was helpful.

"It was a pretty great and fulfilling event to be a part of," says Negulić. "It gave me a lot of confidence in [...] myself as an athlete."

She found that spectators afterward were eager to get photos with the Canadian paddlers, which was a new experience for her.

### Supportive team

There is a strong contingent of Nova Scotians on Canada's paddling teams, which made the fourteen-person Pan Am team feel closely-knit, says Spence.

"It's a lot of hometown pride," says Spence. "It goes a long way, especially for a small province, having so many Nova Scotians on our team."

Several athletes train together year-round: Negulić, Irvin and Steele all train with Maskwa Aquatic Club, while Spence trains at Banook Lake in Dartmouth.

"It's really great to have the familiarity of racing with people that I know well," says Steele of racing in Peru.

### Repeat success

For Irvin, this was her second time winning a gold medal in the K4 500 metre sprint at the Pan Am Games. She also competed in 2011 in Mexico. At that time, she was an undergraduate student at Dal, studying neuroscience.

As well as having that competition under her belt, it gave her a perspective that helped her teammates.

"It's always comforting, having a teammate" with more experience, says Negulić. If she had any questions, it was easy to reach out to her training partner and friend.

### Training and school

Competing at an international level is a big commitment. The athletes are typically on the water for two training sessions a day that are an hour and a half each, as well as another hour of a supplementary session of usually running or weights.

In addition, they usually travel to Florida for training camp in the winter semester. While the

lakes in Nova Scotia are frozen, the paddlers head south from February until April. That training period is especially important because trials for the national team are usually held in May.

However, being away from Halifax for so long can make it challenging to fit in courses that are only offered in certain semesters, for example. Each athlete works with their professors in each class to make sure their academics can fit in their training schedule. Often, they have to take courses online instead of in class.

Spence has had a positive experience in that regard, saying that the support and accommodations from Dal have been "incredible."

"I want to put in the work, like I love my degree," he says. "As long as you put in the work, I think the professors realize that."

Going to university in Halifax, where paddling is a fairly common sport, helps.

"This is one of the best places to train for canoe/kayak," says Negulić.

Many paddling athletes have attended Dal before, which means their schedule of training camps and regattas is usually not new for professors.

"They recognize that we're always training and competing," says Negulić, while acknowledging that some profs can be more accommodating than others.

Irvin, having had considerable experience balancing academics and training in the past decade, finds that school actually helps her as an athlete.

"I find that it's beneficial for both aspects of my life," she says. "For the training aspect, just to have something else to focus on other than just high-performance sport kind of lets you step back from that and realize that how fast you move a kayak is not the end of the world."

**"It's really great to have the familiarity of racing with people that I know well."**



ALEXA IRVIN AND ANNA NEGULIĆ EARNED GOLD MEDALS IN THE 500 METRE KAYAK SPRINT. PHOTO BY EMILY MACKEIGAN



THIS SUMMER, FOUR DALHOUSIE STUDENTS COMPETED IN LIMA, PERU AT THE 2019 PAN AMERICAN GAMES. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: ALEXA IRVIN, ALANNA BRAY-LOUGHEED, ANDRÉANNE LANGLOIS, ANNA NEGULIĆ AND JONATHAN PIKE. PHOTO BY EMILY MACKEIGAN



# A holiday with some basketball

The Dal women's basketball team played summer preseason games in Germany

BY SARAH MOORE, SPORTS EDITOR



AT THE END OF THIS PAST SUMMER, DALHOUSIE'S WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM TRAVELLED TO GERMANY. THEY PLAYED TWO PRESEASON GAMES AGAINST PROFESSIONAL GERMAN TEAMS AND SCRIMMAGED AGAINST TK HANNOVER. PHOTO PROVIDED BY ANNA STAMMBERGER

It was a combination of team-building, basketball and education when the Dalhousie University Tigers women's basketball team travelled to Germany for a week at the end of this summer.

"I've been on a lot of team-building events as a player and as a coach and I would put it right up there at the top as one of the very best team building experiences I've had, no question," says head coach Anna Stammberger.

She tries to take the team on a big trip every five years, whether across Canada to Vancouver or Victoria, or across the Atlantic Ocean, to "let the team experience something different together."

But for Stammberger, Germany is a familiar country. She lived and played basketball there and her kids — both Tigers basketball alumni — play the sport professionally. Her daughter, Tessa, plays for TK



Hannover, while her son, Sven, is on the Tübingen Tigers.

### On the court




After a three-day training camp in Canada, the Dal Tigers played two preseason games against professional German teams and also scrimmaged against TK Hannover.



While they fell 80-62 against ASC Goettingen and lost 70-55 against Alba Berlin, it was a good start to the season for Dalhousie. They were playing against older teams who were further into their preseasons and who have a different style of play than teams in the Atlantic University Sport (AUS) conference.

"They play a little bit differently. They really move the ball well and they're bigger," Stammberger says of the German teams. "It was interesting to have that type of competition."











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## HIGHLIGHT ON HOCKEY!

Men's Hockey Home Opener - September 25 vs. StFX, Halifax Forum, 7pm  
Women's Hockey Home Opener - October 2 vs. SMU, Halifax Forum, 7pm

Sept. 21 - WBB - 6pm (EXH) • Sept. 27 - Soccer - 5/7:15pm • Sept. 28 - WHOC - 7pm (EXH)  
Sept. 29 - WBB - 10:30am (EXH) • Oct. 3 - Soccer (Wanderers Grounds) - 5/7:15pm • Oct. 4 - MHOC - 7pm

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Dalhousie's defence was impressive given the lack of time they had trained together, and Stammberger says their ability to respond and improve throughout the week was promising and a good starting point for the rest of the season.

"We got steadily better every half," she says.

### Experiencing history

While in Europe, the Tigers had time to learn about a different culture and appreciate the rich history in Germany. They saw remnants of the Berlin Wall, visited a concentration camp and were in Berlin for the 80th anniversary of the start of the Second World War.

The attitude of the eight returning players and four rookies was one that appreciated the opportunity to learn, says Stammberger.

"They really seemed to understand the balance between team building, good basketball competition and education," she says. "It just made it a great atmosphere and a great trip."

### Bonding as a team

The third pillar of the trip was team-building, as the Tigers travelled by public transit and stayed in hostels. They also got to visit Goettingen, which is the hometown of second-year centre Lia Kentzler.

"I think we really got to know each other quite well, being together so intensely for one week," says Stammberger.

In addition to the players developing closer bonds, it was also a chance for their coach to get to know them as they move into new roles — as younger players move into more veteran, leadership positions, for instance.

"There's some really quality people on the team and it's neat to see and get to know them like that better," says Stammberger.

Doing the trip during the summer right before term started was a good thing, says the coach, because it allowed the players to focus on each other and the team.

During the basketball season, which runs from November to February, "there's always that pressure and that focus" on balancing an academic workload with athletics, so this offered a different experience.

"It was almost like a holiday with some basketball games before we start buckling down and getting to work in the classroom and on the court," Stammberger says.

The team returned to Canada on Sept. 2, the day before classes began. Their regular season starts with a home game against the StFX X-Women on Nov. 2.

# Big Swim causes bigger waves

## Tigers alumni swam from New Brunswick to PEI to raise money for a local charity

BY SARAH MOORE, SPORTS EDITOR

Standing on the shore of New Brunswick and looking across the Northumberland Strait, all Tyler Immel-Herron could see was the Confederation Bridge disappearing in the distance.

"Not really being able to see the other land, the other side, it's kind of nerve-wracking," the Dalhousie University marine affairs student says.

Three hours and 39 minutes later, he stepped foot on PEI soil, having swam across the Strait.

Immel-Herron, along with 43 other swimmers, was taking part in the Big Swim this August, an annual event that raises money for Brigadoon Village.

### Feat of endurance

Paige Crowell, a Dalhousie University alumna who swam for the Tigers from 2011-2015, also participated. She was the first woman to finish the swim this year, with a time of three hours and 50 minutes. Originally from PEI, this was her first year doing the Big Swim.

"I knew that it was an event that went on and it just seemed like a fun challenge," she says. "I really like endurance and distance events so it just seemed like a natural progression."

The distance of the swim this year was about 15 kilometres and took the average swimmer about six hours. Other years, because of currents that can sweep swimmers off track, that distance can creep up to close to 20 kilometres.

Preparing to be in the water that long was a challenging commitment. Immel-Herron, for instance, often couldn't find time between juggling two jobs to be in the pool for more than an hour at a time — not a long time, considering the length of the actual swim.

### Swimming in the open water

While Immel-Herron, who swam for the Tigers for the past four years, was the first swimmer across and ended up having no problem with the fitness aspect of the swim, the conditions were another story.

The swim is planned so that the tide and current are at the back of the swimmers to help their progress. In addition, each swimmer has a kayaker to ensure their safety. Even so, the conditions of the open ocean can be unpredictable.

In the second half of the swim, the water was fairly wavy and choppy, making it difficult for Immel-Herron to settle into a rhythm with his stroke.



TYLER IMMEL-HERRON HAS SWAM FOR THE DALHOUSIE TIGERS FOR THE PAST FOUR YEARS. THIS AUGUST, HE SWAM FROM NEW BRUNSWICK TO PEI FOR THE BIG SWIM -- AN ANNUAL EVENT THAT RAISES MONEY FOR BRIGADOON VILLAGE. PHOTO PROVIDED BY TYLER IMMEL-HERRON

"When you're swimming for that long, mentally you kind of just want to zone out because you don't want to think about things and you want time to pass quicker and it did not allow me to do that at all," he says. "It definitely made it mentally harder to get through."

This was Immel-Herron's second time doing the Big Swim. The first was in 2014, when his step-mother was registered but couldn't swim on the day of, so he took her place.

This year, when she decided to try again, Immel-Herron joined too.

"I just decided that if she was going to do it that I would do it too, kind of as moral support for her," he says.

Along with Immel-Herron and Crowell, two other Dal swimming alumni, David Sharpe and Jeremy Ryant, participated in the Big Swim this year.

Having the contingent from Dal was a unique experience, says Immel-Herron.

"It was kind of comforting to have people that you knew well around, especially people who were just as good of swimmers as you," he says, while noting that once in the

water, he couldn't actually see any other swimmers.

There was almost a sense of nostalgia for Crowell.

"It was just fun to be there with friends and people that you'd swam with before," she says. "[It] kind of felt like we were all back at a swim meet."

### Giving back

The Big Swim raises money for Brigadoon Village, a Halifax-based charity that sends kids with a chronic illness, condition or special needs to week-long camps, where they can meet other youth like themselves and form lasting relationships.

"You forget that not every kid can go to your traditional camp and so it's just important for [everyone] to have that experience," says Crowell.

This year, the Big Swim raised more than \$160,000 for the non-profit.

"You really felt like you were doing something good to try and raise money for," says Immel-Herron.





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