

THE WELDON TIMES

AMPLIFYING

ISSUE 5 - WINTER 2024



THE WELDON TIMES EXECUTIVE

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*Dalhousie University sits on
Mi'kma'ki, the traditional
territory of the Mi'kmaq. We
are all treaty people.*

*We recognize that African
Nova Scotians are a distinct
people whose histories,
legacies and contributions
have enriched that part of
Mi'kma'ki known as Nova
Scotia for over 400 years.*



LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Welcome to Weldon Times Winter 2024 Issue: Amplifying. Amplifying means to make something louder, bigger, more effective. We called this issue “Amplifying” because part of our vision for the Times is to serve as an amplifier for the stories of all you Weldon-ites—to help ensure your unique voices, perspectives, and visions can resonate around the law school and beyond. From advice on wellness and where to find the best coffee in Halifax to articles exploring technology and AI in law school, this issue is full of discussions we hope will interest and engage you.

This issue, we also want to specifically highlight Zindzi Azubuike’s beautiful poem “Shades” (p 6) and Teiyana Cain’s informative piece on Caribana (p 12). Black History Month may be over, but Black voices and Black history need to be amplified all year round. On that note, we are excited to announce that in each issue going forward, the Weldon Times will be publishing an article as part of the “Black Voices” collection, an ongoing collaboration with Dalhousie Black Law Students’ Association.

If you have an idea for something you feel should find a home in the Times, please don’t hesitate to reach out to us at weldontimes@dal.ca!



Many of the stories in these pages are very intimate and personal reflections on topics such as sobriety, the power of friendship, what brought us to law school, and even pole dancing. They remind us that we are all people as well as law students, and our struggles and successes (like great meals) are often better shared. This issue, we are especially grateful to our Weldon Times executive for helping us with our struggles in getting this issue finalized. The success of this issue, and this magazine, is really and truly a shared effort—and now a shared celebration. Happy reading!

Nicole and Elyse

2023/2024 Co-Editors in Chief



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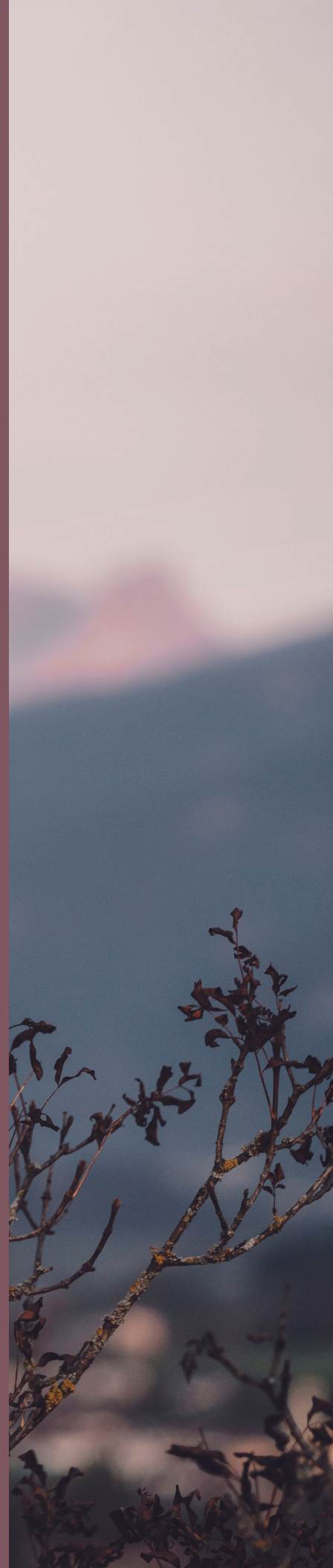
Across

KEEP HIDDEN

Down

KEEP HIDDEN

Crossword Answers





SHADES

By Zindzi Azubuike, 2L
*To Commemorate Black
History Month*

it seems that nowadays
a darker shade
means less praise
even though your skin
looks like it's been kissed
by sun rays

but the media likes to say
that you're beautiful
if you don't gain weight
if your smile stays the same
if you're capable of carrying yourself one way

after hearing all these things
that tell you that your beauty is wrong
that you're weak not strong
that on the front page of a magazine
or being a runway queen
isn't where you belong

you still got features that make you, you

you got that sway in your back
that juice

them full lips
have a nation
remaining intoxicated

Yet they'll belittle you for what you got naturally
because it's what they know
they'll never be
just know that dark or light
you're everything right

you should revel in your melanin
make those people take it in
be proud of your skin
they'll make you feel like it's a sin
but don't let their jealousy win

love your curls that bounce and sway
love your tan that never goes away
love your features that make us proud
love all the shades of brown



BEARABLE: A LETTER TO MY LAW SCHOOL FRIENDS

By Chris Cleary, 1L

The first day of law school is a day I would rather forget. The nervous energy pulsing through my veins left me unable to form a coherent sentence even if my life depended on it. With every new conversation, the words of Professor Devlin echoed through my brain, “These people will become some of the closest friends you ever make (and maybe even your future spouse)!” While he was trying to build our confidence, the comment only added to my anxiety. By the end of the first week, I felt the only sentence I could form was, “So what was your undergrad?”

Thankfully, as time passed we all seemed to relax and conversations with classmates began to flow naturally. Turns out we had much more in common than just being future legal professionals. The initial fear that the curve would hold us back from forming genuine relationships subsided and suddenly, without realising it, classmates became much more: they became my friends. Devlin was right about the friends, but no husband on the horizon.

I cannot imagine surviving law school without my friends at my side. The sheer difficulty of the program demands that you rely on others for help along the way. No matter who you are, there will be moments when law school will sucker punch you in the face. If you so desire, every day has a wide selection of negativity to occupy your time—for starters, the 16th data breach of the semester, or the lack of a functioning women’s washroom anywhere in the building.

Good friends make law school not only bearable, but incredible. Whether it be crossword puzzles, PowerPoint nights, or the complexities of Taylor Swift lore, the unique passions of my new friends have enriched my life. Even if they make fun of my Newfoundland accent occasionally (I’m still shocked mainlanders don’t understand “*what are ya at?*”), they make the challenges of law school a pleasure to tackle.

On a recent weekend getaway, my friends and I stopped at Cape Breton Highlands National Park to savour the view. I remember the moment for the humour of six law students unable to set up a camera, but also for the gratitude that washed over me—thankful to call these people my friends.



CHATGPA: STUDENTS & AI AT WELDON

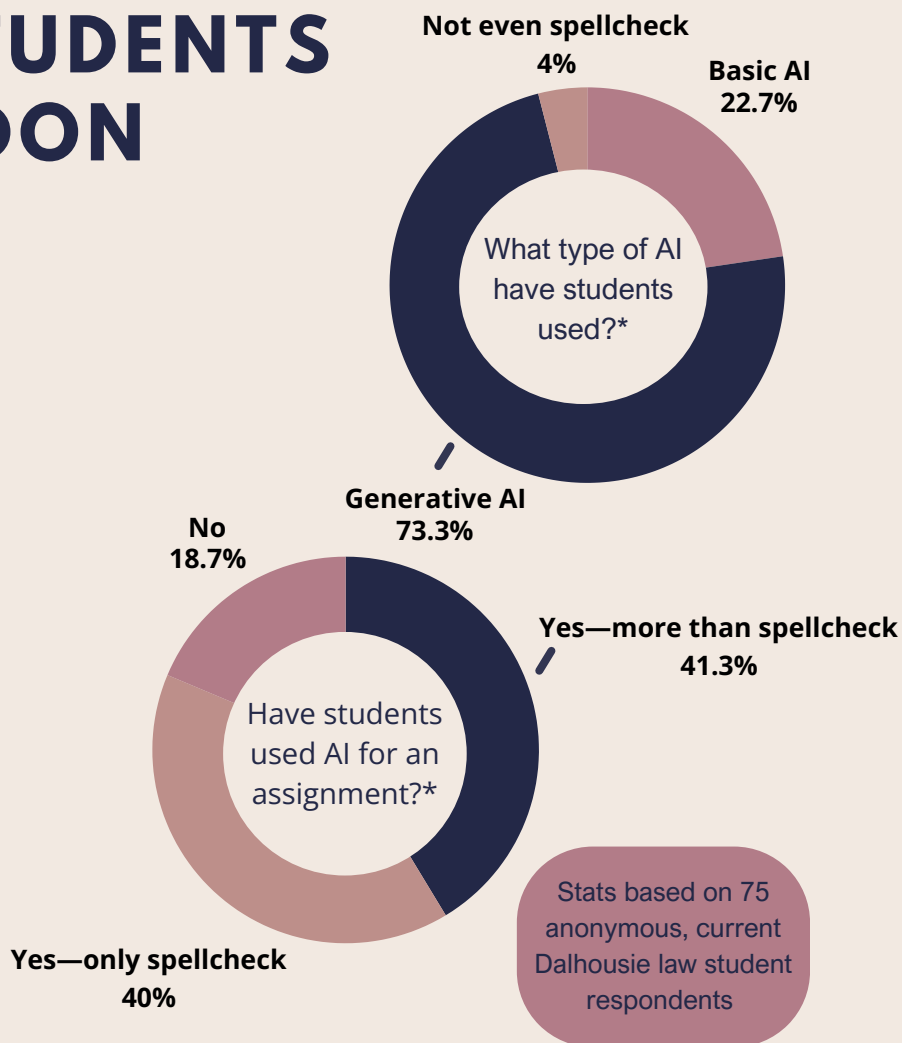
By Kimberly Gilson, 1L

Have you ever used artificial intelligence (“AI”) to complete an assignment—or work on a legal matter? Whether litigating its validity in court, asking it questions about capital market regulations, or using it to sift through contracts and court documents, AI in law isn’t just on its way. It’s here. How much do your peers and professors know about AI? How do they use it? Should Weldon prepare you for the use of AI in your legal career?

The term “AI” covers a wide range of machine-learning behaviours (e.g., spellcheck or auto-complete). In *Litigating Artificial Intelligence*, it’s defined as “the capability of a machine to imitate intelligent decision-making in a given domain.” GenAI is shorthand for generative artificial intelligence, a type of AI that uses existing content to create different, context-relevant content (e.g., ChatGPT or MidJourney). Most AI debates focus on the implications of GenAI, such as in universities for its potential effects on academic integrity and education.

Dalhousie’s current AI policies largely give deference to individual teachers on how to regulate AI use in their courses. The clearest rule I found is that educators cannot require students to use an AI tool. Assistant Professor Suzie Dunn notes that we’re in a “point of transition on where our academic guidelines will be with the use of AI” and it’s likely “best for the university to take time to be thoughtful about what its standards are and not to rush into strict policies right away.” Yet, when implemented, these policies sometimes lead to blanket bans without clear expectations—and with intimidating penalties, if DSAS cases are any indication. Dunn advises professors to be clearer and, while they can tell students to not use GenAI for classwork, she thinks “it is unreasonable for students to be banned from using any form of AI, as AI is integrated into many of our everyday programs.”

This sentiment is echoed by students. Are students trying to commit academic offences? No, but the overgeneralization of AI technologies creates confusion and blurry guidelines.



*Some AI tech is becoming so pervasive that people may not know they are using them. Either that or some students haven’t been using spellcheck, which requires a level of pure confidence that I do not have.

24% of students reported having a law professor encourage or teach them to use AI. That’s encouraging. However, students without guidance may decide to teach themselves and not know the extent of the risks involved. For example, if you check your work with a GenAI technology, like ChatGPT, is your input be used to train future outputs? Yes, unless you can opt out. I don’t have definitive answers to the growing debate on AI in our legal education—and this is a new field for professors as well—but students need more clarity.

A huge thanks to the students, professors, and professionals who answered my emails, phone calls, and surveys. All responses will be valuable for this AI in law education series.

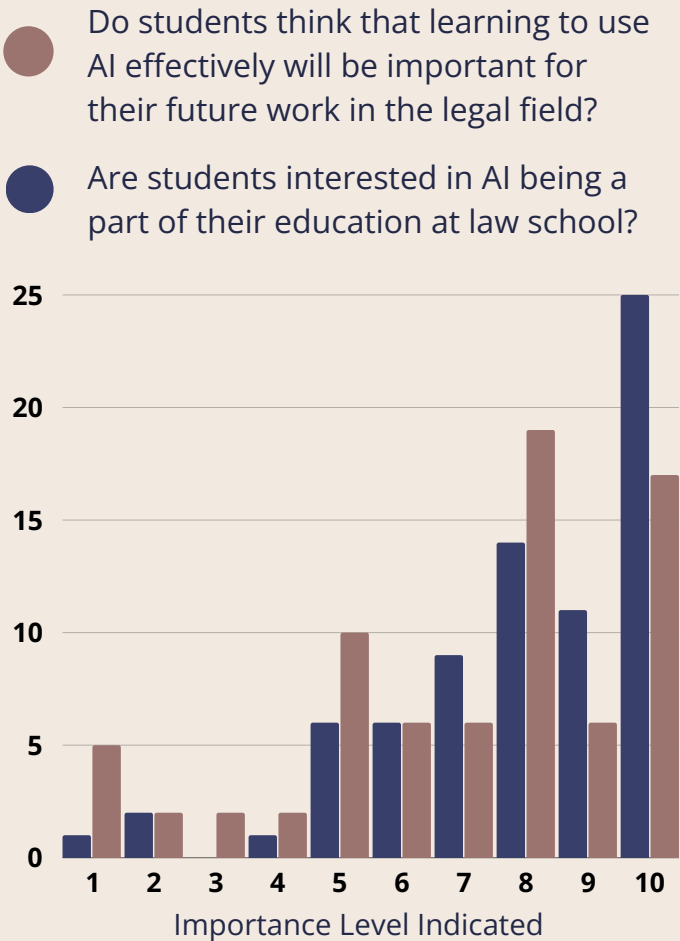
Student professional highlight: Nicole McLuhan, 1L

“At my last job, the legal and software development teams worked together to create a new way to automate our contracts—but the AI wasn’t super smart and only knows what people train it. Discrepancies arose sometimes when developers didn’t fully understand how contracts work. If they work out the hiccups, it would make work a lot faster.

It was a sigh of relief when I realized AI won’t fully replace contract law jobs any time soon. If anything, it can be a useful and efficient tool, but future lawyers should not rest on their laurels. At Weldon, there’s no need to produce mass amounts of contracts, so there’s likely a huge difference in context for why students and practitioners may use AI!

”

Top reasons students use tools associated with GenAI for assignments	
Outlining and summarizing own arguments and words	Condense notes
	Increase writing clarity
Grammarly as a better spellcheck (sometimes deemed unhelpful)	Rephrasing own sentences
Brainstorming & bouncing ideas off of GenAI tools	ChatGPT or CoPilot as a search engine
Find holes in their arguments	Clarifying terms of art
No student reported, unless asked by a professor, submitting copy-and-paste GenAI content	



Who Owns the Moon?

When the little prince ended up on the Fourth Planet in his grand tour, he encountered a businessman whom he began to question:

“How is it possible for one to
own the **stars?** ”

“To whom do they belong?” the businessman
retorted, peevishly.

“I don't know. To nobody.”

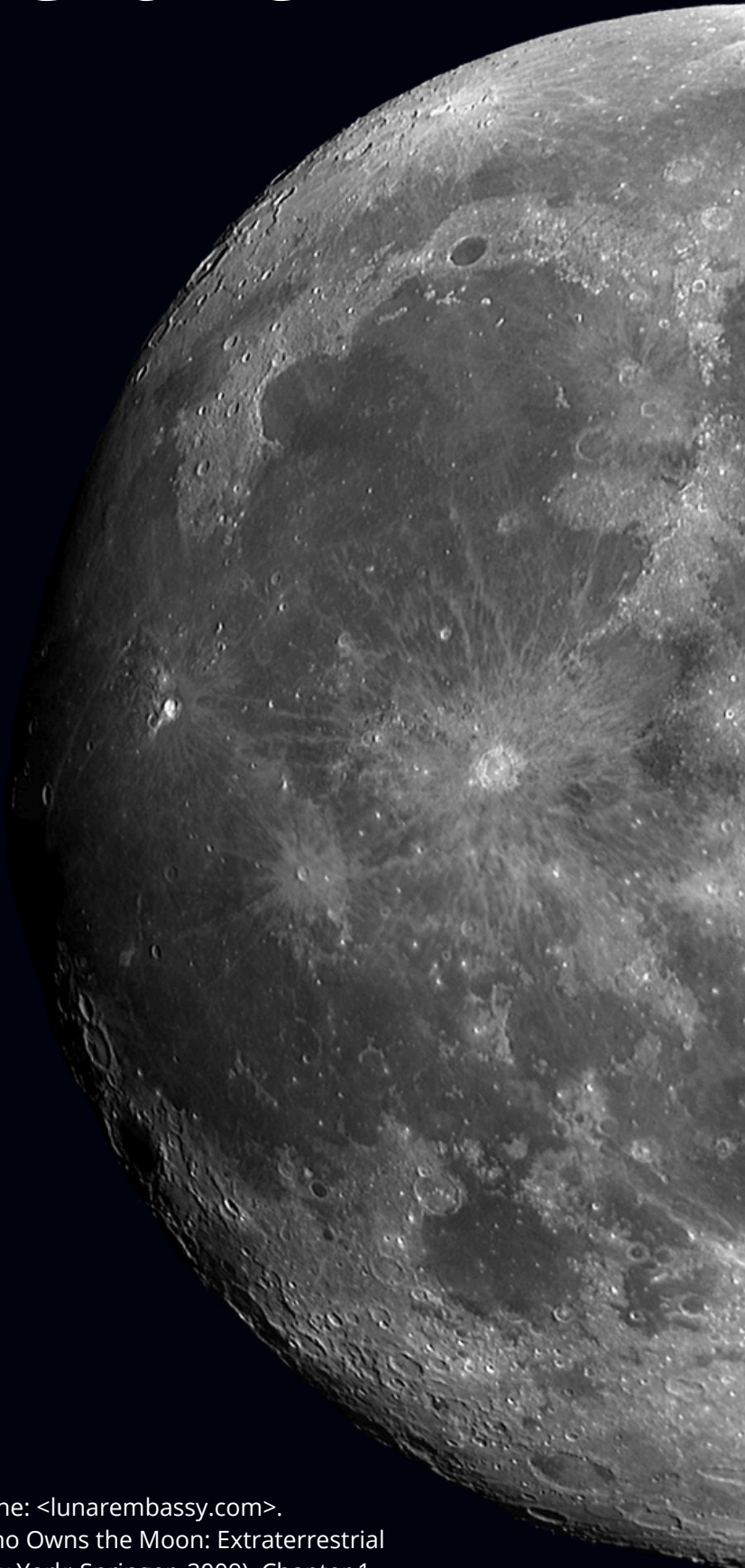
“Then they belong to me, because I
was the first person to think of it.”

- *The Little Prince*
by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Although far-fetched to some, claiming ownership over parts of space is not restricted to sci-fi. Today, Dennis Hope (aka “The Big Cheese”) will happily sell you a parcel of the moon.¹ Similar enterprises existed in New York at least since the 1890s.² Obviously, these sales are not legitimate transfers of deeds and run contrary to the foundational principles as laid out in the Outer Space Treaty (the “OST”). Per Article 1 of the OST, “Outer Space...shall be free for exploration and use by all States without discrimination of any kind.”

¹ “Lunar Embassy” (last accessed 2 February 2024), online: <lunarembassy.com>.

² For a history of lunar salespeople, see Virgiliu Pop, *Who Owns the Moon: Extraterrestrial Aspects of Land and Mineral Resources Ownership* (New York: Springer, 2009), Chapter 1.



Article 2 restrains this positive right by stating that “Outer Space...is not subject to national appropriation by claim of sovereignty, by means of use or occupation, or by any other means.”

More serious claims to space rocks are now emerging as the commercial space sector matures. For example, Ryugu is an asteroid that contains minerals valued at \$82 billion USD. Ryugu is relatively close to Earth, which has led to multiple successful exploratory landings and even some sample return missions. The use-cases of these resources range from enabling “spomes” (space homes) to eliminating the need to mine Earth without compromising on modern luxuries. However, the commercial sector which is driving space mining is currently hindered by the unresolved state of the law. One of the key legal questions is whether resource extraction amounts to national appropriation in conflict with Article 2 of the OST. This legal uncertainty means eccentric entrepreneurs wanting to own planets are effectively precluded from doing so by the unknown status of owning space resources.

The *Artemis Accords* attempts to resolve this uncertainty. This non-binding multi-lateral agreement devotes Section 10 to space resources, stating that “the extraction of space resources does not inherently constitute national appropriation.” This American perspective is further bolstered by the *US Commercial Space Launch Competitiveness Act*, which allows United States citizens to “possess, own, transport, use, and sell” asteroid resources.³ However, the interpretation of customary international law likely requires more than national laws and non-binding multilateral agreements to be conclusive. In addition, states and scholars both challenge national laws that grant any such rights absolutely. Put another way, a Canadian law that allows a citizen to own the moon is not sufficient grounding for a claim. It may, however, be sufficient for an attempt to lay a claim. As national laws begin to address space ownership, incongruent laws spur conflict instead of encouraging the international cooperation necessary to operate in space. This adds another layer to the challenging space environment.

The debate surrounding ownership rights of space resources goes beyond the OST and resource ownership rights. The question of how these resources should be used requires consideration of how we envision the cosmos in our lives. What do we mean when we describe space as the “Common Heritage of Mankind”? Is it an environment? A frontier to be explored by travelling princes or exploited by gold-rushed entrepreneurs? A cosmic heaven that connects the inhabitants of the Earth across time and space? Answering these meta-questions will also inform the legal debates surrounding space resources.

³ U.S. Commercial Space Launch Competitiveness Act, Pub L No 114-90, H Rept 114-119 (2015).

**By Dominik
Dabrowski, 3L**



FEELING IRIE

This Article is part of the “Black Voices” collection, an ongoing collaboration with Dalhousie Black Law Students’ Associations

By Teiyana Cain, 1L

What does a British-Ghanaian, a Jamaican-Antiguan and a Filipino-Guyanese all have in common? Caribana, or as some may know it, Carnival, is a uniting force for peoples across the African diaspora. Caribana is an event that takes place every year in different cities, islands and countries across the globe. This past summer, and the summer before, I have had the distinct pleasure of taking part in the Caribana festival. Laying my eyes on hundreds of beautiful black and brown faces, splashes of bright orange, warm pinks and sea blues, was an experience that made me feel more at home within my country.



Zindzi Azubuikwe, 2L, and family

While Caribana is a celebration of how far peoples of the African diaspora have come, it also is a recognition of the struggles of our past and how we have overcome them. Taking a deep dive into the history of Caribana or as some might know it, Carnival: its origins start in the late 18th century in Trinidad and Tobago. It originally began with “a ritual called Canne Brulees (French for “sugarcane burning”).”¹ Enslaved Africans would burn the valuable sugarcane produced by plantations as an act of resistance. This ritual burning was accompanied by stick and drum music which harkened back to African roots. The music served to reconnect them with their ancestors and guiding spirits that helped to sustain them. This was an act of reclamation and empowerment of their cultural identity.²

Today, Carnival now has various names and is celebrated across various continents and islands – including South America, Europe, the Caribbean and North America. Wherever there are peoples of the African diaspora, Carnival is celebrated. In Brazil, Rio de Janeiro, Carnival is known to be a week-long celebration full of dancing, music, drinking and enjoyment.

¹ “Carnival’s Indigenous Origins” (last accessed 15 March 2024), online: <ecda.northeastern.edu/carnival-an-act-of-opposition-introduction/carnivals-indigenous-origins/>.

² *Ibid.*

In Europe, Carnival is celebrated in countries such as England and is known as the Notting Hill Carnival: “The Notting Hill Carnival, held in West London, has become one of the biggest street festivals in Europe.”³ The same is true for Caribana in Toronto and Carnival celebrations in the Caribbean. Many look forward to celebrating Carnival (or as Torontonians know it, Caribana) months in advance. There is much preparation that goes into creating costumes, figuring out dances and floats and preparing for the overall business that comes with such a vibrant city-wide festival. Caribana to me is a reminder of all that the peoples of the African diaspora have endured and have contributed to the world but most importantly it is a reminder of the beauty, resilience and freedom that comes with being descendants of the African diaspora.

So, if you ever find yourself in Toronto, the Caribbean, Brazil or London during Carnival season, feel free to pay homage to the beauty of the African Diaspora by partaking in the following ways:

How to have a successful Caribana/Carnival

1. Enjoy Caribbean Food

Take a bite out of a delicious Jamaican patty, enjoy some rice and peas and plantain or some jerk chicken! After eating this food, you'll be feeling *irie*!

2. Enjoy Caribbean Music

Bob Marley. Reggae. Calypso. Soca. Dancehall. Let loose and let the island vibes take over!

3. Stop by the parade and enjoy the festivities of Carnival!

Don't forget to wear exuberant colours, and if you're Caribbean or African, represent your country by sporting your flag however you'd like!

10 Songs to get you in the island mood:

1. Blessed - Wizkid (feat. Damian Marley)
 2. We Caa Done - Popcaan (feat. Drake)
 3. Talibans - Byron Messia
 4. Playing Games - Serani
 5. I Am Blessed - Mr. Vegas
 6. Gal Policy - Kranium
 7. No Letting Go - Wayne Wonder
 8. Nobody Has to Know - Kranium
 9. Pass the Dutchie - Musical Youth
 10. Turn Your Lights Down Low - Bob Marley & The Wailers (feat. Lauryn Hill)
- Honorary mention: Murder She Wrote - Chaka Demus & Pliers

Overall, Caribana is a unique, exuberant, rich celebration that connects all kinds of people together. Being able to walk in the parade and celebrate my history alongside my people makes me proud to be Antiguan-Jamaican, and I'm sure many others feel the same! Especially in a country where historically black and brown bodies were commoditized and our labour freely abused, Caribana and other island festivities are in many ways a declaration and a reclamation of our humanity, dignity and pride.

Jah Bless!

³ “Notting Hill Carnival” (last accessed 15 March 2024), online: <nationaltoday.com/notting-hill-carnival/>.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AS A FIRM GROUNDING FOR POLICY-DRIVEN LAW

By Katherine Silins, 1L

The following article is part of a series featuring multidisciplinary students (JD/MBA, JD/MPA, JD/MHA and JD/MI) at Schulich:

Renée Babin is a 1L, but in her second year of studies in the joint Juris Doctor/Master of Public Administration program at Dalhousie. She spent last year taking courses in economics, public policy, organizational design and development, strategic planning, and accounting within the Faculty of Management.



Renée Babin

A lifelong resident of Halifax, Renée graduated from Saint Mary's University with a Bachelor of Criminology feeling jaded about the thought of a career in criminal law. Realizing that this disillusionment stemmed from her frustration with policy issues, she decided to pursue a joint JD/MPA. Dalhousie seemed like an ideal fit for Renée: Dalhousie's MPA program offers a choice between a thesis or internship and Renée was interested in hands-on learning. Additionally, the community offered by the Indigenous, Black and Mi'kmaq program at Schulich Law was appealing to Renée.

Last summer, Renée completed her MPA internship with a Halifax consulting firm specializing in privacy, cybersecurity, and change management. This was a natural extension of her work as a self-employed small business owner, where she provides executive and organizational management services for remote clients. Renée's background in public policy prepared her well for 1L, particularly for Public Law due to her familiarity with the operation of the public service and the overlap between public policy and legal interpretation.

However, despite the complementary material of the two programs, being a joint student comes with specific challenges. During applications and registration, Renée found it frustrating to be the liaison between the Law and Management schools. Additionally, the MPA program is only two years, so Renée's MPA cohort is preparing to graduate this semester. Meanwhile, Renée still has over two years of courses to complete, a somewhat isolating experience.

Renée suggests that Schulich consider adopting some of the pedagogy of the MPA program. The structured nature of her public administration studies provided her with a solid foundation to understand complex social issues that might be overlooked in the legal profession. Studying a range of subjects such as accounting provided her with the context to understand the challenges associated with using rent caps as a solution to the Canadian housing crisis and the diminishment of services that would follow a tax reduction to ease cost of living.

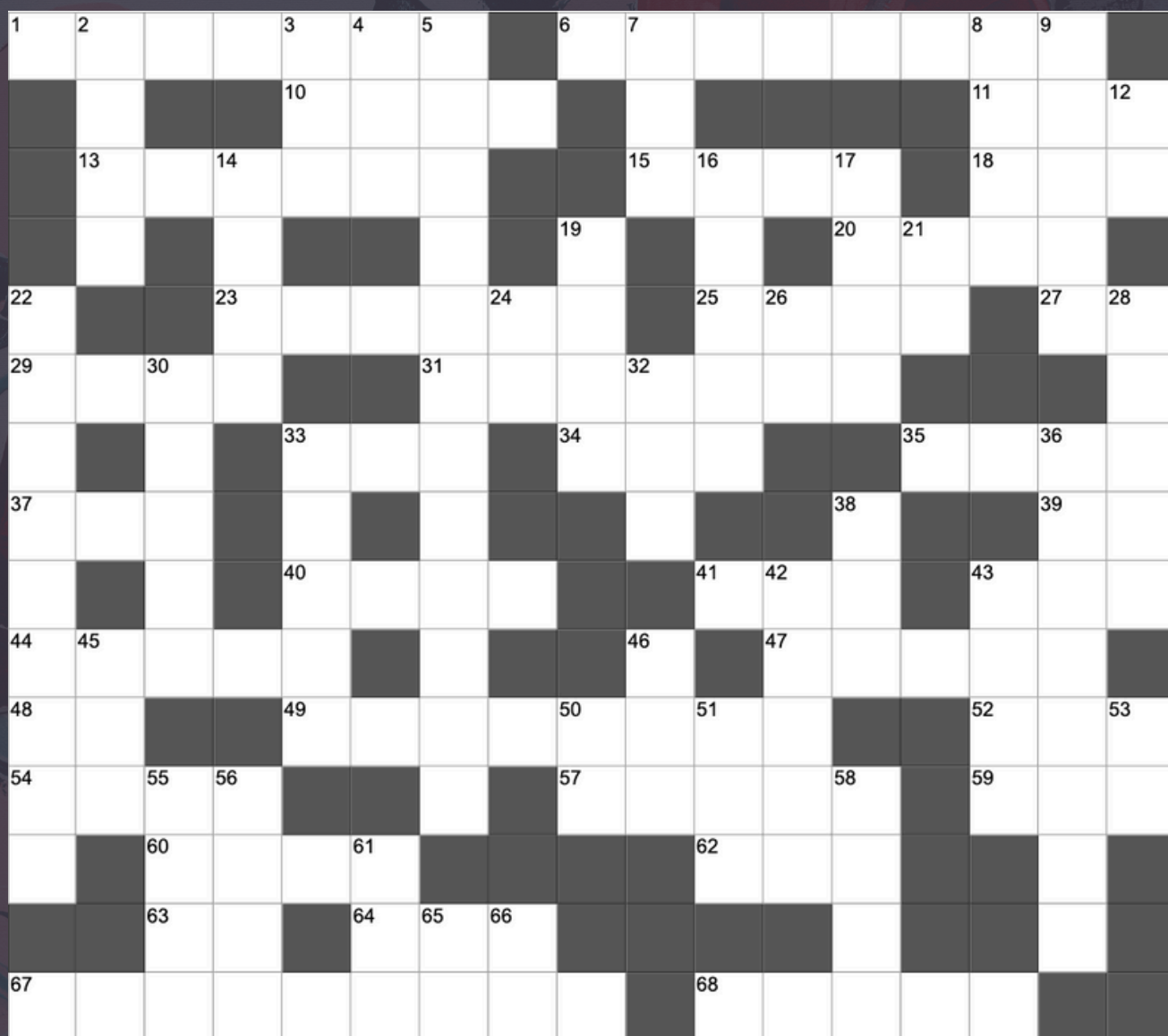
Despite learning law through a critical legal lens, Renée has found that her public administration courses are better suited to preparing her to be an effective, policy-driven lawyer. Without this knowledge, it would be challenging or impossible for lawyers to see and promote change for complex issues. Renée suggests an optional organizational design intensive about the workings and operation of the government. This would give law students a better understanding of the context in which legal practitioners operate.

Looking forward, Renée is interested in taking courses in tax law, employment law, business associations, and intellectual property in her upper years. She also plans on expanding her business, continuing to support her community, teaching (possibly abroad!), and spending time with her dog, Meeka!



FEMINIST POWER: PAST AND PRESENT

By Dalhousie Feminist Legal Association



Answers on Page 4

ACROSS

- 1... Professor ____: TV Lawyer and Prof
6... Coined "Intersectionality"
10... Of laundry
11... Michelle, to Malia
13... Activist and Nobel Laureate known for advocating for girls' education
15... The Male ____ (feminist theory coined by Laura Mulvey)
18... Young woman to serve in America's congress, abrv.
20... Give up, in poker
23... P. Johnson: activate and key figure in the Stonewall uprising
25... "Gilmore Girls" protagonist
27... Ergo, but less pompous
29... Queen required
31... City where the Famous Five fought for women to be recognised as "persons"
33... 33-down, abrv.
34... Certain sibling, affectionately
35... Authentic, fancily
37... Carry (around)

DOWN

- 2... Watson, Actress and UN Women Goodwill Ambassador
3... Abbreviation for both linguists and beer lovers
4... Completely absent
5... Breaking it might be cause for celebration
7... Late SCOTUS legend
8... Clooney, notable British Barrister
9... "What, like it's hard?" speaker
12... Wedding host
14... Lemon's green friend
16... Ethereal glows, for psychics
17... Halifax organization devoted to improving the lives of marginalized women, girls, non-binary, and gender diverse individuals, abrv.
19... Ladies
21... Australian or Irish exclamations
22... Social justice activist, politician and an active figure in the Métis community
24... Reponse to a joke

- 39... Canadian conclusion?
40... Authors of this crossword
41... Do a black diamond run, say
43... Parts of many maternity wards, abrv.
44... Actress and activist Jane who co-founded the Women's Media Center
47... Intersectional feminist author and scholar of "Ain't I a Woman?"
48... "No kidding!"
49... Canadian province where women gained the right to vote in 1916
52... "Girl, you ____!", affectionately
54... Grunt of doubt
57... Desmond, on our \$10 bill
59... Adele's "Someone Like ____"
60... Charlotte spins these
62... Chicken ____ (childhood illness)
63... A good corporation should have this department
64... Hard-to-fold guide
67... First woman to be appointed Chief Justice of the SCC
68... Cho, of *Partner Track*
26... Alternatively
28... Sworn statements
30... Plant-based
32... Coppola, director
33... ____ President
36... Historical events as characterised by RuPaul
38... 2016 Olympics city, briefly
42... Mexican artist and feminist icon
43... "Good enough"
45... Horsehoe-shaped unit?
46... Coy question from Miss Piggy
50... Set in the living room, abrv.
51... Taylor Swift song, per say
53... Political and economic union of 28 member states that are located primarily in Europe
55... New all-women sports league with 6 teams across North America
56... Goddess of women
58... Terminated
61... Way of expressing disgust, digitally
65... Et ____
66... 3.14

WELLNESS: TAKE WHAT YOU NEED

By Faith Thomson, 2L, and the Schulich Mental Health & Wellness Society

Start Here

Do you want to be inside, outside,
or want the option for both?

Keep me cozy please



Are you looking
to tap into your
creative juices?

Make your favourite
meal OR get crafty with
some painting.

Looking for
some alone
time?

Make yourself a tea or coffee, or try
reading a non-law book
(don't worry, your books will be there for
you when you get back).

Can you rally
the groupchat?

Try a movie night where
you all bring one of your
favourite snacks.

Take me to the great outdoors

Have you
treated
yourself lately?

Visit your local emotional
support shoppe and grab
yourself something small like
your favourite beverage or
some flowers.

Weather's
nice?

Try a walk in the Public
Gardens, along The Arm, or
the Commons.





Well, it depends...

What's your capacity like?

I got lots!

Give a new activity a go.

Ehh – I'm not sure, what are my options?

Head loud? How much time you got?

Enough.

Download a meditation podcast and find a spot outside. Some yoga studios offer meditation classes too!

A few minutes.

Open your notes app and download your brain space. Or crack open your journal.

Challenge yourself by trying something new outside of wrapping your head around the law! Maybe you reach for new movement practice, NSCAD public art classes or try out a new board game with friends. Try a new café or restaurant!

Lean on one of your familiar movement practices. This can be light stretching (think head rolls, spinal rollups, etc.) or getting back to a sport that you miss.

I'm fresh out of spoons.

Have you moved your body lately?



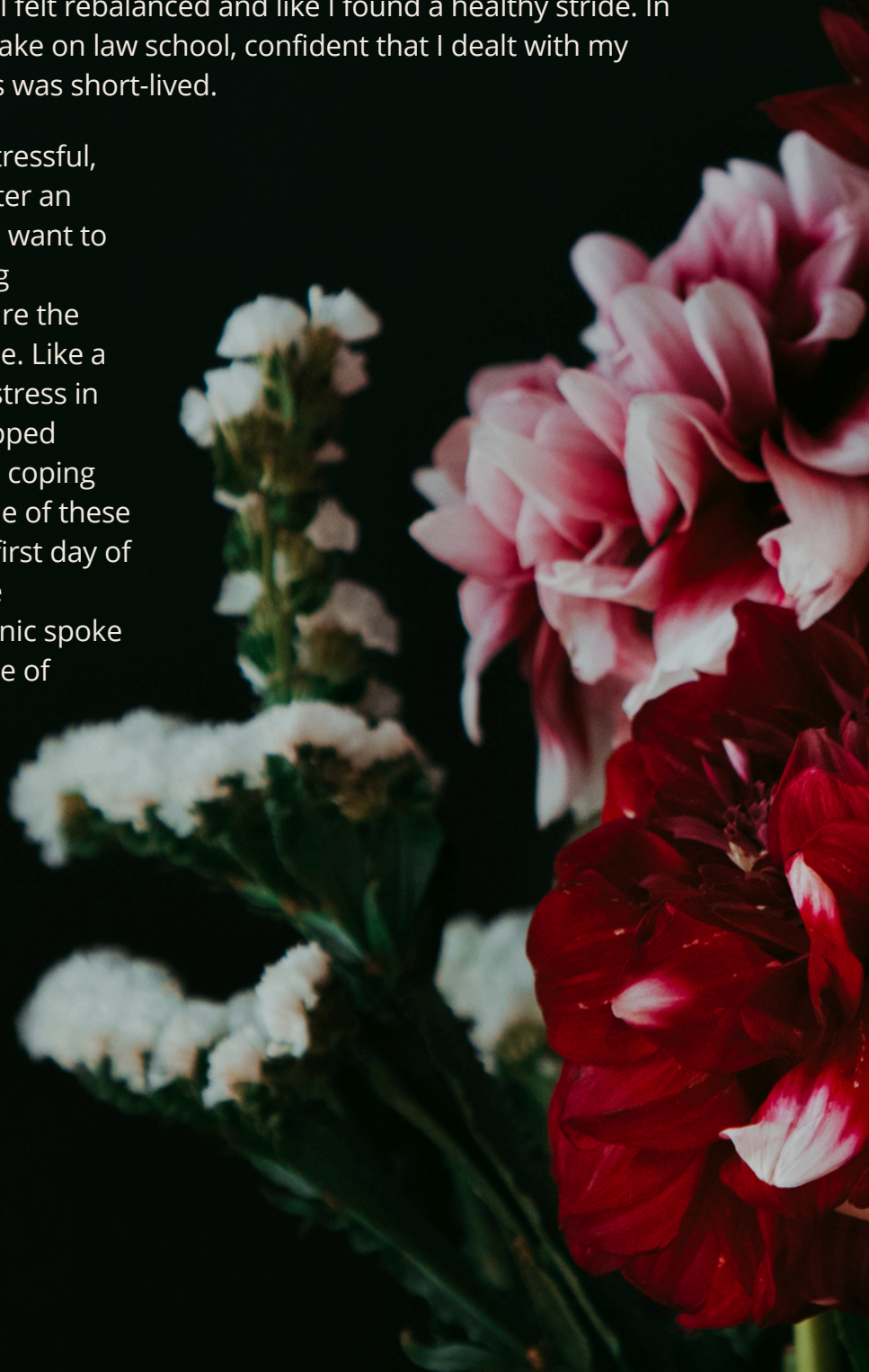
THE PATH OF MORE RESISTANCE: SOBRIETY IN LAW SCHOOL


By Madeline Heinke, 3L

Like many of my peers, before I came to law school I battled with mental health and struggled to find healthy ways to cope. During the last year of my undergraduate degree, despite many of my friends applying to law school, I was skeptical of whether I could handle the pressure. Instead of jumping right in I spent three years in professional working environments. From this, I felt rebalanced and like I found a healthy stride. In the fall of 2021, I felt prepared to take on law school, confident that I dealt with my demons. Needless to say, this bliss was short-lived.

I knew that law school would be stressful, but I had no idea that it would foster an environment that would make me want to return to many of the same coping mechanisms I relied upon to endure the stress of my undergraduate degree. Like a natural evolution, with increased stress in law school, my mental health dropped significantly and I began to rely on coping mechanisms like never before. One of these mechanisms was alcohol. On the first day of law school, a representative of the Dalhousie Health and Wellness Clinic spoke to us about the extremely high rate of substance abuse across lawyers.

Without lawyers in my family I was insulated from this reality. If I was aware of this truth, I likely would have put greater thought before I embarked on this career. My recent journey with alcohol showed me some of the reasons why substance abuse is so prevalent in the legal profession. I relied on alcohol to deal with grief, stress, and anxiety since the time I could drink.





Fortunately, with access to therapy, for a long time I have been well aware that my relationship with alcohol is abnormal in this sense. Without a watchful eye on my relationship with alcohol, it can devolve into an abusive one. In 1L, however, I was sure I fought and triumphed over this demon. I told myself I could handle going to Domus, partying with friends, and having something to drink at the end of a long day.

As 1L continued on, it became exceedingly clear that this was not true. The abusive relationship I had been wary of this whole time was sitting at my doorstep, despite the amount of times I neglected to recognize it. I was afraid that when I did acknowledge it, I would have to stop drinking, which would put immediate distance between myself and my law school friends.

After a night where my relationship with alcohol had become the most dangerous and toxic it had ever been, I realized that any potential loss of friends or change to how I was tackling my stress in law school was significantly outweighed by the cost of continuing to drink. I got to a tipping point with this coping mechanism that made me step back and realize I had to make a significant change.

The moment I became sober was when I knew that for me, relieving stress by drinking was something that would not allow me to be successful in my health, relationships, law school and future career. I also told myself that the friends who absolutely loved me, who I was meant to have long-lasting friendships with, would stand by my side and support me.

Choosing to be sober was a decision I made entirely for myself. It felt incredibly powerful to let go of what anyone thought. I made a choice for me—to protect, love, and support myself. Shedding this particular coping mechanism was challenging, but as I had rightly predicted, the friends who were meant to stay at my side did. While I do a lot of work on my own to continue my sobriety, my close friends and family are steady rocks for me while I was going through turbulent growth. They and so many others empowered me to feel like I could confidently walk in my own direction and do what is best for me.

I continue to engage in many different coping mechanisms, some which are positive and some negative which I continue to come into conflict with. But unlike before, I know I can and will change my habits, because I have done it before.

It is my last intention to voice to you that you must be sober in law school to navigate it. Rather, I want to pass on this. Law school brings out many of the coping mechanisms we have relied on throughout life to handle pressure and stress, some of them productive and healthy, others harmful and injurious. While we largely do not have control over the stress of law school, we have control over how we respond to it. It is important to take time to check in with how you are handling stress and to objectively ask: is this something that is good for me? Do I need to keep a watchful eye on this, or do I need to flat out make a change?

Making the change you know is necessary is the path of most resistance, and I can share from experience that confronting those truths takes courage. However, I promise that once you take steps to do so, you will begin to trust, love, and support yourself more than ever because of the choice that you made for only you.

Resources

Alcoholics Anonymous - Halifax Meetings: <https://www.aahalifax.org/>

SMART Recovery - Halifax Division: <https://smartrecoverynovascotia.org/>

Women for Sobriety: <https://womenforsobriety.org/>

Dal After Dark is a program that hosts substance-free, inclusive events for Dalhousie and King's students.

Instagram: @DalAfterDark



COZY UP WITH THE BEST COFFEE IN HALIFAX

By Carleigh MacKenzie, 1L

For a small city, Halifax has a surprisingly impressive coffee scene. If you're anything like me, you're always on the hunt for a good cup of coffee. For most of us, drinking coffee just comes with the territory of being a law student. Whether you like an oat milk latte, cold brew or a good ol' drip coffee, here are some must-try cafés in Halifax.

Best Overall: Rumi Coffee Company

Rumi is one of the newer coffee shops to Halifax, having opened in May 2023. Everything is made with love in this hidden gem. Rumi can be found in the Vertu Shops above Pete's Frootique on Dresden Row (psst – they also offer a 10% discount for students).

Instagram: @rumicoffeehfx

A Close Second (if not a tie): Espresso 46

This is a Halifax staple, so I couldn't leave it out. Located in the Warehouse Market on Isleville St., Espresso 46 is a coffee window with Italian-style coffee. It's not the best study spot, but if you're looking for a place to take a break from schoolwork with a smooth espresso, this is the place.

Instagram: @espresso.46

Best Vibes: Coffeeology

The coffee is delicious. The artwork is fun. Located on Dresden Row, Coffeeology has that classic third-wave coffee atmosphere. White brick walls, concrete floors, plants, books, and good coffee – what more could you need? Bonus – it's usually a quiet spot to get work done when a table is available.

Instagram: @coffeeologyespresso



Best Dartmouth: Café Goodluck

Café Goodluck is located on Portland Street in downtown Dartmouth. With delicious coffee, brunch and baked goods, it is well worth the ferry trip. Café Goodluck offers a decent amount of seating if you're looking to get some work done, but weekends can get busy.

Instagram: @cafe.goodluck

Dartmouth Runner Up: Morley's Coffee

I couldn't talk about coffee in Dartmouth without mentioning Morley's Coffee. I remember spending my high school lunch hour here sipping some coffee and browsing Taz Records. Morley's Coffee has shared its space with many things, including a barber shop and Joel Plaskett's recording studio. Today, it is home to Taz Records and Friction Books, and located on Portland Street in downtown Dartmouth.

Instagram: @morleysdartmouth

Best Adventure: Cortado Tasting Room

This would have made my "best overall" slot if it wasn't located in Bedford. Cortado Tasting Room has an extensive menu of drinks and food. If coffee is more like a hobby or a passion to you (I know it is for me), Cortado hosts monthly seminars and tasting sessions. They have a rotating feature roast to keep things fresh. If you're up for the adventure to Gary Martin Drive, Cortado Tasting Room is more than a coffee shop – it's an experience.

Instagram: @cortadotastingroom



University of Kings College Lecture around the 1940's

Source: University of Kings College (Kingsca) archives/website.

PERPETUAL CHANGE: LAW SCHOOL AND TECHNOLOGY

By Emily Carr, 1L

Before we carried the internet around in our backpacks, pockets and wore it on our wrists, there was a designated place for the internet. This might have been the library in earlier days, and then maybe the family living room corner, a space where we gravitated towards a bunch of clunky machinery for communication, games, and increasingly more tasks. Somewhere between the invention of the printing press and virtual reality glasses, technology led us to Wi-Fi and the personal computer, our primary learning tool across all fields. I think many of us in school today underappreciate the fact that we have lived through dramatic technological advancements in a short span of time.

I am far from first in stating that computers have entirely changed the ways universities operate and students learn, more than any other technological advancement to date. I aim only to raise questions and doubts about the impacts of technology on our current age of learning and listening as students.

Until the last 10 years, legal professionals relied heavily on physical information. Universities and firms all over the world dedicated entire libraries to stacks of legal research before the ongoing and currently unfinished transition to online databases like CanLII, which debuted only in 2001.

As students today, our learning is situated in a time in history where many of our current professors learned using different methods. The sea of laptops and typing sounds that professors teach to was once a crowd that maintained eye contact and took pen-to-paper notes on entirely oral lectures. Of course, having access to the internet at our fingertips poses new challenges for our focus and engagement. We take our laptops to class with us and subject our human nature to the challenge of focus. Features like the “Do Not Disturb” setting allow us to control distractions, if we find sufficient willpower.

Many excellent professors have shown me the value of an engaging lecture and the value of being engaged in lectures. When we study something we are passionate about, lectures can teach us things that consciously and unconsciously shape our worldview. I fear that the main idea of a striking lecture, that quote that sticks with you for the remainder of your career, might often get lost in the rapid-fire transition of information as it moves from a professor and their slides to verbatim on our keyboards. It is natural for the movement from screen to screen to skip the part where it seeps into our brain in ways that shape our minds.

As I was brainstorming for this article, I asked our Dean Sarah Harding about the changes she has seen in her path from law student to Dean of Law. She recalls her efforts to engage the minds of students during her teaching years. “I am going to post the slides,” she’d say, a familiar statement to students, in hopes the firing keyboards might turn into questions and discussion. Harding stresses the importance of engaging in our law lectures, absorbing the information which will serve as precious foundations for our professional life.

I am sincerely concerned with the deeper social disconnect that might stand between our student generation and the older and wiser folks in our community, specifically the disconnect between students and professors. Imagine this familiar scene: Intelligent, experienced professor begins a lecture on a topic that he has spent much of his career researching, has a tech issue in setting up his PowerPoint, and his student comes to solve the issue. This noticeable difference in capability lies solely in our amplified exposure to technological advancements at a young age (for example, I remember being the one my parents called to fix the Wi-Fi router in my early teens). These experiential differences with technology between coexisting generations might cause more than a disconnect. Thinking about this on a larger scale, it might cause an interference in the natural respect owed to older and wiser generations in our community.

Many law students might go on to become professors themselves, and I do not doubt that history will repeat itself, making our experience as law students drastically different than the world we teach in. Again, the internet used to be a place we went to. Now, we create spaces to escape it, through hobbies like yoga and journaling and other kinds of breaks. But they can only be that, breaks, because the world of education and technology is perpetually changing, and falling behind would cost us opportunities. It is interesting to critically consider the point we are at as students in the changing history of education and technology.

THE MEALS AFTER THE MOMENTS

By Daniel Dai and John Alho, 3L

The 3L winter semester is the equivalent of driving your car with the fuel indicator on 'E' for the last 50km with no gas station in sight. At any point, the car will slow down, inciting a panicked prayer within our jaded 3L souls that the momentum of the last two and a half years will somehow carry us through admin and evidence. Two courses we somehow convinced ourselves we didn't need in 2L but are now taking. With very little in the tank to direct at ~~CAN-sifting~~ actual coursework and reading, I (Daniel) find myself with more time to look back at my clumsy stumble through the tiled and linoleum hallways of Weldon.

Hopefully, when we leave this concrete box, we can look back on these three years with warmth and nostalgia for the people we struggle bonded with in public law. Hopefully, each of us will have a cherished moment(s), whether they were made at the back of 305 where all the diligent students sat or outside the classroom at DOMUS where, coincidentally the same students who sat at the back of 305 could be found.

John and I elected to share some of our moments with you through the meals we have eaten and the stories we have made together with our friends over the last three years. This is not our attempt to fill the shoes of the late Anthony Bourdain or the beginnings of our pivot from law to food writers (maybe). Nor do we intend for these stories to be considered reviews or even recommendations of good food. These are nothing more than the moments we will remember when our time at Weldon has passed.

Daniel: Drowning away public law blues (1L)

Habaneros Modern Taco Bar on South Park Street

Not quite Chipotle but nothing like Taco Bell, I happened upon Habaneros for the first time after writing my public law fail safe, which was the first one of the exam season. It was the kind of exam that really made you want to stroll in the Public Gardens afterwards for a bit and watch the ducks while contemplating if this duck had a better life

than you or if law school was the right choice. It was once I left the gardens that I saw Habaneros across the street and walked in on a whim. The first thing I saw on the menu was the option for not just a large burrito but a JUMBO one. In my vulnerable state, I gave into my morbid curiosity. Looking to forget about that exam, I ordered the Jumbo with all the fixings and extra pickled onions (that's my weakness).

If you care about your pride, take this home to eat, but if you're like me and shameless, eat it in the public gardens by the ducks. During the oversized caloric catastrophe, I could forget about public law. Instead, all I could think about was "damn I should've asked for more pickled onions." A couple of months afterwards, I took John and our friend Zander after our Contracts final, where the three of us ate this monstrosity in the gardens while onlookers (not just ducks) walked by and the gardener loomed over our shoulder.



Photo by Daniel Dai

John: He got the Job! (2L)

Casablanca Authentic Moroccan Cuisine on Queen Street

It was the best of times; it was the worst of times... and it was a time to celebrate: two members of our trio had found gainful summer employment and one of us had gotten their top pick for exchange. 2L, as two-thirds of you now know, and one-third have to dread look forward to, is the (un)wanted gift that keeps on giving. Between the moot, civil procedure, Shapiro making the world's most awkward law ball appearance, or the dozens of law firms leaving your cover letters on read, it is the rare moments of light that we will fondly recollect when harkening back to our law school days.

We found ourselves at Casablanca when our favourite sushi restaurant (Minato) was closed, and we didn't want to go to Cha baa Thai for the fifth time in two weeks. The atmosphere was homely, the food scrumptious, and the conversation jovial. While the details may be lost to time, with the maelstrom of 2Hell still in full swing around us, this was our moment of calm amidst the storms. Also, the mille-feuille was apparently so good, it left Daniel dreaming of eating his way out of a cake, and I definitely didn't write about this restaurant as an excuse to share that story.

John: Winter Reunion (3L)

Sushi Jet on South Park St

It was the beginning of January, and the first time back in Halifax after eight (very short) months for me and eight (very long) days for Daniel. Getting dinner at Sushi Jet (albeit the old location on Spring Garden) was the start of our friendship. It was only fitting that it be the location of our post-exchange reunion to mark the start of the last term in our law school journey. The meal itself was unremarkable, as someone (definitely not me) may have loaded up on too many deep-fried milk buns right out of the gate to enjoy it. Maybe it was the deep-fried bread talking, or perhaps it was a desire to avoid readings, but one thing that stood out was the decision, after two years of waffling, to finally write this piece.

Closing Thoughts

Without a warning, almost three years have passed us by and although we want nothing more than to free ourselves from law school, the feeling is bittersweet. The thought of continuing our journey through the law without the friends we started it with brings the same anxious feelings that accompanied us when we started it. But among our friends, we know that somewhere down the line we'll share another meal together and look back on these memories, talking and laughing well into the night long after plates have been cleared.



Photos by John Alho

WORDS THAT DO THINGS: ONE ANSWER TO “WHY LAW SCHOOL?”

By Elyse Loewen, 3L

As someone who never really aspired to be a lawyer growing up, I get asked “why law school?” a lot. I even ask myself the same question sometimes, especially when I have an assignment due tomorrow. Usually, I give some quick and rather innocuous answer, but lately I’ve been thinking more deeply about it. This led me down a rabbit hole that took me all the way back to the 20th century linguistic theorist J.L. Austin.

See, Austin made the simple yet profound point that some words *do* things. They cause real-world happenings. For instance, if we were standing together at an altar and an ordained minister said the words “I now pronounce you married,” those words would cause us to be linked together in holy (and legal) matrimony. Or if I stood in a courtroom and said the words “I solemnly affirm that the evidence to be given by me shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth,” those words have transformed what I say next into sworn testimony. These examples of “speech acts” or “performatives” are different from purely descriptive statements, like “law school is hard” that merely describe the state of the world.

J.L. Austin quickly muddled his own distinction between performative and descriptive language—for example, if I say “law school is hard” while I’m acting in a play, is that a performative because it’s making the play happen? And then some postmodernists who really dislike binaries came in and showed the whole performative/descriptive distinction to be a bit of a wash. But, with a bit of willful blindness, I’m going to use the distinction between performative and descriptive words anyways, because it’s helpful to explain why I am drawn to law.

Three fast facts about me: I have always loved words. And I have always believed words have immense power. And I never thought I would end up in law school.

Until I applied to law school, my main frame of reference for what law was like was the TV show *Suits*. From this show, I determined that practicing law involved 1) wearing very stylish outfits; 2) having serious conversations in glamorous locales; 3) combing through endless boxes of files on occasion to find the hidden fact which would unlock the entire case; and 4) making brilliant arguments in court to own your opponent. Based on these rock-solid and evidence-based facts about law, I determined that it was not for me. My realm was reading and writing, and I hated arguing. So I got two degrees in English literature.

I love English literature, and I always will. But after 5 years of studying it, I began to doubt my aspirations of pursuing a career in English academia. Hours of researching, writing, and editing; multiple breakdowns per essay—and for what, in the end? What did my words do besides get me a grade? The more I studied English literature, the more I realized that it would take me many many more years of studying to even begin to make an original contribution, let alone change the field. More than that, I wasn’t sure I had an original contribution to make. And I missed the feeling of my words having a real, tangible, positive impact in people’s lives.

Throughout my undergrad, I worked as an arts administrator for a small non-profit music school in rural Manitoba. It was the best job I've ever had. I worked together with a few close friends to deliver a week-long summer music camp. We spent months planning the camp: picking out music, writing out individual schedules for each camper, planning concerts and evening activities. And then, at the end of those months, the most magical thing happened. All the words on our Google docs, our paper schedules, our excel sheets, floated up off the page and became students learning together in classrooms, became outdoor squaredances and pool parties, became concerts for hundreds of community members. I cried every single summer during the final concert, because I got to see all our work—all our words—become students on stage playing their hearts out. It was wonderful.

Three fast facts about what I know about law so far as a third-year law student: Law is actually a lot of reading and writing rather than arguing. You can do law in very non-glamorous outfits, like the same set of old pyjamas for all of exams. And law is all about words that do things.

Take the *Criminal Code*: a very long list of words that do things, in the sense that they create all the things you can't do—and then if you go and do those things anyways, they create your punishment. Or a Lord Denning contracts case: tells a good old story, but the words of that story also determines how people can make legally enforceable agreements for decades. I could go on, but you get the point. Legal words often have a kind of power that few other words do. They shape reality directly, tangibly. A lawyer can write a letter for a client that tells someone to stop doing something and the letter *can make them stop*. A lawyer can go to court and the power of their words can keep a parent together with their child. Even legal scholarship is read and cited by judges, who in turn make law that shapes people's rights and obligations across the country.

J.L. Austin said something else about words that do things. He noted that some words attempt to do things, but don't always succeed. There could be a difference in what people wanted their words to do, and what they actually did.

In a lot of ways, it is people working in the legal field who make the words of the law do things. The legislature could write all the laws they wanted, but if they went unenforced, uninterpreted, and unapplied, they wouldn't really do anything. The work of the law is, in one sense, all about understanding and giving power to words to do things they're meant to do.

In the summer of 2023, I worked in small claims as a summer articling student. I worked my own files (under the supervision of a real lawyer, of course): filing affidavits, submitting applications, and even representing clients in settlement conferences in front of judges. I was, for the first time, the person taking the law from an abstract concept to a tangible reality. It was a terrifying responsibility. It still is. There is the fear, and there is the potential, hand in hand. In the words of the Honourable Judge Diane McGrath, "with great power comes great responsibility."¹

This is all to say—the next time someone asks why I'm in law school,

I guess I'll tell them it's all J.L. Austin's fault.

¹ *R v Campbell*, 2019 NSPC 44 at para 55.

YELAWSTONE

By Nicole Wickenberg, 1L

Since 1983, Law Games has been bringing law students from all across Canada together. With athletics, moot court, social events, team spirit, and, of course, the dirty cup, Law Games truly has something for everyone. As well, this year's Law Games was slightly different from the last few. For the first time in fifteen years, Law Games finally returned to Saskatchewan.

As a Saskatoonian myself, I couldn't have been more thrilled to hear that all the Law Games participants would get to experience the beauty that is Saskatoon—super accurately referred to as the “Paris of the Prairies”. Since I didn't get to go, I interviewed four Dalhousie students who attended the games, hoping to live vicariously through them.

When asked about the best part of this year's Law Games, Sports Captain Antonia Chircop said: “My favourite part of law games was cheering everyone on in their respective events. Our team was so pumped for each other and showed great camaraderie and team spirit.” Antonia's enthusiasm did not go unnoticed, as Dalhousie's team won the Law Games Spirit Cup for the second year in a row.



This year's theme was Yelowstone, which is a fitting pun for a city whose main industries are agriculture and dirty country bars. Lucas Paniak, Dal's Sponsorship Coordinator, stated that these social events were his favourite part of the games. “They held a country bar night on night one, a pub crawl/white t-shirt sharpie night on night two, the talent show on night three, and the closing gala on night four. Each event was not only a super great opportunity to meet and connect with law students from across the country, but also to get to know your classmates better and make some unforgettable memories in the process.” Wendy Yang, a participant in the athletic and talent show events, agreed. “I loved being able to meet everyone. I got to reconnect with old friends that went to different schools as well as meet new ones!”

It couldn't be Law Games without having some funny stories emerge. Ailin Chant, the team's Spirit Captain, spoke about the chaos of the Dirty Cup. For those who don't know, the Dirty Cup is a coveted trophy that is awarded according to points earned by doing social challenges. One of this year's Dirty Cup competitions rewarded the team whose member wore the most denim (a beautiful Saskatchewan custom). When the team banded together to dress Ailin in over 25 pieces of denim, the judges were not convinced that Dalhousie should be the victor. Ailin recalled, “We sold them when we told them that, currently at the time of the competition, we had 5 male team members standing in the bathroom half naked, after donating their pants to the cause! That tipped the scales to our side and we won.”

Naturally, I also had to ask everyone what they thought about Saskatoon. After they all stated that it's their new favourite tourist destination (this is definitely the truth, but even if it isn't, I'm the author, and I can do whatever I want), Lucas remarked on the frigid temperature of the city, then said, "If you can't handle some bad weather, you can't handle Law Games in the first place!"

Of course, being the farthest law school to attend the games doesn't come without work. "The Law Games Committee had to work really hard to fundraise this year as opposed to last year. It took a lot more coordinating and organising to make the trip as affordable as possible for everyone to attend," Antonia shared. However, their hard work clearly paid off. Wendy remarked, "it was such a fun experience, and I'd definitely recommend it for anyone who is considering."

As for the future of the event, Dalhousie students are eager to announce that the 2025 games will take place in Halifax. From incorporating the beautiful scenery, the iconic bars, and more, there's no place I would rather see Law Games be (except Saskatoon of course). As Lucas said: "glory awaits us".



Dalhousie Team at Law Games 2024 in Saskatoon

WHAT A WALK IN THE WOODS CAN TEACH YOU ABOUT THE LAW

By Devon Campbell, 3L

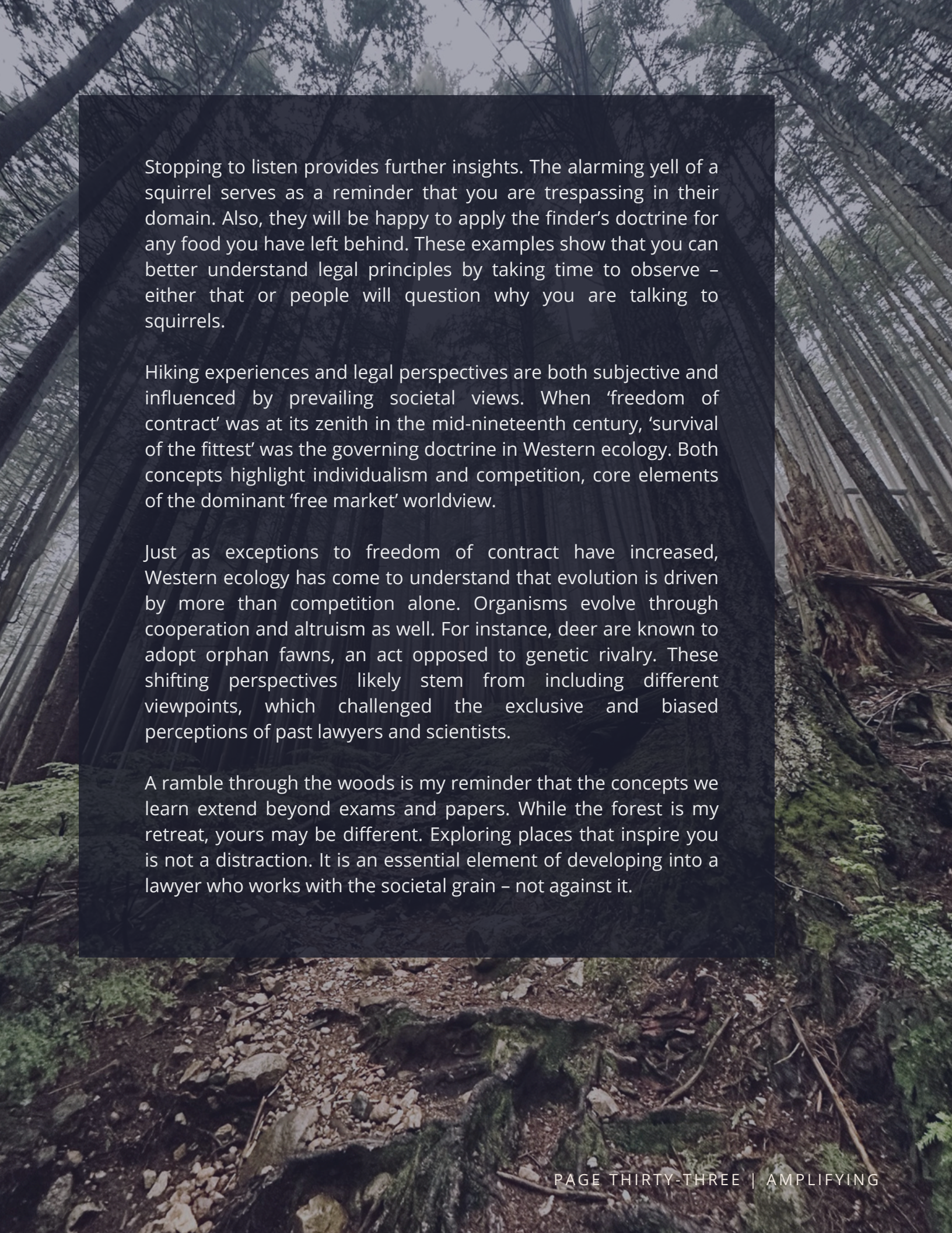
Crisp air, waterfalls, the scent of pine – what's not to love? A walk in the woods offers plenty more than just a relaxing escape. As a forester who spent much of my pre-law life among the trees, hiking is my favourite way to reflect on classroom concepts.

Time in the woods has helped me to reassess the notion of the Constitution as a 'living tree.' Like a tree, our constitution grows incrementally. It is always reaching toward the guiding light of its principles. Changing precedent may result in a branch dying, but the Constitution persists. Yet, a tree must remain firmly rooted in place. Its immobility leaves it vulnerable to shifting climates, unexpected storms, and pests. Once a tree withers, it is gone forever.

It may be better to envision the Constitution as a forest, a diverse ecosystem where countless organisms live and interact. A hurricane may fell a few trees and droughts will parch the undergrowth, but the forest is resilient. Like a forest, our constitution embraces the diversity it protects, adapting with changing societal perspectives. It is not static, nor vulnerable to a quick demise. Instead of a solitary symbol, we should view the Constitution for what it truly embodies: a complex and diverse community that is stronger as a collective.

Observing forest ecology can help visualize abstract legal concepts. To illustrate, trees understand how to be neighbourly much better than we do. The next time you are in a forest, look up and see how every tree canopy respects one another's space even as their leaves rustle in the wind. Nuisance is an unnecessary tort in the realm of trees.

An invisible ecosystem thrives below the surface, including a network of mycorrhizal fungi that connects tree roots throughout the forest. It operates like a trust, where nutrients from older trees are held in the soil and distributed to younger saplings. This network is more egalitarian than a typical trust, providing stored wealth to those in need, regardless of species.



Stopping to listen provides further insights. The alarming yell of a squirrel serves as a reminder that you are trespassing in their domain. Also, they will be happy to apply the finder's doctrine for any food you have left behind. These examples show that you can better understand legal principles by taking time to observe – either that or people will question why you are talking to squirrels.

Hiking experiences and legal perspectives are both subjective and influenced by prevailing societal views. When 'freedom of contract' was at its zenith in the mid-nineteenth century, 'survival of the fittest' was the governing doctrine in Western ecology. Both concepts highlight individualism and competition, core elements of the dominant 'free market' worldview.

Just as exceptions to freedom of contract have increased, Western ecology has come to understand that evolution is driven by more than competition alone. Organisms evolve through cooperation and altruism as well. For instance, deer are known to adopt orphan fawns, an act opposed to genetic rivalry. These shifting perspectives likely stem from including different viewpoints, which challenged the exclusive and biased perceptions of past lawyers and scientists.

A ramble through the woods is my reminder that the concepts we learn extend beyond exams and papers. While the forest is my retreat, yours may be different. Exploring places that inspire you is not a distraction. It is an essential element of developing into a lawyer who works with the societal grain – not against it.

SO YOU DON'T THINK YOU CAN POLE DANCE

By Elizabeth Fleet, 1L

I'm going to be completely straight with you: I'm a pole dancer. When I first decided to write this piece, I wanted to talk about how frustrating it is that I have to hesitate every time I say that out loud, gauging exactly how it might change the way someone looks at me. But I fell in love with pole because of how incredibly empowering it is, and it would not do justice to that feeling to focus on how others have tried to undermine it. Instead, what I want you to walk away with is this: pole is an amazing sport,

and it's for **everybody**.

When someone mentions they want to try pole, what they usually say next is, "But I'm not strong enough." When I first started pole, I didn't have an inch of muscle on me. I had never been an athletic person, and my elementary school gym class made me cry more than once. By the standard of strength we're fed via the fitness community, I shouldn't have made it a minute doing pole. But that's not what pole is about. First off, everybody starts somewhere—no one is expected in their first class to be able to pull themselves up a thirteen-foot pole or start spinning around upside down.



First off, everybody starts somewhere—no one is expected in their first class to be able to pull themselves up a thirteen-foot pole or start spinning around upside down. Secondly, there are so many aspects of pole dancing that have nothing to do with physical strength:

flexibility, creativity, musicality,

and most importantly, a willingness to keep trying.

And thirdly, there is no ideal body type for pole. Every body will have its own advantage in different moves: thicker thighs can hold you better in a pole sit, long arms can help you reach the pole in back-bendy moves, and shorter legs can make it easier to balance in moves like Ayesha.

Another common misconception about pole is that it's just one thing. Often, that one thing is seen to be stripping. It's important to say that, although stripping is not a part of what I do, it is deeply tied with the pole community, and it should never be shamed or forgotten in a conversation about the sport. But what is incredible about pole is that it has become so many different incredible things.

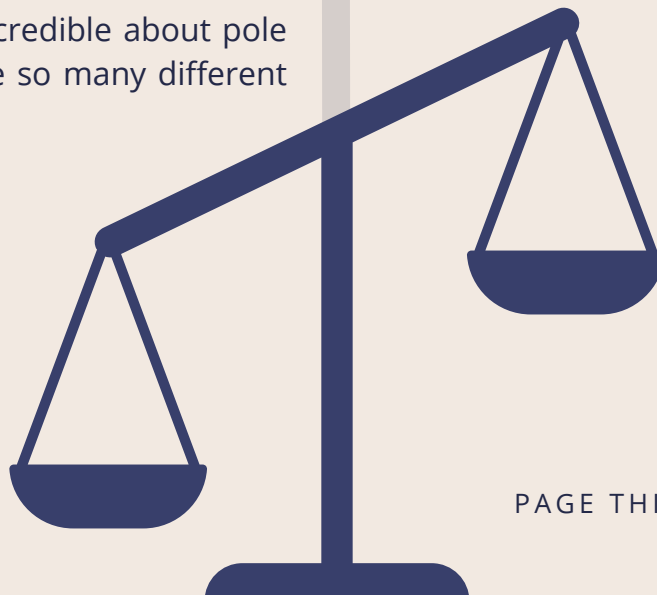
At national competitions, categories range from comedy to floorwork, dramatic to exotic, and theatre to sport. Pole, at the end of the day, is an artistic form of expression that reflects each dancers' interests and style. There is no one single demographic that can be a pole dancer—all genders and ages are welcome (yes, men also do pole, and they kick butt!).

Ultimately, pole is all about community. I've made so many incredible friends through this sport, and I've never felt stronger and more empowered than when I'm in class, getting to try things that I would have never thought my body was capable of doing, surrounded by some of the most supportive and welcoming people I've ever met.

If you're thinking about starting pole and have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to me:

elizabethmfleet@gmail.com.

For more information, here's the link to InesS Circus, the pole studio that I go to: www.iness.ca.



A large, stylized graphic composed of overlapping chevrons. A large red chevron points from the top-left towards the bottom-right. A smaller blue chevron points from the top-right towards the bottom-left, overlapping the red one. The text is centered within the red chevron.

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