

# No villains—just problems on the council front

If you are looking for villains beneath the turmoil which has recently been afflicting student council, you won't find any. If you really think you have one by the scruff of the neck or the back of an ear, let the poor individual go, you're probably mistaken.

'Tis is not to say people haven't made mistakes. We could write a year's worth (25) of editorials second guessing the decisions and actions of councillors thus far. But if you blame council's malaises solely on the deviousness and obstructionism of a few, you are plain missing the boat.

Ex-grad rep Peter Rans has written accusing the council executive of narrowmindedness and stifling of discussion. He paints president Gord Owen, vice-president Jeff Champion and treasurer Scott MacLeod out to be a conservative and insular clique of bureaucrats more interested in running the DSU Like Massey-Ferguson than like a student union.

Rans, on the other hand, before he left, was seen by some as an extremist bordering on manic-depressive, an energetic imported bull in Dalhousie's china shop more interested in running down a red flag whenever he sees one than in settling down to constructively ser-

vice student's interests. The average councillor is commonly viewed as one of those resumé hungry career buffs who misses every second council meeting and, in six months of office, has yet to come down and ask Gord Owen what he is supposed to do.

## Let go of his ear - He's not to blame

Finally, there is "the student," that opaque little abstraction in the bureaucratic mind, that person with

4 or so student loans, a place at Shirreff Hall of perhaps a tacky room on Agricola St., and a mind apathetic for anything but Schooner beer and his or her studies.

All of these visions of our fellow person are much distorted. The council executive has been working long and hard this year and has taken special pains to serve everyone's interests in as fair a way as possible. You may not agree with what they've done, but if that is the case, you should be attacking their policies not their persons. Rans' intent was not been to rabblouse. He focused on a couple of significant trends in the operation and structure of council and quite rightly urged they be reversed. While it is certainly true there are some councillors whose interest in their job died the night they got elected, this is not generally true. Many simply don't understand what council is and does, let alone the larger worlds of student politics and public activism. Until they learn about the gravity of the problems facing students on issues like student-aid, accessibility, housing, government cutbacks to post-secondary education and on broader issues like the arms race, Canadian and U.S. support of repressive regimes, and the state of labour in Nova Scotia, how can you expect them to express a keen interest in their job? The same of course goes for Dalhousie students. As was pointed out at Sunday's council's meeting, how can you really expect them to care about anything student council does unless they know it affects them?

Of course, these popular accusations have some truth to them. The executive has to be a more and broad-minded in their attitudes and action. Their opponents do have to be more constructive in their vituperative attacks. Councillors and students do have to show more of an interest. But, even more important, councillors have to overcome their infighting to learn to work together to face some of the very important issues facing Dalhousie student and the community in which we live.

# EDITORIAL

## the Dalhousie Gazette

The Dalhousie Gazette, Canada's oldest college newspaper, is the weekly publication of the Dalhousie Student union members, and is a founding member of Canadian University Press.

The views expressed in the Dalhousie Gazette are not necessarily those of the Dalhousie Student Union, the editor, or the collective staff. We reserve the right to edit material for space or legal reasons, or if it is considered offensive to our readers.

The deadline for articles and letters-to-the-editor is noon on Monday. No unsigned material will be accepted, but anonymity may be granted on request. Letters should not exceed 500 words and must be typed on a 64-character line and double spaced. Local Advertising is handled by DAL-ADS — the advertising department of Dalhousie Student Union: Tel. 424-6532. Ad copy must be submitted by the Friday preceding publication.

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## Letters to the Editor

### My choice pillars and all

Dear Editor

As I read the article in last week's Gazette about the education students protesting delays on renovations to the Arts Annex, I thought that they don't know how lucky they are. While I am sure they have a legitimate beef about being inconvenienced, they should take a look at what they eventually will have.

As a student in the School of Physical Education, the former occupants of the Arts Annex, I can only tell them how fortunate they are to be moving into that building. There they will have a department office, full-time professors' offices, classrooms, and a student lounge in one building. In effect, they will have a single building as a focal point of their departments.

Since leaving the Arts Annex, we in the School of Physical Education have been scattered about campus. We have core classes scheduled in the Dalplex, Studley Gym, the A and A Building, the Life Sciences Building and on lower campus. Our department offices are housed in two different buildings and full-time professors' offices can be found in three locations around campus. My point is that, while their

inconveniences are temporary, ours are permanent. We don't even have a student lounge we can call our own. If they are getting fourth class treatment, I don't know what we are getting.

I spent my first two and a half years of study in the Arts Annex and if it had been my choice I'd still be there—pillars and all!

Marie Gilkinson,  
4th year student,  
School of Physical Education

### We're not another unnamed flake

Dear Editor,

RE: No Reason For ID's—  
Greg Dennis

The article in last week's Gazette typifies, I'm sorry to say, the characteristic lack of concern and respect for University property shown by some members of the campus community.

If this policy helps stop the rampage of theft, the continual growth of high school students entering our building and the use of other university people who do not deserve to use our facilities, well so let SUB staff do their job.

We should not pass our fault for forgetting the ID on SUB staff, but should assume the act of stupidity upon ourselves. Hell, you're a Dalhousie student and not some flake from another unnamed institution, and you would think there would be enough pride in that very point to produce your Dal ID to prove that point when asked.

Umesh Jain  
President D.S.S.

### Not mere babysitters

Dear Editor,

The October 23 issue of the Dal Gazette printed an article entitled "Exploding the Myths about Daycare at Dal", filled with misleading information, not to mention many untruths.

As Director of the University Children's Centre (Peter Green Hall and Dalhousie Units), I wish to set the record straight. The Peter Green Hall Unit, which does indeed serve 75 children, fully meets the space requirements of 30 square feet of play space per child as set by the Department of Social Services. Saying that the facilities are overcrowded, and that space is a problem, implies that we are squeezing children into the classrooms. This is just not so. Certainly,

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