

Comment

Killam rules archaic

by E. Kranz

Who are those homeless hoards seen Saturday evenings wandering glassy-eyed and aimlessly over Studley campus? Early casualties of the Grawood might be a fair conjecture but if you look closely, they are carrying books and they don't stagger or sing. They're just wandering; as though they were looting for a lighted place to sit down and rest. In fact they're library exiles, forced into the cold by the untimely closing hours of the Killam and MacDonald libraries, wandering hopelessly in search of a place to finish their studies.

Given the actual situation at Dal, the large number of students and the housing situation (where students are cramped three in a room at Howe Hall or have been forced to find lodging well out of town), it seems odd that no attempt has been made to increase the library hours - not even during exams. What can be thought of the educational policy at a university that keeps its gymnasium, rink, squash courts, and Student Union Building open longer than any or all of its libraries?

There is just no excuse - financial or otherwise to keep the present library hours. Who says there is no need of an open library after six o'clock P.M. Saturday because everyone is out drinking and dancing? This is a policy started back in the Dark Ages of Dalhousie (before the SUB) when everyone was a fraternity member, and either you went to the parties or hid at home fearing discovery as a square studying-type student. There are enough "squares" around today to warrant a change in these archaic closing times.

In the Dark Ages (before the SUB) there was no campus police force to keep all-night vigils in the university buildings, consequently,

it was hard to justify paying all-night staff for the library. But now there are Campus Police in the Life Sciences Building (Biology and Psychology) and in the Arts Center and numerous other places. So why not put one in the MacDonald (one person normally mans the library from six to twelve most evenings) and one at the security desk in the Killam? For the price of two extra security people (cheap) Dalhousie could have twenty-four hour library service. Its not necessary to have highly paid library staff on at these late hours as it should be understood that the open library after midnight until nine o'clock A.M. is just a study facility. (In fact, however, it would be very easy to run a system similar to the credit card self service available at airports in bigger cities. Students could just put their cards in that little machine and sign out their own books during these hours.) And don't tell me all about the high cost of lighting - First of all, one half of the lights in the Killam are left on every night for effect even when no one is inside and secondly, it is very easy to set up a system where students would only turn on the lights in the areas they are working and turn them off when they go.

At Rutgers in 1964, they had beds in the libraries so that students studying all night could catch a few winks (or whatever). McGill extends its library hours during exams. A library is a measure of a school. The fact that Dal's closes down regularly before the Pubs shows just where this university is really at academically.

While I'm on the subject of libraries I might just mention a few other points about Dal's outstanding system. The Killam is probably the 2nd most modern, well equipped (largest?) Library in

Canada. The book collection isn't quite that high up on the list. This of course is in keeping with Henry Hick's apparent priorities- a lot of buildings and nothing of quality to stock them with. Libraries are by definition "a collection of books, manuscripts, etc. kept for study or reading." In our modern magnanimity we also allow borrowing for convenience (and to avoid overcrowding?). But in general the purpose of a library is to supply information. When we want to know something we go there, look up a book, find it on the shelves and read it. With the ultra modern system at Dal, however, the books are never on the shelves but always collecting dust in someone's room or in a professor's office (usually the latter).

I borrowed a record the other day. It played 28 minutes on one side and 25 on the other. They gave it to me on a two week loan. Two Weeks! for less than an hour of listening! There's logic for you.

How does the Killam system work? It doesn't. But first let's review how other leading systems work. Books are lent for a specific period (1-2 weeks depending on the popularity of the item and number of copies (a few days or hours in some instances) after which time they are due back. Failure to return the book within the given time limit results in a cumulative fine payable before any other material will be loaned.

Now at Dal once you take a book out its yours; at least until someone comes in and wants it so badly that he's willing to make out 2 or 3 title, author and serial number cards demanding you return it. Then the library sends you a notice by mail (there's a catch-you may be lucky enough to get a book recalled during a postal strike in which case

its yours almost indefinitely) saying the book has been recalled in which case if you're not a graduate working on a thesis or a professor you must return the book within a reasonable amount of time (1-2 weeks) or else be subject to a fine. When the book finally arrives the library sends another notice by mail (ho! ho!) to the unfortunate demanding the book who at that point throws the notice away because his paper was due the Monday before and he had to change his topic when he couldn't lay his hands on the material needed. What I'm saying is that library books should be in the library on the shelves where they can be found and used. I'm not saying that all the books should be there all the time (some college libraries in fact never let any books out) but as many as possible, as often as possible should be there. The way to accomplish this is to give reasonable loan periods and demand responsibility in returning them on time. People should learn to use the books they've taken out and not take or keep books they're not using.

In comparison to how it could be, Dalhousie's library system stinks concerning the length of time open, number of books in the collection and percentage of books in the collection available for use at any given time.

Further the large amount of photocopying of whole chapters etc. is ruining books and book bindings at a much faster rate than normal reading is ever likely to do. This obviously increases the costs and keeps what books the library does have at the binders a good percentage of the time.

What have you got to say to all this Mrs. Cooke?

Dal hosts debating tournament

On the weekend of the Winter Carnival, January 30, 31 and Feb. 1 the Sodales debating society will stage its annual intercollegiate debating tournament. Universities from the Atlantic region will be participating. On the Friday night of the tournament will be a Pub debate at 9:00 p.m. in the Biology Lounge of the Life Sciences Center. Saturday and Sunday will be the days for the debates and a model parliament, which will be held in the Weldon Law building. (Strike permitting) Below is a tentative schedule of events.

Friday 30

6:00- 8:00 p.m. Registration
8:00 p.m. General Meeting:
Introduction of teams
Instructions to debaters
9:00 p.m. Wine and Cheese party
(Pub debate) Biology Lounge

Saturday 31

8:45 Meeting
9:00 a.m. First Round (prepared)
10:00 a.m. Meeting
10:15 a.m. Second Round
(Impromptu)
11:15 a.m. Meeting
11:30 a.m. Third Round
(Impromptu)

12:30 p.m. Lunch

1:45 p.m. Meeting
2:00 p.m. Fourth Round
(prepared)
3:00 p.m. Meeting
3:15 p.m. Fifth Round

(Impromptu)
7:00 p.m. Dinner (at Mario's)
9:00 p.m. Party (Lord Nelson)

Sunday 1

10:00 a.m. Model Parliament
(Weldon Law)
12:30 p.m. Lunch
2:00 p.m. Closing
(Presentation of Awards)

Henry is okay

by Catherine Young

According to Mrs. Alice Moore, secretary to Dr. Henry Hicks, the University President is in a much improved condition. Before Christmas, Dr. Hicks suffered a severe allergic reaction to a vaccine which hospitalized him for a time. His condition had improved enough by last Tuesday to attend a press conference concerning the submission of a brief on university finances by AUCC (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.) Also attending this press conference was Nova Scotia's Premier, Gerald Regan. Dr. Hicks is on the Financial Committee of the above organization. A complete recovery will take some time; however, the President's progress has been steady, and he is making a quicker recovery than expected according to Mrs. Moore. It will not be long before the President resumes all his administrative duties.





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