

DAL GAZETTE

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EDITORIAL

What About Our Greek Letter Societies?

Among the many fraternities and sororities located in the Halifax area are seven fraternities and two sororities, composed basically of Dalhousie men and women, but definitely unrecognized officially by the university as being representative of or associated with the university, or intended as campus organizations.

Yet, the average student and citizen of Halifax considers them a part of the university. No matter how sincere the desire to leave them unattached from university life, they appear to be very much a part of it.

In recent months, the policies and practices of these groups have come in for much discussion throughout Canada and the United States—both internally and by outside interested groups. Probably of greatest and most direct interest to university students was the main resolution of the Committee on Editorial Policy which was unanimously presented to the 1953-54 Canadian University Press Conference in Toronto. The resolution stated, "Be it resolved that the national conference of the Canadian University Press urge that member papers take an editorial stand against racial discrimination in all campus organizations, including Greek letter societies, and urge these societies on Canadian camps to present a strong, united, anti-discrimination front at their inter-national conferences." And this resolution was passed by the large number of delegates composed of the editors and their assistants of nearly every University newspaper across Canada representing over 40,000 Canadian university members.

East of Montreal, discussion of racial discrimination or color prejudice is almost "taboo," and unlike our fellow collegians in the rest of Canada we are afraid to voice our sincere convictions.

Several of the fraternities and sororities which have local chapters have written into their constitutions clauses which permit them to justify any discriminatory tendencies by quoting the text of their constitutions. In this regard we should point out that by discrimination we don't mean exclusiveness or selectivity inasmuch as we feel that a group of persons with similar interests have every right to establish and maintain a society to foster their special mutual interests. From a financial aspect, while expensive, the local fraternities are certainly nowhere as open to criticism for financial exclusiveness as those of our Upper Canadian universities or many of those in the New England and Southern states.

On Page 43 of the Canadian University Press Conference report the editorial policy committee also noted, "Fraternities are frequently guilty of racial discrimination and such discrimination is often demanded by their own society constitutions."

A good deal of the attitude of the local fraternities has been excused on this ground. In comment it may be observed that if members of individual chapters were sufficiently anxious to open the doors of their fraternities to all, regardless of race or religion, (as most of them say they are) they would instruct their delegates to their national or international fraternity conferences to take a firm stand on this issue, and if the majority of an adequate number of fraternities really wanted to do something about it—that aim could be achieved almost immediately regardless of extra pressures exerted by chapters from certain territorial areas of the United States.

It may also be observed that even strong resistance from alumni members of fraternities to contemplated policy changes could be eliminated within a maximum of three decades with the rise of a new generation of modern-thinking youth.

To those local groups who proudly announce that their organizations have no clauses which may be interpreted in a manner which will excuse a discriminatory practice the question may be put, "Why is your fraternity or sorority void of members belonging to certain specific groups which represent a sufficient portion of the student body and as

Interior Work Soon To Begin New Library Wing

Workmen have built walls around walls at Dalhousie University, erecting a plywood shell around the new O. E. Smith Wing of the Macdonald Memorial Library in order that construction may continue uninterrupted throughout the winter. The stonework of the wing is nearly completed and work on the interior will continue within the shelter of the plywood.

Seven Storeys
The new wing will be a seven-storey addition. Five floors will be devoted to stack space and study units and the remaining space will house the Kipling Collection given to Dalhousie by the late J.McG. Stewart, Q.C.

The Macdonald Library, according to a campaign statement issued by the university, is the central unit of Dalhousie's library system and maintains departmental libraries in other buildings for Chemistry and Physics, Biology and Geology. Its holdings total about 100,000 volumes. The Law Library and Medical-Dental Library, which form part of the university's library system, have about 25,000 volumes each.

The Macdonald Library, which has an average daily attendance of about 250 people, offers general library service to students, faculty and alumni. The general public may consult books and other reference material within the library itself. The library also provides phone and serves outside areas through inter-library loans. Work-reference service by mail and tele-

ing with the Nova Scotia Provincial Library and the various regional libraries, Dalhousie, by means of these loans, plays a major role in supplying books to readers throughout Nova Scotia, the statement says. Microfilm copies of early Canadian manuscripts are sent out to scholars in North America and Europe.

Staff of Nine
At present the library is operated by a staff of nine, augmented from time to time, by student help. Funds are now sought, says the statement, to increase the number of experienced professional librarians.

The books in the library are on many subjects and in many languages. The library is rich in early printed books and manuscripts of Canadiana and is particularly strong in Classics, English, Philosophy, Economics and the Sciences. The operation of the library, in turn, requires various bibliographic reference works, the most notable of these being the Library of Congress Authors' Catalog, a set of 233 volumes listing more than ten million works.

Letters To The Editor

December 1, 1955

The Editor,
Dalhousie Gazette
Dear Sir:

We would like to take advantage of your invitation to discuss further the controversial subject of living in residence. As neither of us are Canadians, we strongly felt that living in residence at Dalhousie would offer all the customary advantages, in addition to familiarizing us with the Canadian way of life. This course of action has proved to be the best with regard to participation in college life.

Inasmuch as we grew up under the British and American school systems, we knew a Canadian university would be a change. The advantages and disadvantages of residential life at Dalhousie soon became apparent. The students who live at Shirreff Hall are extremely fortunate. In contrast to other residences with which we are familiar, the girls here are given at a reasonable rate an attractive and adequate diet, pleasant rooms, freedom from domestic cares, a well-furnished library, and infirmary privileges. Yet to us the most outstanding feature is the discipline; the girls live by the "honor system", following liberal and well-chosen rules, which down through the years have become a part of Hall life.

Contrary to most opinions, we noticed only ONE real disadvantage at Shirreff Hall. Both of us being out of our customary environments, we immediately felt the need for a communal gathering place — a COMMON ROOM!! Discussing the issue with those

around us, we found that we were not alone in our opinions. The Reception Room and alcoves are impressive with their well-chosen decorative plan. But formality dominates the atmosphere. At the present moment, the girls have no place in which to gather in a casual, relaxed manner, other than in individual bedrooms. This practice is often detrimental to study. The girls in residence have a problem when faced with entertaining, whether the visitor be an older person, another student not in residence, or a male friend. We feel that a common room is necessary for a two-fold purpose. First, a place should be provided where girls from ALL FLOORS may gather together to play cards, talk, listen to a radio or phonograph, play the piano, sing, and in general, find companionship without feeling that they are disturbing others. Secondly, there is a need for a room where guests may be entertained in the same companionable, relaxed atmosphere which they would have found in our own homes. Moreover, such a room would provide a common ground, stimulating an easier mingling between Hall friends and guests.

Dean Archibald, in his recent letter to the "Gazette", said, "When we finally build our new Men's Residence I would like to see in it various recreational facilities." We are not alone in feeling that Shirreff Hall sadly lacks any such facilities; the situation would be improved greatly by a common room.

Which is more necessary — a reception room which people are loath to enter, due to its formal-

ity, or a common room, inviting to all because of its companionable atmosphere? The opinions expressed herein are only those of Shirreff Hall residents. It would be interesting to hear the views of others acquainted with the Hall.

Thanking you for your courtesy in printing this letter and the space which you have devoted to it, we remain
Yours truly,
Libby Mayall
Anne Coburn
November 28, 1955

The Editor,
Dalhousie Gazette
Dear Sir,
At the November meeting of the Students' Council, an Awards Committee was set up. This committee was instructed to study the present awards system at Dal and to recommend any changes which it felt to be necessary and beneficial.

Many feel that the awards system is unfair to some, i.e. it awards too many points to some, while others are not recognized at all. Most organizations on the campus by this time have been contacted and asked to submit to the committee recommendations regarding the point system for their own organization. The committee would appreciate hearing from any individual or organization having a constructive suggestion concerning awards. Already some individuals have offered suggestions which will prove helpful. Suggestions now rather than your criticism when it reports to Council in the New Year.

The committee does not at present intend "to completely revise the present system of points" as was stated in the Gazette last

week. Members of the committee are Elise Lane, Joy Cunningham, Dave Fraser, Peter Jones, John Nichols and Murray Fraser.

Yours sincerely,
Murray Fraser,
Chairman, Awards Committee

NEWS OF THE U'S

by Garry K. C. Braund



Acadia (Athenaeum)

"Acadia Pays Tribute to Dr. Dewitt, college physician, at Banquet". Dr. Dewitt, holder of this position at Acadia for 36 years has retired and with his wife is on his way to the Southern States for some well-earned rest.

ED.—All who knew the Doctor extend their best wishes for a job well done. We hope the rumor is correct that he will return to Wolfville and continue a general practice.

Queen's (Journal)

"Twas nothing" said the champ as he fell to the floor." Varsity's Tony Bomben is the new intercollegiate beer drinking champ after taking over from Manitoba — (after 64 glasses of beer).

ED.—HIS MOUTH NO DOUBT TASTED LIKE THE BOTTOM OF A BIRD CAGE.

St. F.X. (Xaverian)

"Angus L's" daughter Oonagh Macdonald elected Liberal Vice-President.

ED.—A lovely tribute to her late father who left St. F.X. to lead a generation.

U. of Sask. (Sheaf)

"BEARD CROPS DIMINISHING. A beard growing competition has narrowed down. A former leader dropped from competition (no reason given).

ED.—Perhaps a brush fire from smoking in bed.

McGill (Daily)

"W.U.S. NEEDS HELP. BE GENEROUS". HELP INDONESIA. ED.—CHARITY SHOULD BEGIN LOCALLY. A DOLLAR FOR NOVA SCOTIA IS A DOLLAR FOR HUMANITY.

Ryerson (Ryersonian)

"Campus Nudist Club Rejected". To join or not to join that was the question. Would you or would you not join?

ED.—Not for me — feel so naked without my collar and tie.

A CHRISTMAS CAROLYN

'Twas the night before Christmas
And all through the Hall
Not an alcove was stirring
All home for a Ball.
The stockings were stacked
By the Bendix with care
In hopes that Gene Gibson would answer their prayer.
The Co-eds were tucked
All TIGHT in their beds
With visions of sugar-dads strong in their heads.
Miss "R" in her kerchief
And I in my cap
Had just settled down
(You fill in the gap)
In closing —
SHE SAID WITH CHAGRIN
AS SHE TOSSED DOWN A GIN
GIVE MY REGARDS TO CAROLYN.
FROM ME TO U'S MERRY CHRISTMAS.

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