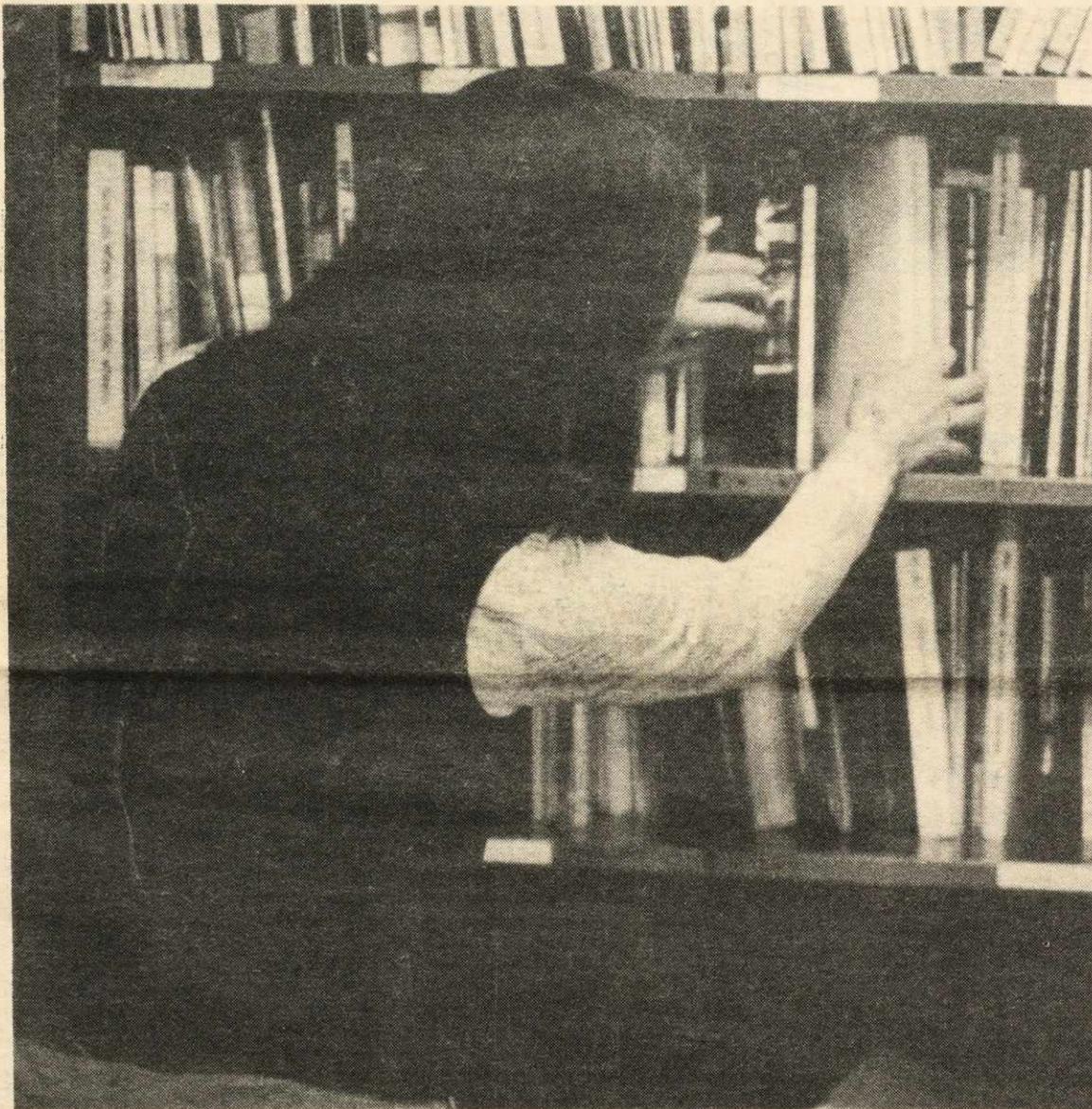


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Does Dalhousie need a book campaign?



Yet another student searches the stacks in vain for a needed book.

by Ralph English

Dalhousie's Library system is reeling from years of underfunding. The good news is, the situation can't get much worse.

Only 4.5 per cent of Dalhousie's 1981-82 budget was allocated to libraries. That's the lowest figure for any of the 26 institutions comprising the Canadian Association of Research Libraries.

The Senate Library Committee report for 1981-82 said the library's acquisition budget was in "crisis." This year's report says, "The acquisitions budget is still in a perilous condition which jeopardizes the health of our collections."

The acquisitions budget for the Kellogg Health Sciences Library increased only 1.7 per cent in 1982-83, and received no increase the year before. The inflation rate for books is estimated at 10-12 per cent and 14-15 per cent for journals.

Although 85 per cent of the Kellogg's acquisitions budget is spent on journals, 200 subscriptions were cancelled during the last two years.

Collections Librarian Dr. Gale Garlock says following three rounds of periodical cancellations in ten years, the libraries are in dire straits. "We are down to the bone in certain programs," says Garlock.

Current library policy does not allow for the acquisition of a new journal without the cancellation of another subscription.

The hardest hit areas are rapidly expanding departments such as computer science and business administration. Financial constraints do not allow the library to respond to the needs of these programs, said Garlock.

"Although our first priority is books and journals, one area the library has to move into is automation," said head librarian Dr. Birdsall. The present computer system is five years old and operating near capacity, he said.

Total library staff has been cut by 10 per cent over the last two years to help conserve the collections budget. Reductions were made in both library and support staff. Birdsall says staff has been cut "to the limit."

Despite these problems, Birdsall, Garlock and Health Sciences Librarian A.D. Manning express optimism for the upcoming year. Birdsall outlined his grounds for optimism in the following terms:

- Some faculties, notably Arts and Science, support the library's bid for a share of the proceeds from university fundraising activities.
- No further reduction in library staff is required.
- An electronic security system will be installed at the Killam library in December.
- A \$50,000 grant for collections has been received.
- A proposal for an integrated, automated library computer system will be presented this month to the presidents of the Halifax universities.

Robbie Shaw, Vice-President for Administration and Finance, admits the library is underfunded but the 1983-84 budget leaves library expenditures at the same percentage as in 1982-83.

SUNS challenged by two resignations at conference

by Rick Janson
Canadian University Press

Two resignations within the leadership of Nova Scotia's student organization has provided a challenge to the rank and file of the student movement here.

Atul Sharma and Peter Kavanagh, chair and executive officer of the Student Unions of Nova Scotia announced their resignations at the opening plenary of SUNS fall conference Oct. 14.

Sharma and Kavanagh—the "Batman and Robin" of Nova Scotia student politics—have been the driving force responsible for a string of recent SUNS victories.

While the national student

organization sent out press releases this summer claiming responsibility for lobbying the federal government into adding \$100,000 to their job creation programme, SUNS successfully lobbied the provincial government into creating an additional \$1.5 million worth of jobs for students here.

SUNS has represented student interests in regular meetings with the government and secured representation on party committees on post-secondary education. Within the short time they've been active, SUNS has been responsible for affecting changes in student aid and is currently pushing the government for more planning in education

under the auspices of the "plan it please" campaign.

To many, SUNS has been Sharma and Kavanagh. Now that they are leaving the leadership of the organization the handful of delegates to the weekend conference had to take an introspective look at an organization that 24 hours earlier was seen to have a vibrant life of its own.

During the final plenary, delegates constantly returned to the need for a broader base for the organization. A poster campaign will be launched this fall to increase student awareness of the organization. Dalhousie Student Union president Tim Hill said SUNS conferences and committees should involve more people

other than local student presidents.

Kavanagh sits in the TV room of the Dalhousie student union building after the conference. The light from the television illuminates a haggard face. Kavanagh is tired after 18 months as executive officer.

"I run into students all the time who are thankful of SUNS," he says. "There is a real appreciation for what we do—but everybody has other concerns when it comes to participating in the organization."

"It never occurred to us that two resignations would be news. We didn't realize it would coincide with a re-evaluation of the organization. If the consequence

is that they resolve to strengthen the participation on campus maybe we should have had resignations six months ago."

Sharma is a physical contradiction. He apologizes for being a "bit incoherent," yet he talks animatedly—fueled by a nervous energy. "The problems students face are horrendous and it's getting worse. It's a bad time for an organization to be finding itself—but I don't despair."

Sharma is excited by some of the "new blood" in the organization. "There are schools where SUNS hasn't had that much of a presence. St. F.X. is one. St. F.X. is making such a concerted effort that it makes me hopeful."