

the Dalhousie Gazette

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The **Dalhousie Gazette**, Canada's oldest college newspaper, is a weekly publication of the Dalhousie Student Union members and is a founding member of the 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 double-spaced. Advertising copy must be submitted by the Friday preceding publication.

Our office is located on the third floor of the Student Union Building. Our mailing address is the **Dalhousie Gazette**, Dalhousie University, Halifax, N.S., B3H 4J2, telephone (902) 424-2507.

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The Gazette's weekly staff meetings are now at 5:30 every Thursday.

Editorial

Cheer up, campers, one of the most bizarre events of this or any other life is coming soon to this humble campus. At a cost of around \$7000, the Dal Student Union is bringing the head gonzo himself to Dal - Hunter S. Thompson.

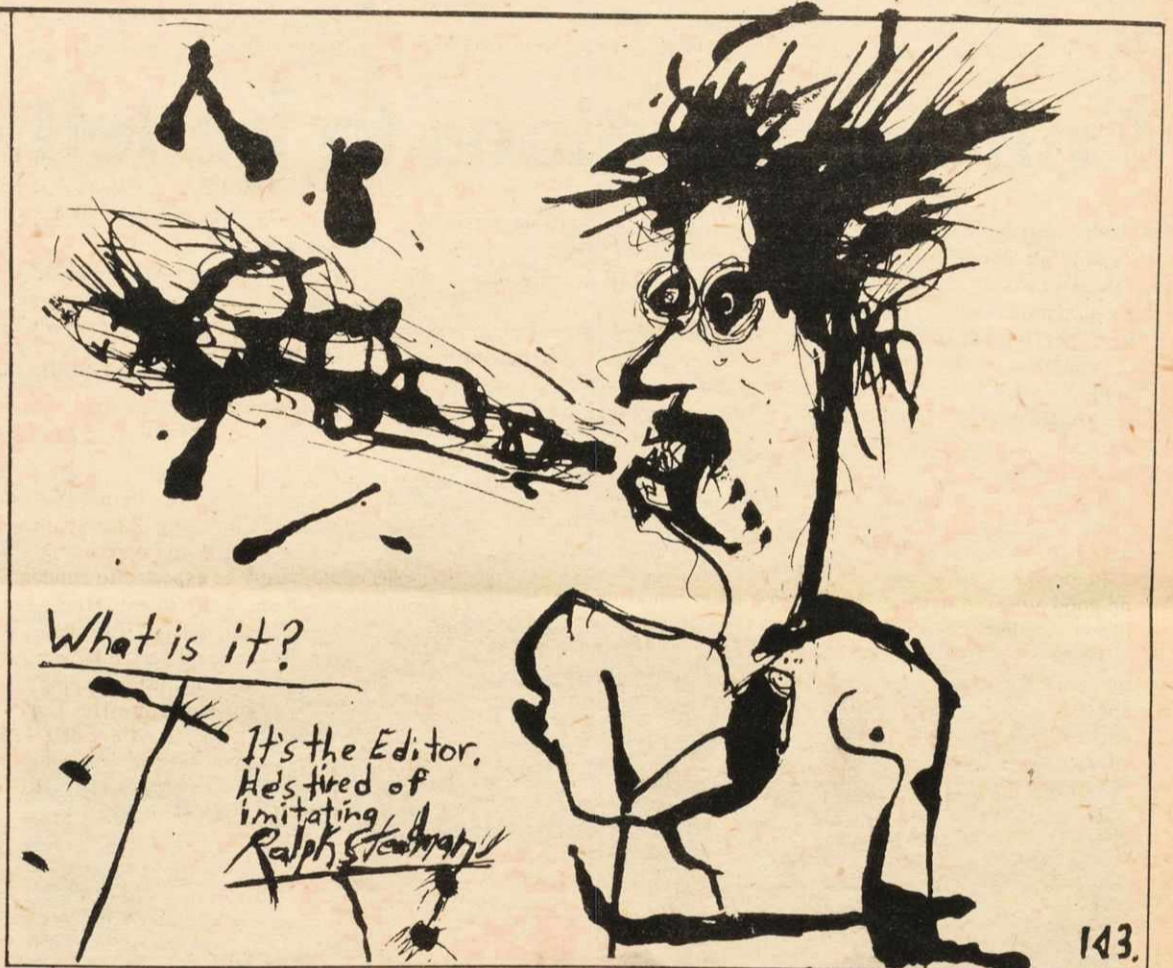
I think that's a well-spent seven thou, meself. Right now the Entertainment Committee is concocting strange and unusual plans for fundraising that Mr. Thompson would no doubt approve of - corporate sponsorships, a '60's Doonesbury party in the S.U.B., and selling buttons stating "Fear and Loathing at Dalhousie in '83 - Hunter S. Thompson."

For those uninitiated...Hunter S. Thompson is a sometimes brilliant writer, author of "Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail", "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas", and "The Great Shark Hunt". He has had one bad movie made about him - "Where the Buffalo Roam", starring Bill Murray. He is reportedly the model for the character of "Duke" in Doonesbury, and has provoked many, many bad imitations of his work in college newspapers by would-be gonzo jernalists.

Since Thompson turns down hundreds of offers and only gives ten speaking engagements every year, it seemed kinda funny he'd pick Dal, but when I asked one of the organisers of the thing, I found out why. When they called up his agents to suggest a trip to "Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia", the agent paused on the other end of the line and said, "You know, that's just crazy enough for him to go for it."

So, following his instructions for the engagement, Thompson will be spending a few days on campus before & after the "speech" or whatever it turns out to be to take in the sights. It's going to be interesting to see what happens, as he'll no doubt have an entourage of would-be radicals (meself included) to shake or tell to go to hell before he can do anything.

It'll be interesting to see if it's him under the looking-glass - or us.



Letters

An open letter to VP

An Open Letter to V.P. Robbie Shaw

I must admit to a certain amount of confusion and frustration at the report in the *Halifax-Herald*, November 18th, on Robbie Shaw's pronouncements at a public seminar on restraint in the fields of social services and post secondary education. As vice-president of this university anything that he says publicly will be scrutinized and considered as the opinion and evaluation of this university's administration. If Robbie Shaw was misquoted by the press then he has a responsibility to clear up the misunderstanding that may arise.

As it stands Mr. Shaw is reported to have made a series of unfortunate remarks that run counter to what I understood the administration believes; and these remarks may do serious damage to this university's attempt to achieve public support to stop this provincial government from making any further cutbacks to university funding.

The first thing Mr. Shaw is quoted as saying is that "the restraint measures to date have not had any negative impact on academic programs." Anyone in the computer science department at this university might be tempted to find this an amusing statement. This is also in direct contradiction to the statements of a brief submitted to the Board of Social Development, Government of Nova Scotia by the Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents in October 1982. This brief

includes the following statement:

"There is serious concern, however, that the point has now been reached at which quality is suffering, and this is not acceptable."

Later Mr. Shaw is quoted as saying Nova Scotia "clearly has too many" universities and "we are not as efficient as we should be". This too is contradicted in the aforementioned brief in such statements as:

"In actual fact, there is no real evidence which indicates that the overall university system in Nova Scotia is any less efficient than systems in other parts of the country." ... "However, the evidence does not suggest that per student costs would be significantly lower if Nova Scotia had, for instance, one or two larger institutions instead of its present number."

The second of these opinions expressed by the University Presidents does not even take into account the ill-feeling that might be generated from such a move, nor the religious, political and geographical realities that lie behind the creation of these separate institutions.

Finally, to be quoted as saying it would take "a gutsy government" to close any more institutions down, would seem to me to be a provocative remark to this provincial government. One would be tempted to say a red flag to an overfed blue bull.

This is written so that Robbie Shaw can be persuaded to clear up this program publicly so that there will be no public misunderstandings of what he did and did not say at the seminar. Surely when this university community is being

asked to engage in a process of financial restraint - in good faith and placing our trust in the administration's wisdom - we have some claim on establishing what our vice-president really believes. Robbie Shaw has shown himself to be a conscientious and a talented administrator in the short term he has been here, it is my hope that such reported statements do not signal a change of attitude or a cry of helpless anguish as regards the adequacy of university funding.

Peter Rans, President
 Dalhousie Student Union

Senate committee wants input

To the Editor:

In accordance with its role in encouraging and publicizing effective teaching/learning activities, the Senate Committee on Improving Teaching & Learning is planning a regular newsletter to facilitate the sharing of information across campus. In order to do this it needs first-hand information from faculty and students. So if you are engaged in - or are planning - an interesting teaching/learning programme, they would appreciate hearing from you.

Another role of the committee is to provide information on what teaching/learning services are available across the Dalhousie campus, as well as to identify those faculty members who have expertise in particular teaching methods, skills, or innovative approaches. As the committee is representative of