

# What are they hiding?

## Bookstore keeps finances secret

By PHIL GOLDBERG

Think twice before going to the Dalhousie bookstore if you're looking for anything but books; if you ARE looking for books, you may have to go elsewhere anyhow.

This sums up the two most common student complaints about the shop in the basement of the Chemistry extension building: prices are too high, and many assigned texts and other essential materials simply are not available.

"Convenience to the student and operation at a profit are the two main objectives of a University bookstore."

So said a local book dealer who gets a large part of his business from Dalhousie students. He was comparing his operations to those of a campus bookstore.

Dalhousie University bookstore manager J. C. Malone agreed that what he is operating is intended primarily to be a service and convenience for the students of Dalhousie, but denied that our Bookstore is trying to make a profit. "Our objective is to break even, as nearly as possible," he told the GAZETTE.

Most students who were asked during the past two weeks to comment on the bookstore had doubts about its "convenience" and will probably be surprised to learn that no one intends it to be profitable.

If these two main complaints are strictly true, the blame does not rest entirely with the management of the Bookstore; but at the same time, the gripes aren't all coming from a group of habitual grumblers. And the answers to many of the questions raised on the store are not available, because the University's records on this -- and practically all other financial matters -- have been closed to the student body.

Mr. Malone himself admitted that the store has problems which can irritate students but claimed that he doesn't receive complaints "too often". He added that although these complaints may be valid, "The majority are irking us just as much as they are the students."

He cited as the bookstore's biggest problem the distance between Halifax and virtually all publishing centres. All shipments are made f.o.b. the publisher, thus adding shipping charges to the store's expenses, but it is the time factor which causes most difficulties and inconveniences, he said.

The distance between Halifax and Toronto does not explain away all the complaints on the inconveniences of the bookstore. Text books are hard to find as they are spread all over the shelves with little regard for the course numbers marked beneath them; it may take ten or fifteen minutes for a history student, for example, to sort through the history sections and discover that one of his texts is out of stock.

There are other inconveniences: although the bookstore handles everything from beer mugs to the British North American Act, it is impossible to buy there a package of typing paper in bulk or an inexpensive clipboard such as many students use. Every student questioned by the GAZETTE had some such minor complaint.

These complaints in themselves are not surprising: no business succeeds in satisfying everyone and stocking every item which it might be expected to carry. The remarkable part of the operation of the bookstore is Mr. Malone's claim that the intention is to run the enterprise on a break-even basis.

The bookstore, as an official University project, is administered by the Business Office and its policies are set by that office. This means, among other things, that the exact (or even approximate) figures concerning the income and expenditure of the bookstore are NOT AVAILABLE for publication or examination by the GAZETTE.

A reliable spokesman for another Maritime university bookstore told the GAZETTE that the books which he handles are sold to the bookstore at a discount of from 10% to 25% or even higher. The books are then marked up from 8% to 10%.

"So the student usually gets a discount of from 5% to 10% below retail list price," he explained.

At Dalhousie, "We charge the regular Toronto list price. On American books, we charge 10% more than the American list price," said Malone.

A selection of Harper Torchbooks, an American paperback series in the Dalhousie bookstore, was checked by the GAZETTE. Most were marked up about 15%. One, apparently no different from the other, had been marked up 33% over the publisher's list price.

"We charge regular retail prices," said Malone, "and we are subject to being outpriced by anyone who gives discounts or uses devices such as loss leaders."

"Outpriced" is the right term. A slide rule selling for \$22.50 in the Dalhousie Bookstore sells for \$15.50 at another University bookstore in Nova Scotia. The Hughes Owens company gives 10% discounts on all its merchandise sold to students, and gives 20% discounts to students for slide rules and drawing sets. In fact, anything which can be bought at the Dalhousie bookstore can be bought -- if available --

cheaper anywhere that student discounts are offered (except perhaps certain text-books). For some items, prices elsewhere may be cheaper regardless of discounts.

In short, convenience has a high price tag. The question is "WHY?"

The University bookstore has one big advantage over regular commercial shops. It operates on property owned by Dalhousie and hence has no separate bills for electricity, water, heating, rent or taxes, and other services and charges which make up a large proportion of the overhead of most businesses.

Perhaps the bookstore does pay these expenses to the University. Perhaps also the Chemistry department has to rent its lab space from the business office; perhaps the library has to rent its office and book space.

This sounds ridiculous. It IS ridiculous. Why should any part of the University, provided as a service and a convenience to the students, be expected to pay for the space which it occupies by direct charge to the students? Should we expect coin-operated turnstiles at classroom doors, or pay toilets in the new SUB?

Malone claims that the bookstore is run on a "break-even" basis. He also admits that regular retail prices are charged on all merchandise. Are the policies under which he works making the operation of the bookstore extremely inefficient? Or is the bookstore contributing to the overall running expenses of the Chemistry Extension Building, and adding this figure to its other expenditures to justify the "break-even" claim?

Whatever is the case, the answer is locked up in the University's financial statement, presumably too weighty a matter to be seen by the students. Malone informed the GAZETTE that he did not feel it was his prerogative to supply such information. Another source stated that the University's financial statement could not be reprinted for public distribution.

The result is a dead end. How much can be said about the operation of the bookstore when the figures which explain that operation are in a closed file?

No criticism of the way the bookstore is run, or of the prices charged, can be complete without full knowledge of the relevant statistics. No effective defense of that operation is possible unless the University's Business Office is prepared to bring its facts and figures into the open and discuss them. This simply has not been done.

Meanwhile, Malone continues to operate on a "break-even basis" while charging "regular retail prices." There appears to be a dollar gap. If you're spending money in the Dalhousie University Bookstore, you're helping to fill that gap.

## ORGY-ASM IS HERE

By Nick Pittas

Have you felt the need to rape anyone lately? Did you contemplate committing suicide last night, when you closed your math text at 4 a.m.? Maybe not, but chances are you will contemplate all sorts of 'maniacal aberrations' before you leave this institution of learning.

Before you go running for spiritual guidance to the Chaplain, or seek the ultimate solution down by the North-West Arm, let me suggest an alternative solution (and it's not socialism). Brother, I have the answer to body odour, boring professors, and coy virgins - ORGASM OF THE MIND - or as Aristotle called it "mental masturbation."

Mental masturbation (M.M.) is universally accessible, except to members of the PUB (by order of editor Cameron), it is absolutely free monetary-wise, and what's more it's immune from any contagious diseases such as fascism, elitism and syphilis.

How then does one get M.M.? It's quite simple really; allow me to give you a step by step account of procedure.

- 1) Read the GAZETTE (stop vomiting)
- 2) Make your way out of the cess-pool, politely known as the canteen.
- 3) Come to the GAZETTE office, and knock softly on the door; if a Gillybird answers, make love to her on the spot, but nowhere else mind you; give the password "Little Red Riding Hood was a nymphomaniac," and scratch your leg (or something for the last time).
- 4) Enter the inter sanctum, and repeat 100 times: I would like to work for the GAZETTE. Having brainwashed yourself in this completely harmful way, you will be given your own VIVA CHE badge, and be requested to join the RANK and file. M.M. will then begin to grab you.

P.S. We need typists, reporters, lay-out people and reviewers. P.P.S. If you can't do any of these things, come anyway and have an ORGASM with K.C. and the Disciples.



## FREAK IN . . . .

Freking out has become socially acceptable. It is no longer the phenomenon described by Frank Zappa as being a collective manifestation of discontent with the Great Society. What was initially a form of creative carping at the status quo has become campy, cool, and a swinging happening, man! Delta Gamma's freakout in the A&A Building last Friday consisted of what is known normally as a light show, with a local band as an extra excitement to lure innocent undergrads into the wicked snares of drugs, debauchery, and sin. The light show itself was well done, mainly because it was run by experienced, competent people. Les Gallagher, who took over the Trip recently, and who has spent a good deal of time running light shows in Vancouver, was in charge.

The basic idea was to project abstract light and color patterns on the walls with motion picture and slide machines. To do this well the background must

be white and uncluttered. Room 21's dark green walls and curtains were less than ideal in this respect, and although the effect was not completely destroyed, the mind-groing impact possible in good conditions was lacking. The pulsating patterns interested and challenged the spectator, but at no time was he threatened with the total loss of ego structure given by a really good show.

An inept local band failed to provide the music. The Hustlers had the standard soul bag—James Brown, Wilson Pickett, The Temptations, and the like—but unfortunately little else can be said in their defence. They showed up ten minutes before the performance, with a set of tiny amplifiers, and launched their three hour fantasia. It was scarcely audible but this was just as well, for their playing left much to be desired.

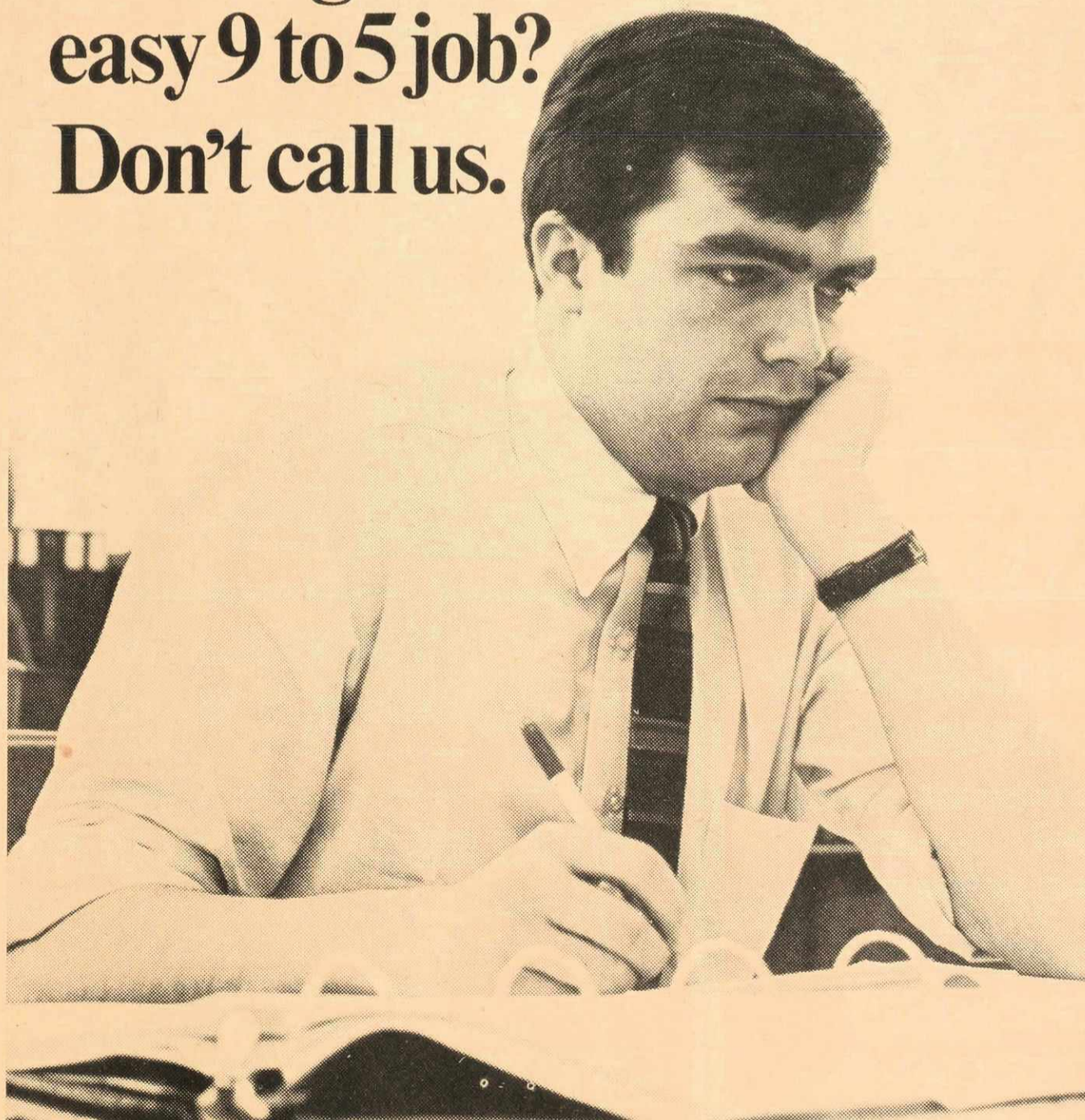
After the third rendition of "Mustang Sally" I left.

## . . . .sneak out

Delta Gamma's "Freakout" can serve as a metaphor for the manner in which straight society reacts to something it does not understand—alienation, caricaturization, and assimilation. The fact that 250 people had their prurient interests sufficiently aroused to amble over to the A&A building is significant. Many of those who came were attired in ceremonial garments that society would term "hippy"—jeans, flowers, beads, fatigue jackets,—and obviated their belief that "hippiness" is a matter of dress.

This lamentable but expected prostitution proclaims the death of flower power and the reign of the Teenybopper. Not really knowing much about hippies and drugs and freak-outs, these seekers are nevertheless eager to pay their dollar and help for a couple of hours in the warm company of their friends. And most of those who attended the D G event probably left in a pleased and happy state of mind.

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