

# INTERVIEW: David Attis Speaks About Drama At UNB

With the purpose of further acquainting the student body with the thoughts and ideas of its fellow students, the Brunswickan interviewed David Attis, a prominent member of the UNB Drama Society and the Company of Ten. Mr. Attis's knowledge of the theatre is quite extensive, and we felt his thoughts on drama and the Drama Society would be of interest to all.

**Brunswickan:** When did you first start acting?

**Mr. Attis:** The UNB presentation of *The Diary of Anne Frank* was the first time in my life that I was on the stage.

**Brunswickan:** Why did you find acting appealing?

**Attis:** I found that being on the stage is an experience that gives a tremendous feeling of self-satisfaction. It has been said that one is an actor because acting is a form of escapism from reality. I myself have yet to have this feeling of escape through acting. It is a different world, but my inner self has never escaped. There is no feeling in the world like being on stage and having enough self-confidence, knowing I can control the feelings of the audience. It gives me a tremendous feeling of power.

**Brunswickan:** Which play did you enjoy acting in the most?

**Attis:** I enjoyed *Inherit The Wind* best of all. In the last performances at the D.D.F. (Dominion Drama Festival) I was only beginning to grasp my character, and only then was I able to give the audience what it really wanted.



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**Brunswickan:** Did you enjoy your role in *Rashomon*?

**Attis:** In *Rashomon*, I finally discovered that I could act. I always had enough confidence to know that I could do whatever I wanted, but I finally felt that I had reached the point at which I knew what was wanted of me. I was able to give to the fullest extent. The role requires this attitude.

The idea of portraying four characterizations in one body is one that the amateur actor has difficulty in putting over.

**Brunswickan:** Are you conscious of yourself or of the au-

dience during a performance?

**Attis:** The only time that I have a feeling of accomplishment is when I have the audience in my hands. I play for my own satisfaction, but if I find that I'm not giving the audience what it wants, I in turn do my best to do so. For instance, in the last sword scene in *Rashomon*, I could see that the audience wanted to laugh at this point, and recognized this, I made up my mind to play the scene for all that it was worth, and the audience almost rolled in the aisles.



"... I won't be here forever!"

**Brunswickan:** Is there one part that you would like to play most of all?

**Attis:** I have been told that I'd make one HELLUVA Macbeth, but I don't think that I have had enough training or that I am capable enough yet to even attempt a Shakespearean role. I'd love to do it, but I don't feel that an amateur has any business in attempting a role of this calibre.

**Brunswickan:** Is Macbeth the role that you'd enjoy playing the most?

**Attis:** No, I'd love to do Othello. The role contains meat and character. Shakespeare gives his characters so much depth and realism. Actually I'd just like to do it, that's all. Perhaps it's the self-satisfaction of achieving the status of giving a performance of one of Shakespeare's renowned characters.

**Brunswickan:** What do you think the society's chances are in this year's Festival?

**Attis:** Being in the position I'm in, I hope we will win. We've beaten both the groups before, but both Bathurst and Edmundston are capable. Edmundston has had the help of the D.D.F. who sponsored their workshop. They are professional adults (doctors and lawyers, etc) who are interested in drama. I would very much like to see the society bring the same honors to UNB as they were able to last year. We have a pretty good shot at it, I think.

**Brunswickan:** Do you think that UNB has the right atmosphere for good drama?

**Attis:** The facilities and equipment are excellent. There is no other campus in the Maritimes that has the right to say they are more capable of producing good theatre. Our students

are very interested in dramatics as can be seen by the large turnout for *Rashomon*. I'd say that fifteen hundred out of the twenty-four hundred were UNB students.

**Brunswickan:** Are enough people contributing to the society?

**Attis:** There must be more talent contributing to the society? ent on campus, but I don't feel we should beg people to act or to help behind stage. If anyone has a keen enough interest, then he will turn out.

**Brunswickan:** Besides the regular Fall and Spring productions, does the drama society have any other plans?

**Attis:** We have considered an evening of one act plays. But because of a shortage of people in the society it is not possible at the present time.

**Brunswickan:** Do you plan to make acting your career?

**Attis:** I'd like to continue, but it not only requires work, but getting the breaks. In Canada, we are on the threshold of professional theatre. It is only through amateur theatre that the idea of professional theatre will be realized. If I'm fortunate enough to get the breaks, I would love to be in the professional field.

**Brunswickan:** What are your immediate plans for the future?

**Attis:** After my undergraduate years, I'd like to enter law school. It is always beneficial to have something to fall back on in the event of being a failure. A college education is compulsory.

**Brunswickan:** Is there anything that you feel that the campus should know about the drama society?

**Attis:** It is not a clique organization. It is open to all, and all students are automatically members. Anyone who wants to take an active part is more than welcome. We have emphasized this more than once.

**Brunswickan:** Are there really enough acting parts for all who might be interested?



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**Attis:** Definitely, I won't be here forever! Seriously, I believe that any person who turns out at a casting for a play has just as good a chance as a regular. Last year I would have very

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by  
Ed  
Ball

## FREE ASSOCIATION

One of the distinguishing features of university students is the fact that they are continually forming themselves into groups to do some zany thing which they would never dare to do as individuals. No sane person in the thirties would have sat by himself and devoured goldfish live from the fishbowl ... but they did it in groups. No sane student in the late fifties would have pushed a bed from one city to another ... but they did it in groups. And no sane student at present would sit for a week on top of a Maritime building ... but they did it in a group ... to Beatle music. The moral of the story is ... if students wish to do weird things, it's safer to do it in groups.

Mind you, the purpose of forming a group is not always for such eccentric objects as piling two dozen bodies into a telephone booth or taking a seven-day shower. At the University of Southern California recently, the students formed a civil rights group and went on strike ... they got themselves a new university president and several free concerts by Joan Baez.

At one point, during my younger days, I had the privilege of being a member of the Alexander Athletic Club on this campus. Its object was simple ... and it is still remembered, more or less fondly, by the faculty and the administration. And then there was the group known as Politicians Anonymous ... whenever in the dead of night you felt that old urge, you called PA and other members would bring cigars and a bottle to your hotel room and make speeches for you.

The latest noteworthy group on this campus is the A.R.G.J.W.M. ... the Association of the Restoration of the General James Wolfe Monument. Composed of both students and faculty members, the Association seeks to have the statue of General Wolfe re-erected ... the statue, in Quebec City, was torn down over a year ago by demonstrators and only the pedestal remains.

The members of the Association have entered into correspondence with the leaders of both the Quebec and federal governments ... as well as with the leaders of the other political parties. They are currently raising money to present to the National Historic Monuments Commission in Ottawa ... to pay for taking Wolfe out of storage and putting him back on his rightful pedestal.

A spokesman for the Association intimated to me in strictest confidence that those who think that the Association is of a farcial nature are in for a rude shock. If the members fail to achieve their object by their present exhortations and contributions, they plan to take retaliatory action by spiriting away another Quebec City statue which remains standing ... that of General Montcalm.

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