

the Dalhousie Gazette

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The Dalhousie Gazette is Canada's oldest college newspaper. Published weekly through the Dalhousie Student Union, which also comprises its membership, the Gazette has a circulation of 10,000.

As a founding member of Canadian University Press, the Gazette adheres to the CUP Statement of Principles and reserves the right to refuse any material submitted of a libelous, sexist or racist nature. Deadline for commentary, letters to the editor and announcements is noon on Monday. Submissions may be left at the SUB Enquiry Desk c/o Dal Gazette.

Commentary should not exceed 700 words, letters should not exceed 300 words. No unsigned material will be accepted, but anonymity may be granted on request.

Advertising copy deadline is noon Friday before publication. The Gazette offices are located on the 3rd Floor SUB. Come up and have a coffee and tell us what's going on.

The views expressed in the Gazette are not necessarily those of the Student Union, the editor or the collective staff.

Subscription rates are \$15 per year (25 issues) and our ISSN number is 0011-5816. The Gazette's mailing address is 6136 University Avenue, Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3H 4J2, telephone (902) 424-2507 or (902) 424-2055. The business office may be reached at (902) 424-6532.

Are you comfortable?

It's been a mystery to the DSU, academic planners, and the media at large as to why there's been no real fuss raised about accessibility to a post-secondary education.

The government doesn't take the matter seriously. And why should they? Only student unions and faculty associations have protested cuts in funding for post-secondary education and the resulting tuition hikes. The student voice has been conspicuous in its silence.

Perhaps the problem is communication. If students aren't upset about increases in tuition, we must have failed to communicate the issue to them.

But maybe not.

What if our image of the poor student isn't quite representative of the student of '84? Perhaps students aren't speaking up on the accessibility issue because it is not a concern of theirs. Perhaps they're comfortable. Perhaps they have no financial difficulties.

A 1982 survey (the most recent) found that 33 per cent of Atlantic families had an income of \$15,000 or less. Dalhousie drew only 13 per cent of its enrollment from these families. The \$15,000-\$30,000 income category encompassed 43 per cent of Atlantic families, and their children make up 39 per cent of Dal students. The over \$30,000 group make up 21 per cent of Atlantic families, and their children are **48 per cent of Dalhousie's enrollment.**

Just maybe, the wealth of your family determines whether or not we'll see you on campus. Could it have something to do with the fact that Dalhousie's tuition is among the most expensive in the country?

Where have all the poor students gone? Maybe the battle for accessibility is already over.

We wonder what kind of society the richer readers of the **Gazette** are bent on building.

And if they have a social conscience.

And if they have a voice.

A.D.W. & R.E.

On the changes in teaching in universities: corporate interest in the classroom

News Commentary

by A.D. Wright

The nature of teaching at Dalhousie is changing. Partly due to changing enrollment patterns, partly due to funding cutbacks, and partly due to corporate influence.

In a society where money is tight, and jobs are scarce, students are less likely to go into the humanities. Arts enrollment is down by 26 per cent; science by 15 per cent. Enrollment in business administration, however, is up by 72 per cent. Students see job training, as opposed to a general education, as more important.

Industry is thinking along the same lines. They see training for young people to fit into the cor-

porate mold as a priority. In this school year, two professorships have been set by industry to do this. Mobil Oil is giving \$140,000 to Dal to set up a chair in Marine Geology. The Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association, along with a number of other pharmacy-related organizations, is giving \$250,000 to Dal to establish a professorship in Pharmacy Administration.

Be it understood that there is nothing wrong with this *per se*. Industry has a role in higher education, and it would be a mistake to suggest otherwise. They can recognize future needs for individuals trained in select fields.

The problem is that no one is doing the same thing for the Arts

and Science faculty—the humanities. They depend on the portion of government funding allotted to them by the Dal Administration. Provincial funding to the university will likely increase by only 4-5 per cent. This is a rate of funding that is insufficient to maintain the present standard of education. The quality of teaching will deteriorate.

Given limited funds, the administration will cut what it sees as less important—and Arts and Science will not be a high priority. It is anticipated that, taking inflation into account, there will be an \$800,000 cut. The budget of the faculty is \$20 million.

Corporate funding of special interest subjects is a factor in administration decisions. What programs are they receiving support for? Can their graduates succeed in gaining employment? If so, there will be more people in that program, and the program will continue to expand. Ultimately, the program will produce more graduates than the job market can absorb. Business operates under the principle of expediency; they will pour money into something as long as they stand to gain from it.

This is supply and demand. Is it the best way to run a university? A center for higher learning must see farther than the here-and-now and while they may appear

to be corporately worthless, the humanities are one of the few fields of human endeavor that looks not only at tomorrow, but the day after tomorrow.

The point is that what will be needed in a complex and ever-changing society is all the insight that can come from the humanities. The foresight that the best-laid technical plans still can lack. The humanities are an easy cut: no one is screaming at the present time—the students aren't there, and the grassroots community support isn't there.

But it's a cut that will be eventually felt. The canary in the coal mine is too valuable an asset to cut for the money you'll save on birdseed.

