

Campus cyclists not catered to

By MARGO GEE

EACH SEPTEMBER, THE university community embraces its yearly rituals, signalling the return of masses to South End Halifax. There are enormous line-ups for everything from registration to cafeteria food. A multitude of frosh wander lost and forlorn. And, of course, the bookstore experiences record-level sales.

Those benefits of summer — quick service, functioning photocopiers, and every book I've ever desired to read available in the library — quickly fall by the wayside when faced with the demands of five times as many students.

I can accept these inconveniences. I will tolerate disruptions in routine after four relatively deserted months at Dal. There is, however, one thing that I cannot accept, and I know I speak for many (especially fellow grad stu-

dents stranded here over the summer).

That is, the lack of available parking.

Although this is a concern for all vehicles, whether of the two, three, or four-wheel variety, I am most indignant about the current lack of bicycle parking. No longer can I be assured of a convenient, safe, and sheltered spot for my favorite mode of transportation.

It seems that bicycles have become even more popular this year, if the number cluttered around any given building on a sunny day is an indication. While providing such benefits as exercise and cheap and pollution-free transportation for many, it only exacerbates the problem of too few, too rusty and too unsheltered bicycle racks on campus.

It seems administrators have been slow to recognize or deal with this problem. Perhaps they assume that a bike may be secured

to any unsuspecting tree or railing. This may be true for the minority who favour chain or wire locks. After having been subjected to no less than three bicycle thefts, I prefer to stick to the supposedly burglar-proof crytonite model. Its nine-inch U-shape frame limits parking possibilities considerably.

In addition, for any of us who ride mountain bikes or like to dismantle their racer before locking, nothing less than a skinny metal pole will do. Physical plant take note!

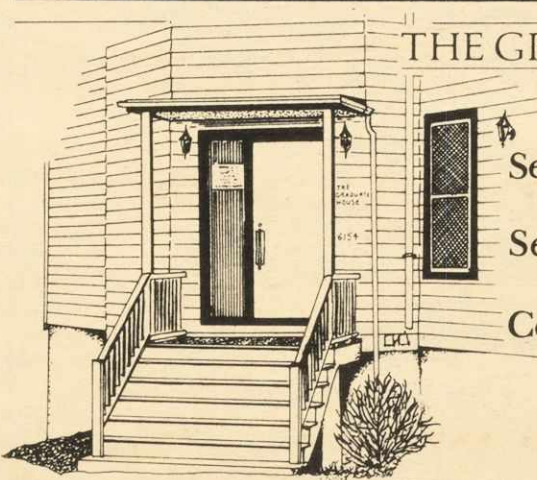
This lack of parking leads to problems for both bicycle and rider alike. How can one expect to be on time for anything when you

have to juggle your bike in a sea of handlebars, crossbars, and derailleurs to find a suitable position — only to find yourself performing acrobatics to secure it with that trusty, inflexible, 9" lock. Upon your return, you consider yourself lucky if someone else's pedals haven't been wedged in your spokes — permanently.

It would be unfair if the small steps taken over the years to improve this parking situation were not recognized. First, a thank you to the Killam Library for moving their racks to a more sheltered position. Now, if they could just replace that decrepit wooden thing with a safer metal model. Also, the parking metres

in the lot across from the SUB are a welcome addition for cyclists, if not motorists.

Among campus buildings, the Tupper Medical School receives full marks for its sheltered, convenient and reasonably adequate bicycle racks. Worst parking award is extended to the Stairs House, housing most of the faculty and administration for the Physical Education and Recreation divisions. There is one measly pole in the front yard. Tsk, tsk. For a School that encourages physical activity and fitness, a better performance is expected. Let's hope for some campus-wide improvement in the near future.



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