

Frosh week humiliating

The first week of a new student at Dal can often be very tough. Many students are away from home for the first time, without the support of their family and friends, and can experience loneliness and confusion (it sounds corny, but unfortunately it's true). To these people, frosh week provides a vital opportunity to settle quickly into the university environment, make contacts, and feel accepted. Why, then, is Frosh Week often ridiculed or simply disliked by new students?

The activities of frosh week 1988, although possibly calmer than those of past years, largely consisted of attempts to publicly humiliate "the frosh". Examples of this include the painting of frosh, knee bending and yelling,

duck-walking downtown, etc. A large emphasis was also placed on drinking. Many of us like to have a drink once in a while, even get trashed, but students will discover this on their own; they don't need encouragement from frosh leaders in this field. Get-togethers to meet people often consisted of answering the questions, "Where are you from?", "What do you study?", and "What's your favourite drink?" This is fine for those who drink, but what about those who don't? Students feel a lot of peer pressure to answer the last question "correctly". Often, people answered, "I drink everything." I wonder if that includes cattle urine?

Frosh week is an important opportunity to meet people and

to get to know the campus, but activities don't have to be based on group embarrassment and alcohol intake. Next year's frosh week should include more positive "group building" activities. These activities should encourage group interdependence rather than obedience to "older" students. They should bring people together in a casual environment where they can talk and mingle freely. Activities such as barbecues, evening cafes and friendly sports competitions allow for interaction without forcing the students to behave like five-year-olds.

Frosh Week is useful when conducted properly. Let's hope next year it's worthwhile as well.

Alex Burton



LETTERS

Charmed by Gazette

To the editors:

Charmed, I was, the open the Gazette and discover that I shouldn't "... stay on the wrong side of the firing lines. Assert your views in your newspaper. The Gazette."

I was disappointed to not discover a letter I submitted for publication last week. What gives? Who is controlling the press over there? Was the half page devoted to "the freedom of the press" an academic exercise or could you fit my huffing and puffing in there. I would appreciate your views on this.

And now, the letter

Charmed, I was, sitting in the MacDonald Science Library,

when the hollowed halls were rocked with Marine-like bellowing. Not the gentle, enigmatic clicks of dolphins and whales but the US Marine-like tradition of hollering, (by bottlenecks and blubberheads), at Frosh. Perhaps this spectacle was inspired by Spike Lee's latest film, School Daze, in which the ignoble tradition of fraternal degradation, among other pathetic prejudices is satirized. Lee's point was, give it up. Times have changed.

We have a society that can respond in a creative and gentle way to the world. It is necessary to

reflect on some traditions and consider their worth in the hopeful academic milieu we are privileged to wade in.

A hearty welcome to all new and returning students. Be sure to edit your personal experience for dignity and your personal

dreams.

Brian Hill

Our apologies to Brian Hill. We neglected to have his letter typeset last week. We're charmed to correct our omission this week.

- the editors

Flawed

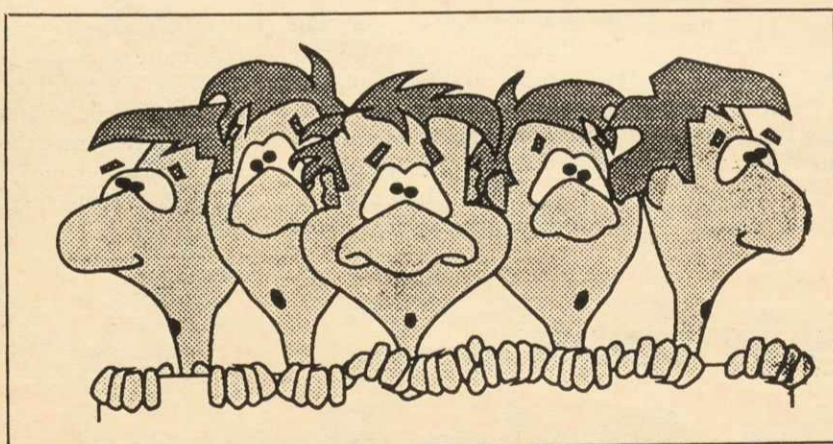
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the same class as an elective. In a university that is already critically short on class space, it's inconceivable that some sort of class priority has not already been incorporated into its registration system. And when a student finds out weeks later, by mail, that they did not get a required course, their attempts to re-register in another course are once more bogged down in the notoriously slow mail system. Clearly the new registration system is inadequate.

For an answer to this problem one might look to how other Canadian universities have dealt with this problem. For example, Carleton University in Ottawa has just implemented a new phone registration system. The completely automated system

allows students to register by touch-tone phone. This system can give up-to-the-minute information on class availability, process up to twelve registrations at a time, and best of all, a student can register from anywhere in the world simply by picking up the phone. To prevent the system from being swamped by phone calls, different departments are authorized to begin registration at different times. This system seems to have solved all the problems of registration in the past.

Dalhousie's new registration system causes more problems than it solves. Perhaps it's time we made a serious evaluation of our registration process and took corrective measures. Automation may be too expensive a solution for Dalhousie's tight budget, but in any case, a fair and efficient registration system is overdue at Dalhousie.



Registration Horror Stories

Send us your best or worst experiences this year

The Gazette will print excerpts of these in future issues.

The Gazette presents:
Newswriting Workshop
 by
Lois Corbett

- Thursday, Sept. 29 at 4 p.m. Room 302
- Show up or die a painful death