

Comment

# Strippers by any other name

by Glenn Walton

The appearance this week on campus, at an entertainment sponsored by the Dalhousie Engineers, of an 'exotic dancer' (otherwise known as a 'stripper') raised some important questions at a Student Council meeting on Tuesday. A petition signed by over 200 persons was presented, protesting what the concerned students considered the sexist nature of the show in the McGinnis Room. The resulting debate and ultimate recalcitrance of the council even to censure the event irked many who thought positive action was needed; others argued that it is not Council's function

to act as moral arbiter of the student body.

Sexism denotes exploitation of a person solely for those characteristics peculiar to their gender in such a way as to be degrading. Stripping fits this description; the argument that it is an art form is debatable at best; at worst it lends a bogus respectability to the practice. The term 'exotic dancer' euphemistically avoids its own basic point, which is that the dancer ultimately removes all or most of his/her clothes by the end of the dance.

Those who feel that stripping is sexist, question the appropriateness of it going on in, of all places, a university.



Students are here to be educated, as well as entertained, and part of any education is certainly learning respect for other's human worth. This intangible but real task is not aided by making an object of a body in a public

show and having masses of people drooling over it. The feeling of uneasiness the thought causes has nothing to do with a new puritanism. Rather, making an object of another person violates the basic purpose of an educational institution, which should be, if anything, a civilizing force in society. The reduction of sex, a private matter, to a show designed merely to excite its audience, is ignominious and unpleasant in any context. That it should happen at a university is incongruous in the extreme, and can only discredit the public's estimation of that institution's worth. A government being asked, for example, to increase its subsidies to students is going to ask itself whether the money is being well-invested. The spectacle of seedy stag bashes going on at the SUB will hardly help students' petitions.

Ultimately, apart from questions of taste and priority, there is the issue of permitting or not permitting such events in the students' building. It is conceivable that a majority of students disagree with them, but that in itself is not sufficient grounds for a ban. Majority rule does not preclude minority rights. History is full of examples of the misuse of the 'public will'. If the legality of an event cannot be contested, then, in this writer's opinion it shouldn't be forbidden, no matter how distasteful one finds it.

Speaking out on such issues, however, is another matter, and I believe Student Council should have officially censured the event, while allowing it to go on. One cannot legislate morals, but one can hope that people will listen to well-founded objections, and reason will prevail. After all, what are we here for?

## Council Cuts

Beginning in 1980-1981, Dalhousie student council will have eight fewer members, council decided Sunday night.

Constitution committee member Keith Evans told the Gazette that having only 21 council members would streamline council's operation and encourage individual councillors to be more active.

The present council structure is "too large to be efficient," Evans said.

The faculties or groups that councillors will represent under the new system are Arts (2 people), Commerce (1), Education (1), Health Professions (Dentistry, Dental Hygiene, Medicine, Nursing Science, Pharmacy, Physiotherapy) (2), Engineering (1), Graduate Studies (2), Law (1), Science (3), Health Education and Physical Education (1), Transition Year Program (1), Howe Hall (1), and Ardmore and Shireff Halls (1).

The student representatives on the university's Senate and Board of Governors are also expected to attend council meetings.

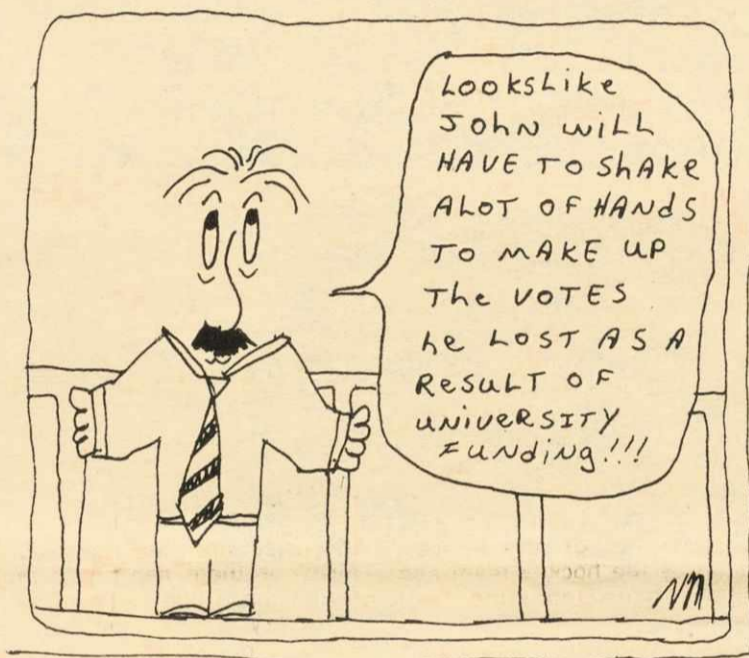
## Honoraria to increase

The president, vice-president and treasurer of the Dalhousie Student Union will each get a total of \$4775 next year, council decided Sunday.

Gary MacGillivray, a member of the council honoraria committee, said that the decision to raise honoraria came because the council officers' work kept them from taking more than three courses, so that the council officers couldn't get student aid.

"You'd never get anyone to do the job for less," he said.

The council officers will receive \$150 a week for 17½ weeks this summer and \$265 per month for the eight months of the academic year.



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## Student Union General Meeting to approve Constitution by-law changes

11:30 a.m., Thurs., March 29, Student Council Chambers

### We goofed

The telephone number in the ombudsman ad last week should have been 424-6583.



CANADIAN CROSSROADS INTERNATIONAL Benefit Dance

Featuring:

## SUN MACHINE

Saturday, March 31, 1979, 9p.m. to 1a.m. SMU Multi-purpose Room, Loyola Bldg.

Admission: \$2.50

Tickets available at RED HERRING BOOKS, OXFAM, the Dal Gazette and at the door

## THREE DAYS FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

March 21, 22, 23, 1979

•March 21, 22, 23; 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.; Green Room, SUB, Dalhousie University.

Displays by eleven volunteer organizations\* working in the field of International Development within the Halifax/Dartmouth community.

•March 21, 22, 23; 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.; Main Lobby, SUB, Dalhousie University.

A continuous showing of films and slide/tape shows dealing with a variety of developmental issues and volunteer organizations.

•March 21; 2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.; Room 410/412, SUB, Dalhousie University.

**Technical Workshop I: Handling Audio-Visual Equipment**

*N.B. Workshops are open to all volunteer organizations working in the field of international development.*

•March 21; 8:00 p.m.; McInnis Room, SUB, Dalhousie University.

**Rich Man, Poor Man—A Public Lecture**; Speaker: Mr. Murray Thomson, President of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation and Education Coordinator for Project Ploughshares.

•March 22; 2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.; Room 316, SUB, Dalhousie University.

**Technical Workshop II: Poster Design & Visual Communications.**

•March 22; 8:00 p.m.; McInnis Room, SUB, Dalhousie University.

**Two Films on Development.** Five Minutes to Midnight & Controlling Interest.

•March 23; 2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.; Room 410/412, SUB, Dalhousie University.

**Technical Workshop III: Dealing with the News Media.**

•March 23; 8:00 p.m.; McInnis Room, SUB, Dalhousie University.

**The International Night.** Exotic Food, International Disco; Proceeds to go to UNICEF & OXFAM; Admission \$5.00. Organized by the International Students Association.

\*The following volunteer organizations are participating in "Three Days for International Development": The Bottle Babies Group—Canada World Youth—Canada-Palestine Association—Crossroads International—CUSO—Development and Peace—Oxfam—Devric—Southern Africa Information Group—UNICEF—United Nations Association—Ten Days for World Development.