

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

The Party's Over

This year has been like many others in recent Dalhousie history. It has seen six months pass, while 2000 students attended classes and did little else to contribute towards the other things which go to make up a university education.

It has seen the sports scene degenerate to new depths. Our football team lost all its games, a fact which led many people to think that we should get out of varsity football rather than recount, which seems to be the only other alternative. Our hockey team dropped out of the intercollegiate league but gave us plenty to cheer about as they won the championship of the Atlantic Hockey Conference in the league's first season of the Atlantic Hockey Conference in the league's first season winning, while our basketball team failed miserably.

On other fronts we fared much better. Our debaters placed second in the Maritimes and did very well in the international tourney at McGill. The musical was a success both artistically and financially as crowds turned out in record numbers to witness the first amateur production of "Bye Bye Birdie."

The student's council did an average job. They did accomplish one noteworthy thing in that the student fees will be raised next year in return for which all Dalhousie activities will be free to Dal students. But it should be pointed out that the idea and much of the work for this idea came from sources outside the council.

We had as usual our supply of organizations such as WUSC, NFCUS, ISA, which remained merely names to most of the student body. Their work was done by a few community-minded students but passed unnoticed by a majority of students.

The Gazette was controversial, sensational, and in some opinions down right bad. We stuck our necks out and people continually tried to chop them off. Politics and fraternities were the main bone of contention, with the prime arguments being whether we should comment on the "sacred cows" of race, religion, and politics. We defended our right to do so and went right on doing it.

People had fun individually but there was still a noticeable lack of spirit. The Engineers did their best on several occasions but still could not arouse any solid demonstration of Dalhousie spirit. Apathy continued to reign.

Students talked more, worried more, studied more, but did no better in their exams. The questions of nuclear arms, birth control, the mission, and Diefenbaker were discussed among other things. But no burning issue appeared to unite us into one solid feeling. Indeed as we said earlier, this year has been like many in recent Dalhousie history.

With this issue the Gazette ends another year of publication. Her editors wish to thank all those who contributed to this year's edition. Despite the criticism, and the turmoil we had fun, and we thank you all for reading the Gazette.

And may we remind our critics that the world, and Diefenbaker (unfortunately) will still survive, despite student journalism.

LETTERS

Sir: While it is perhaps in error to take any editorial in the Gazette seriously, the rationale behind examinations in universities seems to me sufficiently important to warrant other than flip and cynical treatment. Despite your remarks (March 7), examinations, like prisons, do serve purposes. Indeed, they serve the same two purposes as prisons: to punish and to reform.

Students, I think, are mainly aware of the punishment (and reward) aspect of testing. Good grades help bring monetary fellowships, acceptances by graduate schools, better jobs; poor grades have the opposite effect. The pseudo-mathematics of percentile grading at Dalhousie unfortunately emphasizes the punitive element in examinations, by allowing what seems a very precise scaling of students' performances. It would certainly be preferable to have only a three or four grade system (e.g., high pass, pass, fail) than to indulge in numerology that has neither reliability nor validity. But

Education at Dalhousie

- a contributed comment

L.H. Neatby, professor of classics at Acadia University, in commenting on the "droll outcome" of education week, wrote recently in the Halifax Chronicle-Herald:

"... What good the teacher training schools does to its students this writer (though himself duly certificated by two such institutions) is quite unable to declare, but it certainly does not offset the evil of excluding from the profession good university graduates who have a vocation for teaching, but will not submit themselves to a term of indoctrination in what rightly or wrongly, they regard as trivial, obvious, or irrelevant to the point of quackery."

Bearing in mind that these are strong words for an academic, the Gazette recently undertook a rather cursory investigation into the Dalhousie faculty of education. These are its findings:

The education faculty — along with pharmacy — is located in a remote corner of the campus in a "temporary" wooden structure built hurriedly during World War II.

Death of goldfish has been attributed to dust taken into the building from the muddy yard.

Besides the rearing of goldfish, students carry out other projects such as post card collecting and map drawing. Considerable part of the building is devoted to scis-

sors and paste work. Art or physical education is compulsory. Wire, soap and clay sculpture, and linoleum etching are taught in Art.

Some aspiring high school teachers are assigned to practice teach in grades 6, 7 and 8. ("It's part of the ordeal if we want to get a B. Ed. and a decent salary.")

Lectures in principles of education have included: the public nurse and schools; alcohol and schools, teaching machines, architecture of schools and juvenile delinquency. The text book, "Prologue to Teaching," is what academic professors on campus describe as the "American reader type." It contains more than 175 basic reading covering the gamut of pedagogues from Plato to David Riesman (The Lonely Crowd). Students are required to compile an annotated bibliography of 10 pedagogical books. One by John Dewey is compulsory.

Curiously, two hours per week are devoted to methods of teaching science, but students spend three hours learning "scientific testing of intelligence" and guidance. Current class project-soliciting universities throughout the United States for information on guidance courses. On basis of our interviews, all students are determined not to pursue guidance studies.

Students with widely divergent scholastic backgrounds attend lect-

ures in theory and history of education. This results in a diluted course ("Gosh! We covered Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding in five minutes.") Teachers cannot probe too deeply into theory as it becomes unintelligible to those with little training in philosophy. Others become bored.

Academic professors on campus remain completely aloof as far as teacher training is concerned. None are invited to speak to prospective teachers on their techniques learned in many years of university teaching.

A record number of students — about 80 — are enrolled in teacher training at Dalhousie. One student is working towards his Masters degree in education.

Said one irate student, "All I want to do is teach. Gold fish, soap sculpture, guidance and the activity curriculum bore me. The whole damn course is exasperating. It's like punching wool: no challenge at all — unless it's to your patience. The course is fragmentary and devoid of any intellectual content. Perhaps the Reader's Digest editors compiled it. Imagine coming from Kant and Shakespeare to this junk. How much longer is this university going to insult our intelligence? You know, we were taught how to form letters in art class last month."

The Acadia professor may have a point.

in any case, so long as the feeling remains that rewards ought to be to some extent consonant with performance, examinations will continue to have a punishment component.

Reform—learning, if you wish—is the other possible end of testing. In my opinion it is the more important of the two functions. An examination should be part of the learning process. It should require a student to draw together material that has been presented separately ("compare and contrast") or to apply what he has read and heard to new bodies of data. In addition, so far as I am concerned, the most useful results of examinations accrue when you discuss the questions and answers during several class periods after the testing.

Christmas examinations (which you oppose) can fulfill a learning purpose because there is time to discuss them in January. Final exams do not suit this purpose because once they have been taken everyone goes home; and yet you seem to prefer final to Christmas examinations. In the "ideal college" of my imagination, there would be no final examinations. But there would be examinations several times during the year, including one toward the end of the term, though with time left for discussing it and for learning from it.

Final exams induce the feeling in students that courses have beginnings and ends, whereas all they have are cut-off points. If examinations were simply exercises in regurgitation, as your editorial states, then they would all be worthless for learning; but you are wrong on your characterization. If you think universities should be places of learning and teaching primarily, and not of reward and punishment, then I can see your opposing final exams. But the Christmas exams ought to remain. Even teachers learn from them.

Sincerely,
Morris Davis

Sir: In reply to the letter about "dummy" candidate in the Student Council elections recently held, I am afraid that the composer, who apparently didn't want to suffer the disgrace of signing his name to such a piece of unfounded trash, labours under a misconception. It saddens me to realize that there are people who think like this, who will go so far as to try and spread their mis-

A SPORTS EDITORIAL

Why not give sport's Scholarships?

In the past few years it appears that the administrations of some of the Maritime universities have altered their views on athletics. The men in charge of these institutions have realized the enormous amount of free publicity that can be derived from producing first class sports teams, and have set about to use this media as a means of increasing aid.

As examples of this change we only have to view the sudden increase in the number of Americans enrolling and playing football or basketball at Acadia, St. Mary's and St. F.X. This transition immediately brought on cries of sports scholarships and under-

guided thoughts among the student body of this University.

The truth of the matter was that the election campaign was originally delayed for a short time because both Mr. Cappell and myself both had difficulty in finding suitable running mates. It was then further delayed in order not to jeopardize the SHARE campaign.

At the Student Council meeting where the nominations for the positions were presented, I was assured in no uncertain terms by one of the teams against which Mr. Sommerville and I ran, that the campaign would be a hard-fought one, and that both Mr. Cappell and Mr. Brown were very serious about the affair.

I assure you that a great deal of work was done during the campaign, particularly by six people, and by numerous other people who gave their help in many ways — making posters, arranging appointments, and trying to make the students aware that an election was coming up, and that it was their duty to come out and vote. I was disappointed in the percentage of voters, but I know that we all did our part in trying to make a group of disinterested people perform their duty.

One need only ask Mr. Cappell or Mr. Brown about "dummy" candidates for a straight-forward answer in the negative; and I'm sure they both feel as strongly as I do about a student disgracing himself, his own publication, and his University by making public such utterly false statements as was done in the March 7th, issue of the Gazette.

Sincerely,
Al Robertson

table payments from those universities who did not adopt this new programme. It is not our task to decide whether these universities are guilty as accused, but we would like to suggest that sports scholarships are indeed a good idea.

After all the greatest problem facing any university, and particularly Maritime universities, is a financial one. We get less money from the federal government because we have too many students in relation to our provincial population and at the same time less alumni support per capita than such places as McGill and U.B.C.

What then is a better way to increase alumni donations than by having the name of the university concerned appear on sports pages across the country. If, for example, St. F.X. should beat McGill in a football game and a few days later a Montreal alumnus of should get a letter asking for money, the chance of a donation being forthcoming is greatly increased. For only a few days earlier the alumnus will have said to himself, "They sure are doing a good job back there in Antigonish. Imagine that my old school beat big McGill."

This seems to be the view held by many university administrations, a view which is indeed very practical and very well justified.

If then this approach is practical why not be quite open about it and offer sports scholarships to outstanding athletes provided that they can meet the academic requirements of the institution involved. During their stay at the university these men will do more towards spreading the name of their college than will even the brightest of students. Surely then such men are entitled to the same monetary return as would be given a first-class honors student.

Also it can well be argued that if we give scholarships for good brains, and good piano-playing ability, why not give them for good football-passing ability as well? There is certainly an equal amount of skill involved in being an All-American Quarterback as there is in getting an 80 per cent average.

We can only feel that the time has come in our growth when Dalhousie and all other Maritime universities should adopt a programme of sports scholarships. Provided that there is no lowering of the academic standard, (as there has been in similar situations in the U.S.) we can see nothing wrong with such a policy.

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