

First King's Debate

by Michael Greenfield

On Wednesday the 20th of November at 8 pm, the Haliburton room at King's College became the forum for the first in the series of King's Debates. The question being examined was, what is the proper business of philosophy today, - the room overflowed with people some anticipating a battle royal some not knowing what to expect. But after almost three hours of debating most agreed that it was well worth while.

Speaking for the Classic's Department were Professors James Doull and Wayne Hankey. Professors Robert Martin and David Braybrooke represented the Philosophy Department. Each gave a short speech, after which comments from the floor were entertained, and finally the professors were given a chance for a short rebuttal.

Professor Doull was the first to speak. He talked about the youth of today becoming disillusioned with what he termed "A technical utilitarian" society. He felt that by looking back Philosophy can restore to young people their traditions. Philosophy Dr. Doull stated "liberates people from their habitual certainties", and he stressed that Canadians must develop their own philosophical potential. He seemed to imply the philosophy was not keeping up with present day conditions. Professor Hankey reinforced Professor Doull's viewpoint and also pointed out that we must join ourselves to the classical tradition. He further emphasized that we must strive to know the good Socrates sought to know.

However, the Philosophy professors presented a different viewpoint. Professor Martin started off by stating that too much thought was geared towards what philosophy should do. He strictly defined the business of Philosophy as "conceptual analysis", which is a very scientific and rigorous analysis of ideas and concepts, such as morality. Professor Braybrooke, the last speaker, supported Professor Martin with examples. He read one such "conceptual analysis" by Plato from the *Meno*. He even handed out a sheet containing examples of the sorts of problems philosophy should attempt to deal with.

All four presentations were stimulating and extremely well presented. Their was never a dull moment, the crowd made the appropriate snickers, OOHs and AAHs, laughs and outbursts of applause.

After the first round of speeches, comments from the floor were entertained. A high intellectual keenness was displayed by all the comments. Some people put forth questions which they thought had not been adequately dealt with by one or all of the speakers. The audience was obviously deeply concerned with the topic and each comment contributed significantly to the debate.

Each one of the four professors then gave a short rebuttal. In the rebuttals the essential difference of the

two positions came across very strongly. Both Classicist's felt that Philosophy as presented by Braybrooke and Martin was too narrow. It did not deal enough with classical philosophic history and ignored many of the German and Existential philosophers. The Philosophy professors, however, did not seem to think much of some German philosophy or Existentialism, and believe that they perhaps deviate from the true business of Philosophy, that of analyzing conceptions.

This rift gave rise to comments from the audience on the ignorance of both views presented. And a sense of deep conflict was apparent throughout the debate. Due to the extremely high level on which the debate was conducted, the

whole evening came off as a huge success. The people seemed almost unanimously impressed. There was no attempt made to indicate either a winner or a loser. A choice would have been excessively difficult to make owing to the excellent presentations given by everyone involved.

Much appreciation must go to the Quintillion Society for arranging The King's Debates. It is an excellent opportunity for an informative as well as entertaining evening. The moderator John Godfrey must also be congratulated for doing a fine job, his wit certainly added to the debate.

I urge everyone to try to attend the next debate, concerned with the question - Can Halifax become the Toronto of the East?

Arts Society ?

by Bruce Russell

Take cheer, all ye advocates of political freedom, religious tolerance and a revived Arts Society here at Dal; we are trying one last time to find you. Right now the Society exists in name only although a revised constitution for it is being studied by the Union's Constitution Committee and approximately \$2,000. is collecting dust in its bank account. As you are probably aware through the Gazette and posters throughout the campus, in October there was a week or so previous to the referendum vote when nominations were open for President and Vice-President of an Arts Society for this year. No nominations were forthcoming.

That pretty much is the current situation of the nebulous Arts Society. What I want to know is, are we, the Arts reps, beating a dead horse by continuing to push this Society when to date, there seems to be little enthusiasm among Arts students, for it. While the Commerce and Engineering Societies with their balls, bashes and houses etc., provide good examples of potential benefits of a Society, these can only be head if there is a fairly broad base of active support within the membership of such a Society.

Over the past couple of

years, the "Arts Society," for reasons which are fascinating to debate, seems to have degenerated to an unglorified Grants Committee, administered by the Arts reps and representatives from special interest Arts groups on campus. The Arts reps this year do not want to continue this practise as generally we feel Council members should not be so directly involved and also, all Arts students should benefit from this money rather than just specific groups.

So what to do? What role, if any, should an Arts Society here at Dal play? You tell us. We have had almost no indication that people even want an Arts Society but for any Arts students who do, please sign your names, plus any comments, to a list posted on the bulletin board just inside room 222 of the S.U.B., the Student Union Office. This list will be up until the last day of classes and if it indicates a significant response, a meeting to form an Arts Society will be called. Otherwise, due to lack of positive support, there will be no further attempts this year to form an Arts Society. If anybody would like to talk about this right away, the three Arts reps, Tom Clahane, Peter Costwell or myself can be reached through the Student Union Office, second floor of

Cannabis Penalties softened

OTTAWA (CUP) -- The federal government is expected to unveil its long awaited legislation to soften criminal penalties relating to marijuana and hashish in the near future.

The new law is expected to reduce the penalties for possession of marijuana and hashish by prescribing only a fine for most offences.

It is expected that the new legislation will allow the level of fines to be raised if the offense is repeated and jail will be ordered for offenders only if they cannot or will not pay the fine.

The new legislation will

place marijuana and hashish in the "soft drugs" category under the Food and Drug Act. The cannabis drugs are now under the Narcotics Control Act, which lumps them in with hard drugs like heroin.

The new law also distinguishes between importing and trafficking in cannabis for personal use by allowing prosecutors to proceed in court by indictment or summary conviction.

The unveiling of the new law follows four years of hesitation by the government

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