

Trouble in the Sociology Department Again . . .

(And again, and again, and again . . .)

"Professor Clark condemned voting as doing more harm than good... Clark wanted to avoid all such nasty confrontations. Voting procedures produce unnecessary confrontations as he sees it."

— from an interview with S. D. Clark in *Anomie* (U. of T. student newspaper), January, 1969

The troubled history of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Dalhousie has entered a new crisis. During the past two years Chairman, Don Clairmont, and his regime have survived two major ordeals: one, a faculty motion of censure against Clairmont for his unilateral action in allegedly working out "secret deals" with the University Administration in hiring new faculty; the other in a year-long struggle during 1971-1972 which succeeded in re-defining student representatives out of their effective participation in Departmental committees and meetings.

Each of these thrusts was turned back in faculty through Chairman Don's talents as an alliance-builder. When properly motivated by inducements and persuasions, the majority of faculty in the Department have been persuaded to support Clairmont and oust student representatives. (See *Gazette* coverage of the student efforts to present grievances against Nick Poushinsky for alleged unprofessional conduct and negligence in his courses in the Department last year.)

Through skillful maneuvering, Clairmont has thus been able to avoid serious costs during his first two years here. In 1972-1973 more threatening

developments have forced him to resort to the "outside solution" to problems of "law and order" which now confronts us. During summer and fall, 1972, pressure has converged upon him from two sources: faculty and students. Criticisms have been made by both faculty opposed to the erosion of the "rule of discussion before decision" and by graduate students highly displeased over the imposition of a new set of course requirements enacted by the Executive Committee of the Department after students had accepted admission to the Department.

Pressed from all sides by discontent, Clairmont's response has been to seek outside help — in the person of a new Chairman. In his search Clairmont has had the support of the University Administration. After two years of trouble in the Department, the Dean and his associated appear anxious to install a leader in Sociology who will calm the situation and restore good order and peace. ENTER, SAMUEL DELBERT CLARK!!!

Professor Clark, a distinguished Canadian sociologist, former Chairman of the Department of Sociology at the University of Toronto, and presently McCulloch Visiting Professor of

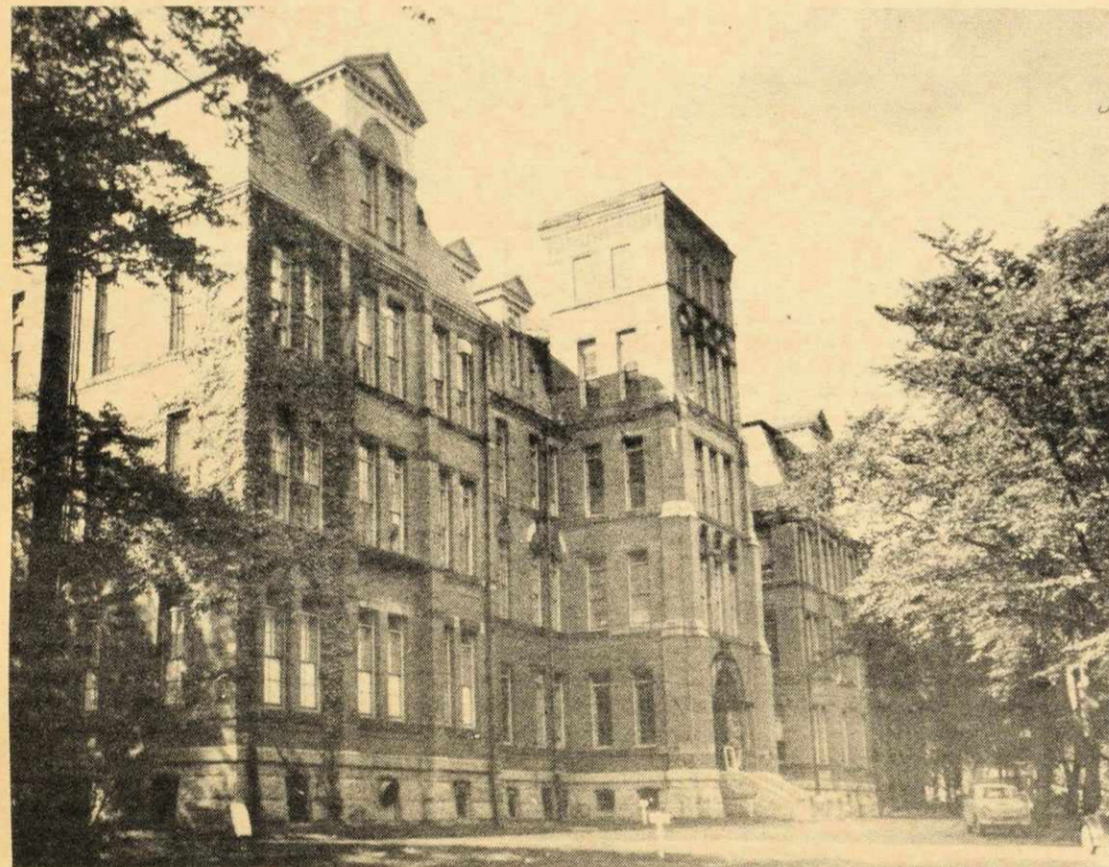
Sociology at Dalhousie, came to Dalhousie on a two-year appointment in July of 1972. His presence on campus provided Clairmont with a strong, experienced presence in the troubled waters of Dalhousie Sociology. When the question of a successor to Clairmont arose, Clark was quickly defined as the answer.

Our survey of the situation in Sociology suggests that Clairmont's answer is relevant to the broader range of issues in the University. We also feel that a review of Professor Clark's background may provide some answers as to the likely future of peace-keeping operations in Dalhousie's Sociology Department. In seeking background information, we have thought it important to look to Professor Clark's tenure as Chairman of the Sociology Department at the University of Toronto. We have been able to do this through the pages of *Varsity* and *Anomie* as well as through recollections of students and faculty at the University of Toronto who have worked under Professor Clark. What follows is drawn from the historical record. We leave it to our readers to predict from this record the future prospects of peace and tranquility in our Department.

"Resolved, that the Department of Sociology recognizes that the right to vote is inherent in every organized group, and that its will to express its views in accordance with parliamentary procedure by a democratic vote cannot be abridged, curtailed, or abrogated; that such a right to vote is inherent in all the meetings of the Department, its committees and sub-committees, both regular and advisory, and whether composed of faculty exclusively, or both faculty and students;

that all formal votes shall possess such bearing as is consistent with and does not contravene the constitution and governing rules of the University.

— Lewis S. Feuer (senior full professor of Sociology at U. of T., January 13, 1969).



The Sociology/ Anthropology Department is located in the Forrest building.

Fever battles Clark

— from *ANOMIE*, Jan. 14, 1969, U of T Soc student paper

by Francis Reiss

The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee exploded last Wednesday in a cross-fire of words between Professor Feuer and Chairman Clark.

Feuer accused Clark of trying to pull a "fait accompli" with curriculum changes. He demanded that professors be consulted when their courses are under revision and shouted angrily "You're out of order in trying to rush these changes through." He maintained that in not circulating the document of course changes before the meeting, adequate notice was not given to concerned parties and they were effectively hampered from preparing a defense. In a hail of words, Feuer then called the whole proceedings undemocratic, and begged the committee to support him in these allegations.

Feuer then moved to take the Sociological Theory course (now 323), which was the focus for the whole battle, out of its proposed second-year slot, asserting that the second year students could take the third year course upon request from Feuer himself.

At this point Professor Clark simply ruled Feuer out of order, but Feuer refused to acknowledge the Chair's authority and again called for a vote. Clark took the charges rather personally, and admitted later to "blowing his cool". He told the committee that they would receive his resignation Monday (ed. we think he meant only to the committee) and started to walk out. He was persuaded to stay on.

Meanwhile, the student members rallied behind Prof. Feuer in demanding the right to vote and calling for rules of parliamentary procedure to be adopted. They passed for minutes to be taken and votes to replace the present system of indecisive consensus opinion.

Clark was rather taken aback, but when Feuer reminded him that a vote should be taken, whether or not the chairman agreed, whether or not the chairman was present, Clark relented and, in a seven to one vote, the committee favoured deleting the theory course from second year.

Sociology Head Clark may resign

— The *Varsity*, U of T
January 17, 1969

by Paul MacRae

Prof. S. D. Clark may resign as chairman of the sociology department following bitter disagreements within the department.

Several sociology professors say Clark made the announcement at a closed faculty meeting Wednesday. Clark refused to confirm or deny the report, labelling it "rumour". He added that he would not be leaving the university in any case.

A. D. Allen, dean of Arts and Science, said Prof. Clark told him that he was thinking of resigning. The dean said he had "not yet made up his mind" what he would recommend to university President Claude Bissell.

According to reports from the Wednesday meeting, Clark said his resignation would be effective June 30. He has been chairman of the department since it was separated from the political science department five years ago.

The disagreements arose out of what one observer called the "Tammany Hall" atmosphere in the department, an atmosphere which he said had

already caused one professor to resign and might lead to the resignation of others.

This dissension broke into the open at a January 8 meeting of the Undergraduate Curriculum committee, made up of students and faculty. Clark almost walked out of the meeting when Prof. Lewis Feuer proposed a motion demanding vote counts of committee decisions.

Feuer's motion said in part that "the right to vote is inherent in every organized group", provided the voting is consistent with university rules.

A graduate student in the department said Dr. Clark had sometimes used his no-vote policy to make decisions without discussion, over the wishes of faculty and students.

At a meeting with graduate and undergraduate students yesterday, Clark said that he had no "strong objections" to voting, but preferred trying to work out situations without voting.

"The final responsibility (for decisions) is the chairman's," he added. "I hoped to avoid the issue

of voting because it can lead to irresponsible actions like we saw last Wednesday (Jan. 8)."

Following the Jan. 8 meeting Clark prepared a series of recommendations for restructuring the department to be presented to Wednesday's staff meeting. He proposed a system of four committees. Only the two student committees would have had formal voting procedures.

At Wednesday's meeting according to reports, Clark announced his intention to resign and these recommendations never came up. Instead a resolution prepared by three professors was passed 25 to 1.

This resolution called for a 12-man committee made up of six faculty and six students to recommend structural changes which would democratize the department. The committee is to report before March 1.

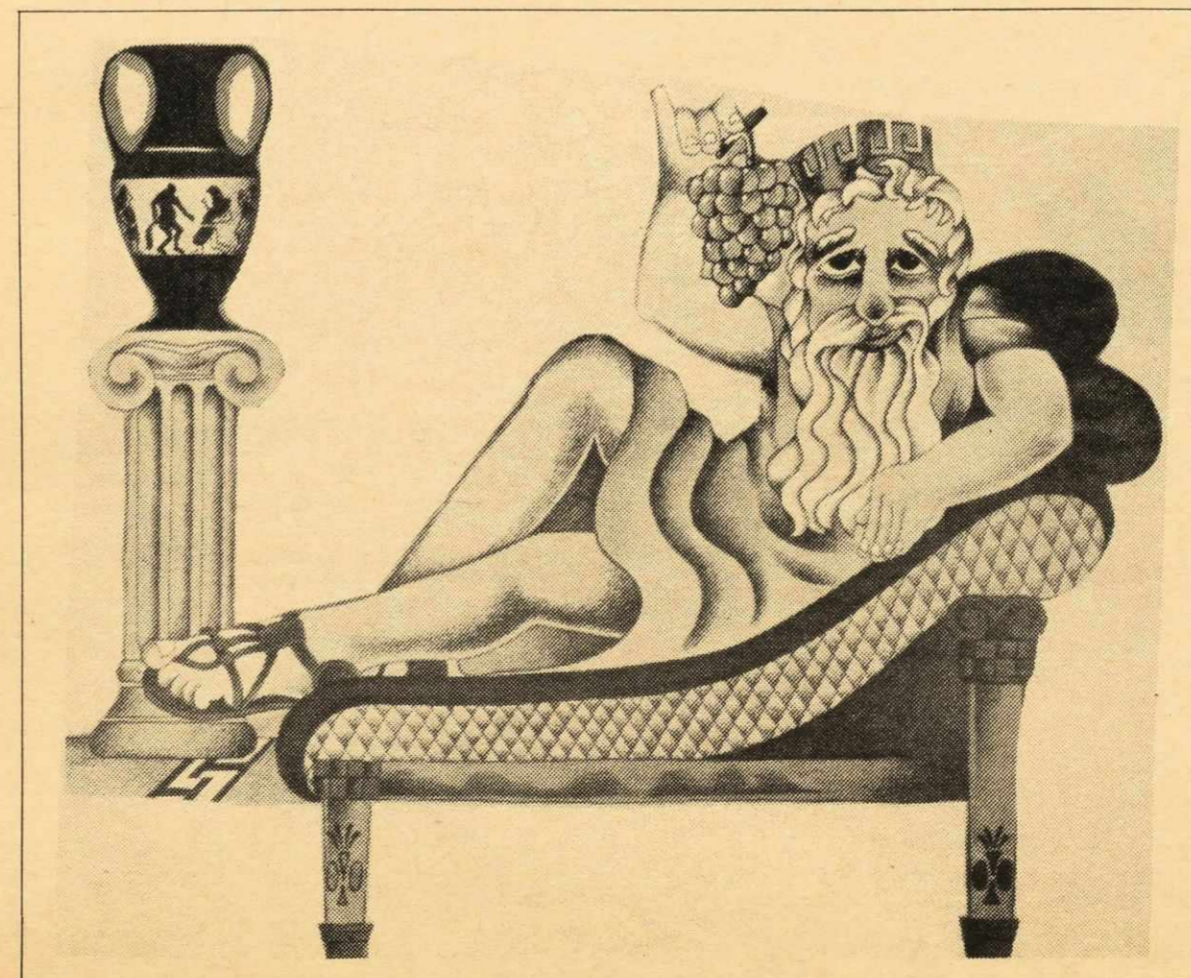
The proposal was accepted almost unanimously by the graduate-undergraduate meeting. The students will meet at 1 p.m. today to discuss mechanisms for electing their six members.

"S. D. Clark was a 'faculty club chairman', a benevolent paternalist, a man with no compatibility for the new structures of self-government in our Universities."

— Graduate Student at U. of T. (name withheld)

"There can be no doubt that Clark is an autocrat: I took one Ph.D. seminar from him and the only talent he exhibited was the ability to employ repressive tolerance."

— Gary Teeple (Graduate Student at U. of T. during Clark's last year there as Chairman).



"decisions and recommendations, and departmental responsibility for them must rest with an identifiable authority one that can be found — namely the chairman."

— from "The Role of Students and Faculty in Academic Staffing Procedures at the University of Toronto"; memo signed by S. D. Clark, April, 1969.