

No animals

by Randal Smathers

The U of A fraternities seem to be having an identity crisis this year. The problem revealed itself early in conversations with fraternity executives. "We are trying to overcome the 'Animal House' stigma," said Rush vice-president Sean Brett, the person in charge of recruiting for the Inter-Fraternities Council (IFC) this year. "Are you gonna be nice to us?" asked an anonymous frat member on learning I was doing this story. Even the official U of A fraternities pamphlet is headed "Fraternities — Not Exactly Animal House."

The fraternities are trying to project a serious image. D'Arcy Ross, president of IFC, stressed benefits like gaining post-graduate business contacts, philanthropic works, and belonging to a tightly knit community. Brett mentioned good cheap housing and being part of an ongoing tradition.

Greek Week, the fraternities' showcase that passed last week, was relatively quiet. The beer gardens did a good business, but many of the planned activities were rained out at week's end. Brett said that recruitment was going well, with approximately 500 students in 13 houses.

The number of people involved in fraternities is proportionately much lower in Canada than in the U.S. Rick Toogood, a member of last year's fraternity executive, said that frats have more history and prestige in the States. He also said that universities provide less housing in the States, so students are more likely to join a house for the accommodation.

What kind of image do fraternities have on campus? An informal poll revealed most people thought that frat members were capable of, if not outright fond of, some serious partying. Of course, a lot of students are judging from Bear Country on Saturday.

The fraternities deliberately try not to emphasize the party aspect. Toogood said, "The feeling among the IFC executive is that the public has a distorted view so perhaps we go too far to emphasize the other (academic) side." He also said the activities participated in varied "from individual to individual." Brett agreed, saying that, although he wouldn't deny fraternities throw good parties, this aspect of fraternity life is over-emphasized.

This year's recruitment theme is "Give fraternities a try, you'll like it."



Gumby's in town! Here he is relaxing at the Fiji house on Friday afternoon, but he had a busy week beforehand. Gumby visited Quad, Pi Beta Phi, Rutherford Library, and the International Student Centre, while promoting Phi Gamma Delta's sixth annual Terry Fox Run for Cancer. photo Rob Schmidt.

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Students escape book tariff

HALIFAX (CUP) — Although it isn't much of one, students will get at least one break this fall — they will escape the newly imposed 10 per cent tariff on books printed in the U.S. if they are books designated as required reading by a professor.

Finance Minister Michael Wilson

imposed the new tax on American books, periodicals, computer components, and other items in retaliation to the 35 per cent U.S. duty on Canadian shakes and shingles.

The new tax is expected to raise millions of dollars for the federal government from the \$360 million

worth of American books that Canadians buy each year.

Most university bookstores order about 50 per cent of their books from the U.S., and most of these are not available in Canada.

Dalhousie University bookstore director Robert Baggs said the new tax is "a dumb move."

"It's not going to affect the American book publishing industry at all. And more importantly, we can't afford to produce the books they send here, so we would buy them anyway," he said.

The new tariff is going to cost the university some money, however. Revenue Canada is demanding the signature of each and every professor approving each and every book ordered from the U.S.

The additional paperwork will mean higher administrative costs.

"It's more work for the professor, and it's more work for us. Someone is going to be picking up the tab," said Don Mosher, bookstore manager at Acadia University Wolfville.

The tax does not apply to books for educational institutions or libraries, and religious books will continue to be duty-free.

The ten per cent tax will be applied to dictionaries published in the U.S., but not to other reference books.

Many bookstores are participating in the mail campaign coordinated by the Canadian Booksellers Association. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney has already received more than 120,000 postcards asking him to drop the tax.

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