

The idea of a university.

by Glenn Walton

Welcome to Dal. At last: university. Before you a sprawling apparatus whose functionings it will take years to master. In fact, you will never run out of things to learn, facilities to use, and people to meet. E.M. Forster's comment about America, "you can find anything you look for in it", can be applied to university. It really is what you make of it. So what are you looking for?

Obviously there are career considerations. With varying ambition, students choose a degree programme. Competition can be fierce, or not. Law and medicine students have already fought an important battle in gaining admittance to their respective faculties. They are in effect joining clubs with their own look and outlook. The M.B.A.'s (that's Masters of Business Administration - you might as well get used to academic shorthand as soon as possible) can look forward to highly valued degrees, and if you are an Engineer or the right kind of Science major you can smile, too. Others are not as favoured: some actually insist on studying philosophy or sociology, despite their small market value, and musicians will be musicians, no matter how many people who play their instrument will later apply for that coveted job. Teachers continue to roll off the academic assembly line onto a market long since glutted with their numbers. "Ora et labora": Dalhousie's motto - "pray and work".

But career is of course not all, and university must be enjoyed and recognised for the opportunity it presents to newcomers to play at serious 'adult' games in a tentative way. You can join student governments, student newspapers and radio stations, act in student plays, or booze it up at student pubs, all without the pressure of the 'real world'. You can experiment, shop around, drop this, take up that. Along the way university can provide you a pretty good idea of

what you are and where you're headed. But it should provide you with something more essential than a vocation and a good time.

To the modern mind, the idea of a professional student runs contrary to the business ethic and the pressures to get out into the real, i.e. the earning world. It would surprise some to realise that in the middle ages, when what were to become the first universities were forming around great teachers in towns such as Bologna and Paris, the vocation of student was a life-long one. One never stopped studying and learning, even when one had begun to teach or act as a scribe. Students travelled from learning center to learning centre to sit at the foot of teachers, before moving on to some other destination, arguing and debating with other students all the way. There was a quest for truth that could last decades. The students gathered in Auerbach's Keller in Goethe's *Urfaust* were no spring chickens, and it is that watering hole rather than bank boardrooms that is the true spiritual home of the student.

It is a place where the student is confronted with **ideas**. This is the single most important thing an education can provide a person; it is what distinguishes her or him from an animal. In these days of growing economic pressure and an apparent apathy on the part of too many students to issues beyond their utilitarian needs, it is essential that we not lose sight of why we are here.

We at the **Dal Gazette** will make a no doubt flawed and often unpopular attempt to define and promote those issues we feel are important to students. But we, like everyone else at Dal, are still "playing at 'adult' games in a tentative way". The **Gazette** is a student paper, run on democratic principles. Why not drop up (Room 312 in the SUB)— and be a part of it?

Dalhousie graduate killed in Guatemala raid

by Cathy McDonald

The Canadian government has yet to respond to the violent death in Guatemala of a lay missionary and graduate of the Dalhousie School of Social Work. Raoul Leger was shot by government troops for "guerrilla activities" last July.

At a press conference held at the Maritime School of Social Work, friends and colleagues called on the Canadian government to investigate the reasons behind Leger's death in a country known for its brutal oppression of basic human rights.

Professor Reg Craig remembered his former student, Leger, as a gentle, sincere person and a devout Catholic. Friend Claudette Legault said Leger's

concern for humankind meant he would naturally sympathise with the impoverished in Guatemala.

Leger's family in Buctouche, New Brunswick, has learned from a CBC journalist that the body will be exhumed on September 14. Leger had returned to his home last December after a priest's life had been threatened with whom he was working. He then returned to Guatemala.

The church is involved in community work in Guatemala. The government's security forces eliminate all people who oppose it or who appear to have leadership roles in the community, according to Mark Alain of the Latin American Information Group in Halifax.

Leger was accused by the Guatemalan government as being a guerrilla leader. Based on his personality, these accusations are "outrageous", Alain said. The situation in Guatemala is close to civil war and will soon assimilate the situation in El Salvador, he said.

In a Globe and Mail article of August 21, it was reported that the "Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Foreign Mission Society of Quebec and the Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America have asked the Department of External Affairs for a thorough investigation of the affair."

The article notes that whereas the American government's reaction to the murder of three

American nuns and a lay missionary last December in El Salvador was a swift withdrawal of military aid, pending an investigation, the Canadian government has made no formal protest with respect to Leger. The government's relationship with Guatemala is a friendly one. Days before Leger's death, the

Canadian Export Development Corporation signed a \$7.5 million loan to the Guatemalan railway.

Editor's note: Information for this article came from the August 27 Chronicle Herald and the August 21 Globe and Mail.

Provincial government is to blame

There would have been a freeze on tuition this year if the provincial government had financed its share of post-secondary education, according to Student Union of Nova Scotia spokesperson, Sandy Spencer. SUNS is calling for accountability in provincial financing.

Spencer said the Buchanan government diverts monies from the federal transfer funds away from post secondary education to such things as highways. As a result there is no increase in

grants to universities.

It may not be news to Dalhousie students, but tuition is a more painful experience this year than last. Increases range from \$110 for Arts and Science students to \$215 for medicine and dentistry, plus an \$8 across the board increase in student union dues and larger student fees in particular faculties.

"Tuition is the last flexible revenue item after universities consider cutbacks in other areas," Spencer said.

"They have to raise tuition if they want to maintain a reasonable standard (of service)" she said.

Tuition represents 10% of Dalhousie's \$83 million operating budget.

Mount Saint Vincent University's fees topped the \$1000 mark for the first time this year. Dalhousie's increases were the highest in the Maritimes, a region that leads the country in tuition levels.

Due to lack of staff interested in sports there was no sports coverage in the Gazette this week. How about you? Join our staff or cover events yourself and send your reports in.



Pictured above are John and Jim Logan, this year's president and vice-president respectively. The Logans swept through last year's student council elections on a platform that esoused anarchy and an unbridled disregard for the recognised conventions of student politics. What has the self-styled joke team done to date? Well, they've renovated the Grawood, procured the Gazette typesetting equipment, promised to improve on-campus communications and hired Marie Gilkinson as activities director. All very well and good, but where are our mounds?