

Traditionally, a space is reserved for staff members of *The Gazette* to express their opinions in Editorial Forum. The 'editorial', which normally precedes the letters' column, has not been included in this week's *The Gazette*.

Though the issue received much debate amongst the editors and collective staff of *The Gazette*, it was democratically decided that we break from our policy of not responding to letters as we received a letter which questioned this policy. We decided that it required a clarifying response.

This accounts for the lack of editorial space.

Blatant Sophistry?

To the Editors,

This letter is in response to the disgraceful "Victims of Society" drivel that appeared in this section on Thursday, November 24. What can I possibly say about such blatant sophistry? Mr. Francis complains to the world about how his friend and he, both "bright and capable students" with 60% averages (!), were "robbed" of their places in university by others with higher marks. Well, really, what does he expect? As he himself points out, students spend 12-13 years of their life in junior and high school; if this doesn't allow ample opportunity for the brightest and most capable ones to prove themselves, what will?

Mr. Francis attempts to support his ridiculous position with the statement "no matter how you twist this, you have to agree". What a classic example of the *petitio principii*. I need not even dignify it with an answer.

Mr. Francis then goes on to develop his theme with the following: "The performance (sic) to acquire a higher educational status is demanding and pressuring. This performance is even more frictionated (sic) by the university's method of selection". Frankly, if Mr. Francis found the process of obtaining his 60% average to be demanding, he should seriously consider whether he is ready for university, which even he must surely realize is rather more challenging than any high school.

In conclusion, if Mr. Francis has his way, the meritocracy we presently enjoy must be replaced by mediocrity. This idea is repugnant and insulting to all of us who earned our places here by hard work. I am somewhat surprised that the *Gazette* would seemingly condone this by publishing Mr. Francis' letter without at least an appropriate editorial response. Permit me to rectify this deplorable situation, and print my letter in its entirety.

Sincerely,
Robert Harke, B.Sc. '83
3rd Year Ph.D.

P.S. My apologies for not writing sooner, but unlike Mr. Francis in his arduous "Transition Year Programme", I was too caught up with preparing for exams in late November to spend time putting pen to paper to write in to the *Gazette*.

This is Cory Francis' letter, originally published November 24, 1988.

Victims of society

To the Editors:

The universities' method of selecting and accepting students is unfair. How can universities distinguish a person's ability and personality by a grade point average?

Students spend twelve to thirteen years of their life in junior and high school. After graduating out of grade twelve academic, they should be allowed to attend university. High average should not be their ticket.

I had a friend in grade twelve with me at Liverpool Regional High School. Having a 62 per cent average, he applied to Acadia, Dalhousie, and UNB. He could not get accepted to further his education. In Liverpool this year, he will pursue the same courses as last. No matter how you twist this, you have to agree, he had a year of his education stolen.

I was pushed off the major highway into a bushy trail also. I graduated along the side of my friend at LRHS. I had a 60 per cent average and felt that I had earned my entry into university. Instead, I had my future goals rearranged. I am in university this year but only as a TYP student (Transition Year Program). Passing this year will enable me to attend regular university next year. The problem is, I waste a year and acquire no credits.

Here at Dalhousie University, I see students who had 70-80 per cent averages coming out of high school. These same people are failing and robbing other students' positions. I would like to be taking a BA or BSc. But my graduating marks would not allow me. I feel my friend and I are victims of society.

The performance to acquire a higher educational status is demanding and pressuring. This performance is even more frictionated by the university's method of selection. My friend and I are capable and eager students. We should be taking a BA or BSc, not TYP and high school.

— Cory Francis

Our response:

Dear Mr. Harke:

The objective of an open letters page is to expose our readership to the views expressed by those who submit (signed) letters. Generally, we do not wish to influence the contents of these letters by providing editorial responses. However, since you seemingly require a response, here it is.

As you suggest, the sophists were not great thinkers. In fact,

they were pseudo-philosophers who consciously attempted to appear as, rather than be, accomplished academics. They were guilty of manipulating the language of their science for the sake of appearance.

*If Mr. Francis is as unintelligent as you seem to suggest, it is not likely that he consciously committed the errors that you identify. He, as well as our general readership, would probably appreciate an explanation of the *petitio principii*, as well as a real answer to Mr. Francis' letter.*

The Editors

Life's tough

Dear Editors,

Should Student Council take lessons in "How to Speak Properly and Politely?"

Student Council has become a dynamic business — a ruthless money-making executive has decided (with no student input, naturally) that the Alumni of Dalhousie University are to be treated like dupes. Why? This and the previous student executive have decided that all pre-1987 Alumni who come to pick up their Yearbook are now required to pay a "storage fee" of \$20 on top of their past student union fees which covered their Yearbook. Did the Graduates have any say in this fee imposed after their graduation? Of course not. Eager beaver council members fishing for money decided to impose a "storage" fee — despite the fact the pre-1987 Graduates were not informed of when to pick up their Yearbook anyway (an ad in the paper? What about out-of-town Graduates?) and despite the fact that the Yearbooks were never on schedule anyway (so the Graduates never knew when to come and get them).

When I went to talk to the Treasurer (whatever his name is), I was told — "TOO BAD, LIFE'S TOUGH" and "WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR".

Eloquent. Well, here it is, in spite of your hostility.

Student council in my year was never like the farce of a student council I had this experience with
Anil Kapoor
Engineering Class of '85

New library unnecessary

To the Editors,

It has been brought to our attention that King's College is going to build a 5.2 million dollar library on its campus. The purpose of this library is to provide a much needed home for King's collection of rare and valuable books, and the building is to be funded jointly by the Federal Government, Provincial Government and King's. It is admirable that our governments are directing more money towards this campus; but the 5.2 million dol-

lar question is, "Is this money being spent wisely?"

It is true that King's is separate and distinct from Dalhousie, King's desperately needs a new library facility, and King's has not undertaken such an ambitious capital program for some time. However, because financial resources for post-secondary education are very constrained in this province, schools in close proximity to one another must refrain from duplicating resources. Furthermore, both levels of government must continue to support university library resources and facilities, but they must do so only on the basis of a prudent program.

The Dalhousie Law School library collection will be moved back to the Weldon Law Building in May 1989. It is not difficult to figure out that this move will create much space in the already under-capacitated Killam Library. With some minor renovations the Killam space could be optimized to create a new home for King's collection, and perhaps this could be possible even if the MacDonald Library collection were to move to the Killam. Essentially, King's could enter a rental agreement with Dal. The windfall saving would benefit King's and the rental income could be used to supplement Dal's poorly

financed library services branch.

There is more to a high-quality education than working within newly constructed walls. Halifax's many schools and different levels of government have placed a big emphasis on capital programs aimed at new building construction rather than substantially improving library collections, compensating professors with nationally competitive salaries, and maintaining existing buildings. The proposed King's library and the recent Dalhousie Faculty strike provide bone-chilling evidence of these priorities.


Why not examine what other first class Canadian universities have done when they faced similar duplication of resource problems? For example, the University of Toronto built the John Robarts Library to house at least four downtown campus' books.

I hope other persons feel the way I do. I encourage you to speak out on this subject. Let your opinion be known to appropriate decision-makers. We must divert our priorities from bricks and mortar to the tools of learning — books and quality instruction.

Yours very truly,
Roger W. Proctor
Student

ADULT

MONDAY
MOVIES



Tom Hanks
big

Dalhousie Student Union

TRAVEL CUTS
Going Your Way!

January 30, 8 pm, McInnes Room, SUB
Admission: \$3 with CFS Studentsaver Card \$3.50 University Students
\$4 Faculty, Staff & Alumni

Dalhousie Art Gallery

Call for Entries to the 35th Annual Dalhousie Student, Staff, Faculty & Alumni Exhibition

Feb. 2 to March 5, 1989
**All works must be submitted with entry forms
between Jan 24 and 29, 1989.**

Entry forms available at: Dalhousie Art Gallery
Dalhousie Arts Centre, Killam Library, Dalplex
SUB, Tupper Medical Bldg.

For More Info.
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