

The Largest Worldwide Debate

By Allan Carter

Saint Thomas' small, yet spirited debating society of approximately twenty members (including two from UNB), have accomplished quite a number of things in the past year and are making plans to keep the society vibrant and active.

Four debaters, two from UNB and two from STU, had the opportunity to participate in the largest worldwide debate ever held, this January in Princeton, New Jersey. This event hosted teams from the U.K., Australia, New Zealand, Poland, Japan, Jamaica and many other places. STU's debating society debated with nine other teams; they won three of these debates and tied in points with another team. Neil Bouwer, President of the society, felt this was an exceptional record for novices and undergraduates who were, in most part, debating against veterans who are doing graduate or post-graduate studies.

The two UNB debaters, Derek Dunnett and Kapil Kamra, debated against seven teams, defeating two; and were only

behind by one point in two of the other rounds. This was the first tournament that Derek Dunnett ever attended and the society was very pleased with him as he ranked as the second best speaker in one round.

In addition, Bouwer says that the group plans to debate on one of the most talked about and

controversial topics on both campuses, feminism. They are also thinking of establishing a debating program on the campus radio. Apparently, UNB and STU plan to co-host the Atlantic Debate this upcoming October.

Funding has been one major concern for the society. They have received donations from

several STU faculty members, limited funding from the STU-SRC, and the university. But, still feeling they are financially limited, the society has decided to organize a fund-raising Easter raffle. Tickets will be sold on campus, as well as in the community. The draw is scheduled for March twenty

second. Prizes for the lucky winners will be announced during sales of the tickets. He feels that the potential is there; and anyone who is interested in debating or would like to see such a society established at UNB is invited to come to the meetings that are held every Tuesday evening at 5:45 in the second floor lounge of Edmund Casey.

Through different debating activities and fund-raising the debating society hopes to help make people aware of the importance of such a society on the campuses and in the community.

As Daizal R. Samad, an English professor at STU and faculty advisor for the society pointed out, few other organizations help us to use language clearly, concisely, and logically while developing research and questionnaire skills, and obtaining and applying data. These are but a few of the numerous advantages of debating. In fact, Prof. Samad feels that debating is probably closer to academics than any other SRC-sponsored event on campus.



Front to Back, L to R: Daizal Samad, Kapil Kamra, Neil Bouwer, Kelly Lamrock, Derek Dunnett.

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