Offices vacant

Classes held parties, lost money

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What did the classes do this year? Due to acute lack of participation and organization in everything from Senior Follies to the Freshman Class party—not much.

The Senior class expects to break even with its Senior Prom with patron bids from Senior parents. The Junior class managed to throw a party early in the year and lost $133 which it owes to the S.A.

According to the Sophomore secretary-treasurer, the Sophomore Class managed to stay out of court” and owes the S.A. $100 which it intends to pay in 1969. The Freshman Class party never happened, although the class owes the S.A. $40.

This year, perhaps more than any preceding year, the existence of class government is being challenged and criticized at Rice.

A freshman class enters the University and, aside from the practices of beanie-wearing and attending the first football game en masse, slides classlessly into the general student body. Four or five years later this class comes together again for a second and last time when it graduates.

Where do the classes obtain their funds? Generally, they borrow from the S.A. or throw parties which lose money. S.A. loans to classes are rarely paid in full and must be written off.

David Cohen, new S.A. vice-president, recently made a proposal (which was defeated in Senate last week) that the S.A. no longer be responsible for class debts but that the classes be obliged to pay the loan back or the S.A. will collect from individual class members.

It was suggested that such a measure might either give future classes the incentive to produce, or encourage the student body at large to abolish class government in the next referendum in an effort to avoid such active participation in their class.

In the last election Rice students voted 72% in favor of abolishing class offices, a crucial 3% short of the majority necessary for amending the constitution.

In the first election this spring, only six people filled for class offices. The second election was augmented by those students who had lost in college and honor council elections—offices which are far more workable and significant in student life. Many offices were simply not filed for; all 5th year offices were filled by one candidate.

The $348 deficit owed to the S.A. by the classes may be the mute death rattle of a system which is merely a carry over from the days when there was no college system at Rice.

But another referendum on the abolishing of class offices cannot be held until a new Senate takes office in the spring of 1968.