

# letters & comment

All letters should be addressed to the Editor, Excalibur, room III, Central Square. Please type letters, triple or double spaced, and keep them to around 250 words. Name, address and phone number must be included, but name will be withheld on request. Excalibur reserves the right to edit for grammar and length. Deadline Monday 4pm.

## Hayden totally disgusted with Excalibur

This letter is to show my complete disgust with the last issue of *Excalibur*, its editorial content, reporting and tempering with submissions by staff reporters.

The editorials and reporting of a community paper should take into account all sides of an issue and should investigate them thoroughly.

*Excalibur* in the past has been considered one of the best weekly student newspapers in the country. After last week's issue the credibility of the publication in my opinion is in jeopardy.

The editorials, and articles took only one side of an issue and in two instances failed to contact or include all the views.

The article by Mark Boudreau on the front page was altered not for space restrictions but because the article did not implement the biased, political view the editor favoured.

Every issue this year has been followed by some question on misquotes, mistakes or in simple terms bad reporting. The excuse for this has been and I quote "so" ... "Who cares" "Maybe we'll fix it next week". This might be adequate for the editor of *Excalibur* but it is unequivocally, no less than incompetence in any other area of news coverage. The reporting and editorials last week discussed the disqualification of one Harvey Pinder because of a retroactive motion passed by CYSF March 3, 1978.

The fact is *Excalibur* has finally brought to the forefront its obvious contempt for good reporting and community responsibility.

I don't blame the entire staff of *Excalibur*, there are staff on the paper who are competent and only trying to increase their ability and professionalism. It seems to me utterly criminal for the time consumed and the work applied that these persons work be laid to waste by the biased, incompetent, self-centered editorial butchery of members on the editorial staff.

**Paul Hayden**  
CYSF, President

The following letter has been sent to all college council chairpersons and presidents.

## Dear College Council Presidents and Masters:

This is to clarify a misquote in *Excalibur* March 9, 1978. In the issue Laura Brown stated that one of my solutions to the Calumet financial situation was to have each college donate 75% of their social budget to Calumet. This is totally wrong.

One of my solutions was to have each college take 75% of their social budget and pool it with the other colleges. From this pool all entertainment would be booked for the campus, allowing no more than two events on the same evening. This would ensure that events would

be able to attract the majority of students and also allow all colleges including Calumet to have access to halls and a chance to make increase services to students.

**Paul Hayden**  
CYSF, President

**Ed note:** For readers' information, the changes from Boudreau's original to the story in the paper are as follows.

Boudreau's original two beginning paragraphs read: "The final decision regarding Harvey Pinder's eligibility to run for CYSF president was handed down last Tuesday when Garfield Payne, Chief Returning Officer, ruled that Pinder's nomination was invalid on the grounds that 'he was not a member of a constituency of CYSF since November 1, 1977'."

"Throughout the week Pinder's eligibility was the most controversial question surrounding the CYSF presidential race."

In the paper, the second paragraph was taken out and the first rewritten to:

"Harvey Pinder, student representative on York's Board of Governors, who had filed nomination papers to run for student council president, was removed from the ballot on Tuesday. Garfield Payne, Chief Returning Officer, ruled that Pinder's nomination was invalid on the grounds that 'he was not a member of a constituency of CYSF since November 1, 1977'."

In the paragraph, "The issue surfaced on March 3, two days before the end of the nomination period, when CYSF passed a retroactive rule..." the words "two days before the end of the nomination period" were added by an editor.

At the end of the article, comments on Pinder's eligibility from presidential race dropout Andrew Cardozo were compressed to add opinions directed to the same topic by candidates Arnie Bell and David Chodikoff during interviews with *Excalibur* Tuesday.

The final sentence, "The matter will receive further consideration when the election tribunal meets on Wednesday March 8", had to be deleted due to an undercalculation at the layout stage.

Readers may judge for themselves whether these changes were made, "because the article did not implement the biased, political view the editor favoured".

We will be glad to print any factual corrections in the paper if Mr. Hayden would kindly give them to us in writing.

## Pinder injustice

Garfield Payne, Chief Returning Officer for CYSF, ruled last week that Harvey Pinder's nomination

for the presidency of the CYSF was invalid. Mr. Payne based his ruling on a computer error. We do not know why Mr. Payne chose incorrect information as the basis for his ruling. This indiscretion indicates either an uncommon ignorance or clear contempt for democracy. In either case Mr. Payne's decision constitutes an injustice. The following York students criticise Mr. Payne for his mistaken ruling and protest the blatantly anti-democratic nature of his action.

**Andrew Nikiforuk**  
and 19 others

## Excalibur elections

In his campaign leaflet CYSF Presidential candidate David Chodikoff proposes that the editor of *Excalibur* be elected by the students at large, rather than by "the self-serving clique that runs the paper". As a member of that notorious group, I would like to explain why Chodikoff's proposal is undesirable.

Who is better equipped to choose the editor of a newspaper than its staff? All those eligible to vote for the editor must be present at the candidates' interviews or listen to tapes thereof. How many of the students at large would do likewise?

Chodikoff is also troubled by the leftist tendencies of the paper. Now as a former staff member, he should know that the correct political affiliation is not a job qualification. The political make-up changes as the staff members change.

Chodikoff should be advising those dissatisfied with the paper to work for it, a commitment that need not take up a great deal of time. This, and not a senseless election by the students at large, is the way to further involve students in *Excalibur*.

This lapse of good manners and good sense is especially disappointing in one who managed to restrain himself from heckling (unlike most of the other candidates) at the all-candidates meeting of March 10.

**Annette Goldsmith**

## Calumet correction

A small but important error occurred on page four of your March 9 edition. The article was entitled "Calumet, CYSF in deadlock." The mistake was with the sixth paragraph. The paragraph should have read something along the lines of, "Hayden suggested that 75 percent of each college's social funds come under CYSF's jurisdiction."

Not donated to Calumet College. If you would please note this mistake in your next issue we would be very pleased.

**Lawson Oates**  
Calumet Steering Out Committee

## Acclamation appalls

As Founders College students we are appalled at the apathy which resulted in the recent acclamation of incumbent Steve Muchnik as Founders representative on the CYSF. During the by-elections last October he stated that he was running because he was "concerned about student needs, not just students in residence but students as commuters". However, in the past five months he has only demonstrated how totally insensitive he is to the true needs of his constituents.

Firstly, Muchnik endorsed the motion, railroaded through council, to terminate CYSF funding to all political groups on campus. Secondly, he was one of the leading participants in a move by some CYSF members to axe Harbinger. And last autumn when *Breakthrough* and the Women's Centre presented a request for funding at a council meeting, Muchnik responded with a comment which reveals his ignorance and sarcasm, suggesting that the women's services "approach the National Feminist Organization of Canada for money" — an organization which, to our knowledge, has never existed.

On Tuesday, March 7 we were sitting in Central Square publicizing International Women's Day with three other women when once again Muchnik demonstrated his sexist conservatism and lamentable level of insensitivity. Sauntering over to our table with a smirk on his face, he attempted to provoke us by spewing forth derisive, bigotted remarks against women. When one of our representatives listed our demands he began to rail at the spending of his tax dollars on such things as daycare and rights for lesbian mothers. He declared that "lesbians are sickies" and that he was "not going to support a sickness".

About ten minutes later Muchnik returned with a few buddies. Pausing in front of us he chuckled and uttered, "Too bad, eh. What a waste that they're all lesbians". This final taunt blatantly exemplifies his whole misogynistic attitude. We ask the women of Founders if they feel that such a person really represents their interests.

**Momoye Sugiman**  
**Susan Sturman**

## Pro Life singleminded

The York Pro Life group has approached CYSF for help in getting a Birthright office on campus. I am concerned with the implications of this request.

Women and men have the duty and responsibility to determine their own lives. Others may help by providing information and support, but in the end, each person must take responsibility for the directions they have chosen. Do we assist individuals in taking personal responsibility by supporting an organization which not only presents a monolithic stance, but one which, in moral passion, fails to even acknowledge that others have valid reasons for coming to differing conclusions? When a service is motivated on moral grounds, such as Pro Life and Birthright groups are, there are no options presented among courses of actions. A person is either moral or immoral, depending on whether their decision fits the group's ideology. I cannot accept such a division for people in need or distress.

We all may wish the world were divided up along clear lines of right and wrong, but many of us realize that this is not the case. Good counselling for people in distress involves understanding that there are good arguments from various perspectives, and helping an individual realize that choices are their own.

Surely it is obvious that the initial place of contact for women facing an unplanned pregnancy should be a service which offers in-

formation on all the options open to her, adoption, abortion or raising the child by herself or with a partner. This service is already provided through Harbinger. Do we need to have Birthright on campus, when the counselling they provide is so singleminded in purpose, providing only support for continuing pregnancies, regardless of any consideration for other than moral factors?

This is not an issue of Harbinger vs. Birthright or Pro Life. It is an issue of women's capabilities to determine their own futures, to make informed and free decisions.

**Chuck Wheeler**

## Harbinger - no abortion viewpoint

Two weeks ago, *Excalibur* published a letter from Jerry Bonello and 17 others protesting the funding of Harbinger through student fees (not tuition fees as was stated). Many of the statements in the letter are based on erroneous assumptions, the most obvious being that Harbinger is not unique. In fact, Harbinger is unlike other services on campus, in that it offers students a chance to talk with other students who are trained to listen carefully and provide information in a relaxed, relevant manner.

Harbinger's staff are peer counsellors, not social workers or psychologists, and that distinction is important for many students. Bonello et. al. also suggest that Harbinger's services can be offered at less cost through Health services, especially abortion referrals and sexuality awareness. While Health services does what they do very well, it is erroneous to assume that their small operation can adequately meet students' needs for information, talk and referrals that Harbinger now provides. In fact, Health services refers many students to Harbinger for information and counselling, specifically in the area of unplanned pregnancy.

Bonello et. al. also state that "the social-political viewpoints promoted by the Harbinger program do not reflect the viewpoints of all York University students in regard to the issues of abortion and human sexuality". Firstly, Harbinger staff members relate information, not viewpoints or a program. As an organization, we grew out of students' needs for access to information in lots of areas, and we have continued to exist so that students can make informed choices.

The present concern of budgeting bodies should not overlook the need to provide adequate services for a reasonable cost. But the suggestions by Bonello and et. al, that Harbinger's services could be provided by outside agencies overlooks the responsibility of York governments to take stock of its members' needs, and to support the services which make York a more personal, liveable place to study.

**Sue Kaiser**

## CRO Payne replies

This letter to the editor is a demand for a retraction and apology on page 1 of your next issue for the page 1 error in the Mark Boudreau story in your issue of March 9, 1978. You are in error in stating that Harvey Pinder was disqualified on grounds that 'he was not a member of a constituency of CYSF since November 1, 1977'. The truth of the matter is that Pinder was never properly qualified as a candidate because he submitted an invalid nomination form. That would be clear if you read my reasons for the decision on the Pinder matter of March 6, 1978, or had spoken to me about them.

Either you did not read the reasons, which amounts to gross incompetence, or you deliberately published false information for whatever motive. You also do not appear to be aware of the fact that the Council at its February 6, 1978 meeting approved in principle the enactment of a membership

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## Review of National Ballet's "Dream" uninformed, laughable

Although it is not my function to act as apologist for the National Ballet of Canada, the uninformed and logically wretched criticism on Ashton's *The Dream* which appeared in last week's *Excalibur* must be corrected.

I must make it clear that I did not see Tennant and Kudelka dance, but rather saw Karen Kain as Titania, and Luc Amyot as Oberon, so perhaps *Excalibur's* critic and I didn't see exactly the same principals, but we did indeed see the same choreography, sets and the splendid adaptation of Shakespeare by Ashton. Yet *Excalibur's* critic found the production wanting, dismissing with laughable skill not only Mendelssohn-Bartholdy's music, not only Frederick Ashton's powerful choreographic adequacy, but also both of the principals, who were interpreted by that critic's Napoleonic ability for stupidity with that generalising, and naive: "and

some of their pas de deux were quite rough".

Whether Mendelssohn-Bartholdy's music is considered good or bad is subjective, and critic can offer intelligent judgement on that topic; yet when your critic points out that "the ballet's major flaw" (is that) "the music leaves out much of the drama and some important portions of the stage play", evidence of a great vacuum of thought is given. Firstly Mendelssohn's music is not Shakespeare, but a musical translation of Mendelssohn's ideas and notions of Shakespeare's play. Your critic seems unaware of that. Secondly, what important portions of the play are left out? Why should music give us "portions"? Music gives us sense, and one minor chord could be metonymic for all difficulties in Shakespeare's *Dream*. Just as one series of phrases could be metonymic for all the love within that play.

With respect to your critic's disdain for Ashton's "monotonous" use of sur pointe in Bottom's choreography, your critic should bear in mind the immense difficulty for male dancers to use such pointe work, and the immense virtue of first Nijinsky's then Ashton's shift of male dancing from the acute boredom of their being merely porteurs.

Finally, your critic's comments on "rough" pas de deux gives readers no referent within the ballet, just a generalisation with no illustration. Such a lack of example, by one who simply can't understand or judge dance, is typical.

I suggest that in the future *Excalibur's* critics of dance should begin to greater knowledge of dance, and knowledge of terms and differences in choreographies, rather than a smirking, self-indulgent subjectivity.

**David Scott**