

"Few people identify with their colleges. For all the impact it has made on my life, there might as well not be a college system."

"Lots of people say that they don't know anyone in their colleges, but they never visit them, so what do they expect?"

York's mythological college system: to the commuter, it's the system that never was

Students politicians in Winters, McLaughlin, Vanier and Founders have been meeting during the past few weeks to discuss the possibility of seceding from the CYSF, York's central student government.

For his part, CYSF president Dale Ritch has vowed to fight them to the wall and, if necessary, reduce the colleges to "a state of political impotence".

The college system lies at the very heart of York. The quotation from York's first president, Murray G. Ross, which is inscribed on the eastern wall of the Ross Building, dedicates York to "the humanizing of man".

But York's college system is being called more and more into question. A college may have some meaning for residence students, but what does it mean to the commuter? What has your college done for you?

This week, Excalibur tries to find out.

The coffee shop in Central Square. The great melting pot of York University, where students of all shapes, sizes and college affiliations mingle on equal terms over coffee and french fries. It makes no difference whether a student hails from Stong, from Winters, from Founders or even from Bethune — he will be welcomed here.

At some point along the way, each member of this swirling horde was a new student at York and, after looking deep inside himself, found an answer to the question, "What college shall I belong to?"

Excalibur talked to a number of students in Central Square on Monday and most explained that they had chosen a first year college tutorial and simply accepted the college that came with it.

Others didn't bother to choose a college and simply went wherever they were assigned. And some simply closed their eyes, pointed their fingers to the application sheet and checked the nearest box.

Mary Ellen Foley, a Stong psychology student, came to York from Sir George Williams. She didn't choose Stong, but was assigned to it.

"We didn't have anything like colleges in Montreal," she said. "And the registration information from York didn't really explain what they were."

While at York, she spends most of her free time in Central Square.

Carlos Simas, a fourth year Founders history student, was studying at a table between the bookstore and the library on Monday. When asked what Founders has meant to him, he shrugged his shoulders and said, "You want it in two words or less?"

He spends most of his free time

in the colleges."

Howard Klein, a Calumet student majoring in Urban Studies, chose Calumet in order to take its tutorial, the Canadian-American Nexus. The main meeting place for Calumet students on campus is the Calumet common room in Atkinson, but Klein rarely gets over there because it's out of his way. "I'm more familiar with Vanier," he says.

Luanne Sansom, a first student who plans to major in sociology, chose Vanier as her college in order to take the tutorial, Theology

"The whole university doesn't seem to be linked together," she said.

Are colleges, then, simply glorified residences? Are they states of mind? Do they, in fact, exist?

Most colleges at York's main campus have a pub, a newspaper, a programme of social activities, a common room and a student government. But the main infrastructure of student services is in Central Square. The colleges lie on the periphery of a wheel whose hub is Central Square.

about the other colleges.

There is a small, hardy force of commuter students, however, that resists the call of Central Square and doggedly trudges out to the colleges each day. Some members of this force even get to know fellow members of their college and take part in college events.

Chris Fox, a first year Winters student, was reading in the Winters common room on Monday. She spends all her free time in Winters.

"There are a lot more social things going on in the colleges," she said. "I even come to Winters on the weekends sometimes."

Laura Cowan is a first year McLaughlin student and is one of a few York commuter students who actually took part in their colleges' orientation programmes. She met a lot of McLaughlin students then and has kept up the acquaintances.

She likes the idea of small, distinct colleges within the larger university. "If things are big, they just get too big and they get unfriendly," she said.

"Lost of people say that they don't know anyone in their colleges, but they never visit them, so what do they expect? I don't feel any great patriotic fervour about McLaughlin, but it's a friendly place; I like the people."

If commuter students have little involvement in their colleges, the problem may lie, not with the colleges themselves, but with the character of the university as a whole. Most York students live at home with their families and come to school for four hours of classes a day. Whether they spend their spare moments in Central Square or in the college of their choice, most of these students will still feel neither the need nor the desire to involve themselves in the social activities on campus.

"People come to York for the academics," says Winters student Rick Hughes. "When people meet, they meet on that level."

Perhaps for that reason, most York commuter students have a purely part-time involvement with the university. Says Stong student Mary Ellen Foley, "What I do on my weekends doesn't even concern York."



Peter Hsu photo

at York in the library. "Most people at York seem to identify with the Ross Building rather than with their colleges," he said. "For all the impact it has made on my life, there might as well not be a college system."

Bruno Bedan, an economics student from Winters, spends his free time in McLaughlin because a number of his friends from high school live in residence there. "Most students in first year don't know what they're getting into when they sign up for colleges," he said. "Any way, there's nothing

and Eros in Literature. ("It's about love stories", she said.) She makes an attempt to justify her membership in the college by eating lunch in the Vanier dining hall and by reading now and then in the Vanier common room. She has even made friends with several Vanier students that way.

Cynthia Micek, another Vanier commuter student, also eats her lunch at Vanier. But she doesn't spend a great deal of time in the college because, she feels, the college activities are geared mainly toward residence students.

Inevitably, commuter students are drawn into the centre.

You can do a kind of Rorschach inkblot test with college names. ("What do you think of when I say Founders?") But the responses, at least in Central Square, are just a series of bland faces. To most commuter students the colleges don't seem to have distinctive identities.

There are exceptions, though. Many students agreed that Stong is a "jock college"; some felt that Vanier is an "animal college". No one could think of much to say

Letters To The Editor

All letters should be addressed to the Editor, c/o Excalibur, room 111 central square. They must be double-spaced, typed and limited to 250 words. Excalibur reserves the right to edit for length and grammar. Name and address must be included for legal purposes but the name will be withheld upon request. Deadline: Mon. 5 p.m.

Near victim of rape, afraid it may happen again

I hope that every girl on campus reads this letter; hopefully it will help someone.

After my evening class on Thursday, November 20, at approximately 9:50 p.m., I was attacked near Bethune residence. If I hadn't resisted so strongly, I would have been raped. "Mr. X" decided it wasn't worth the trouble and settled on beating me up instead.

A lot of people; men and women alike (especially if a woman has never been attacked), do not realize what a humiliating and frustrating experience it is. What can a 117 pound girl do to stave off an attack by a 175 pound man? My advice is to scream your bloody lungs out and fight back as much as you can. You'd be surprised how strong a terrified female can

be. There have been at least three rapes on campus this term; one occurred in broad daylight near a residence. I was informed of this by a doctor at Health Services.

A lot of people tell me I'm lucky. I came out of the experience with only shredded clothes, multiple scratches, a bummed-up knee (where I was severely kicked) and bruises. I was slapped so hard on the face that my vision didn't clear up until 3:30 p.m. the next day. It's too bad that I can't forget that it ever happened.

Unfortunately I cannot describe my assailant accurately because it was dark and rainy and I was crying so much that I couldn't see. I also spent a lot of time covering my face as he had threatened to break my nose.

If I see him again, I'm sure that I'll recognize him or his voice. I've had enough nightmares about it.

I hope that he is reading this (if he is a York student) so that he knows I'm keeping my eyes and ears open in case he's around. My boyfriend is walking around with hopes of finding him and castrating him.

I hope to God he doesn't try it on someone else; if he does, and you're the victim, please tell someone about it and hopefully he will be caught.

Don't walk around anywhere on campus by yourself at night. If someone starts bothering you, SCREAM! and run to the nearest place where there are people.

I wrote this letter to make people aware that there are poten-

tial rapists and attackers at York. I'd hate to hear of another attack.

Jane Oakleaf

Let's be Frank is correct, but...

Frank Giorno is perfectly correct when he says the "United Nations is being used as a tool by the Arab World and third world nations." (Let's be Frank, Nov. 27)

But he is still missing the point. The use of the General Assembly to pass resolutions that seems to us irrational or calculated to promote hatred and bigotry rather than peace, comes to us as a great shock.

It is, after all, only a few years since the Afro-Asian bloc sud-

dently realized that, united, they comprised an absolute majority in the Assembly.

We in the Western world had always counted on their disorganization which allowed us to use the General Assembly as our tool.

What we must realize is that the U.N., as presently constituted, does not work. It didn't produce just or equitable action when we were pulling the strings, and it still doesn't.

Only the names have been changed.

The U.N. isn't working, but it must not be abandoned. It is still the only international forum for diplomacy.

It must be restructured so that it can function properly. Doug Tindal