

Lacking in literature?

Dear Editors,

Excalibur's lack of coverage of York University campus literary publications and events is no longer an oversight, it is a travesty. In the last issue (Feb. 23, 1989), attention was given to Harbourfront's World Poetry Festival. Fine. A few weeks before, a review of *Mondo Hunkamooga* appeared. Great. But what about campus happenings?

For this entire year, the Winter's Poetry Series has been unjustly ignored. There has always been a great turn out each week and people never leave disappointed. Where is the coverage? Unknown to most students, there are also campus litzines. Our magazine, *Eat Me, Literally* (in its third year of production), has not been reviewed once this year. *YAK* also has not been reviewed, and *Existere* (nine years old) was reviewed once at the beginning of the year. What is going on here? We personally left review copies at your office to no avail. *Existere* launched their third issue of the year before reading week without any notice on your part.

Where are your priorities? *Excalibur* claims to be "York University's Community Newspaper," but for some reason preference has been given to reviewing first-run movies and off-campus literary events. There is no excuse for this type of apathy. We know from last year that our sales at the York University Bookstore double after a review. It is difficult enough to get students' attention regarding literature on campus (which is worthy of attention) without having to be snubbed by the local media.

As we have stated, *Existere* was released two weeks ago. *Eat Me,*

Literally comes out next Monday, *YAK* will probably be released soon, a new litzine *Rag* is scheduled for release early March and every Tuesday at 5 p.m. in the Winter's Senior Common Room is the poetry series. Now you know when and where these events take place. Know how, you've got it . . . use it!

*Love but no kisses,
Glenn Richard Gustafson
John Barbisan
(co-founders)
and the Eat Me, Literally gang*

York Lands "stimulating"

To *Excalibur* Editor:

It is with interest that I read the "York Lands" centrespread in *Excalibur* after recently reading the "President's Report to the Board" entitled "York in Progress" (Jan/89, No. 6). They make for very stimulating and in many ways encouraging reading.

I am also delighted that a student centre will finally become a reality. After 16 years of working at this university I can genuinely feel that inertia has been overcome with respect to some of the changes we have all known are necessary. Those responsible, particularly it seems President Arthurs, should feel proud and deserve our collective appreciation.

At the same time as one recognizes the vitality and excitement these changes create, I cannot help but wonder at the apparent inability of these same planners to recognize the real and potential benefits of sport and physical recreation to the quality of life for everyone on this campus.

Consider the following:

1. A new student centre is planned and approved without any provision for physical recreation. Compare

this to the plans for the Student Centre recently approved at UBC or others in existence at UWO and U of T (universities of similar size).

2. On-campus housing will increase with a 264-bed residence (Calumet) and 378 units in student apartment buildings without any physical recreation facilities included.

3. Retail office complexes, co-op housing, and increased university/industry linkages all add up to the potential for dramatic increases in the number of people joining our community who will be looking for physical recreation facilities.

These changes must be understood in the context of the present Tait McKenzie facility being intended as a *women's recreation facility* for a student population of approximately 1/2 of the current enrolment. It presently helps to support not only recreation programmes for the whole community, but also men's and women's varsity athletics and academic programmes in the faculties of Arts, Science, and Education. It is and has been recognized as a clearly inadequate facility and yet more residential and commercial space is committed before additional recreational facilities are available. Additional facilities are not even the top priority in the next phase of construction.

At the same time as many corporations, unions, and government agencies are clamouring to build and provide programmes and facilities for physical recreation, we have a public report from our president that makes not a single reference to the potential that these same programmes might make to "The Quality of Campus Life."

The Hare Commission reported that "sports activities" was the most frequent college activity for students in second and third year and the second most frequent activity (behind "social activities") for first year students (p. 17). Obviously the students consider this significant to the quality of their campus life. If we are serious about improving the "Quality of Campus life" it seems to

me that a basic answer is to adequately provide for what is already popular not only with our students but with society at large.

*E. Willis
Physical Education*

A comment on colleges

Dear Editor:

Please let me comment on some statements about York's college system contained in the *President's Report to the Board of Governors* of January 1989.

The first paragraph, after stating that "York's College system has not lived up to expectations," (sic), claims that "our Colleges were conceived as bearing primary responsibility for both the academic and other dimensions of undergraduate student life." I do not believe that this statement is true as it stands, but makes sense only for the period 1959-1965, during which time York university was located in its entirety on the campus that is now known as Glendon College.

But surely this is not what the above statement has in mind, since it refers to "our Colleges," not just to one College. Once the decision was made to build the Keele Campus, the collegial organization of York between 1959 and 1965 quickly faded into the background in favour of a faculty of arts headed by a very powerful dean who was already in place at least one year before the move to the Keele campus began. It was this new office that was invested with the power and authority to designate and staff the departments (and later divisions) that would take shape on the new campus.

The Colleges could not possibly have been given "primary responsi-

bility" for academic matters because these Colleges only came on stream one at a time, over a seven to eight year period, first in 1965 (Founders) then 1966 (Vanier), 1967 (Winters), 1968 (McLaughlin), 1970 (Stong), 1971 (Calumet), and 1972 (Norman Bethune). No university worthy of the name could have held up the development of its academic and curricular organization for such an extended period of time and, indeed, York did not do so. Undergraduate academic responsibility was vested from (or before) the new beginning on the Keele campus with the faculty of arts.

Subsequent developments therefore did not occur because the new Colleges, or Glendon for that matter, failed to take charge of primary academic functions which they had been authorized to perform. The decision to organize the new campus on a collegiate residential and administrative basis, far from constituting a commitment to the academic priority of the Colleges, signalled the very opposite intention, and had the effect of splitting the university into warring camps which brought it to a virtual standstill.

Even with these caveats taken into account, the overall spirit of this statement is refreshing, particularly if it intends to help us overcome the reigning "institutional fiction" of York's existence on the Keele campus since 1965, namely, that the colleges are responsible for virtually everything that is wrong with York and for nothing that is right. One wonders what York would have become had the more constructive attitude signalled by this statement been operative on the Keele campus these past 24 years!

*Yours sincerely,
H.T. Wilson, Professor &
Director, Social & Political
Thought Programme*

ERRATUM

• Lavinia Lamenza's letter to the editor entitled "Pro-choice reasoning (February 2) should have read: "Yes, I disagree with [T. Quek's] statement that a mother knows she is ultimately ridding herself of a baby in having an abortion."

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