

Conference ponders the humanities

Ingrid Matson

Humanism was the central topic at York's Concept of the University conference at McLaughlin Hall last Saturday, with discussion ranging from the highly philosophic to the coldly pragmatic.

In his opening remarks, Professor G.V. Doxey, Master of McLaughlin College, lamented the lack of values evident in modern society. In a society dominated by technocrats and bureaucracy, humanism is giving way to structuralism, he said.

Doxey quoted York's first President, Dr. Murray Ross, in saying that the primary obligation of the university is still the pursuit of truth. We must remember this as our young are drifting into patterns of hedonism, said Doxey.

In the ensuing panel discussion Dr. E.F. Sheffield, Professor Emeritus of Higher Education of University of Toronto, emphasized that higher education is a

field of study, not a discipline. Our attitude toward the students and the subjects is much more important than technique, said Sheffield.

Sheffield stated that higher education is a particularly big operation, and we must learn to study, perform and understand it.

He said that research on higher education is often done, however, by people outside the field of education.

The government is responsible for much of this research, Sheffield pointed out, through Statistics Canada, the Economic Council of Canada, the Science Council of Canada and the Canada Council.

In order to solve the educational problems in Canada, Sheffield recommended an Agency for the Review of Education.

In a discussion on the problems facing our universities, Dr. D. McCormack Smyth, former dean of Atkinson College, said "We have allowed bureaucracy to take precedence over teaching and research. Universities have contributed not only to money capitalism but to knowledge capitalism."

"The university has fostered mathematization and depersonalization. In large part modern thinking is mechanistic," said Smyth. He indicates that these trends to mechanization in thinking are due to the secularization of universities. Religion, "that which holds life together", has no place in much of western society, he said.

Dr. Smyth pointed out the paradoxical functions of

universities. "We think of the university as a place of growth, a

place for intellectual development, a positive place. But it is also the place where bombs were developed."

According to Smyth a crisis in

higher education has developed as a result of intellectual arrogance and the acceptance of war as natural.

"We are now in the fourth World War, although we are not dropping bombs," said Smyth. "We must put an end to war or war will put an end to us."

"The art of running a college is in being relatively inefficient I would hate to see the day when this changed," said Doxey.



York students Elise Heimann and Jay Richmond. Dreaming of Miami?

Bryon Johnson

York students just clients?

Michael Monastyrskij

York University is becoming structured on a principle that excludes students from membership and reduces them to the status of clients.

H.T. Wilson, a York Administrative Studies professor, made this assertion at a conference entitled The University: Society and the 1980's, held on January 17 in McLaughlin Hall. Wilson's address was part of a panel discussion on "The Concept of the University".

In presenting a paper written in response to a York University Staff Association strike, Wilson discussed the "organization principle" which he believes "is a model that is coming to existence in York and other places." According to Wilson, whose

structure is based on this principle accepts "the idea that by the term member we mean anybody who is

paid regularly by the university." In such a system students are clients because they pay fees.

Wilson also argues that the division of residences into administrative rather than pedagogical units keeps students

from feeling that they are part of the institution.

To illustrate the extent to which he feels students are not part of the university, Wilson read a statement frequently found on York bulletins: "Classes will not be held today but the university will remain open."



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Our Town

Women and Self

Prof. Millie Bakan (York, Philosophy and Social Sciences) will discuss the situation of women in regard to the problem of definition of self, with particular reference to the theories of Simone de Beauvoir, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Dorothy Dinnerstein. Today at 4:30, Room 312, Fine Arts II.

On Dying Well

On January 27, 1981 at 12 noon in the McLaughlin Faculty Common Room (140) Dr. Rory Fisher speaks "On Dying Well".

G.A.Y.

Coffee house on Wednesday, Jan. 28 in Senior Common Room 305 Founders from 7 to 10 p.m. All lesbians and gay men are welcome.

A Resounding Tinkle

A Resounding Tinkle by N.F. Simpson is being performed January 22, 23 and 24 at 8:00 p.m. at the Samuel Beckett Theatre. Free admission!

Mature Students

Meeting of mature students, Bethune and Stong Colleges, Thursday, 22nd January, at 2 p.m. in the Junior Common Room, Bethune College.

Italian Earthquake Benefit

The Carlo Levi Cultural Club is holding a fund raising benefit concert in support of the Earthquake victims of Southern Italy. The concert takes place on January 24, 1981 at 9 Boon Avenue (Dufferin & St. Clair Ave. West) at 7:30 p.m. Donation requested is \$5.00 per person. The concert features nine performers from the Canadian, Italian, Uruguayan, Chilean and Turkish communities.

Shakespeare

York University's Theatre Department will present Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* as its final production of the season at Burton Auditorium on March 18 and 19 at 8 p.m., March 20, at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. and March 21 at 4 p.m. For information call the Burton Box Office at 667-2370.

Lots of Stuff

Winters Gallery presents "Lots of Stuff"—prints, paintings, sculpture—by Joanne Bigham. Opening January 26, 1981 in Room 124 Winters College. Gallery Hours: 12 noon-1 p.m.; 5:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m., Mon. to Fri.

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