

University Forum

Articles submitted for publication on this page from the university body must be typed triple-spaced and signed. Articles must be submitted no later than 12 noon on the Friday before publication.

You don't know how lucky you are

You are very lucky, students of York University, living in a modern setting, with most of the comforts and some of the luxuries. All you have to do is appreciate what you have — the opportunity to become better men and women, to set some standards which others could emulate. Unfortunately, we see not too much enthusiasm regarding higher learning, or any real attempt to be a little better than the average 80 per cent out there, who will never today enter these hallowed halls. Lest you get too puffed up and vain, take a good look around and see if these people with whom you associate are really going to be the leaders of tomorrow, and IF the people out there will think it worth while to spend public funds to educate men and women to be the governors or rulers of our society.

Let's set our sights a little higher than the mere animal lust, and boredom, with its accompanying uncontrolled behaviour, dirty language and lack of formal standards. Are we all going to walk around spouting "four" letter words as if Shakespeare had created them and made them famous, is our vocabulary so limited that even professors and doctors must resort to gutter pictures, before we understand what students mean. Why is it we propagate every pornographic magazine or obscene book? Is it not because this is what people read and enjoy — is the obvious reality of living, and sexual experience with all its accompanying joys and sorrows not exciting enough? Is it better to blow out our brains and glands before we can say we are "humane" — we have lived? Have promiscuous people really lived, or are they just escaping reality in momentary ex-

perience? Anything that is deviant is highly acceptable, homo-sexuals, drug addicts, sex perverts, drunkards, artists, and writers who portray for us the sordid or seamy side are important. Why? Why is a normal sexual life with a partner, we love, with whom people live and experience life, birth, death, hopes, and dreams, why is our normal way of life not important? Why do we scoff at all those who accept life, and struggle to make the world a better place for future generations? Why is sex in marriage not as beautiful as stolen moments in the back of a car? Are children not as beautiful and interesting as dull-faced students and somber old bachelors and old maids, who ARE AFRAID to face life, and all it holds. We wallow in self-pity and laziness, when we could use our talents to achieve something, be vital, alive, dress up and look up at something better? Two men have eyes, one looks up and sees stars, the other looks down and sees mud. It all depends on our view. It seems most of us are loaded down with the tenacles of boredom and filth — we don't want anything better. We live in clean places but we don't clean up, neither ourselves, nor our places, yet we DEMAND THIS RIGHT AND THAT RIGHT AND WE WANT THIS AND WE WANT THAT.

Parents work in factories so that their children can go to university and live a better life, with less strain and pain. The children forget all too easily the struggles of the parents, look down on them, forget them, hate them, and all those who try to give any example.

I am an adult student, I waited 30 years to come back to get my degree, and believe me I thought I was missing something. If this is

what people struggle for, to give their offspring — Heaven help us all! If from these humble beginnings we are going to build character and controlled people, then I think, the time has come for parents and teachers to take their responsibility seriously, so that those who will be in charge tomorrow might have something to give us.

Teachers should give example — personal and in school. The way they dress, speak and act is certainly a criteria for the students — they want ideals to look up to, why are we going down to the gutter level? Do we not learn that in adolescence? How many need to learn to control in their lives — not permissive garbage? How many must experiment with drugs because it is the in-thing to do? Have we nobody any more who has guts enough to stand up and be counted? Are we all middle class conformists, and close our eyes to everything, fair, unfair, just or unjust, smut or filth? Why have we de-escalated our standards? Why does everyone hate authority? We all hate control. Yet, we must have it, or else we have chaos. We let the lower standards creep in and we relish the ideals of the gutter, why? Because it is EASIER than having control. It is easier to follow the herd, than being a lonely leader.

I see dissatisfaction around here, I see disputed efforts re grades, I see lack of ambition, I see deviant behaviour — who cares? YOU SHOULD ALL CARE, because each of you is a part of the youth who will some day have to set example for your own children.

We talk about pollution — our minds and hearts are polluted, not with chemical filth but with gutter filth — until we no longer see

anything good around us. All life is not ugly and rotten — there are some wonderful things in life, some real beauty if we just open our eyes to see it and experience it. Maybe if we lived, really lived, we would not be bored. There are all kinds of things to do — volunteer work, in hospitals, in centres for children, right in our own midst, people need friends. Life is creative and beautiful — look at children. Look at flowers — really look at the sunrise and sunset. There is so much that is glorious — why do we deify the sordid? We toss away so quickly those standards that our parents tried to teach us — and we exchange them for the experiences of those who had no control — those who prefer to regress to animal behaviour — free to indulge in anything, and still not happy because lust is insatiable, as well as love, and there is a world of difference. Everyone loves, and wants love, but how many know the meaning of the word? Is love a casual coitus, or is it a deeper experience? Is it all taking and giving nothing, or is it mutual sharing, giving, so as to be a mystical ecstasy? Love is the source of life — you and I were born because of sex — it is beautiful! Let us not degrade everything, even love, the only experience that still makes us humane, and sensitive to the needs of others. We all need to realize we are part of this big universe, a big part, an individual part, and we can make it better or worse. Let us each of us, start with ourselves. We should see tremendous changes around here.

Ed. Note: This article was submitted to the EXCALIBUR signed "an adult student." It was also accompanied by, "Dear Editor, I dare you to print this."

Letters to the Editor

My condition

As an editor of Masada, (Progressive Students for Israel's publication,) I am writing in reply to Al Cappe's letter to EXCALIBUR of March 4, 1971, attacking me for the article I wrote in Masada under the head Teach-in Trauma. (Why Mr. Cappe brought his case to EXCALIBUR instead of to the correct place, Masada, is beyond my comprehension.)

First, I should like to comment on what Mr. Cappe calls "my disturbed condition." I am unaware of Cappe's academic credentials which enable him to pass judgment on my emotional state so freely, however, I suspect that my support of my people's right to national self-determination makes me screwed-up in Cappe's view. In order to be no longer disturbed, I imagine that I should be like Cappe, and hope for the destruction of the Jewish state. I prefer to remain disturbed.

His statement that the Zionist side gets "adequate coverage in the daily press" is ludicrous in its inference that the Arab position is ignored. Both the Globe and the Star give prominent attention to the Arab case (although neither paper demands Israel's destruction); A.C. Forrest and Robert Reguly have consistently condemned Israel in the Star, and even the Toronto Telegram has its anti-Israel specialist in Douglas Fisher. . . Would that Mr. Cappe could read!

We did not participate in the teach-in for reasons that we (along with the Israeli Students Organization) clearly spelled out in leaflets that were distributed before the event. (These are obtainable for those interested in CS 106, Ross.) Furthermore, we have no counterpart at the U of T; any Zionist organization at that campus operates separately and independently of Progressive Students for Israel.

The Trotskyist organizers of the propaganda forum (the word "teach-in" is a blatant misnomer) were informed well before the printing of their pamphlets that we would not take part; thus, their placing of our name on the programme is indeed a "cheap trick."

Cappe's statement that I am on common ground with the "Stalinists in Moscow" is absurd; but then so are his views on the Mid East. I find myself forced to ask why the

Trotskyists, who are so opposed to the Stalinists in Russia, have remained silent about neo-Stalinist incarceration and persecution of Soviet Jewry, and have consistently supported the Arab puppets of the Soviet regime in their desire to wipe out Israel?

Finally, our position in regard to a debate with the Trotskyists is quite simple. We are willing to debate issues on the Mid East crisis. However, it is ridiculous for Cappe et al to expect us to debate the question of Israel's right to exist. Who ever heard of a debate on the question of the Arab's right to exist, or the legitimacy of the Japanese people to their homeland. Similarly, the right of the Jewish people to a sovereign existence is beyond question; as we believe that the same right for the Palestinian Arabs to a national home alongside Israel is a non-debatable point. Borders can be debated, a final peace settlement in the area can be argued about, the viability of a joint economy is a topic for debate, but the right of the Jewish people to a sovereign existence is not to us a moot point.

Mark Michaels
Progressive Students for Israel.

Little hope

I write this letter with little hope of seeing it published in EXCALIBUR. After all what I intend to say is neither fashionable nor particularly pleasant. The truth hurts. Yet it is time that someone was really honest in describing the true nature of the myths about York.

I wish to reply to Paul Axelrod's comments concerning misconceptions of life at York. After paragraphs of rhetoric, liberally laced with emotionalism, Axelrod makes a final plea to York's publicizers to "express themselves openly to students and members of the community about the true nature of York".

And what is this "true nature"? According to Axelrod, it is an "alienating and rapidly deteriorating educational system" which has destroyed class participation, stifled the sense of power of the individual and annihilated any meaning in the daily life of York University.

Thus we find that it is the system — the nasty, power-mad university structure which has created all our ills. It is the

hierarchy which has destroyed initiative. It's the administration that produces Joe "Apathetic" Yorkite who doesn't care as long as he passes. It's the system, of course, that has made student apathy a fashionable attribute. Vanier had no elections this year, solely because of an oppressive organization not disinterested students.

Students — disinterested? Students — actually contributing to the demise of York? What heresy! Students — as cynical as uninspired as the administration described by our all-knowing scribe? Of course not. Don't you agree with Mr. Axelrod that we the students can do no wrong?

Don't fool yourself. Are you going to swallow that line? Just think about it. You're all supposed to be fairly intelligent. Think — then, who it is who's really to blame for apathy and alienation. If you're honest with yourself, you'll realize that it's everyone of you who goes to York and doesn't care. It's everyone who contributes nothing to the York community. It's all you who sit and complain and do nothing more.

So what are you going to do about it? York is, pardon the cliché "only as good as you make it". The first step towards viable university is ceasing to believe that stone-age myth that the powers that be control your fate. Accept the fact that you do affect your destiny. It is, then, your responsibility to get involved, to build up instead of tearing down. Once you leave worn-out myths behind you, learning can be exciting and community at York even better.

Yours in myth-shattering
Pat Dean
Mac. I

Goldilocks dialogue

Entering university is for many a psychological shock. Students have been trained for thirteen years to give school teachers what they want. When confronted with the demands of university professors, they are often at a loss. Take some bewildered student straight out of B.B. King C.I. and plop him down in What Is Reality 131, and you will find:

Prof: Have you read Goldilocks and the Three Bears?

Student: Er, yes.

Prof: Can you give us a brief summary of

the relevance to our modern technological society?

Student: Well, er. . .

Prof: Of course, we know that the bowls of porridge represents more than just porridge. . .

I suggest that what is needed is a preliminary course on university jargon and hidden-meaning-finding. Such a course could be given as part of Orientation Week. Thus the student would be prepared for heavy discussion in his first Humanities tutorial:

Prof: Have you read Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs?

Student: I have indeed and found it existential.

Prof: (interested) What did the book really mean to you? I mean, could you really identify?

Student: I found the concept of Snow White, product of a middle class bourgeois home, finding refuge with members of an underprivileged racial minority, i.e. the dwarfs, an extremely relevant situation to our modern life. The plea for understanding so typical of Mother Goose was here stated most explicitly. Furthermore, I found Prince Charming a real, warm human being.

Prof: (warming up) Don't you feel we sometimes hear things without really listening to them?

Such a course would save valuable time in permitting students to acclimatize themselves before the commencement of classes, instead of the present spectacle of bewildered scholars wandering around until halfway through the year muttering "Jean-Paul Sartre? Who was Jean-Paul Sartre?" I propose it be immediately adopted for the 1971-72 academic year.

Michael Robinson
College F

Life

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring,
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
Brian Wasser.