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those individuals Rand considers to be the most stupid, slothful, and incompetent are not those living in poverty but pseudo-capitalists who work hand-in-glove with governments to take huge grants of tax money or obtain a government-backed monopoly to run all competitors out of business. Pirsch-Steigerwald's use of statistics about women in poverty (in this *non-capitalist, mixed economy*) was a cheap rhetorical device.

5) Pirsch-Steigerwald says she cannot see a difference between public and private coercion. Here's a hint for spotting the difference: if a poor person refuses an offer of employment ("private coercion" in Pirsch-Steigerwald's eyes), he or she can choose to walk away; if any person refuses an "offer" to pay taxes (public coercion), a large man with a uniform and a gun will appear on their doorstep (just try walking away).

I would love to write for several more pages on Pirsch-Steigerwald's errors and misapprehensions but instead I will simply refer her to the extensive interview our club is conducting with Professor Ridpath which should be published soon. In the meantime, if Pirsch-Steigerwald would like to read any of the many Objectivist essays or Ayn Rand novels that she has obviously never seen, I'd be glad to lend her mine... if she promises to read more than a few sentences this time.

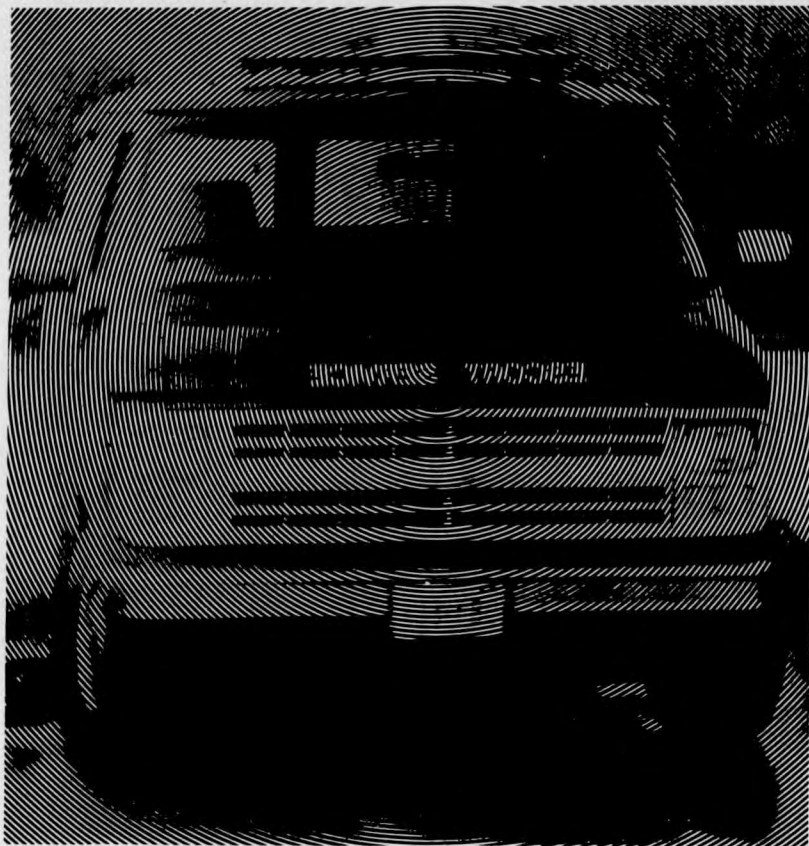
Dan Gardner

York campus not safe

Dear Editor,

This is not a safe campus. If you think it is, you probably don't go to York. The odds are that you will not be aided if you are assaulted on campus. In many areas it is not even likely that you will be heard if you are able to call for help.

The fact that this problem is hardly addressed by the administration is a near criminal outrage. Recently, *Excalibur* printed an article informing us that there is going to be a cutback in the York Escort Service - the York van pick up service is going to be replaced by a paid shuttle bus. The idea of a shuttle bus for money is



Letters continued

offensive. That people on campus should have to pay to be safe is ridiculous. If the administration had its priorities straight, we would have a safe campus before we had an entrance foyer with a huge brass dome, or Wendy's, or Benetton store.

The problem with the Escort Service seems to lie in two areas: money (the problem of the administration) and waiting time (the problem of the users of the service). To rectify the problem I propose a volunteer escort service for the inner campus. The vans could then service the outer regions and edges of the campus more efficiently. The "money" aspect would then not be any sort of an arguable problem. And the waiting time would be considerably less between calling for and getting a ride; less time spent (dangerously) waiting for in the dark. Setting up a volunteer service should not be giving the administration the idea that they can do whatever they want, whenever they want, or that they can ignore the problem. We, as students and faculty, should demand training be provided

for the escorts - not only in defence, but in the problem itself.

In addition to this, we also need to demand better lighting on this campus. We need to demand that there not be any unsafe spots. We need to demand constant and complete security on the campus. As things stand, York University is leaving our safety to chance. If we do not try to rectify this problem then we are giving the message we don't care about it.

There is a lot of talk on campus regarding this. But complaining without doing is only a small step from apathy. We can not let this be a passing issue, it needs to be addressed and changed. If you have any ideas regarding this, and want to help rectify the problem, please contact me through the YSF offices and use the school papers as a medium for discussion of the issue as well.

Think about it.
Jeff Clayton

Commodified campuses

Dear Editor,

In this year's "YFS Student Handbook" and in recent issues of the 'Excalibur' we learn about different

issues students at York should be concerned about. We hear about and continue to experience the rising cost of education in the form of tuition increases, taxation of student loans and higher parking fees. We have noticed the university's eagerness to 'develop' our campus by establishing a shopping centre (York Lanes) and by promoting the urbanisation of the campus area as a whole (the subway loop being central to the latter idea). Finally, we are informed about the changing mandate of York University and the increasing specialisation of the curriculum at the expense of the more interdisciplinary aspirations of 'liberal arts' (as proposed in the "Green Paper in Enrolment").

Of course, these three issues have very much to do with the economic and political restructuring of North American and Western European societies since the 1970's. Confronted with declining growth rates, rising unemployment and the economic transnationalization, nation-states face "structural deficits". While states (such as Canada), have exacerbated this trend by relieving the corporate tax burden at the expense of average workers, they have also individualized, reduced or eliminated social programmes. Declining funding for universities is then expressed in rising tuition (in Canada), enrolment quotas or higher entry requirements (in different European countries) and the involvement of universities in alternative, profit-related fundraising activities.

This indirect privatization of public education has even other dimensions: First, in times of heightened international competition, it becomes ever more important for companies to have direct access to subsidized research undertaken at universities in order not to lose their competitive edge in 'core' technologies. Also, such companies crave for (limited numbers) of highly qualified, versatile university graduates. Preferred are, of course, students which feature "social responsibility" rather than "political correctness", technical flexibility instead of critical, holistic thinking.

Second, nation-states have to compete for investment and deliver "sound finance" while being unable to maintain and deliver high levels of domestic economic cohesion. Being 'accountable' to transnational capitalism rather than the rhetoric of 'evenly' distributed growth, they not only resort to repressive measures

(against trade unions, for examples), but they also try to shield themselves against political discontent. Emphasizing patriarchal family values and discouraging critical thinking are well-suited for this purpose. And finally, continued economic instability forces companies to search for new investment outlets. Ever more areas of social life (education, health, the environment, university life) are commercialized and thereby transformed into realms of passive consumption.

In other words, expensive tuition, fragmented curricula and commodified campuses are not only the effects of the Tory-agenda but also of neo-liberal forces which transcend the boundaries of political parties. In any event, they render university education more elitist and discourage independent, critical and interdisciplinary thinking. Are we really willing to accept universities which reinforce social polarization, de-politicize consciousness and foster inter-personal competition? At stake is not simply the concept of 'liberal arts' but the prospect of progressive political praxis.

Stefan Kipler

Grad student wants control

Dear Editor,

Re: "Health care fee insults student" letter in September 18 edition."

The author of the above letter was required to pay a \$60 mandatory health insurance fee.

As a graduate student, I am forced to pay \$70.79 for health insurance. If I want a refund of my money (and note that it is my money), I have to prove to the Graduate Students Association that I have medical coverage beyond OHIP. Since when is that any of their business? At what point in my life does the GSA think that I will be grown up enough to decide for myself what medical insurance I have?

I understand that there will be a referendum on this in November. I expect that the propaganda machine will be out in full force, telling students how the GSA is providing this wonderful service for only \$70.79. Don't be fooled. This is just another form of taxation.

Yours very truly,
David Schachow

ATTENTION STUDENTS

Undergraduates in the Faculties of Administrative Studies, Arts, Education, Environmental Studies, Fine Arts, Pure and Applied Science:

If you paid a minimum of \$75 towards your fees before August 17, 1991 (or received a York University Scholarship), your Sessional Validation Card was mailed to your mailing address.

If you paid your fees after that date, your Sessional Validation Card was not mailed to you. You may pick it up at the Registrar's Office, C130 West Office Building, between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. (Monday-Friday), upon presentation of identification.

Glendon College Students:

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Osgoode Hall Law School Students:

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In order to protect the security of York University examinations, students must present a piece of acceptable photo identification in addition to their current Sessional Validation Card when writing a York University examination.

Acceptable photo identification include: a current Canadian driver's license; an Ontario (or other provincial authority) Photo-Identification Card (Age of Majority Card); your current passport; a Canadian Citizenship Card (with a current photograph).

TTC METROPASSES ARE NO LONGER ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF PHOTO-IDENTIFICATION AT YORK UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS.

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