

Racist letters should be seen

Dear Editor,

Osgoode Hall Council members were wrong to fire two editors of *Obiter Dicta*, and law students should be ashamed to let the injustice stand.

Clearly, the editors printed the anonymous, racist letter Feb. 10 without malice. Their goal was not destructive. They tried to show students that racist attitudes persist. Why should only a clutch of editors witness racism: if attitudes are to change, we need to see it, recognize it and respond in ways which don't let it happen again.

Hiding racism pretends it doesn't exist. Racism won't go away quickly or

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easily. Publishing racist letters under banners that say "Hey, this is a racist letter! Look how ignorant some people are!" is an excellent way to teach people that racism still exists. People can respond to the letter.

Of course, some people will be offended. Sometimes real life is too unbelievable; but to release two editors for progressive action is foolish. It does not create a healthy climate for discussion. It's like parents who shelter their kids from the evils of the world.

Eventually, however, they'll have to grow up.

Sincerely,
James Mackinnon, and
Alisa Gordaneer, Co-editors, and
Derek McNaughton,
Ruben Anderson, writers,
The Martlet, University of Victoria

Articles not educational

Dear Editor,

Re: "Excal helping expose the truth" (*Excalibur*, Feb. 12/92)

I, Alexandre Sévigny, have nothing but respect for the African cause. It is very true that Africans have been the victims of racism in the past and continue to be so in the present. All I was suggesting, was that the nature of the articles which *Excalibur* had been publishing was more confrontational than educational.

To solve the problem of systemic racism, we must work together, Africans and Whites and Chinese and Japanese and Native Canadians, etc., until equity is achieved amongst the offenders. To make statements like: "They are the ones who manufacture and practice and preach racism as a religion" is perhaps true for a minority of racist Whites, but slanderous towards the vast majority of Whites, Whites like myself, who recognize the beautiful concept of Canada, its multi-culturality and openness. This, Omond Obanda, is an example of the type of comment that I was criticizing *Excalibur* for publishing.

To pursue the point: Do you not realize, Omond Obanda, that there exists much racism within the White community itself, towards French Canadians, for example? I have seen many French Canadian victims of systematic racism, and therefore, applaud whenever any particular group of people breaks down a "glass wall" that divides Canadians.

I have been to pro-equality rallies for Africans, Women, and Students That Suffer because of High Tuition Fees, and shouted for equality. I have even addressed what I construed as being an anti-Francophone illustration in one of the summer issues of *Excalibur*. Do not, Omond Obanda, accuse me of incredulosity, unremorsefulness, and being uncomfortable around those who struggle for equality and justice.

On the contrary! I understand and

empathize with the causes of those who fight for their rights and the rights of future generations, and that is why, Omond Obanda, I cannot accept your gross misinterpretation of my letter!

Alexandre Sévigny

Critique of *Existere* unfair

Dear Editor,

Liz Flagal should rewrite her shoddy article on student literary magazines in *Excal* Feb. 26. The article claims to 'compare' the second issue of *Existere* with *Acta victoriana* and the *U.C. Review*, but instead she offers her own weak opinions on 'literature' without qualifying them.

Flagal makes the general assumption that many of the writers in *Existere* are 'entrenched within themselves' because they write in the first person. That sure sounds great but it's pretty difficult to prove and Flagal doesn't even try.

Did Flagal read the same issue of *Existere* that did? Did she read it at all? I found this issue a breath of fresh air as far as *Existere* is concerned. The cover photo is of a goofy, 'Mod Squad' type character. Is that pretentious? Farhad Desai uses slapstick humour to deal with race relations in his short story and Patrick Pautler's cover of a caveman/priest - pretentious? And what about Zaffi Gousopoulous' 'Captain Kirk' poem and the excerpt from the bad poetry book, a poem called 'if elvis was a goalie?' Flagal writes, "Despite their efforts, it is unlikely *Existere* will be able to shake its tainted image." Excuse me, but it seems to me that they're on the right track and the third issue has made even greater gains, I've given examples. She didn't.

Flagal says that *Existere* has 'added new artistic elements, like art and photography.' *Existere* had been publishing this stuff for years - had Flagal even seen a copy of the magazine before?

Even though she mentions that these magazines are 'a great resource for artists and writers trying to get their first break,' she fails to mention that *Existere* has a section that announces contests and lists other publications that accept work - and I'm sure the other magazines have something similar.

Flagal's criticisms of *U.C. Review* also seemed to 'fall flat, missing their targets.' She accuses the first poem of being 'so intellectual that the reader will lose interest.' So intellectual? I lose interest if something is boring or poorly written - I don't think that I've encountered anything that is 'too intellectual', what ever that means.

The paragraphs on the U of T magazine show promise but most of the article is a mess. Ms. Flagal's criticisms would have been more constructive had she directed them towards her own article - she is too concerned with her own opinions about 'art', she fails to back up her criticisms with substance and doesn't do any comparison at all. The people who work on *Existere* are hard working volunteers and they deserve solid criticism.

Sincerely,
Brett Lamb
Production Manager, *Existere*

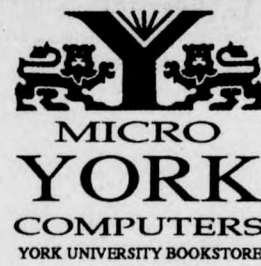
Men's article out of order

Dear Editors,

I was rather surprised to find Darren Wilson's article "The door marked 'Men Also'" lurking in the pages of the International Women's Day supplement. Wilson seems to think that the Women's Movement is so lacking in political sophistication that we cannot do without his "realistic male perspective."

He complains that here at York, he as been subject to "male-bashing." I am curious to know what he means by this statement. Has he been physically attacked, harassed or threatened? I doubt

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