

## LETTERS

cont'd from p. 4

large, unified and militant student response. This response can grow out of the OFS if it continues to organize rallies such as Monday's as opposed to a strategy of lobbying. The success of this movement will depend on the number of students who become actively involved. If CYSF is serious about confronting the major economic problems facing students today it should have wholeheartedly promoted the protest. There is simply no way that CYSF can extract more money from the government on its own. If OFS tends toward a passive, lobbying strategy it too may fail. If it continues to attempt to organize an active movement, however, it will stand an immeasurably better chance than a small group of student government bureaucrats. Nevertheless, the construction of a movement will require the support of student governments, CYSF included. The least it could have done was poster and spread information about the rally. A more active orientation could have included organizing buses and approaching the administration to have classes cancelled.

If we are not vocal in our demands we will all soon be faced with large tuition increases and ever poorer living conditions. If a successful movement is to be built it will require the support of all the students and their councils across the province. At present, the sectarian spirit of the York council is contributing to the government's inertia and neglect.

Jeff Noonan

## Alternative teachings

After attending York for two months, I have found that, contrary to the liberal arts spirit extolled by Murray Ross on the exterior of the Ross Building, there appears to exist two styles of courses available to students: traditional and alternative.

Traditional curricula entail courses which are well-defined — professedly concrete and seemingly constrained within walls fashioned by accepted beliefs.

David Lertzman, a psychology teaching assistant, describes these courses as "presentations of the mechanistic world."

I am confronted with four such courses in my first year. Many economics, political science, history, psychology, sociology, mathematics and accounting courses belong to the traditional genre as well.

Alternative-style courses offer a more open-minded, tentative, and creative academic base. A great portion of these courses hang on the ridge of extinction. Such courses may fall under all headings already listed under traditional courses, but they simply offer unique or different perspectives.

Why should such courses be offered then? One TA suggests that they allow the student the "luxury to imagine other worlds." After all, isn't this what liberal education means?

I questioned students at York and the University of Toronto and found that many favour traditional courses because they are straightforward, and exams tend to have questions with specified right or wrong answers. This, no doubt, makes it easier to achieve higher marks — a desired result for those wishing to pursue graduate studies. As a substantial number of students aspire to graduate school, many who are confronted with alternative-style courses are initially very apprehensive.

For instance, a sociology course I sat in on at York has abandoned the normal textbook used in that year — and one which is also used at Western and U of T. In its place, classical novels were implemented to provide a different perspective. Many students are sceptical about the course.

Their reaction seems to bring to light the two ways that students view traditional and alternative courses. Traditional courses are construed as normal, and alternative courses are looked upon as radical.

Psychology Professor Chris

Holmes, who teaches Mysticism, won't be back at York next year because his courses have not been validated by the Psychology Undergraduate Committee.

Holmes said that his courses are "derived from ancient, esoteric traditions [which] . . . actually formed the framework upon which [traditional] theory is based."

Student comments on the course were anything but derisive. In fact, students seemed to love the courses, although initially they felt uncertain about the material. Holmes further said that existing traditional courses threaten liberal education.

In response to the Holmes situation, Lertzman concluded "it is ridiculous to accept the fruits of [historically based theories] and reject the tree."

After interviews with several alternative-oriented professors and

TAs, I was angry and vengeful. I resolved to find out why the administrators perpetuate such injustices on some of York's open-minded instructors.

I tracked down a traditional professor in order to establish reasons for this situation. John Ridpath, an Economics and Social Science Professor, was not fully opposed to alternative courses but, as with everything, he said certain "parameters" are necessary to focus courses and keep them within reasonable boundaries. In his mind, unleashed open-mindedness leads to an anarchistic academic climate.

Moreover, a university is not a completely self-perpetuating institution. It relies on money contributed by society's taxpayers and corporations. If courses are allowed to become increasingly inclined toward an alternative style, benefactors will

raise more than just a whimper.

It is not a simple situation, and it is difficult to point the finger at anyone. Nevertheless, Professor Ridpath suggested that we are in a situation where "students are the main consumers of education." He added, however, in economic terms, that it is a suppliers' market.

The battle between traditional and alternative courses is far from over. We as consumers must decide what we want to learn; we must not be misguided and idealistic in this quest, though. Institutions and people must work together to construct a compromise. At present, we are indoctrinated to accept the status quo, but how much bearing do students have on such powerful interplays between society's institutions? Are we qualified and entitled to defy the present situation?

Trevor Rosenberg

## YORKDEX

Amount of flour, in pounds, York's Food Services used in the 1986/87 academic year: 93,972

Amount of sugar, York's Food Services used in the 1986/87 academic year: 81,212

Loaves of bread York's Food Services used in the 1986/87 academic year: 161,215

Amount of meat, in pounds, York's Food Services used in 1986/87 academic year: 210,184

Portions of milk served at York's Food Services in the 1986/87 academic year: 845,308

Number of packaged sandwiches eaten at York's Food Services in the 1986/87 academic year: 142,178

Approximate number of employees working in Food Services: 125

Per annum labour cost for Food Services: approx. \$1.2 million

Annual sales of Food Services in the 1986/87 academic year: \$5.5 million

Number of full-time parking control officers employed at York: 21

Number of York students employed as part-time parking attendants: 14

Average cost of a one-bedroom apartment listed by York's Off-Campus Housing Service in August and September: \$600

Number of apartment units lost each year in Metro: 1,200

Approximate number of people York's Health Services sees in a year: 8,700

# HATS OFF TO ALL THE FREE PASS WINNERS!

## A NATURAL SELECTION OF HAPPY STUDENT TRAVELLERS!

### Congratulations to the winners of VIA FREE Unlimited Travel Passes:

University of Ottawa  
Danielle Fournel  
University of Sherbrooke  
Micheline Brousseau  
University of Québec in Montréal  
Luc Bélanger  
University of Western Ontario  
Margaret Ho  
York University  
(to be announced)  
Ryerson College  
Jennifer King  
Queen's University  
David Meabowes  
University of Waterloo  
Marie Sedivy  
University of Guelph  
Nancy Veehny  
McMaster University  
Niel Levine

University of B.C.  
Laurie Brown  
University of Alberta  
Lisa Sokoluk  
University of Montréal  
Isabel St-Pierre  
Laval University  
Jean-Guy Gauthier  
Moncton University  
Mario Leonard  
Mt. Allison University  
Alexandria Tao  
University of Québec in Rimouski  
André Lévesque  
St-François Xavier University  
Tim McCann  
Acadia University  
Brenda Gupta  
Dalhousie University  
Robert Speirs

St-Mary's University  
Mark Hamilton  
Bishop's University  
Suzanne Muigati  
Concordia University  
Pat Archer  
McGill University  
Gavin Downing  
Carleton University  
Tamara Stephens  
Trent University  
Joanne Henrico  
University of Toronto  
Ian Johansen  
Brack University  
Edmund Lee  
Wilfrid Laurier University  
David Broad

University of Windsor  
Tricia Frizzell  
Laurentian University  
(to be announced)  
Lakehead University  
Noel Keag  
University of Manitoba  
Coleen Peters  
University of Winnipeg  
Matt Brown  
Univ. of Saskatchewan  
Rob Chartier  
University of Calgary  
David Francoeur  
Simon Fraser University  
James Glave

C. DARWIN

At 33% OFF\*, VIA is always a winner way to travel for the student species!



Registered trademark of VIA Rail Canada Inc.

Take the train. There's nothing quite like it!™

™Trademark of VIA Rail Canada Inc.



\* Student discount not applicable on Fridays and Sundays between 12:00-18:00 hours for intercity trips (Quebec-Windsor) corridor, and (Halifax-Fredericton), (Moncton-Cambellton) services except when travelling to a station outside above territories, AND not applicable on all train services from December 18, 1988 to January 4, 1989.

