

Excalibur

Everything secret degenerates; nothing is safe that does not show it can bear discussion and publicity
— Lord Acton

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You can't please everyone, all the time

Well, yes, that editorial on CYSF last issue did tend to rake our allies over the coals, and that cartoon was sort of hard on York's recruitment programme . . .

And come to think of it, that nasty caption about residence students burning their Versafood vouchers did lapse a bit into exaggeration, and I suppose that crack about algae in the Scott Library pools may have discouraged a few waders.

No argument about that orientation article, either — I mean, it didn't paint York's week as the whirlwind of dance and song that it truly was — and even less argument about that myths column, which callously undercut more than one wet dream . . .

And those true rumours . . . yes, well, of course, and that CYSF column may have been the teeniest bit dry, and that talk about complicated CYSF matters like incorporation and publication boards — I mean, who really cares?

And all that talk about John Yolton and the duck. I mean, who's to say she wasn't a consenting adult? And after all, the five girls on the radiator were members of the Sisterhood.

Besides which, we went a bit far in supposing that the 15 bodies huddled under the blanket in the Senate chamber were doing anything naughty, just because the hog was leased from the S.P.C.A., and the collapse of the Ross Building archway shouldn't necessarily implicate the builders, though the presence of silly putty seemed the teeniest bit unusual.

And those complaints we received about our feature on the two-way mirrors in the Behavioural Sciences Building were more than justified. After all, just because a 16 mm. camera and four reels of film were found after that transactional analysis class . . .

But of course we can't sign off without

apologizing to Versafoods again for that hideous mess we made of reporting their menu, although it was hard to tell what lay behind the steamed glass, what with the smell and all, and those squirming tidbits did bear a startling resemblance to decapitated worms, but —

Well, naturally we can't defend that parking article. The cars may have had their licence plates removed, and that official may have been scraping off the serial numbers and giving them a quick spray paint job, but those students who complained about their cars being towed

away and not returned were surely barking up the wrong tree.

And to all in general — that nice lady in the servery was totally innocent, the pitchfork was nowhere in sight, and the goose had nothing to do with it.



Is a student union building really necessary?

It's frightening to realize how closely the York campus conforms to the original architect's plans, drawn up at the Glendon campus ten years ago.

With the exception of the Calumet residence — given to Bethune College because Calumet was holding out for town-houses — every

building, tree and light socket on this campus is precisely where the planners said it should be.

Somebody in the department of campus planning has made sure that his vision of York in 1980 will become a reality, and that raises one important question — what next?

Since the Ontario government has placed a freeze on funds for new buildings, most of the future additions have been either postponed or abandoned. But one item on the agenda, the York University Community Centre — commonly referred to as the Student Union Building — may now be in line for some "private" funding from the Council of the York Student Federation.

For the record, the contents proposed in the original plan include:

- a large acoustically designed theatre for two to three thousand people.

- a large cafeteria complex for about 800 people.

- one or two smaller quality licensed restaurants with banquet room facilities.

- a health centre consisting of medical, dental and psychological services, and the student clinic.

- student newspaper and Yearbook offices.

- a community broadcast centre consisting of AM and FM radio broadcast stations, and an educational/community television station.

- offices for student, faculty, alumni and staff associations.

- club offices for all university-wide organizations.

- hotel service for the York community and its guests.

- a large student pub with a capacity for 500 to 1,000 people.

- an art gallery specializing in the paintings and sculpture created by members of the York community.

In the department of campus planning's 1963 study, York University Campus 1980, the authors decided that this Shangri-la would be "located in the central core of the campus", probably between Osgoode and Atkinson. The building would be a "combination of low and high rise construction with a gross floor area of 175,000 square feet".

The centre would offer bowling alleys and television watching rooms, although many of the study's other suggestions — such as "the President's penthouse suite used for entertaining guests" and "music listening rooms and reading rooms" — have already been incorporated in the Scott library and the Ross Humanities Building.

While such a dream factory seems desirable, it raises an interesting question. York was originally intended as a "noble experiment", with a unique set-up called the college system, designed to deal with students in groups of 1,000, rather than a block of 20,000.

Where, however, does the college

system fit into a campus with two central lecture hall buildings, a central cafeteria, a central library, a central administration building where the university president and a central council for York students have their offices, and a central student union building with all necessary amenities?

The more one studies the situation, the more one realizes — whatever rationales can be made about letting the colleges carry on their own activities — that the architects of the college system and those of the Student Union Building were working at cross-purposes.

As it stands even now, only resident students and the very loyal choose the college common rooms over the Library and the Central Square bear-pits.

Perhaps before the CYSF hammers the final nail into the coffin of the college system with the construction of the Student Union Building, it should pause for breath and try to figure out in which direction the social framework of the university is heading.

It's all well and good to leave the college system behind and brand it a noble failure, but it would make even more sense to blueprint a replacement system to aim for, before the campus drowns in a forest of monoliths with no sense of purpose or identity.

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