

EDITORIAL

Flying in the face of York's principles

It's a scene all too familiar to Psychology majors. You walk into a packed classroom at the beginning of term with not a step — let alone a seat — to be found. For a course slated with a limit of 150, there's easily 200 students. The professor then informs the class that all unenrolled students in the course might as well leave. No one moves. And for the first three weeks students are scrambling to find a comfortable place to sit in order to properly hear the lecture.

And then the lecture ends. Students immediately crowd the departing professor with the faint hope of getting the course director's signature, which guarantees course enrolment. Some are successful, too many are not. By mid-October though, the class is back at its original maximum capacity, a number which in many cases is far too high.

The current philosophy behind the liberal arts education is based on accessibility: offer the students a number of diverse course, and give them the freedom to determine their course of study. It was no coincidence that this philosophy was borne out of the '60s, a time when post secondary institutions had a seemingly never-ending supply of government funds.

In the '80s, the story of university underfunding is all too well-known. The government policy of allowing any student with a 60 per cent average an opportunity to get a university education is now a pipe dream. Accessibility is itself slowly becoming a myth. And the entire accessibility philosophy upon which York was founded is ironically one of the major causes for the deteriorating quality of education in this university.

Earlier this month, the Faculty of Arts released its academic plan which among other things announced that the Faculty intends to ration access to the Mass Communications and Psychology Departments. In essence, it's a step which flies in the face of York's founding principles. Unfortunately, the Faculty has no choice.

Unrestrained access to the Mass communications and Psychology Departments have punished these programmes. As the faculty of Arts Dean Tom Traves stated, the programme's current resources do not "enable them to meet all of their faculty's and students' expectations for course selection, advising and attention." Essentially, the Faculty of Arts faces two options: maintain the status quo, or curb the number of people entering these programmes.

The Psychology Department has yet to formulate their policy. But Mass Communications Co-ordinator Fred Fletcher said that his Department has devised a scheme where students will require a B average in their core courses, or a B average in their first two Mass Communications courses in order to proceed into first year.

If this policy was implemented, a substantial number of Mass Communication students would be ineligible to proceed in the programme. But what about those students who have a genuine interest in the subject matter and not in gaining admissions to a professional programme? And what about those students that don't blossom until their third year?

While reality dictates the needs of such a move, the Faculty must still be sensitive to such circumstances. Hopefully, when the policy is implemented it will benefit the majority of students in these programmes.



We will publish, space permitting, letters under 250 words. They must be typed, triple-spaced, accompanied by writer's name and phone number. We may edit for length. Libellous material will be rejected. Deliver to 111 Central Square during business hours.

LETTERS

Prof's letter: unbecoming

Dear Sir,
I am writing in response to Professor Newman's letter to the Editor, "Misusing the American Flag."
Dear Professor:

I do not wish to discuss the Liberty Coalition but I wish to tell you that I thought your remarks were rather nasty and unbecoming of an Associate Professor of Political Science.

I will agree with you that the US flag is a symbol of the United States. That is about all I will agree with you on. The first major point I wish to disagree with is when you say, "free to choose, we might opt for some alternative economic system." Why do you say this? Why would the US opt for a different system? The one they have now is working very well indeed!

In your second point you stated that capitalism is so entrenched in the United States that we really have no choice but to accept it. Here you make your first big mistake. You forget that it is also a Democratic society, and in such a system the government reflects the peoples wishes. The US is capitalist because the people (voters) want it to be. A capitalist (read democratic) country can vote to "change its economic system" but non-capitalist countries cannot vote to change themselves into capitalist ones.

Your second mistake is in saying there are "problems concerning the nature of our freedom under conditions of inequality engendered by capitalism." This is simply not true! It sounds catchy and "progressive" but please spare me from rhetoric.

Finally, I do not see the Liberty Coalition abusing the American flag. They are not burning it, they are not pissing on it, and they are not tearing it apart. They are using it as a symbol. A symbol promoting the only viable socio-economic system in which we are free, have rights (also the right to change the system), and the pursuit of happiness.

Jerry Jorritsma

Who's that CHRY guy?

Dear Editor,
On the front page of the November 7 edition of *Excalibur* there is a picture of me, David Ackerman. I am flattered that you chose me for the cover of your paper, sharing space with Simon Reisman. No doubt it must have been your most popular issue to date.

The headline read "Doyle dispute sees light." Then below the photo the outline read "CHRY and John Doyle may settle their month-old dispute through a proposed mediation process." Nowhere is there a mention of my name. The conclusion one draws from this photo is that it is one of

John Doyle. I normally would not be bothered by this, except only yesterday I was mistaken for Doyle.

In future, please be more careful, you could offend someone.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

David Ackerman

Pave a path to Stedman

To the Editor:
Why has the physical plant not paved the well-trod path between Stedman and Founders and the path between Petrie and the Gym?

John Buttrick
Economics

What about that money?

Dear Editor,
With all the recent attention given to the firing of CHRY's News Director, there has been no news about Radio York's well-publicized fund-raising drive.

As a member of the York community, I am anxious to know exactly how much money was pledged, how much as actually been collected and how that money is going to be spent. Does anybody know?

Yours,
Nancy Sperling-Rosen

e x c a l i b u r

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