

FEATURES

York at night: shadow play

Clifton Joseph

There is an all-too-easy stereotype idea of what York is like after the end of classes and the regular business day.

To many it's as if the place changes into a wasteland of concrete and empty space. For the majority of those people who go south to their homes until another school day, the reality of the University pales away into clouded visions of isolation: of crowdless, grey corridors and hallways reflecting a silent blandness; or dark, empty classrooms whose only sign of life are the constant, heavy ticking of clocks; of residences filled with foreign students and country bumpkins who glue clannishly to their studies; of winding roads and huge, empty parking lots that are conspicuous in the emptiness.

The geographical location of York lends itself to this conception. Situated on the city's northern limits, it is far enough from the throbbings of downtown Toronto for it to be considered another place. However real the physical isolation might be though, life at York in the night time is not as clichéd as many may think. For instance, when regular classes

finish and full time students thin out, part time students are the population. They constitute 40 per cent of the 24,000 registered students at York, and for them life at York begins at night.

Milford Jones is a computer programmer for a large financial firm downtown. He is doing a part time MBA degree and has been commuting to school two nights a week for the past two years: "When I rush to York from work I usually have an hour before class, so I am either in the library or having a coffee in the cafeteria. I get to meet other students that way. After class sometimes we go upstairs to the (Graduate Students') pub. I don't have the time for much else. What else is there anyway?"

mature clientele

The part time students' departure from the campus somewhere around ten o'clock presents the last major exodus from the compound. From that point onwards into the night, the bulk of people are those who live in the various college residences. In fact, those who live at Assiniboine and Moon Roads (along with late commuters) make up the majority of the clientele at the seventh floor pub. It usually has a more mature

clientele and with its recorded music, colour T.V., constant conversations, and sometimes live-music is a focal point of activity in the Ross Building. Its patrons are not just a crew of 'rum-heads'. There are hardly any incidents of drunken behaviour and unlike many pubs, there are no visible bouncers. Many take in the atmosphere and converse with their friends. Kwame Abasnago, by his own admission, is a regular.

"I come here for relaxation and to meet my friends," he says. "I like the atmosphere. And there isn't much else happening in the night time."

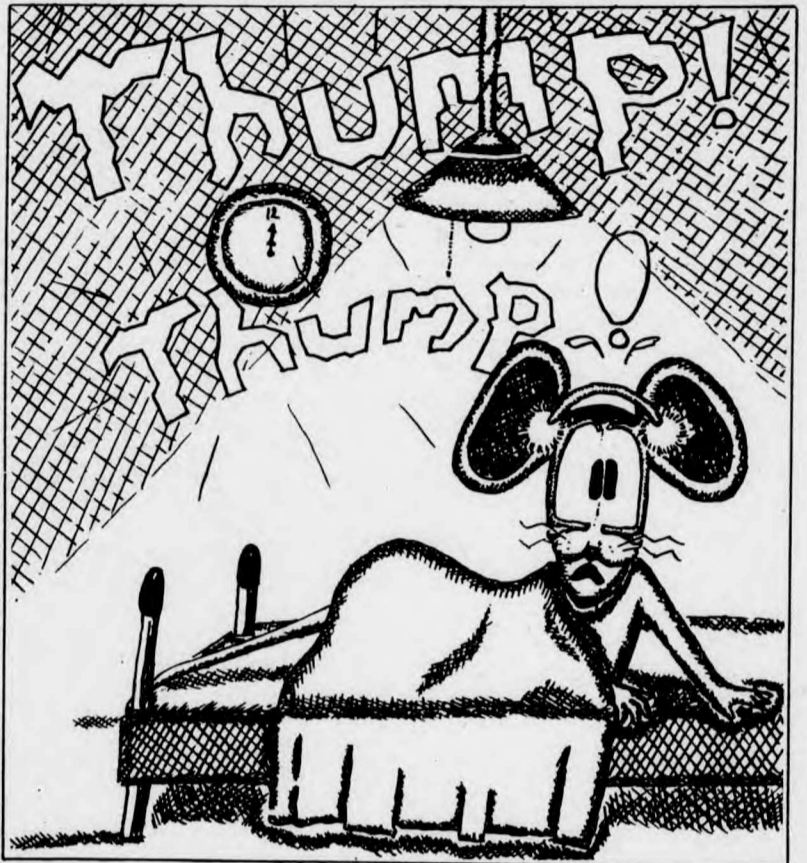
Not much else except the movies. The Reel and Screen and Bethune Movies provide the celluloid entertainment on campus. The weekends are usually filled with recent box-office hits, European genre films, and specialty entries. The Reel and Screen recently experimented and combined two movies with reggae scores with live musical entertainment provided by the Yorktones Steelband: "If there is success" manager Howard Hacker promised at the time, "we will turn it into a regular feature."

From Central Square there is a tunnel that leads to the Vanier-Founders-MacLaughlin-Winters complex and here in this kaleidoscope maze there is modern graffiti art ranging from the cartoonish to the realistic. In this z-shaped mural, many express themselves in fits of spontaneous (and sometimes poetic) inspiration. There are humorous couplets: "Got a gun in my holster got a horse between my knees, and I'm going to Arizona pardon me if you please", brief statements of happiness, "Pictures make my life so wonderful," and those that just stand out at you, "I was a punk before you were a punk, now I'm just fucked up," and "Do you know who you are? Do you care?"

The colleges have their own games rooms and pubs. The gamesrooms are usually filled with dedicated pool players and pinball groupies. Winters and Bethune are the most popular for these. Bethune has line-ups and there is almost always a steady stream of space-age sounds coming from its machines.

Of the pubs The Cock & Bull and especially the Open End are the top contenders. Both draw crowds and at times have to turn people away. Inside the residences themselves, the activities are low keyed. There are many foreign students, out-of-towners, and Toronto residents who find it more convenient to live on campus. Winters has a floor that has a group of girlfriends who came together from the same high school. They plan and generate their own activities and excitement. The colleges sometimes stage productions that are open to the general public. MacLaughlin Hall recently premiered York playwright Graham Smith's play, *The Incomparables in Africa*. The play, when it finishes at York will go downtown to the Tarragon Theatre.

With all of this activity there are still groups of residents who find York at night a dreary, uneventful experience. There is the dance major from Montreal who has no nice words for the campus. All of the activities, he contends, are just substitutes and failed substitutes at that. For



Alec Rutgers

him the isolation of the campus is too much. After a week of classes he says, he has an irresistible calling to go south into the city. Hardly anything will change his views.

York at night then, remains a

bitter-sweet experience. One has to forget about the imposed isolation of the location. Many do. One has to locate a groove and hook into it. Many do. The activities are there and so is the choice.

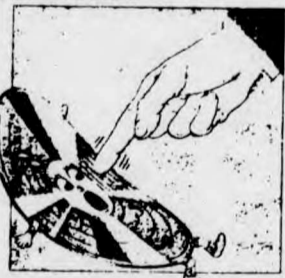
Soundproof plays on

Stuart Roebuck

Ian Pedley, co-manager of the Soundproof record store, contends it "was not designed to rip people off."

Pedley's contention is seconded by partner John Wright who claims "album for album we're the cheapest record store in Canada." Both are referring to the York University record store which stocks popular discs at inexpensive prices at an extremely convenient on-campus location. It is a student organized, student staffed, non-profit business which was brought into existence chiefly due to the combined efforts of Wright and Denise Lackey.

Faced with constant losses from the used book store, the new student administration at York sought a more functional and productive alternative for the use of that prime real estate. The record store idea seemed the most feasible, especially when one takes into consideration the veritable dirt of record outlets conveniently accessible to York students. Consequently, on June 1, 1981 the record store idea became a reality. Pedley is in charge of store layout, upkeep and the ordering of albums while co-manager John Wright is responsible for the store's books and it's staff.



Although non-profit, the store must nonetheless earn approximately \$2,000 a year to cover its overhead. This figure, although beyond Soundproof's grasp this year, is predicted to be attainable within the next two to three years. The \$2,000 goal is based on current operating expenses which includes staff wages, album orders and most importantly rental payments. Soundproof presently pays 2% of its gross to the University and \$166 per month to the Excalibur whose space they sublet. This leasing agreement is due to expire in the near future and both Pedley and Wright fear the advent of a substantial rent increase. An increase in payments must necessarily result in a proportionate increase in album prices in order for Soundproof to remain viable. Any

substantial escalation in record pricing would be contrary to the student-service orientation of the store which seeks to maintain the lowest possible record price. Therefore, it appears Soundproof may find itself in quite a bind should an imminent rent increase prove a reality.

requests available

Wright states, "the average markup per record is 20%, although greater bargains can be found in the bins." The selection and number of records to choose from at these relatively inexpensive prices is quite good for such a small store. In addition to records, Soundproof sells a selection of cards and posters as well as offering a mini-pinball arcade.

Unlike large chains, Soundproof must order a narrower selection of records in smaller quantities — thereby eliminating the benefits of bulk buying. Sunrise Record's Ken Stowar understood the circumstances surrounding the establishment of Soundproof and agreed to stock Soundproof on reasonable terms in the quantities they desired. Despite its size, the problem that might arise should the record you desire not be available has been conveniently skirted by the availability of order request forms. Each Wednesday Pedley orders his weekly selection from Sunrise and providing your request is in by then, odds are the album you're looking for will be available by Friday. This type of accommodation of the student-customer is characteristic of the service Soundproof hopes to offer to the York community.

A brief comparison shopping trip, designed either to substantiate or refute Soundproof's claim to be the lowest sticker prices on regularly priced records, was conducted at one very reasonably priced Yonge-Bloor store. In order to embrace a representative sample of the available record selections such (unknown to me) standard greats as "The Stranglers: The Men in Black" and "Uriah Heep: Salisbury" as well as some more staid and conservative discs such as "Neil Young: After the Gold Rush" and "The Best of the Beatles 1967-70" were compared. Transportation costs included (bus fare) Soundproof's prices were on the average 25% lower on regularly priced albums. Excluding transportation costs Soundproof remained 15% less expensive — not to mention 100% more convenient.

Film society faces cuts

Mike Guy

Last year Clay Sandercock formed the York Film Students Association to address issues of the following nature: student representation on film committees, complaints about the kinds of films made at York, the quality of teaching and the availability of facilities and public presentation of completed films.

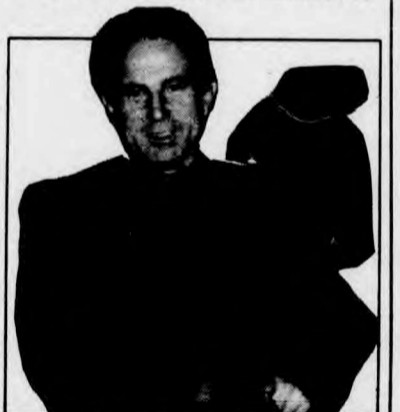
With these issues in mind, Sandercock approached the Council of the York Student Federation. They informed him that to enlist their support he would have to convert his organization from a club to an association. The logic here was that an association involves itself with political events; a club involves social events, i.e.: Card playing or dances.

Once established, YFSA tackled the issue of course evaluation at the end of last year. Sandercock said "both the film students and the film instructors devised the course evaluation forms." Thus, the film department supported the idea of course evaluations. Having the department's backing, the YFSA distributed copies "to

interested in teaching and seemed to be preoccupied by other interests" might have been a contributing factor in the annoyance of the professors.

Lawrence did not view this controversy as a major issue to him, "it's quite proper to have course evaluations, but a problem develops when one tries to put the information together. The results get misconstrued."

"Instead of pressuring us," said Sandercock, "those instruc-



Dean Lawrence of Fine Arts

tors bothered by the results of the course evaluations, should have worked with us, so they could understand what YFSA is about."

The controversy behind them, the YFSA sent a letter concerning financial cuts to the President of the film department. The President's reply was not totally satisfactory to the YFSA. However, they didn't give up; at present they are busy sending letters to the M.P., the Minister of Education and other government officials.

"We're particularly concerned with financial cuts, because York is the premier university of film," said Bob Levine, secretary-treasurer for the YFSA. "With these financial cuts York is in danger of losing its leading role. But more important are the expenses that the film student has; the decrease of government subsidies will increase them greatly."

To be continued in next week's feature section. Stay tuned.



YFSA's Sandercock and Golden

almost all film students at York." Then they counted the results and submitted the results to Dean Lionel Lawrence, then-Chairman of the Department, Stan Fox and individual instructors.

At this time, a controversy befell the YFSA, for although the film department approved of the evaluations, when they read the results several individuals were annoyed.

Comments such as "the instructor did not seem to be