

To each his own bag in York's residences

By MONICA WILDE

Residence life does strange things to people.

Consider the student who decided to rearrange his room. First he ripped the drawer cabinet from his desk, then heaved his mattress onto the floor where the desk has been, tipped the bed frame on its side to form a wall around the mattress — and presto — an instant cave, snug and safe from the world. Is there all that much to hide from in residence?

Yes! answer a chorus of voices: "Around here, I'd prefer to have more enemies than friends. You get more work done that way." (3rd year Mac).

"It's a bloody nuisance standing in line every day to eat." (2nd year Vanier).

"I've got absolutely no privacy around here. People are always knocking on doors, wanting to borrow something, or just talk. It's hard to get work done." (1st year Vanier).

And then there are the girls in Founders whose yogurt is always curdling on the window ledge because there's no fridge, and the people with room-mate problems, and . . .

The list would stretch right to the door of the college master's office.

You would never know about these grips, considering the pressure to get into residence. In spite of the steep fees (\$935 for a double room, \$985 for a single) students are fighting to get in.

Winters College reports there is an average of 50 names on the waiting list at any time during the year; Vanier had 30 names on its list the first day of September. If someone vacates a room, there is a good chance the new occupant will move in the same day.

Why such popularity? Lack of alternatives, for one thing.

The most developed complex so far around the York Campus are the oil storage tanks across the highway.

University City, a plush apartment complex which will stand adjacent to the campus, is still a big hole in the ground.

There are no rooming houses and very little of the co-op housing so popular on the University of Toronto campus. Add all this to the haphazard bus service (almost non-existent on weekends) with which the campus is "blessed", and the obvious answer for students from out of town or



Founders College resident Tim Johnston rearranged his room into an instant cave.

Excalibur — Hank Jay Kitz

distant parts of Toronto, is residence.

The convenience helps.

Apparently, there are a lot of people around who find the rigors of academic life exhausting enough without extra cleaning, cooking, and travelling. These hard-working students come up with comments like:

"I like being waited on hand and foot."

"It's great in the morning when you can get up five to nine or a nine o'clock class."

"I'd starve if I had to do my own cooking. Versafood fills my stomach."

And then, for those who are willing, residence offers the dizzy freedom to leave the straight life behind. Other than some half-hearted attempts to impose "quiet hours," there are no rules and no restrictions in any of the college residences. The old guideline of "in

loco parentis" where the university tried to take the place of parents' authority, has been scrapped in favor of personal responsibility.

Drugs have become so much a part of the residence scene that they are just taken for granted, at least unofficially. Casual sex seems to bother the maids more than anyone else.

Many come, of course, for personal reasons — to make new friends, to escape the loneliness of the isolated day student. Generally, residence seems to come up to scratch in these respects.

As one first year student remarked: "when I came here, I was really shy. But my first night here I went to a party. I've been meeting people ever since."

Paradoxically, much of the freedom residence offers may be a sham. Ed Ksenych, a McLaughlin resident, put it this way:

"The pressure to conform here is very real. There's so little privacy — everybody knows what's happening. Look at sex — it's become almost a status symbol. It's so much easier to go along with what others do than to make up your own mind, run your own life. Yet the only time we really live is when we make our own decisions."

What of the environment? "It's so stark, so sterile out here — it's almost inhuman," commented Kathy Kidd, a student in fine arts.

Take a look around, imagine you were living 24 hours daily on a campus that offers the cold grandeur of the Ministry of Love, a concrete smokestack belching soot into the air, flat arid acres of grass with the trees planted ever so carefully in strategic locations.

Remember, York is a "planned" community being developed to accommodate 15,000 students by 1980. It is fast becoming so func-

tional that it is expanding beyond the human dimension.

Worse still, there is no relief from this monotony for the residents. Though the calendar optimistically describes the campus as located "near the centre of a rapidly growing suburban region," it would be a lot more realistic to admit that York is out in the sticks.

Toronto is a good one-and-a-half hours away by bus, and on weekends, especially late Saturday and Sunday nights, inaccessible because of poor bus service. Without a car, a student is stuck.

So residents sit around in the coffee house, talking to each other about urban poverty and ethnic sub-cultures. But they are never really exposed to the sights, smells and sounds of Kensington Market, to the face of a factory worker coming home after work.

"It's such an unreal environment out here," said Kathy Kidd.

Indeed, York is a prosperous middle-class university where a large proportion of the students come from the same socio-economic background. The steep fees for residence narrows the residence population still more.

Most day students are excluded from this incubated world. Because of the isolation of the campus, it can be a real problem for students to stay after regular class hours, if it means rescheduling a car pool or phoning home. Many resident students admitted quite simply, "my best friends are here in residence."

By default if nothing else, residents participate more in the political structures of the colleges. Last year's Winters College Council contained twice as many residents as day students; similar ratios held for the other colleges. When day students are elected to office, they often move into residence soon after.

Thus far, York has failed to establish real links with either the city of Toronto or with the almost 6,000 day students that form most of the undergraduate population. Everyone is a loser; residents because they are isolated in a hothouse culture, day students because they are hampered in exploiting the resources the university can offer.

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Glendon plans languages forum

By ANDY MICHALSKI

A Glendon College Forum on minority languages in Canada, planned for next fall, has called for an operating budget of \$69,395.

Forum organizers expect the federal government to pay two fifths of the forum's cost and expect provincial governments to pay for another fifth.

Ticket sales, commercial organizations, York and Glendon College are expected to supply the

other two-fifths of the proposed budget.

French delegates to the forum will be invited from each of the nine provinces in which they are a minority. Quebec is expected to send English delegates.

Each provincial government will be asked to send a representative, preferably the provincial minister of education or cultural affairs.

The conference has been planned to allow the linguistic minorities in Canada to come together, discuss

and criticize what is being done or not being done about their rights as a minority language group in Canada. Stress will be placed on the French and English languages. Delegates from countries such as Belgium, which has a large Flemish minority language group, will also be invited to attend.

The Glendon College Forum is an annual four-day event of workshops, seminars and plenary sessions. The forum organizers operate under the scrutiny of the executive committee of the Glendon faculty council.

The huge budget is a thorny problem. Faculty members have already expressed pessimism over the possibility of obtaining funds for the forum, and have complained about the limited scope of the subject.

Last year's forum, The Year of the Barricade, an international forum on the student revolution, operated on a budget of \$10,000. The conference still has a \$2,400 debt.

Conference organizers expect to be able to accommodate 600 participants — 1,200 if they can arrange a closed circuit television hookup.

In the budget, \$27,900 has been allotted to pay for delegates' transportation and living expenses; \$28,820 has been allotted for organization expenses and \$12,900 for cultural affairs. Translators will be hired at an estimated cost of \$14,775.

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