

The state of this university

We recognize that a university cannot give an education to its students, let alone impose it on them. We believe, however, that it should awaken the complacent and provide a liberating but demanding milieu in which the uncertain and aimless have a fair chance to develop intellectual autonomy.

*University of California
(Berkeley)*

*Study Commission on University
Governance 1968*

No university administrator today can deny the above Berkeley statement that universities do not just "give" education, but create the correct atmosphere for an individual to "educate" himself as his interests direct him.

You just don't walk in and get handed an education. It's all in your mind.

Education is a process of the individual finding himself, with enlightened assistance from the institution.

But why bother? A university does this because it alone has the past facts to provide a firm background. A background that is analyzed and reflected upon to produce new ideas.

From the universities are supposed to come the best new ideas of what a society needs to grow, to progress and to change.

To change. Change is part of a society's growth.

No society can continue if it does not change.

The university should be the centre of change in a healthy society.

A university is for reflection, consideration and advancement of ideas to change what is wrong.

A university is not for the preservation of the status quo.

A university should be the one place in society where ideas of change can be respected, as free from personal greed or gain to an individual.

What comes from the university should be respected as the one "product" of man that is honest, and true.

So what is coming from this university?

Nothing.

The university should be the most direct area of confrontation between the new forces of the society, and the old social and cultural demands that oppose them.

That's what universities are all about. Guardians, examiners and changers of society.

But not here. At York there isn't any confrontation between the old and the new. There isn't even anything very new. Just thousands of happy children, and jolly faculty, hashing out the old stories, and filling in the correct forms on the computer cards.

The most healthy form of change, in the best of societies, should not have to come from outside the established boundaries of civil action. The best of change should come from within, through the system established, in the courts and assemblies of the institutions themselves. It is only when the system has grown so unused to change that it has hardened all arteries of change short of violence, that violence must come. And, if it is necessary, then let it come from the university.

But there is no threat of violence at York. There is no threat of change, initiated by the students. A few changes still come slowly,

through a system that does function in some ways. We do get our students on the Senate and the faculty council, at the university's urging and offering.

But there is not enough effort by students or faculty to ask if this is enough, if this is the answer, if this change is real.

In fact, there is no effort by students to engage in change.

But it is not students alone. It is the university, in total, that is in need of strengthening. It is less valuable to simply demand greater concern by students alone, than it is to want a university of students, and more advanced students who pass on their knowledge and judgement to the younger students. Certainly the faculty doesn't pass on those lecture hours just because they want us to have expanded lists of facts. They must really believe they lecture to us in the hope that what they pass on will be affected by the individuality of our own minds to create something new.

And why something new? Because the old will literally become worn out and we must be able to utilize the new.

But at this university, and many others, professors seem to have lost this desire to really see something new come alive. They seem to have lost the belief that the new ideas are here, and come sooner, and more clearly, when urged and openly welcomed.

But the problems of this lack of challenge are not easily seen, since we obviously haven't been trained to recognize them. And so many schools are now translating the problems into concrete, easily understood situations, like representation of students

"No, students can't sit on the vice-presidential committees. You can't have students on those private committees, talking about money and the important things in the university."

... a secretary to an Administration head, to Excalibur, Sept. 27, 1968.

on the university administration.

Students are demanding representation because they know the chance for change is reduced when old society holds the dominant place, such as boards, and refuses to open up.

Some students do realize the chance for a changing society is slipping away when boards of governors and committees are exposed only to their own confirmations of what is right about the way they run things, attuned to the present, not the future.

And if it must be that the philosophical lack of challenge should be translated into examples, for a greater student body to see, then let it be done here at York too.

If profs are only students who know more and are here to guide students to creating a better, changing society, then why does the administration, who theoretically run this school for the students, insist on creating an arbitrary distinction and appoint profs to the Board of Governors, while ignoring students? It's in their minds.

What gives, to have one group of scholars who should be concerned with changing society sit on the ruling body while the second body of scholars are treated as niggers.

It is issues like this and others like a donated chapel which would have paid for a lot more books, like insistence that the students — pay rent for the university-owned bookstore through higher prices, that may be the concrete forms of what is wrong here, and what should change.

A university is all about change.

Change comes from looking at the existing, and asking why?

Asking why is part of what universities should be fostering.

Universities must change.

The view from the bottom of the pile

by Larry Goldstein and Stuart P. Hertzog

We watched as the freshmen began to integrate themselves into the stream of college life. Their initial bewilderment has worn off and they are beginning to find their way about the maze of corridors and buildings in this vast complex. Approximately 7,000 people are settling into a routine that they will follow for the next seven months.

People are taking stock of the campus itself. "What a lovely place it is," they are saying as they admire the massive architecture and revel in the freedom that huge lecture halls give. In addition, there are all those hidden delights that one encounters all over the place: little nooks with a few comfortable chairs; lovely sunlit patios; plush, carpeted common-rooms and huge "great hall" dining rooms. From this enormous womb will emerge the new leaders of tomorrow's brave new Canada.

There are three myths connected with every University: Community. Freedom. Elitism.

We have been told that the huge sums of money invested in these buildings are being used to build an "academic community"

at York. We don't know about you, but we haven't felt part of any community. And we're both sure than no community can develop here.

First of all, look at the architecture. After a while the glamour begins to wear thin. Imagine . . . in the winter those huge buildings will loom like icebergs on a vast arctic plain. That pleasant greensward will be an icy impasse.

The design of the campus buildings is obviously intended to honour those stalwart Canadians after whom they were named. That is: those buildings were designed to impress the rich industrialists who gave their money to the colleges. This campus was not set out as a place for students and faculty to live and work in. It is more like a mausoleum in a cemetery: a monument to the absence of a capital gains tax.

The architects had to please their clients. After all, they are only trying to make a decent living. But because of the power structure around here, their clients were the Board of Governors. Not the students. (We don't believe that, given the choice, students at Glendon would have

built toilets with marble partitions in their halls of residence.)

One consequence of the design of this campus is a fragmentation of student life. We are forced to tramp miles across a frozen waste. Those "Great Halls" are not meeting-places for a whole college but mass eateries for groups of strangers, 300 at a time. Those delightful little nooks help form the defensive cliques that every York student knows so well.

Faced with such an overwhelming environment, community cannot flourish. But because most students at York accept the myth of community, they will begin to internalise the conflict that will arise when they find that they cannot reconcile their experience to the dictates of those who rule them. After the Christmas break, the school psychologist's waiting-room will start to fill. It happens every year. That's what he is provided for; to help maintain the status quo. The myth of community cannot be wrong. Therefore the individual must be out of step.

Have another look at the model in the Steacie library. It is built on a metric grid system that divides and rules.

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the old clock is falling off the wall, but frank was only a student when it happened and no one would talk to coop but olga so he sulked and tony was a model . . . layouter while grant freudiann damination and licorice-legs . . . ross doctorally disserted while anne champagned . . . gail got sick so mike typed . . . bob was king while rich yom-kippured it, claire helped . . . does george loney-griller know that stew loves bob? and what will roly say when the price of pizza goes up? and what will he say when the price of bob goes up too? certainly not enuf to say about homecoming yet. where does that leave little anita? married yet, dearie? the diff between a column and an article is who eats the most pizza; severe case of staff giggles, and nobody can find the feathers. must have ducked off for a nip. and remember you heard it here first . . .