

# Excalibur

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

Excalibur, founded in 1966, is the York University weekly and is independent politically. Opinions expressed are the writer's and those unsigned are the responsibility of the editor. Excalibur is a member of Canadian University Press and attempts to be an agent of social change. Printed at Daison's, Excalibur is published by Excalibur Publications.

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## OFS is vital ombudsman for student interests

"Is it worth three beers to you?"

The Ontario Federation of Students sums up the issue in a sentence: when students are asked on November 14 to vote for or against an additional \$1.50 in next year's tuition fees to continue the student council's membership in the OFS, many of them will think less of the federation than of what \$1.50 could buy.

Half a movie. Two Big Macs. Three beers. A glossy paperback. Or a year's membership in a political union of Ontario university students.

This year, each undergraduate member of CYSF is paying, indirectly through the \$10 he or she pays to the council, a 40-cent membership fee to OFS.

For this fee, the Ontario Federation of Students criticizes the current Ontario Student Assistance Programme. It confronts the government on such matters as tuition fees, class sizes and libraries. And now that the government has frozen the building of any new university residences, the OFS attempts to make the public and government aware that students require adequate housing at reasonable prices.

But this January, a five-member committee to restructure the federation complained that the OFS was in trouble.

"The commitment of most members to the organization has been minimal," said the committee's report, "and most students remain unaware of the federation's existence."

The committee agreed that the OFS executive (culled, as are all

the members, from the university student councils) needed more time to familiarize themselves with the organization. Solution: pay them during the summer.

The OFS pays two full-time office workers and a researcher, but they are swamped with work. Solution: hire a research coordinator and two researchers, to respond quickly when students request information from OFS.

The paper needs an editor and the OFS needs an information officer. Solution: hire one.

Fieldworkers are needed to help students organize, justify OFS policies on the campuses and try to entice non-members into the OFS fold. Solution: hire at least four of them.

Further solutions included hiring a full-time secretary-receptionist, and raising staff salaries "to more nearly reflect comparable employment situations everywhere."

The only problem was that the money had to come from somewhere.

Hence, Ontario university students were asked to pay a higher fee — in York's case, \$1.50 instead of the current 40 cents. CYSF said it couldn't afford the increase within its current budget, and so the November 14 referendum is being held to ask York students to pay \$661.50 next year in tuition.

The question remains: is the OFS worth three beers?

Yes.

The federation's dues can be regarded in a number of ways. First, as union dues for belonging to a province-wide union of students, who must have some bargaining power for appealing to the government concerning housing, fee increases and similar issues.

Or, if you wish, as an insurance policy in case the government decides to cut back on its per-student grants, as it did in 1972, thereby forcing universities to increase tuition. The federation would be prepared to launch an organized protest.

Or, if the first two strike you as somewhat abstract, as a lending library of reports related to students in Ontario. Written this year were papers on orientation programmes, the Ontario student, and student housing.

Future proposals include theses on discipline, Canadianization, liquor, daycare, birth control clinics and graduate studies. All completed research papers are available through the OFS head office in Jorgenson

Hall, 380 Victoria Street downtown (tel. 360-1876).

The OFS in the past two years has trembled on the brink of uselessness; one might be tempted to write the group off as an abortive attempt at a union if they didn't have such worthwhile projects under their belt for the future, and if they weren't such a vital ombudsman for the students' interests in the province.

One suspects that CYSF's past disinterest in the Ontario Federation of Students might have been one reason for a bottleneck of information. When CYSF requested 500 copies of the last OFS newspaper for campus distribution, 2,500 copies were delivered. Nobody is sure how they were distributed.

And when one OFS representative asked CYSF what the campus rules were concerning stuffing OFS information in mailboxes and posting signs around the university, the CYSF representative responsible for external affairs had none of the answers. There is obviously a need for our student council to take a larger interest in the OFS if the federation is to succeed.

The OFS has admitted its own incompetence in the past, but writes that off, probably justifiably so, to a lack of manpower. The \$1.50 sum students

are being asked to pay will go toward hiring that manpower. Students at Western, Guelph, U of T, Ryerson Glendon, St. Pat's (Ottawa) and Lakehead have already voted to pay it. Carleton voted against paying, but has agreed to conduct another referendum.

The decision is not irreversible; if the OFS fails to justify our trust, another referendum in a year can withdraw our membership. But at the moment the federation looks like a good bet; and paying \$1.50 to give Ontario students some unity is a small price if the bet pays off.



"I understand you may have a few vacant positions soon."

—James McCall

## Smackwarm woman's

"Oh. There is a line of Joyce. I try to recover it from the legendary imperfectly explored grottoes of Ulysses: a garter snapped, to please Blazes Boylan, in a deep Dublin den. What? Smackwarm. That was the crucial word. Smacked smackwarm on her smackable warm woman's thigh. Something like that. A splendid man, to feel that. Smackwarm woman's".

Updike, Wife-wooing

"All my senses seemed to desire to veil themselves and, feeling that I was about to slip from them, I pressed the palms of my hands together until they trembled, murmuring: 'O love! O love!' many times."

Joyce, Araby

Amazing. To see yourself through someone else's eyes is as though a stranger bearing your name, but perhaps not even looking like you, were pointed out in a crowded room. The idiosyncracies of manner are familiar — the irritating nervous laugh, the self-conscious smile, but somehow the quintessential quality that is you is missing, and you deny the truth of the portrait. And yet, when you are seen with love, even mingled with that initial side-long glance of doubt, the pain, failure, and tedium that rest inside you, that have, in fact, become your other self, are washed away. You are reborn clean.

In some sense we can not know ourselves apart from what we do. Our fears paralyze that natural propensity to feel, to trust, to love which is our true self, so much so that we become debilitated, mere half-persons. Love sets us free from our sullied self-consciousness. We become aware of what exists outside of us — people cease to be simply moving obstructions and take on character, the day itself is precious because it is different from all the days that have come before and all the ones that will follow. We are alive in a unique way.

Usually, passionate love can not be sustained for very long, since to some extent it is dependent on the

novelty of the experience. Once one knows someone else their behaviour becomes predictable and consequently less interesting. Passion can best be sustained in the mind without the encumbrance of a relationship. It is an idealized feeling the object of which, if intimately known, could only be a disappointment. The attractive woman on the bus or the pretty girl down the street can never meet the expectations that the imagination fulfills. But it may be that this is not love at all, this yearning for something unattainable.

As children we are loved first; only later do we learn to respond, if ever. Some people are always waiting to be loved, as if to give of themselves were too great a risk. It may very well be.

To love someone requires honesty and strength because it demands that we accept her as she is, rather than as we would like her to be. But, in fact, often we do not know what she is until long after we have affirmed our love. Then, we feel cheated and betrayed that our image of her did not exist at all.

You try to think how it was before you met her and what drew you together. And you realize how little you remember. Even what you do remember you can not believe because you know it has been distorted by what has happened since. Did you love her? Perhaps you only needed her, but was that need something less than love? Must love be exclusively for the virtuous or the sentimental?

You are often unhappy; that's true enough. But you were willing to settle for something less. Sharing your life with her was important, even if imperfect. Do we have to wait until our motives are pure before committing ourselves to anyone? If so, there is little hope for any of us. There is something debilitating in not being committed. At least a commitment to a less than perfect relationship demands a certain courage. Having several rather casual relationships to which you feel little responsibility seems less liberating than merely gutless.

O love! O love!

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### Important

Staff meeting  
2 p.m. today

Room 111  
Central Square