

# Correspondence

## Tutorials flattered

Last week, Richard Dubinsky's consistently interesting column "Yorkscience" suggested a metaphor which I would like to apply to current discussions of the college tutorial program. Phenomena, it was suggested, are understood differently from different perspectives: to the human hand a table is smooth and solid, to a termite it is rougher and more tasty, to a beta particle it is full of holes.

The *Excalibur* editorial of 15 January presented a very good case for what college tutorials have done for 1st-year students. John Bell's letter of 22 January evaluated current developments "from the CUEW perspective," and on the same date Hedi Bouraoui presented very forcefully the viewpoint of Stong College.

But to return to my parascientific analogy, let me point out that two criteria governing the interest of a theory are "strength" (i.e., in this case, breadth of view)

Let me attempt to bring this argument into the present by pointing out some current facts of the case:

1. As of all 1980, only 1475 of the 2143 college tutorial spaces were occupied by 1st-year Arts students; the remaining 31 per cent of college tutorial students came from upper-year Arts (465) and from other faculties (203 - mostly Fine Arts). Since 1st-year Arts registrations last fall numbered 2233, it's clear that just over a third of these students are not currently enrolled in a tutorial; in order to make room for them we would have to either increase class size (already too high at 17 plus per tutorial) or add another 50 tutorials.

2. Some students are opposed, either in principle or by temperament, to requirements of any sort. A survey conducted last year suggested that 60 per cent of students already in tutorials would have taken them whether required or not. Many of us would prefer to serve this group and let the other 40 per cent go their way.

3. The college tutorials have, arguably, the best record of any set of courses in the university for surviving curriculum committees, appraisal committees, and ad hoc committees of all sorts.

Many of us feel that it is now appropriate for the qualities that have marked the tutorial program to move out of the 1st-year ghetto and into a student's upper-year experience (as has already been done in Vanier), as well as into a closer working relationship with other programs within the university.

The 1st-year college tutorials at York are a way that has been tried and found remarkably successful. We at Winters are interested in building on this success and using it to make the Colleges—always publicized as central to the York view of university education—even more effective and hospitable as centers of learning and teaching during the coming years. In particular, I would like to remind readers of this college's longstanding concern with the areas of 1) Canadian Studies, 2) Mass Communications, 3) things literary (not limited to English as a discipline), and 4) science and its impact on society; and I would like to invite all members of the university community who share these concerns to come forward with their ideas about how we may take advantage of this opportunity which I believe the Faculty of Arts has presented us.

It's possible that some will find my argument "disingenuous." Others may find it (like the table of my original metaphor) smooth, solid, rough, tasty, or full of

holes—each according to his own perspective. I myself, however, find his argument both strong and elegant.

**Bruce Flattery**  
Academic Advisor  
Winters College

## El Salvador

On Monday, January 12, 1981 an Ad Hoc Committee for Solidarity with the People of El Salvador was organized at York. The basic principles are the following:

- to condemn the continuing repression and violation of human rights by the governing military Junta of El Salvador;
- to support El Salvador's right to self-determination against U.S. or any other foreign intervention;
- to support the struggle for democratic rights and freedoms of the people of El Salvador under the leadership of the Democratic Revolutionary Front (the F.D.R. is the political coalition of all the popular mass organizations in El Salvador including church, labour professional, small business and political groups).

The York committee is working in collaboration with other organizations in Toronto and across the country concerned with the critical situation in El Salvador and with U.S. intervention there. As our share in this community effort we have organized a week of solidarity with the people of El Salvador from January 26th to 29th. This will consist of films and video presentations, speakers, information displays and a benefit concert with the Companeros musical group on Thursday, January 29th. Through these activities the Committee hopes to counter the media distortion and to raise public awareness of the Salvadorean situation.

The following are some of the organizations and individuals who have already endorsed the 'solidarity week':

L.H. Lawrence—Dean of Fine Arts  
Prof. Griff Cunningham—Master of Bethune College

Prof. David Trotman—Coordinator of Latin American and Caribbean Studies Programme.

Prof. Peter Landstreet, Liisa North, Robert Albritton,  
York University Faculty Association

Student Christian Movement  
Hellenic Student Association

Send all correspondence, endorsements, cheques or pledges to:

York University Ad Hoc Committee for Solidarity with the People of El Salvador

c/o Griff Cunningham  
Master of Bethune College  
Master's Office

205 Bethune College  
York University

**York University Ad Hoc Committee for Solidarity with the People of El Salvador**

## False Fires

A recent letter from the City of North York Fire Chief expressed the concern of the Fire Department with the incidence of false alarms emanating from the University, usually from the Colleges.

The University policy concerning the mis-use of fire safety equipment or giving a false alarm of fire was promulgated by Vice-President W.D. Farr on 6th May 1980, when he indicated that those responsible, if apprehended, would be prosecuted under the Criminal Code and, if students, would also be subject to University discipline. The tenor of the Fire Chief's letter, which points out that sending fire trucks to York to respond to false alarms depletes the number of those available to respond to real emergencies where lives may be at stake, makes

it clear that this policy is very strongly supported by the Fire Department.

The Fire Chief also reported that on the last occasion that the Department responded to false alarms from College Complex I the emergency fire route was blocked by several illegally parked cars. In response to this complaint the University has found it necessary to provide additional towing services, particularly during the evening hours when there are many guests and visitors to the colleges and residences. Students in residence are advised that they should tell their visitors that they may park free of charge in the peripheral lots, during the evening

and at weekends, but that if they park on the Fire Routes they can expect their vehicles to be towed away.

The Fire Department is having a particularly difficult time, the fire at the Inn on the Park, where there was a tragic loss of life, together with reports of other major fires in Metropolitan Toronto, should illustrate to all members of our community the potential risk to the safety of the other occasions when men and equipment are diverted to attend false alarms resulting from the senseless acts of persons at the University.

**C.G. Dunn**  
Director of Safety and Security Services

## Fooled you Rick

Regarding the letter I received on Thursday January 22, 1981, concerning monetary contributions from individual colleges to *Excalibur*. Is the need for these contributions a result of CYSF budget cuts or a need to sponsor more trips to England for *Excalibur* reporters. I quote from the January 22, 1981 issue of *Excalibur*, page 13: "I've just returned from my *Excalibur* sponsored trip to England where I interviewed the notorious inmates..." Perhaps if *Excalibur* refrained from these obvious misuses of funds, it would not be in the position of needing money from individual colleges.

**Rick Jackson**



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