

we the authors feel extremely offended with Aaron Kendal's profane use of our mother tongue.

Contemporary Israeli society cannot be defined using Hellenic terms. Given the seemingly necessary, and extensive use of military law, the Hellenic term Democracy becomes absolutely inapplicable. Its use by Mr. Kendal constitutes profanity.

The authors are aware that many will read this letter and will attempt to label us as, "pro-this" or "pro-that." We are neither "this" or "that." We are Greeks who are very concerned with profanity used against our language and our culture.

Sincerely,
Panagiotis Ioannidis
and Nikos Parakatis.

Nothing to do with sexism

Dear Editor,

I am the first female film and video student who feels compelled to write concerning the article on our exam revolt ("Professor claims sexism as reason for student boycott of film exam," Jan. 22). I am appalled that Kalli Paakspuu had the gall to insinuate that her dismissal had to do with the fact that she was female.

Kalli is not some sort of martyr for the female filmmakers cause, as she apparently feels she is. Our decision to boycott the exam was not a planned premeditated male conspiracy, in fact the idea came from one of the female students after reading over the exam. For her to say that it was in any way symbolic because of the date of the Montreal Massacre is shameful. The tragedy of what happened to those women is horrifying, what happened to Kalli is in no way connected. She cannot come to terms with the reason her contract was terminated, Kalli was not capable of teaching the program to film majors.

When I entered the program, I came in with a love and a fascination for the film industry. What I expected was for that love and fascination to be developed into technical ability. Kalli did not provide that. In fact the skills I acquired were from reading instructional books.

When confronted about her marking schemes, she was evasive and could never explain her reasoning. Machines we were told were broken were not, she simply did not know how to operate them. In the two labs I've had since Kalli has been dismissed, I've learned more than the entire semester I had with Kalli.

Yes, it is a shame to lose a female teacher, but when I work so hard to be able to attend university, when I put in such a large financial investment into my future (which I fully expected), I expect to be taught well. Whether the teacher is male, female, White or Black, whether I like them as a person, has no bearing whatsoever. Do they teach me; Kalli did not, that was and is the bottom line. If she does not realize that, she is only deluding herself, I was her student...I know the truth.

Annamarie Morais,
First Year Film and Video student.

Incompetence lead to boycott

Dear Editor,

In Elaine Bellio's front page article in the *Excalibur* Jan 22 issue, former York instructor Kalli Paakspuu blamed sexism as the motivation for her first year film class's general boycott of their December exam and her subsequent dismissal. As a member of that class and a participant in the boycott I can assure you that nothing could be further from the truth. The real reason for the boycott was the only possibly acceptable one, gross incompetence. She simply didn't know her subject, or at least didn't know how to pass on that knowledge to us. She would regularly

Letters

continued

evade direct, pertinent questions, spend entire lectures rambling off on irrelevant tangents and then leave us off to learn on our own. In a course as technical and expensive (we are expected to spend hundreds of dollars on our own supplies) as film production this is totally inexcusable. We all hoped that the issue could have been dealt with quickly and quietly with a minimum of embarrassment to anyone concerned, including Kalli. However, by her irresponsible "wolf" cry of sexism she has shown herself unworthy of such consideration. She has not only hurt the cause of sexual equality on campus by showing how easily the issue can be abused, but has irresponsibly damaged the reputation of the finest film department in Canada. I would welcome a more in-depth follow up article in a future issue to corroborate this.

Sincerely,
Brad King

Standing up for the YFS

Dear Editor,

Re: (*Excalibur*, Jan 22/92) "Why the YFS should be abolished"
Mr. Saunders suggests in his article that there is an atmosphere of great antagonism within the YFS, with the executive on one side and the councillors on the other. In fact, the executive has a great deal of support from many of the councillors. A look at the YFS minutes will demonstrate that in fact, many of the initiatives the executive has taken have passed, suggesting that there is more cooperation within the YFS than Mr. Saunders has noted.

The article also suggests that there is no cooperation between the college councils and the YFS. It is our experience that last year, there was a great deal of cooperation between the colleges, who successfully mounted many campaigns in solidarity with the YFS. Many of those who represent the larger student body this year on the YFS were past presidents or executives members of other student councils at York, and therefore have a background in these activities. It is ironic that a paid staff member of the *Excalibur*, which is supported by students, is attacking unpaid volunteers across campus.

Finally, we take great exception to the "Report Cards" on the YFS executive. The author has attacked these members needlessly. It is our opinion that they have been working tremendously hard on their initiatives, and the reports on their actions are misleading. They have shown themselves to be very capable and dedicated members. Although Mr. Saunders raises some valid questions about the structure of student government at York, particularly its decentralized nature, he levels many unfounded personal attacks that only serve to discredit the worthwhile suggestions he does make.

It is a pity that Mr. Saunders did not take the time to research the facts for this articles thoroughly enough, unlike many articles he has written for the *Excalibur* in the past. His lack of research is transparently obvious in the "Members' Attendance List." The June meeting, which is listed as one of those which did not meet quorum, was in fact held on June 9, 1991. The author also suggests that members do not show up to meetings simply because they can't



be bothered. This is not the case. To take one example, Rhys Bowman, the Faculty of Education representative to the YFS, has been present at all meetings but two—the first, in May, while representing the York Student Centre at a national conference in Calgary, and the second, in September, while working on a volunteer development project in India. Meanwhile, the attendance list does not correctly note the number of times that he was present. The attendance of other councillors is also misrepresented on this list. The attendance list published in the minutes of the meetings.

Mr. Saunders does make some worthwhile suggestions about changing the face of government at York, and he is undoubtedly not the only student who is unhappy with the current state of affairs. However, let's not ignore what we do have going for us at the YFS.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rhys Bowman,
FESA representative, YFS
and Tina Roesch,
Winters Councillor, YFS

No faculty in Faculty Club

Dear Editor,

In response to Corey Goldman's article "Faculty club losing out to Student Centre restaurant". How dare Tony Turrin suggest that the "short-term resolution" for the Faculty Club's growing financial problem is to allow students to eat there, but in "the long term it would definitely be faculty-only?"

Why should we, as students, be used as tools to help the Faculty Club's financial position and then be discarded as soon as it regains its balance? It appears through statements from faculty members that they actually prefer the "diverse atmosphere" of the facilities that encourage students' patronage over the "very unpleasant...pompous" atmosphere of the Faculty Club.

Turrin better rethink his solution and if his long-term solution remains the exclusion of students, then he'll have to find another way to reverse the faculty club's "financial descent." Further, his demeaning attitude towards students certainly ensures that I would never enrol in one of his courses!

Pam Chelin

Left versus Left

Dear Editor,

I was rather surprised to open the Jan 22 edition of *Excalibur* and read the letter from Jordan Berger attacking my article "Reading from the Left" (printed in the Dec 4 issue).

Berger claims that my short review article was "biased." But this wasn't any ordinary bias, it was a bias in favour of (shudder!) *Socialist Worker*, the newspaper of the (gasp!) International Socialist, an organization to which David Camfield belongs!

Since it is merely common sense that writers reviewing left-wing periodicals will approach them with their own political perspective ("bias"), why is Berger so upset that I did so? I am sure that as a New Democrat he would have written a piece which included the same attack on *Socialist Worker* that appeared in his letter. It is obvious that what Berger dislikes is not bias, but the politics of the International Socialists.

I am not surprised, considering that his politics aim to halt the erosion of English Canada's "national cultural specificity by American commodified culture" (does he really believe it isn't thoroughly commodified already?) without acquiring a nationalist label! I can only hope that the "Proud York New Democrat" stops worrying about a parochial imperialist culture and gets involved in fighting the real threat - Bob Rae's latest round of cuts.

David Camfield

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