

Open letter on Iran

Honourable Donald Jamieson
Department of External Affairs

We, the members of the York Student Christian Movement, at York University, are following with concern the recent events in Iran, where human dignity is denied by a regime based on corruption and repression. We support the just struggle of the people of Iran. Students, professors and workers are playing a prominent role in this struggle for liberation and justice. We demand that the Canadian government use the power of its office to ensure that no support be given to the Shah and his forces. We are confident in the strength of the people's struggles and wish the people of Iran the final victory soon.

Tim Dayfoot
Student president,
Debra House
General Secretary
York Student Christian
Movement

Welcomed women's feature

The November 30 article on women's activities at York, by Kim Llewellyn, was a welcome feature. As you observed, women are investigating more areas, making new statements and doing more things every day. One aspect of the Women's Centre which your article didn't mention is our calendar which lists events of interest to women on and off campus.

We hope your coverage of women on campus will continue next term.

Mimi Mekler, Coordinator
York Women's Centre

Gay activists are learning

Bravo to the gays who finally shouted back at those who tear down gay notices on campus *Nine York gays object to bigotry*, 7 Dec., '78. Gay baiting? What else is new in our 'community of scholars' - the university? This thuggish behaviour has been going on for years at Glendon.

As far as I know I'm the only gay at Glendon who actively cares about gay liberation. Anyway, I've often put up notices, posters, etc., here for gay dances and demonstrations. Almost every one I've put up has been torn down within a few hours. So (gay baiter please note) I've replaced them, daily, and will continue to do so, if necessary.

It seems that as intimidation of Jews and blacks is a bit harder now, such fascist behaviour is aimed primarily at gays. Well, Jews and blacks how how to

fight back. We're learning fast. Only that way "we (too) shall overcome."

JIM QUIXLEY
Head Librarian,
Frost Library

Note: Last issue's comment piece was signed by a number of individuals who are not gay.

The new Spanish Civil War

I was very pleased that you published our letter in your 'comment' section, but slightly disturbed by your heading ('Nine York gays object to bigotry'). Of the nine signatories, I am certainly content (despite a twelve-year marriage and three children) to have myself designated gay; but I happen to know that the others include one heterosexual (and married) man and one bisexual currently involved with a partner of the opposite sex. I would guess that the nine of us cover the entire range of sexual orientation.

The assumption seems to be that you have to be gay to care about the way gays are treated, and that gays are somehow quite separate from the rest of humanity. In fact, I see the gay liberation movement as one aspect of a much wider movement for sexual liberation, its main target being the sexual ideology that oppresses heterosexuals as much as gays (they are just less aware of it).

A relevant anecdote: I was drinking with a graduate student the other night who was bemoaning the fact that the present student generation no longer has a Spanish Civil War to rally to. I pointed out to him that the gay and women's movements are all around him. He looked surprised. It's true he isn't a woman and isn't gay; but neither is he Spanish. For anyone, of whatever sexual inclination, who is looking for a cause - we are your Spanish Civil War.

Robin Wood
Fine Arts
Atkinson College

Note: I made no "assumption" when I wrote the headline on last issue's comment piece. Rather I tried to reflect the content of the article, specifically, the following passage:

"In our lives we have found the strength and positive potential within homosexuality. We will no longer have our value as lesbians and gays denied..."

Paul Stuart

Scuba at 217 Founders

Members of the York University Community should indeed "Look Further Than the York Scuba Club" (letter by James Hendrick, November

16, 1978) as a Scuba Club does not exist on the York Campus at this time.

The Department of Physical Education and Athletics does offer a forty hour skin and scuba diving course at a cost of \$50.00 per person as part of its instructional programme. The course is designed to provide the students with the skills and knowledge to skin and scuba dive safely. It is neither the responsibility nor expectation of a course instructor to organize "dinner dances or sponsor numerous dives to various islands."

A Scuba Club composed of faculty, staff, and students was active at York between 1972-74. If there are certified divers currently at York who are interested in organizing a scuba club they should begin their "shopping" trip at my office in 217 Founders College

Carol Gluppe
Sports Club Advisor
Dept. of Physical
Education and Athletics



Incident at Atkinson eatery

For the past three years I have been attending this university. During that time, I have had reason to use the Atkinson Restaurant - Coffee house - Cafeteria (whatever you wish to call it) on numerous occasions. I have had the pleasure to enjoy a small dinner, or lunch, or just a cup of coffee with friends, and, I will freely admit, to having enjoyed my brown bagged lunch. However, whenever I have done so I have always patronized the establishment with the purchase of a beverage of some kind.

The first time I was asked to leave the "restaurant", as the "bouncer" insists on calling it, was approximately six weeks ago. I will admit that his tone was very polite and when I replied that I was just going to purchase some tea, he did not seem to mind. However, unlike the last time which was during the lunch hour rush, this time, on November 30, was at 11:15 in the morning with at the most fifteen people in the "place". I was told, in no uncertain terms, that this was not a study area. When I pointed out that I was having a cup of tea that I had purchased at this "eatery", I was told that I had not purchased it there. I believe that the "hit" man came to this demented conclusion because the tea was in a mug of my own.

Now, I understand why the people who run the "diner" do not want people lounging around during their rush hour. This is usually between 12 and 2. It is also reasonable to understand that during this period they would not want people to study. However, what I do not understand is that at 11:15 in the morning with the place practically empty, why I should be thrown out, when the fellow next to me, who had the table covered in books and one very cold looking cup of coffee, was not asked to leave at all? Or why weren't the two young ladies asked to leave? They were only having a chat and a cup of coffee. Surely, they could have had their coffee upstairs as I was very rudely told to do. Unfortunately, neither will I ever be able to enjoy that place again, nor will I want to.

Don Strand

Central Square is a "Rip-Off"

I think I can safely say that I have never come across such a poorly organized, outlandishly expensive, poor quality and understaffed food service as can be found in the "Food and Plenty Coffee Shop" in Central Square. To recount all the experiences and observations I have had and made in the above establishment would take more than a few paragraphs but it may be of use to comment for the benefit of the management.

There is no doubt that this food service is the most expensive on campus and can rightly be called a Rip-Off.

Why are sandwiches sold at a counter where drinks cannot be purchased? Why are sandwiches sold at a counter with a cash register but no attendant? "You will have to go around the side - if you want milk you must go inside around the back - Oh, if you want butter for your bread you must go outside around the side - sorry, we have no cream for your coffee - if you want to order from the grill you must go outside around the side - sorry the grill is closed." I think the reader gets the

message.

If one would like to buy a lunch as simple as a carton of milk, a hamburger and some cookies, the order of purchase is as follows: 1) Go inside, around the back, select, que, pay. 2) Go outside, around the side, que, order, wait, pay. 3) Go around the other side, que, order, pay. Of course one can rearrange the order for variety.

To me, (and I suspect to many others) the whole situation is ridiculous but it can easily be summed up in the reply to a question put to one of the attendants. "Who is the manager and where can I find him?" Reply - "I don't know who he is but he must be around here somewhere."

No wonder the grad lounge does so well!

C.T. Taggart
Biology

On abuse of the library

I would like to draw Excalibur's attention to the flagrant disregard of library rules at Scott by a minority of students.

It would appear that study areas around the stacks have become social centres and requests for silence remain ignored. On occasion, it is not uncommon to have distractions such as loud conversation, laughing eating, drinking and smoking. Recently I witnessed horse play around the stacks. After all, the library is one of the essential areas of the university, and is supposed to be a place where reading, research, etc. may be pursued without distraction. There are designated areas for conversation, smoking etc.

This concern has been communicated to the library director, Anne Woodsworth, and I understand that the current budget no longer provides enough funds to have someone patrol the study areas.

Finally it would appear that not all of the offenders are members of the York community.

Seamus Maurice Stokes
Year IV part-time student
Founders College

Enjoyed dance feature

Just a little note to say thanks to Paul Stuart who wrote some nice truths about dance majors at York University in the November 30 issue. It was enjoyable to finally read some worthwhile and sensitive reporting about the much abused Fine Arts Department. Too bad your roving reporter missed out on the other half of us dancers.

A few of us in
a forgotten
Modern Three Class

RESPONSE:

Open letter in defence of Stong College

This memorandum is written in response to the letter of November 30, 1978 from members and friends of the gay community here at York.

Your letter certainly elucidates the problems you and many others on campus face in the need to disseminate information about your activities and goals. You attempt to inspire by educational and compassionate means, those sympathetic to your cause in order to protect the freedom of information we all closely cherish. Indeed, here at Stong, our own community is suffering dearly from the vandalism of college property in general, and the destruction of posters advertising our activities in particular. We concur with your synopsis in that we feel it is the small and creeping erosions of such freedoms which allow societies as a whole to slide to dank depths of oppression and injustice.

It was with severe regret, however, that we found two digressions in the letter which tainted its entire scope and purpose. The last sentence of your opening paragraph reads: "Such is the calibre of intellectual understanding and human compassion at York University."

Surely, this slipped by you accidentally! Why should such bitterness be directed against the whole of our community here at York? Do not allow the actions of a few insensitive and contemptible individuals to draw vicious and unwarranted comments against our entire University!

The members of Stong College also find much objection with the seventh paragraph of your letter in its entirety:

Further, we want to know specifically what the Stong College Government intends to do in response to expressions of such obvious prejudice and violence within its community. What do you plan to do to defend the dignity and protect the safety of the lesbian women and gay men who attend and/or reside at Stong?

The incendiary intent of the paragraph must not have been fully realized in the repercussions it wrought. You have, without further exploration, deduced that Stong College is somehow responsible for the actions of some anonymous individual. This is very wrong! This simple-minded assumption and the resulting bitter and impulsive inferences made in

this paragraph has caused much alarm in the community. Some members of Stong have however, identified this as a presupposition and have been able to assuage the anger and hurt that it had brought to us personally. Unfortunately, the damage of Stong College's image to the rest of the York

community caused by presumption is not so easily repaired. We can only assume that the association made of Stong in your letter was not maliciously motivated.

We hope this statement will sufficiently indicate not only our position on the vandalism and

"homophobia" of which you refer, but also a feeling on our part to have some form of rectification for the damage, unintentional as it was, that your letter caused.

William R. Petrie,
Chairman,
Stong College Executive
Committee

Not everyone who signed last issue's protest was gay

To the York Community:
We greatly appreciate Excalibur's printing a letter, the original rough draft of which I wrote, in its 7 December edition on the plight of lesbians and gays at York. One problem has arisen, however, that I would like to clarify.

The letter was developed by several gay men, written assuming only lesbians and gays would sign it. Happily, several heterosexual women and men felt the issue so important that they, too,

signed it. They saw our concern as part of their own struggle for personal freedom and dignity. Sadly, we failed to change several lines in the letter in order to reflect this fact.

As today the possible repercussions of being labelled gay are so serious - indeed, so overwhelming that most homosexuals are too intimidated to sign such a letter - while I greatly appreciate their support, I feel it is my responsibility to those straight women and

men, who had the desire and courage to sign the letter, to clarify this situation.

Thank you.

Chuck Wheeler
Social and Political Thought

NOTE: Those signing last week's comment piece were: Chuck Wheeler, Social and Political Thought; Robin Wood, Chairperson, Dept. of Fine Arts, Atkinson College; Edward Weissman, Ass. Prof., Political Science; P.J. Murty; Morgan McGuire; G.L. McKinney; Varda Burstyn; Gary Kinsman; Linda Keith.