

EDITORIAL

Plurality of opinion crucial on campus

It should now be quite apparent to the university community that we have a political power-play emerging on campus.

It seems that the "socially-progressive" factions on campus want their own voice. Not happy with having the largest (and perhaps the most vocal) contingent among Ontario universities, they now also want a political outlet for their views.

For those of you who may not know, the *Lexicon* this year has gone beyond the mandate of its college council and picked up a strong progressive (traditionally referred to as left-wing) bias.

Despite the fact that the *Lex* is bucking the Bethune college mandate of science and society, from which their funding comes, they have done an admirable job based on their limited resources.

While it is true that the *Lex* has never discouraged anyone from writing about Bethune events and does provide an alternative view to that of *Excalibur*, we should examine this situation a little closer.

Those who support the *Lex's* self-appointed political mandate should not claim to be solely concerned with the preservation of the *Lexicon's* autonomy, control for the *Lex* staff and freedom of the campus press as they did in last week's demonstration.

The real question is not so much freedom of the press as it is a healthy desire to have an alternative paper. In simplest terms, do York students want to have a left-wing newspaper? And is this even necessary considering that *Excalibur* is not necessarily tied to any political alignments itself, progressive or conservative?

If the *Lex* is provided with a student levy, Bethune would lose its newspaper. Founders College does not have a newspaper, yet its council has managed to become one of the most vocal "alternative" voices to the YFS. Perhaps, if the Bethune College council had done something constructive this year, their own paper might not be trying to do it for them.

Are two newspapers on one campus too many?

No. Many universities support two campus papers and do just fine. Although two papers will bring increased competition for advertising revenue, volunteer staff and readership, a plurality of opinion and information is a basic tenet of democracy.

Having two or more alternative views allows the different sides of a story to be told, and provide students with an opportunity to make better informed decisions through increased awareness.

Those who hold conservative (right-centred) views at York may be aggravated about being asked to financially support yet another "community paper," especially if it may not reflect the majority of their opinions. Good! Conceivably this will induce them to mobilize just as the *Lex* supporters have done. Any action is better than apathy.

The question of whether or not York campus should have an "alternative" paper must be answered by students-at-large. And it should be decided in a fair referendum, with none of the YFS back-room politicking and political force-feeding of which the last referendum was accused.

EXCALIBUR

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Excalibur is York University's community newspaper. We publish twice-weekly, and distribute across York and Glendon campuses and various locations within the North York community.

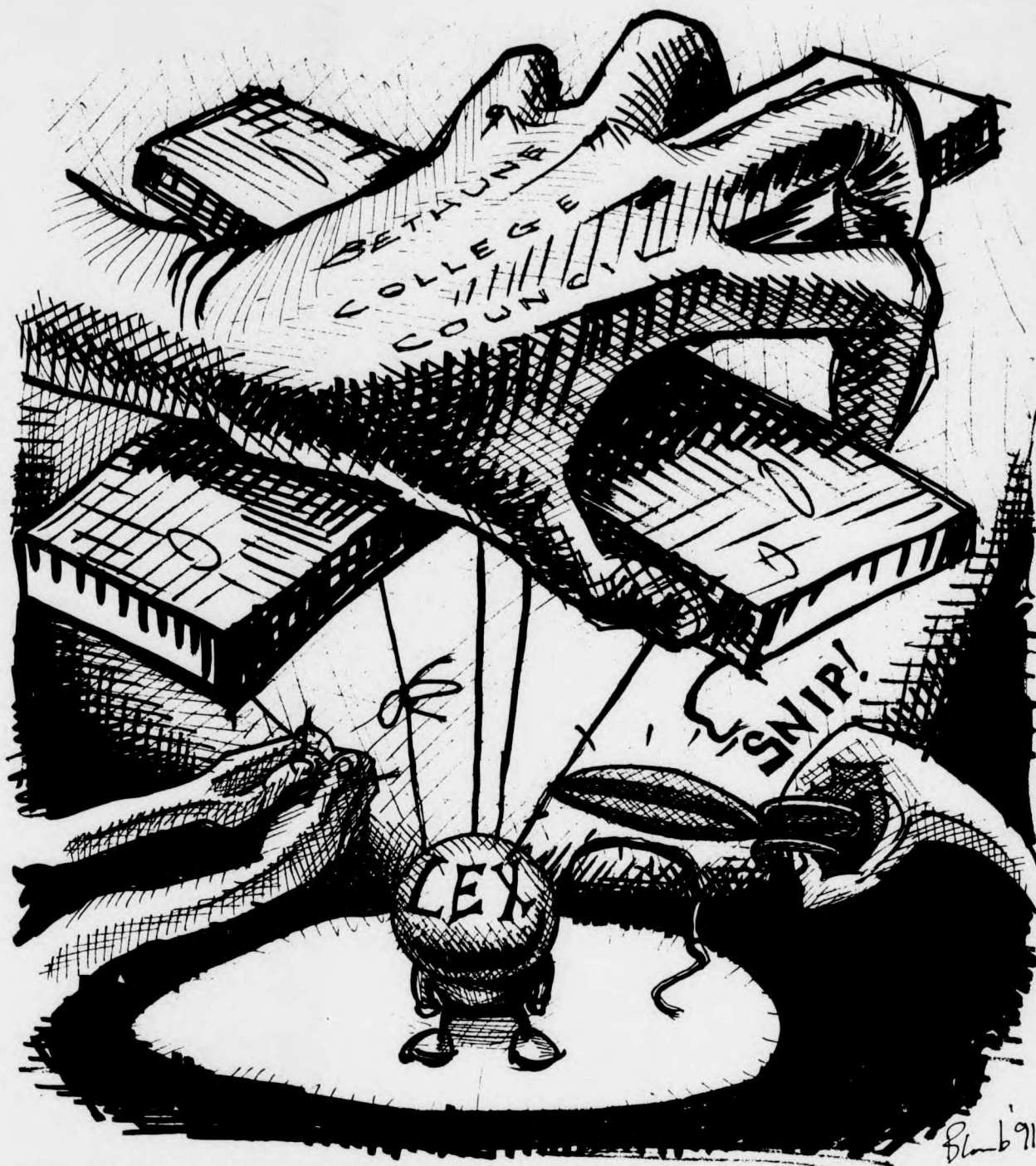
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LETTERS

Excalibur welcomes letters to the editor on all topics. We will publish space permitting letters up to 500 words in length. They must be typed, double spaced, and accompanied by the writer's name, signature and telephone number. The opinions expressed belong to the writers and do not necessarily reflect those of *Excalibur* staff or directors. However, we will refuse letters that are racist, sexist, libellous or those which attempt to incite hatred toward an individual or an identifiable group. All material is subject to editing. All submissions must be addressed to the Editor-in-chief, Room 111, Central Square.

Ghomeshi et al draw fire for Lex demo

To the editor,

We are writing in response to the YFS executive's hasty decision to endorse and support the *Lexicon* demonstration. First of all, where does the YFS get off opposing Bethune College students and their right to a college newspaper.

We are also curious as to why nobody from YFS, especially Jean Ghomeshi, Mr. Unite to Fight for Student Rights Advocate, never approached the students/financial supporters of Bethune College to find out about what was really going on.

Jean, you've finally outdone yourself. You've rallied and protested yourself into a situation where you have students from Bethune College fighting against outside students from YFS, OFS, CUP and International Socialists. This time you are on the wrong side. You are fighting against a mobilization of students who deserve and are fighting for their right to college content in their college newspaper.

On Mar. 11, Bethune College council was heartily endorsed by their students, as you saw with your own eyes, in their position to encourage college content in the college newspaper. We, the Bethune students, defeated you and your YFS executive at your own game.

Now, we will attempt to clarify the situation for you since you and your executive seem to be looking at this issue through a fractured lens.

1) You argued all year against administration's misuse of funds. Who do you think pays for the *Lexicon* newspaper. Answer: Bethune College students. They have a right

to stand up and argue against what they perceive as a misuse of their funds. Whose side are you on, again?

2) The college council hired the *Lexicon* editor in good faith and anticipated a laissez-faire approach to the editorial autonomy within the *Lexicon*. But when the students of the college became unhappy with the lack of information being written in their college newspaper, we took a stand for Bethune students. Who were you elected to represent?

3) What the hell are you doing preaching in Central Square and rallying against Bethune College students. This is a college issue. Who was minding the store? What is the status on residence fee hikes? How's that freeze on tuition fees going? Has anything been accomplished regarding women feeling safer on campus at night? What we are saying is that perhaps you and yours should stick to your mandate and we'll stick to ours.

4) While we are on the topic of Bethune students, the YFS executive endorsement was done through an emergency meeting that you yourself called and the only Bethune student on your executive was not informed of that meeting. So your endorsement simply reinforced the fact that Bethune students are not being represented by you/your executives and your "Unite to Fight for Student Rights" mandate.

So, in closing, we, the Bethune College council, will make every attempt (within our mandate) to ensure the maintenance of a vital and exciting press for Bethune students. Again, thanks for coming out.

In Solidarity and THEN SOME,
Bethune College Council
Sarah Payne, President
Ian Knight, Vice President

P.S. Student activism is alive and healthy in Bethune College.

YFS support criticized

To the editor,

Regarding the YFS executive's support of the demonstration "aimed at Bethune College council," I, as a Bethune student, am offended by Jean Ghomeshi's paternalistic attitude towards Bethune students. In his view, "Bethune students should take pride in hosting a widely distributed newspaper of such quality."

Well, while I don't dispute the hard work that has gone into the *Lexicon* this year, I and many other Bethune students do not take pride in not having our own college covered in OUR newspaper. The

people who volunteer for the *Lexicon* are volunteering to do a job, and that job includes covering Bethune College in our college paper.

Ghomeshi supports the *Lexicon* receiving a "direct levy from the York student body." The *Lexicon* is the Bethune College newspaper, and as such is funded by Bethune College students.

If a group of students wishes to start up an alternative newspaper to *Excalibur*, and hold a referendum to receive funding from the York student body, they are welcome to do

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