



**YORK**  
UNIVERSITY

# The College Systems : ending alienation or castrating students?

## Holmes on the Student Eunuch

by Fred Holmes

Let us paraphrase a recent Excalibur article, and consider the student as 'eunuch'.

After a public and high school history of lining up and having to ask permission to get a drink, a university student may bask in the belief that he has found his political utopia.

But I contend there are at least two strong administrative machines operating to ensure that the student will continue to be politically isolated and morally engaged.

The first is this farce called 'the college system'.

It is nothing more than an incredibly devious device to break down student voice into units, while the administration remains unified, growing more monolithic and centralized each day.

Each student has classes in many colleges; eats in undifferentiated dining halls; and has friends throughout each complex.

Yet in what counts most, his political base, the administration HAS made sharp unitary (college) distinctions. Either the Department of Student Services and the other administrators that control us must segment, or we must unite. Since the former is not likely to occur, the cruel hoax of political alignment with paper colleges must end.

The second castrating agent is the enforcement of Ontario's moral status quo by

dons who stand in the place of Dick and Jane's parents while they are off at school.

These administrative nurse maids are aided by the physical design of the residence buildings, which includes a central porter's turret (in Founders only the women are saved), and fire doors that act as moral burglar alarms. The unsuspecting students never had a chance.

But here are some suggestions. Why not fire Linda Newmarch, the senior women's don in Founders, and her male counterpart? Why not run residences like any other apartments?

Why not arrange colleges as to temperament?

Measures like these, or indeed any real changes, can only be effective if students have a powerful, broad and centralized political base.

Disband the college councils or call them the dance committees that they are, actively support (by demonstrations if necessary) a university-wide student political association, an activist York Student Council.

We must realize that The Whole Man is a myth while administrators make all the important decisions for us. We gave away our self-determination and responsibility even before we got it. For us to be whole, it must be won back.

But power is never given; it must be taken.

*The following is an article written by President Murray G. Ross for Excalibur. In it, he explains the rationale behind the college system at York.*

The college system on York campus is one of the unique features of York University which is being watched and studied with care by universities all over the



Dr. Fowle signs the Vanier Constitution as council Chairman Larry Rapoport looks on.

by Alan Gayda

*Dr. C.D. Fowle, Master of Vanier College, feels we have been too concerned with the means and not the action. In an interview with Excalibur, Dr. Fowle talked about the problems faced by Vanier College.*

Dr. Fowle says the difficulties faced by the university government to date arise from attempts to formulate a constitution using experience drawn from other universities that have no colleges. The college system at York is novel and it is understandable that we will meet problems in incorporating it into a workable constitution.

### Finances

Dr. Fowle does not feel it is too expensive to operate separate colleges.

'Though it may require more money to maintain individual colleges, the provincial government judges by the return it gets from its funds.

If the return is the successful working out of a new idea, then the government will continue to provide the funds. So it is important that we put every effort into making the College system a success.'

### Vanier reputation

'It's a little early to jud-

world. The reason is that no university has yet discovered a way of combining individual student contact with mass enrolment.

York's idea is a simple one which appears to many as a most promising solution to the inevitable problems of the multiversity. The plan is to provide a college for each 1,000 undergraduates which would become the centre for student activities on the campus and in which students would have opportunities to meet each other and faculty members around topics of interest and importance.

The University has made a considerable investment in the college system, not only in terms of buildings but also in terms of operating budgets. Whether the colleges will succeed cannot yet be

ascertained. There are some encouraging signs, but it is clear that buildings and facilities will not make a College. It is only the students, the Masters and the Fellows that can make the colleges viable. It is only they who can develop college traditions, attitudes, and programs.

It is too early to say if the colleges will work, but it is not too early to predict that the colleges will succeed only if each year there is an increasing number of students who identify with, and contribute to, the life of their college.

Most students want such identification; it remains for some group in each college to find the formula for involving their fellow students in significant college programs.

## Master Fowle on Vanier

ge whether Vanier has established a reputation that would influence the students. However, over half the fourth year students who transferred from Glendon last fall, as well as a large proportion of students from second and third year, chose Vanier over the other colleges. This may indicate a preference.'

### Fellows

One of the difficulties in the operation of Vanier college is that the role of the Fellows has not yet been clearly defined.

'A Fellow has outside affiliations, such as research projects, besides his obligations to the university. Though we have not yet clearly defined his role he would have to give up some of his outside activities to accommodate his interest in the college,' says Dr. Fowle. 'Many Fellows are presently contributing to Vanier college. Professor Polka, for example, has a full time program as well as the added responsibility of senior tutor and Fellow of the college.'

### Vanier council

Speaking of the problems faced by Vanier college council, Dr. Fowle said 'The college council has done a fine job under the circumstances. Two or three mem-

bers of council mentioned to me they were finding the work of council too heavy along with their academic responsibilities.'

### Apathy

College dinners in Vanier college have not been too successful. A well-publicized college council conference in mid-October drew minimal attendance. Dr. Fowle has asked if these were symptoms of apathy. He explained the reason for the poor response to college dinners. 'We planned to have no central attraction at our college dinners and to make them regular and open to all. College members were either unavailable at the time or uninterested in that sort of thing.'

'It is oversimplifying the matter too much to call the failure of the college conference 'apathy'. Transportation problems to York means that students spend less time in college activities. Residence students, of course, are active but that does not solve the problem for the rest of the college.'

'One definite attempt to stimulate interest in the college is the division of the college into 'houses' for athletic purposes.'

'Our outgoing college council has done much for college finances, and apathy in Vanier is no worse than in the other colleges.'

## Students Say

by Sam Pinkas

Question: Are you satisfied with the college system at York as it is?



This is a system? It's too vague and undemanding of the individual student to be a solid system. I want the colleges ultimately supreme, not YSC, for more college identity. Di Gillespie F II

The colleges are quite irrelevant to most students. They are just buildings. I'm in Winters and I really couldn't care less about it. I spend most of my time in Vanier and Founders. The college system here is merely a feeble excuse for a bureaucratic machine. David McCaughna WI



Damn right I am, chickee. It gives this place some variety and spirit and other goodies. I say keep the system. Five years from now the college system will make this crummy U great! Richard Levine F III

