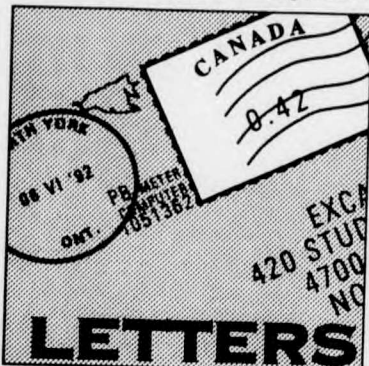


Nada just not good enough

The paragraph regarding the campus political parties trying to lobby Excalibur to cover their speakers (*Between the Lines*, Oct. 7), was not, in my opinion, exactly an ideal example of quality journalistic practices.

The Excalibur states that it will give the same coverage to Bob Kaplan as it



gave to Barbara McDougall — "nada". What credible media source would not cover two prominent speakers appearing in its own back yard?

One of the most wonderful aspects of a liberal democracy is a free and responsible media. The media is free to question and criticize the many and diverse realms of society, as it sees fit. Yet, the media is responsible not only for what it says, but also to bring as much information as possible to the people, so that they can make their own informed choice. Media is not separate from society. Rather, it is an integral part of it.

Every year, each student at York pays \$4.00, so that they can have an entertaining, informative student newspaper, a newspaper that tries as hard as possible to provide comprehensive, fair news coverage of the York community.

If the paper does not agree with what certain campus events express or represent, then it has the freedom and responsibility to offer compelling alternative arguments for the individual's digestion. But, please, do not intentionally circumvent legitimate events, as you seem to have done with Barbara McDougall and Bob Kaplan.

Jason Beer

1990/91 Executive Editor of McMaster University's student newspaper Silhouette

Dryden must tone down rhetoric

The Oct. 28 issue of *excalibur*, besides being perhaps the most economical, well-composed and even somewhat readable edition I've seen all year, included an article on its front page about Columbus Day.

Not that its presence was wrong in itself — don't get me wrong. I think that most thinking people realize by now that celebrating a day that really represents the oppression and murder of human beings is not, to say the very least, in good taste. I do, however, have some comments about the article itself, and especially on the comments of Heather Dryden, who was quoted in the article.

"This [Columbus' arrival]," writes the author, Mr. Ramjattan, "made a profound impact on indigenous people and other groups..." Well, I should say it did. The writing here reminds me of a professor who called World War II "a major political event". Anyway, this is not the bone I want to pick.

Once again, I am in disagreement with Heather Dryden's judgments. Some God-given insight, one supposes, allows her to pick out exactly what is the fault in modern education, "This is Columbus manifested. The educators, by allowing books like this [books that reflect negative stereotypes] to remain



• photo by Wayne Todd

We will not accept any letter to the editor without the telephone number of the writer.

in the curriculum are perpetuating these negative stereotypes."

This seems quite naturally the answer. Let's ignore the centuries of human thought and writing, because it isn't as open-minded as in our pristine 1990's!

I immediately wonder what books Dryden would suggest instead. I admit I don't know of a book — or an individual, for that matter — that doesn't have some smidgen of prejudice, that doesn't have some slight imperfection. Dryden's library must be impressive in its obscure materials.

Also, Dryden is quite right in assessing us all as incapable of seeing past these stereotypes. We need the guidance of the VP Equality and Social Affairs, bless her politically correct heart.

Heather, your purpose seems good and true, but your reasoning, and your rhetoric leave a lot to be desired. All I ask is a little consideration — once in a while, please assume that I can think for myself.

Tim Conley
Vandoo editor

Questioning Greek record

Based on his letter in the Oct. 29 issue, Mr. Tsoukas would like us to believe that Greece is a paragon of democratic principles. He confidently states that, as a Helsinki Human Rights Accord signatory, Greece automatically established for itself an exemplary record of human rights policies. Reality is quite the contrary.

How would Mr. Tsoukas account for the blistering *Helsinki Watch* report of 1990, entitled "Destroying Ethnic Identity: The Turks of Greece"? This was the most critical human rights report ever published — until, that is, this summer's *Amnesty International* report on torture and ill-treatment in Greek prisons and police stations (many of the case-histories just happen to involve the brutal treatment of Turks, Albanians, and other non-Greek victims).

Amnesty International 1991, also criticized the Greek government for jailing two Turkish men simply because they identified themselves as "Turk". Ethnic Turks in Greece are officially considered to be Greek Muslims, and are forbidden to organize associations whose names include the word "Turkish".

Mr. Tsoukas should also be criticized for failing to address the issue identified by Ms. Nitsis' article — that is, the harassment of a Canadian-Macedonian student by Canadian-Greek students during clubs week. I am grateful that our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms enables cultural groups to maintain their identity in Canada. This charter guarantees Mr. Tsoukas' rights and freedoms to associate with other Canadians of Greek descent, but he would have us believe that Canadians of Macedonian descent should not associate with each other, or even exist.

Paul Brown
2nd year Law student

Plug for out-of-class activities

This is in response to the letter entitled "Quit bitching, go to class" in the Oct. 21 issue. I was surprised and pleased to notice that out of York's approximately 140 clubs and 5 services, Mr. Robbins chose to refer to the Bisexual, Lesbian and Gay Alliance at York (BLGAY), or, as he so cleverly worded "the gay and lesbian club". We are currently making exciting plans for the '92-'93 school year, and can sure use the publicity! However, I feel compelled to correct his letter on two major points.

Firstly, BLGAY is not a "club" — we are funded to provide services to the entire York community. Our support group meets Tuesday nights at 5 pm in 315C Student Centre. Also, throughout the year, we sponsor speakers, workshops and activities on a variety of subjects in order to increase awareness and, therefore, provide educational opportunity for York students and faculty.

The second point I feel necessary to correct is Mr. Robbins' assumption that being involved in BLGAY distracts our members from their studies. I assure you, Mr. Robbins, with York's 45,000 daytime enrollment as my witnesses (4,500 of which are gay or lesbian, according to the Kinsey report), that BLGAY makes every effort to hold our organizational meetings and events at times convenient to our members, NOT during class time. However, if you do have proof of any of our members or associates skipping classes, please report them to me directly, and I will give them a good talking to. However, I think you'll find us to be a generally studious, pro-learning bunch.

Finally, I would like to extend my personal invitation for you, Mr. Robbins, to any of our informative events which fit into your schedule. Watch for posters on your way to class. We always love to hear many diverse opinions at our organizational meetings (Mondays, 5:30 pm in 311C Student Centre). If you can't make it at that time, please let your gay, lesbian and

bisexual friends know — hopefully, they are free. Thanks again for the publicity!

Nicole Shick
female coordinator BLGAY
2nd year English/Canadian Studies student

Educate your body all the time

I would like to deal with a question brought up by Marty Robbins in his/her letter "Quit Bitching, Go To Class" in the Oct. 21 issue. The question Marty asked was, "...isn't the whole reason we are here (at York) is to attend class and receive an education?" My answer is no, it is not the whole reason for many of us.

Education comes in many forms. For some, the university 'experience' is merely attending classes and going home to study. But there are others, who need to socialize more while on campus, hence the idea behind the infamous pub. Some people drink more than others, and this may very well affect their academic success, but what business is that of yours? Its not your education that's being ruined!

And what does one make of your evaluation of "protesting", those nagging individuals who will protest "anything"? What exactly have you got against people who speak their mind — those of us who choose to show our disagreement with some facet of society? In case you are not aware of this fact, not everyone benefits under "the powers that be". One of the more peaceful results of this scenario is a protest. Maybe you yourself find life at York, or life in general, perfect, but what right do you have telling others it should be the same for them?

This brings me to your attack of the "gay and lesbian club" (which is in actuality called the bisexual, lesbian and gay club). For those of us whose sexuality is different from the so-called 'norm', the world can be a condemning place. Groups like BLGAY, are often the only place for lesbians, bisexuals, or gay men to find stability and support. This analogy doesn't just apply to BLGAY, but to any of the clubs at York — they exist for a reason. Clubs meet the various needs of a particular group, and you are most incorrect when you bunch them together with terms like "diversions". For many students at York, clubs are a necessary part of their daily life on campus, as much as classes are.

Your expectations when you came to York were stereotypically idyllic. In your own words, you pictured a place where everyone was "embarking" on a similar "journey", of course leaving no room for individuality or special needs in the process. You, and others like you, must realize that people are different, and what one person needs, an-

other may not. You can't stop people from "bitching", as you call it, if that is what they feel they must do. This world may seem like a magical land of Oz to you, but for many of us, the ruby slippers don't always fit.

Ian Hamilton
3rd year Sociology student

Voices on Israel should not divide

I was absolutely horrified when I read Ira Nayman's political commentary entitled "Silent weeping ultimately bad for Israel's political soul" (Oct. 12). He has presented only one side of this issue, which is against the divine law of journalism. I present the other side now, because I am a Jew who disagrees vehemently with him.

Nayman refers to the "dulled humanitarian instinct of the Israeli people". Since when has any human's instinct been "humanitarian"? Human nature is to defend what one has at any cost. Israelis are just like all other human beings. They fought hard to get the sliver of land which is their home, and they will, no matter what anyone says, do anything to keep all or most of it.

The opening reference to the mistreatment of a twelve-year-old Palestinian boy is again one-sided. Why did the soldiers mistreat the boy? If he was minding his own business, the soldiers were unjustified. If the boy was committing a crime, the soldiers were not only justified in apprehending the boy, but required to do so.

Criminals in many countries, are often mistreated by the police forces. In Los Angeles, Rodney King was terribly abused. In Toronto, Wade Lawson was killed by the Metro Toronto Police Force. Why is Nayman placing such a burdensome yoke upon the shoulders of the Israeli people by expecting perfect morality, when our own society is not flawless?

Nayman states at the end of his personal commentary that North American Jews should be allowed the right of full participation in political dialogue affecting Israel. This is ridiculous! Should Nigerians be allowed to decide what is best for Canada? Should the French be allowed to create legislation affecting Japan? Of course not, so why does Nayman expect North American Jews to be given such rights concerning Israeli politics?

The most offensive criticism in this commentary is Ira Nayman's not-so-subtle handling of his own hate-mongering. After striking down racism as unjust and immoral, he shows that he belongs in their camp. He condemns and insults "well-organized, conservative Jewish groups", by bluntly accusing them of imposing their opinion upon all Jews. These same organizations are what holds the Jewish people together. When a group has many opinions, often the group breaks apart. We cannot allow this to happen, because it has happened too many times in the past. The battle plan of 'Divide and Conquer' must be dealt a blow by 'United We Stand, O Children of Israel.'

Joshua Heuman
1st year Visual Arts student

Labor students squish debate

After I got out of the class and ran out of the building, I tried to hide my tears from the others. I felt very depressed and inadequate. How could I have been so stupid, I asked myself.

It was my Labor Studies class. Ev-

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