

First woman in man's job

Cleaner breaches sexist job classifications

By DALE RITCH

For the past 10 months, Edna Sinacola, a member of the cleaning staff at York, has been proving that a woman can do work traditionally reserved for men and do it well.

Since Sept. 23, she has been the lead hand in a crew of 12 caretakers who clean and maintain York's undergraduate residences.

Formerly a house-maid, Sinacola did such jobs as vacuuming, picking up garbage and cleaning outrooms. Although the work was similar to that done by the male cleaners, the job classification held that it was less demanding physically; Sinacola thought differently.

"Myself, I used to think I was working harder than the men," she explains. "I had a bigger area to

cover and more jobs to do."

Sinacola first applied for the cleaner's job nearly two years ago. Her main motivation in applying was to get on a steady day shift, although the wage differential, \$4.04 for cleaners as opposed to \$3.48 for house-maids, was an additional incentive.

The maintenance workers' union, CUPE 1356, supported her when she bid for the cleaner's job, but because there were separate job classifications involved, they couldn't file a grievance.

Her first application was turned down because a male worker with more seniority had also applied. However, the second time, a male worker with three years less seniority was given the job.

Sinacola was not deterred by these setbacks. "I kept seeing men with a lot less seniority getting day jobs, and I knew that once I was trained as a cleaner, I could do the job.

"I wanted to know why they wouldn't train me to do the work. I wanted to be given a chance to try it."

Finally, on her third application, the university administration decided to train Sinacola for the job of cleaner.

On the whole, she says now, her fellow male workers "were very helpful" in assisting her to adjust to the new job.

Ed Gorton, the president of local 1356, feels the union is very sensitive to the inferior status and pay of female workers.

"If women can do the work, they should get the job."

At the present time, the union is trying to negotiate an across-the-board increase from the administration. Such an increase would mean that the house-maids, as the lowest paid workers, would get a proportionately much larger increase. This increase would considerably lessen



Edna Sinacola

C.T. Squassero photo

the difference in earnings between men and women.

The administration has so far been reluctant to meet the union's demands; two years ago it refused to give any ground on this issue in the last contract.

The wages Sinacola earns mostly "go on to the table each week" to pay for the groceries for her family

of five. She feels that a good increase is necessary to catch up with buying power lost to inflation, and to keep up with the rising cost of living.

In any case, York's only female cleaner-lead hand thinks that her actions are helping to set a trend which will see women workers challenging many of the longstanding discriminatory practices at York.

Student awards officers call for changes in OSAP

By DOUG TINDAL

While the Association of Student Awards Officers of Ontario is neither as vocal nor as radical as many students in its criticisms of the Ontario student awards programme, it too has levelled charges of inadequacy and inefficiency at the programme for many years. And it, too, has gone largely unheeded.

While the Ontario Federation of Students, for one, has called for the removal of tuition and the provision of living stipends (grants) for students, the association has contented itself, for example, with trying to secure an increase in the OSAP room and board allowance.

But it has been trying for six years now, and it has continually provided a range of food and housing cost studies, documenting the shortcomings of the current allowance of \$32 per week.

A recent report from the association to OSAP states, "a more realistic (living allowance) should be adopted, and all costs should be adjusted annually to keep pace with inflation".

It is expected that the ministry of colleges and universities, which administers the awards programme, will finally react this year to increase the allowance.

No one knows how great the increase will be, but York's student awards officer, Kaye MacDonald, told Excalibur that "none of us (in the association) are going to be satisfied with less than \$40 per week — many want \$42 per week".

MacDonald has also been displeased with the practical administration of the programme.

The ministry was slow in setting up its computer programmes for receiving applications this year, which resulted in an increase of four weeks over last year in the processing time of an average application.

"We have an emergency fund here, to make loans to students who are waiting for their OSAP awards," said MacDonald. "They were so low this year that as of the end of November we had had to give out \$28,000."

Stong celebrates day for women

With a group exhibition by five women photographers, a one-woman show on Gertrude Stein, a Toronto feminist singer, a book display from Longhouse bookshop, talks, and concrete poetry with original music, Stong College will celebrate A Day of the Woman, a salute to International Women's Year, on Friday, February 28.

Planned as a series of events for anyone from the York or Toronto community, the day begins at 1 p.m. at the Samuel J. Zacks (Stong) Gallery with an opening of a show exhibiting some 50 photographs by five artists from Cambridge, Massachusetts and Toronto.

Included is the work of Elsa Dorf-

man and four well-known Toronto photographers, who were part of the Baldwin Street Gallery of Photography (now defunct as the result of "urban renewal") — Pam Harris, Lynn Murray, Robin Williams, and Laurie Jones.

Immediately following the opening, at 2 p.m., Johanna Stuckey will comment on Women in Universities, with special attention to the report of the task force on the status of women at York University.

At 3 p.m., the programme shifts to the Stong Theatre where Nancy Cole, an American who has lived for some years in Paris, will present her one-woman show of readings: Gertrude Stein's Gertrude Stein.

At 4:30, the scene will move to a book exhibition in Room 106 where Sandra Foster of the Women's Educational Press (a cooperative) will talk about Women and Publishing. Other participants will include Beth Appeldoorn of the Longhouse Bookshop and Judith Lawrence, creator and producer of CBC's Mr. Dressup.

Following a break for dinner and free conversation, the day will continue into the evening with three more events, including a performance by a feminist singer whose first recording of her original songs is now in press — Rita MacNeil of Toronto.

No admission is charged for any event.

How does it compare?

How does Ontario's student awards programme stack up against awards programmes in other provinces?

Not bad.

The major virtue of the Ontario programme is that it does not use all of the \$1,400 loan available to it under the Canada student loans programme. Instead, it uses only \$800 of the federal money, and then provides a grant of up to \$1,400 from its own coffers.

In all other provinces, students who receive the maximum allowable award end up with a debt of \$1,400 per year.

The Ontario maximum award of \$2,200 is exceeded by three provinces — Manitoba and Alberta, with \$2,800 maximums, and British Columbia, with a maximum of \$2,900.

If your main concern is to finish your education owing as little money as possible, and the support you require is less than \$1,800 per year, your best bet is to become a resident of British Columbia and attend university there.

If, on the other hand, your needs fall between \$1,800 and \$2,200 per year, you should be an Ontario resident, and you may enrol anywhere in Canada.

If you require more than \$2,200 per year, you may reside and attend university in Manitoba, Alberta or B.C.

Those choices result from policies regarding award allocation and residence requirements, which differ from province to province.

Whereas the first \$800 of an Ontario award is loan, and the remainder grant, B.C. makes an initial grant of \$200, and splits the remainder 50-50 between loan and grant.

Ontario, on the other hand, is the only province which guarantees support to Ontario students who study out of province, and is also the only province which provides any support to part time students.

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