

# Correspondence

## TTC Express 'the better way'

Since Reading Week I have benefitted regularly from the TTC Wilson Station-York University express service. It has been punctual, fast, convenient, and in every way a wonderful improvement over the previous Wilson-Keele-Sentinel route. I hope other faculty, students, and staff will write the TTC to support the continuation of this service after April 3, when the experiment is scheduled to end. Letters should be sent to Public Relations, Toronto Transit Commission, 1900 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario M4S 1Z2.

Selma L. Odom  
Associate Professor  
Department of Dance

## 'Whose interests being protected?'

Regarding Jenny Gonsalves' letter of March 27 (3-D sex flicks 'not funny'). Miss Gonsalves' comment "You can call it censorship. I call it protecting people's interests" is distressing. "Protecting people's interests" is merely a euphemism for censorship, and no euphemism, no matter how articulate, makes the concept of censorship any more acceptable. Euphemisms are used to justify morally wrong acts, and it remains morally wrong for persons in power to decide what the public may be allowed to consume. The decision should rest with the public. If this is denied, then it says that people are not intelligent enough to lead their own lives.

The Funk and Wagnall's Dictionary lists a censor as "an official examiner of manuscripts, plays, etc., empowered to suppress them, wholly or in part, if objectionable." But the old question remains: what is con-

sidered objectionable, and by whom? It seems that many people in the York community have already answered this for themselves, in the duty of 'protecting people's interests.'

Having seen the films, I believe that they are not only offensive to women, but to human beings in general. The fault lies in the fact that they were poorly chosen. Both films were boring, and unworthy of study except for the fact that they are products of the culture in which we live, and anything produced by our culture, no matter how vile, boring or unexceptional, deserves analysis in an attempt to better understand ourselves. But *nothing* should prevent them from being screened.

I do not care that the films were screened during International Women's Week, nor do I care that Bob Wales resigned. But I do care that guidelines may be put forth to 'protect people's interests.'

Paul Bellini

## Censorship? 'Let's talk'

J. Gonsalves, CYSF's vice-president for women's affairs, complains (Letters, 27 March) that both she and the Women's Centre have been misrepresented and deserve an apology for the *Excalibur* reports on their efforts to stop the showing of certain motion pictures on campus. But then, in the same letter, she makes the frustrated exhibitor appear to favour the degradation of women.

She quotes at length from Susan Brownmiller's characterization of pornographic movies: "viewing females as anonymous, panting playthings, adult toys, dehumanized objects to be used, abused, broken and discarded." Without a break, she goes on: Mr. Wales in his own words

regards such movies as 'hilariously funny.'" This is dirty pool. Wales was discussing the movies he proposed to exhibit — not Brownmiller's characterization of "porn". If anybody deserves an apology it is Wales, whom I do not know and whose movies, for all I know, may be detestable.

Gonsalves is also at pains to separate herself from any attempt to censor what people should see. This is disingenuous. I think a reasonable case can be made for censorship; and Gonsalves clearly wants, on this matter, what is usually regarded as censorship. But she needlessly handicaps herself by fleeing from a scare-word. The reintroduction of open censorship — fraught as it is with the possibility of abuse — is preferable to random acts of thinly-disguised censorship accompanied by disclaimers. That is worse than official censorship because it is uncontrollable. Gonsalves would certainly take it amiss if Brownmiller's tract, which views all male-female relations as tainted by rape, were quietly censored out of the bookstore and off course lists.

If any of us wants censorship, let's talk about it — and about how many things we want censored, and for how many reasons. If we don't, let's not pretend that our acts of suppression aren't censorship.

T.W. Olson

## Understanding harassment

I agree with R. Goranson that rape and sexual harassment are extremely serious matters which call for prudent, non-sensationalist and non-trivialising treatment. The recent Forum on Sexual Harassment brought speakers to York who helped us begin to understand various patterns of behaviour which we

term sexual harassment, ranging from explicit physical attacks to more subtle threats and promises. We have a tape of the Forum for those people who were not able to attend.

York University will participate in Professor Norma Bowen's questionnaire concerning sexual harassment, so we soon will have information about how students at York perceive this matter.

Ann B. Shteir  
Advisor to the President  
on the Status of Women

## The more things change...

Well it seems things never change at York Student Elections. It is becoming a yearly comedy show to see what is going to happen. Two years ago, Harvey Pinder was refused entry on the ballot because David Chodikoff and his clique were threatened by his candidacy. The CRO at the time, Garfield Paine, claimed that Pinder was a Calumet student while the Master of Stong College as well as other college officials maintained that he was a Stong student. Because of this political dispute Harvey Pinder the "Student Action" candidate had to be replaced as presidential aspirant by Mary Morrone who went on to lose the election to Chodikoff by a mere handful of votes. Last year, everyone and his brother was being acclaimed to positions on the revamped CYSF, including myself... well almost. In another unorthodox move my acclamation to the position of CYSF Vice-President of University Affairs was overturned. The reason given was that a candidate had come forward who wished to enter the race. That person was my co-representative from McLaughlin College, Donn Sugg.

This year's episode seems most comical, once again Sugg is

involved and once again Chodikoff. Clearly, Andrea Doucet has no claim to the presidency in as much as she is a Bethune student. But the fact that the Chodikoff/Sugg team are once again embroiled in controversy, this time with a one time ally is too much to take with a straight face.

Jon Simon

## 'Wrong impressions' about rape case

The front page account concerning the alleged rape case may have left some wrong impressions in your readers' minds and I would like to comment.

Ms. Gonsalves is quoted as saying the 'Three other women gave evidence about this teacher during the investigation.' This is not true. No other women have registered any complaints about this teacher. The identities of the people that Ms. Gonsalves refers to are not known to the University officers conducting the investigation so it is not possible that they 'gave evidence'.

There is also a comment that the Council of the York Student Federation has been urging the administration to act on this complaint since November 16th. This is not true. The University was not aware of the complaint or the names of any of those involved until three weeks after the incident is supposed to have occurred. During this time the CYSF President was in no position to urge action on events about which he and we had no information.

John A. Becker  
Assistant Vice-President

All letters should be addressed to the editor, *Excalibur*, Room 111 Central Square. Letters are limited to 300 words. Name, address, or phone number must be included or the letter will not be published. *Excalibur* reserves the right to edit for grammar and length. Deadline Monday 5 p.m.

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