

OPINIONS

Toronto's bid for a flawed Olympics

by Howard Kaman

Well, we blew it. The 1996 Olympics will be taking place in Atlanta, rather than Toronto, or any of the other four cities which bid. If we're such a "World Class City," then why did we lose?

It wasn't the facilities. Hell, we've got plenty — from the Dome, to the proposed stadium to be built upon the Exhibition site.

Well then, maybe it was the memory of how Ben Johnson tainted the Olympics in Seoul? No of course not; we had the Dubin inquiry to demonstrate our commitment to the elimination of drugs in sport.

Indeed, Toronto seemed to have everything going for it.

Then what went wrong?

Perhaps we lost because of the Bread Not Circuses coalition, which demanded that the city put the money in a more valuable place — say, inexpensive housing. Perhaps it was because of this group which remembers what it was that truly made Toronto great. Ten years ago, we may not have been stars on the international

stage, but the people could afford to live here. We didn't have the Dome, but housing prices weren't through the roof. Our city was truly cosmopolitan, with a firm grasp on many cultures which lived together in harmony. Ten years ago, the politicians weren't spending so much of the public's

Councillor Tony O'Donague say that Toronto's failure rests squarely on the shoulders of Bread Not Circuses. A group has never been more appropriately named.

Watching the ceremonies unfold on television, you could virtually see the three . . . er . . . five

cities put on an elaborate act, with glitzy promo films and presentations. Like tightrope walkers, each city's representatives sat nervously in the front row trying to look as comfortable as possible. Then, with all the subtlety of an Academy Awards presentation, the IOC members arrived to a standing ovation, and Samaranch took the microphone. Like a pro, he built an audience anticipation by slowly opening the envelope. For a split second, I actually thought the ceremony was at the Dorothy Chandler pavilion in California, rather than at the New Takawana Prince Hotel, in Tokyo. Then, he said the name: Atlanta.

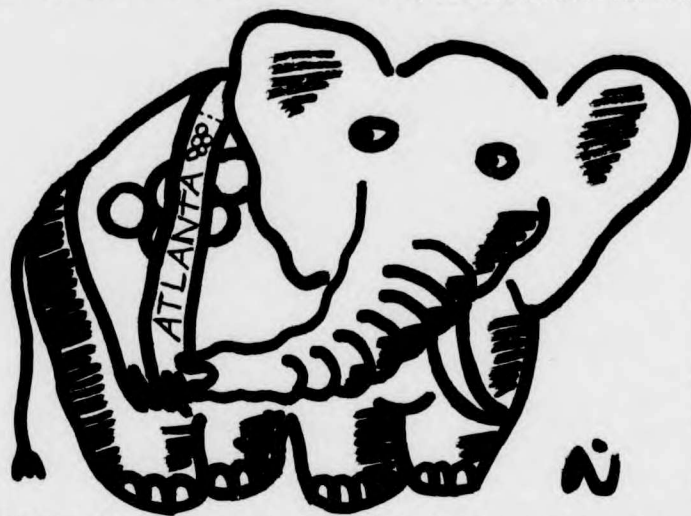
It was all very pathetic. If the spirit of the Olympics is the competition, then why all the elaborate schemes to win? Clearly, this was a game that had no rules. Athens representatives actually offered free three-day cruises to Olympic athletes if their city won. Toronto, in comparison, offered a tour of the Toronto Islands. Athletes arriving in Atlanta will receive a free trip to both Disney World and Universal Studios in Florida.

In the end, however, the petty incentives aren't what mattered. With the media watching, the increased technological power (and TV viewing audience) of the North American cities clearly put them at the forefront.

This said, it is also important to recognize the importance of Ted Turner's influence in Atlanta. With so much of the IOC's membership being from Third World nations, Turner's offer to supply a free television feed to these countries was probably the deciding factor.

The power that people like Turner have over such decisions destroys the nature of what the Olympics are all about. Rather than being a testament to the spirit of competition, and the enjoyment of participation, the games have become simply another fight for money and ratings points.

Of course, all is not lost on the politicians involved. Interviewed by the CBC after the announcement, Toronto bid chair Paul Henderson said the effort was well worth it. To people like Henderson, it is all a big game. But then, it wasn't his money that bought the equipment.



Riccardo Sala graphic

money to put on a show for the IOC.

Watching the CBC's coverage of the announcement last Tuesday morning, I heard Toronto

rings. The audience was sitting in quiet anticipation as they waited for the ringmaster, IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch, to appear. They watched as all six

LETTERS

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unfortunate.

I can only hope that YSF/FEY's sudden and overdue interest in issues which affect the lives of foreign students is an indication of a new found commitment to work with and for foreign students in an effort to enhance their educational experience while in Canada; to help pressure the federal and provincial governments to provide more scholarship support; to end differential fees; and to make it easier for foreign students to seek part-time employment while studying. This new attitude is refreshing and I look forward to working on these issues with York University's foreign student population and the YSF/FEY should that be your genuine intention.

Clark Hortsing
Foreign Student Counsellor
Office of Student Affairs

by Patricia Hutahajan

In this day and age it is hard to believe that we as a society are still facing problems concerning attitudes of gender inequality. This is a time when women and men should be working together to deal with such issues as the destruction of the environment, the dying of species, and the future of our countries and planet.

Ideally, everyone in our society would realize that men and women are all just people. Aside from the biological differences that have to do with reproduction, it is what we are taught and what roles we are expected to carry out that divide us into sexes. Sex role expectations hurt everybody. They constrain and restrict our potential as human

beings. Women suffer the effects of sexism by feeling intimidated and belittled needlessly. Women are encouraged to develop emotional thinking but are often unacknowledged intellectually. Men suffer the effects of sexism by feeling that they must be "strong" all the time. They must take charge of things and are denied any emotion.

If we accept these stereotypes as to what women and men "should" be, we allow ourselves to become victims of ignorance. Instead we should explore our potential as human beings. Why should men be penalized for having long hair or women for having short hair? It's a fact that most offices and other workplaces will not hire men with long hair regardless of their ability to do the job (by the way, Jean Ghomeshi's hair is looking good.

Our new YFS President was voted in for his potential.) Why should women get less pay for equal work? These types of 'issues' have no place in our future. We must work together now to eliminate sexism.

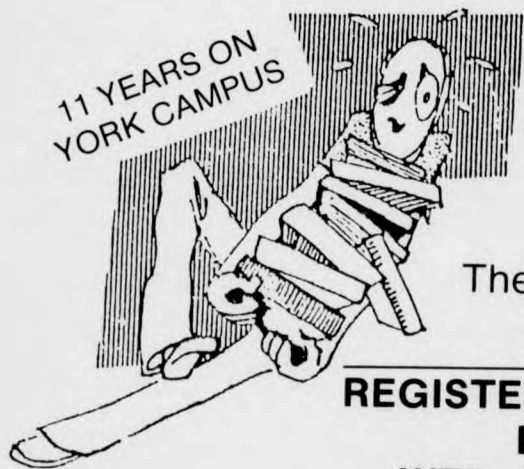
We must learn to respect each other as human beings. Do not settle for less; it starts with us. We must take a stand. For example, do not judge someone by the car that they drive, that is, do not judge by dollars but by sense. Do not judge love with a diamond ring (Why should anyone feel obligated to give someone a diamond ring? Perhaps, with our changing times we could alter the tradition of engagement rings. We should give each other engagement rings within our means, symbolizing our commitments to each other rather than symbolizing our worth to the

rest of the world.) Do not leer at and make derogatory remarks about others: this does nothing but indicate ignorance. We can find a good example of this looking at recent posters which decorate the entrance to Vanier residence. Posters which state: Shalom guys do it on top; Vanier Frosh go HARD or go home; Alysia Sharpe is SEX; L'arcians don't say no, What's the matter Shalom guys, don't you like girls?, etc.

I asked the door monitor what the purpose of the posters was, and his response was, 'They're for orientation. Why, are you offended by something?' Tsk tsk. If they suspect that they might be offending some people, shouldn't they question their actions? I hear that even the Master of Vanier does not approve. Come on everybody, let's work on it. We are our only hope.

Work toward breaking sex barriers

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