

ZARNET ZONE

Poor Man's Square

What is "Poor Man's Square"? One of the founding members, Mark "Bones" Swartz says, "it is a cultural reaction to the Scott Bearpit and the T intersection at the entrance to the Ross Building.

"When I came to York," adds Irwin, "Hervin" Zon, another founding member of the non-elitist group, "I hid in the library every day and would escape only after the 'beautiful' people of Central Square had departed."

These are just some of the comments of those who now inhabit the space between the typing service and the East Bearpit in Central Square. When asked what was the best thing that has happened to "poor man's" as it is affectionately called, Brian "Shimma" Taran commented, "well, they added benches this year."

"Lovely" Linda Zon, the only female member is enthusiastic about the notoriety, but warns "this type of publicity may not be good. The type of person that we would want to attract probably does not read *Excalibur*." She is also talking to the members about changing the name to "Poor Student's" or "Poor Person's" square.

Lately, the group had its patron and its faculty advisor to close its charter membership. Howard G. Hilroy III renounced the family fortune, estimated in excess of \$200 million in favor of his membership in "poor man's." However, Howard was able to take some of that money and he established a scholarship for those studying foreign films at York. Howard says, "it was the least I could do."

The last charter member, Tom "prof" Shafer has brought an air of distinction to the membership. Shortly, through his efforts, members in the club will sport new apparel bearing "PM2." His logic is impeccable.

Consistent with a fear of publicity, photographers were only allowed to picture charter members of the "square" only when they wore paper bags on their heads. In fact, when first photographed, the members attempted to throw Roberta Di Maio's camera through the bookstore window but settled for exposing the film. In fact, the *Zone* almost did not break this story. It was only after four years of investigative journalism and undercover work was the *Zone* able to gain the confidence and

trust of this sometimes credulous group.

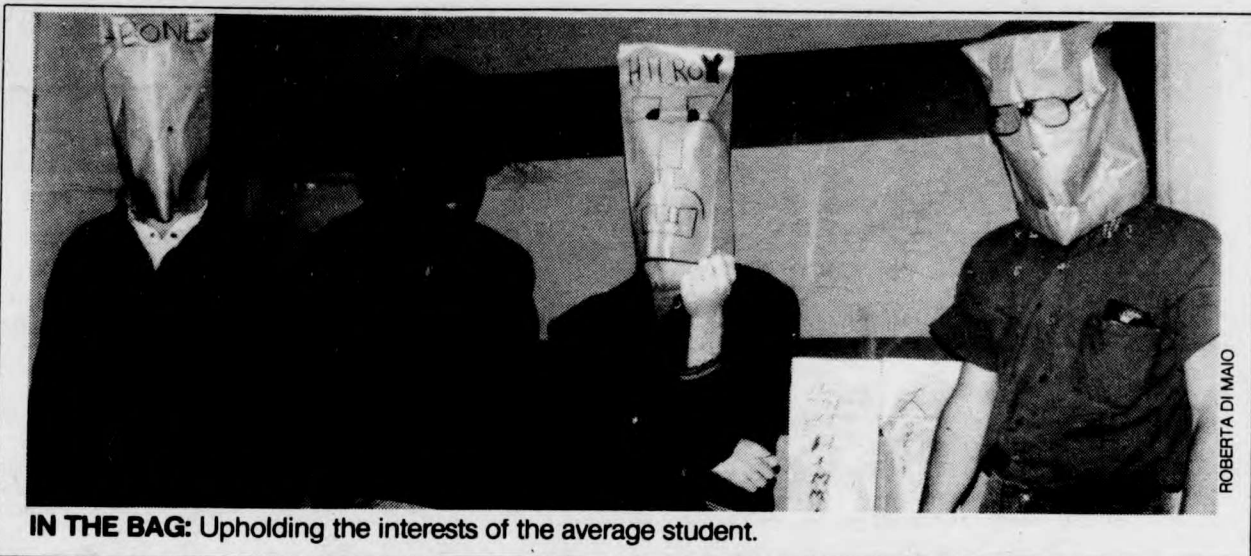
Of course, being where they are (in the busiest location of Central Square) the group has encountered some problems. Reportedly, last year was the worst. "September, 1984 was like a human monsoon: floods of people coming at you."

"However," as Bones says, "we were given floodgates this year," referring to the benches that were recently added in the halls. "Now people are slowing down. While the amount of people passing poor man's humble home are the same, they don't speed by as fast anymore."

"This has been a boon for membership," boasts Shimma. This year the club has plans to admit between two and four qualified members. When asked what traits a prospective member must exhibit, Linda answered that "the potential member must have the qualities and abilities of an exceptional person, yet portray an appearance of being average." This present group is far from average. It consists of a majority of postgraduate and law students.

One real problem this year has been the tendency for people commuting to lock their bicycles on the wood rails where the members rest their weary bones. "It's a shame," says Hervin, "that these people who park their bikes here are depriving us of our home." What is happening now is that members, well versed in the Ontario Fire Code are having the illegally parked bikes removed. While the members of the square want to be nice, "there is a limit to our tolerance," says Hervin.

When asked what they thought of the new elite Faculty Club, Hilroy, the one-time heir apparent to the notebook kingdom said, "what Faculty Club"? After further questioning, Howard added that he thought President Arthurs and a majority of the faculty did not care for the students as much as they care for themselves. "Here the faculty get their offices and their club while the average student at York gets nothing but a classroom, of 500 and a patch of terrazzo in Central Square. Students at York need something more. Walk through Central Square during the week. The faculty says that York needs better paid faculty not more buildings. Who are they fooling? Enrollment has grown but the



IN THE BAG: Upholding the interests of the average student.

facilities haven't."

Upholding the interests of the average student. It is what the members of "Poor Man's Square" have been doing since 1978. "It's our motto," cries Bones. "We're willing to lend an ear to those who can make York a better place for the more than 40,000 students who pass through the hallowed halls of this institution.

It's a big place and you can get lost out there. However, the members would like a real place to sit."

These common problems are not new, nor will they disappear in the near future. York University, as most know, has a space problem. We don't have enough. What the Administration has done is to expand faculty and academic support staff space at

the expense of student activity space. Clearly, if a university is to be an enlightening experience, what is needed is space to handle those extra-curricular activities. Notwithstanding faculty claims in their recent job action, space is needed now. The plight of the members of "Poor Man's Square" acutely demonstrates this need.

JEWISH STUDENT FEDERATION

DANCE

Saturday, Oct. 26, 1985
Beth Shalom Synagogue
1445 Eglinton Ave. West.
8:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$5.00 advance, \$6.00 door

INFO: JSF OFFICE - 667-3647

BETH SHOLOM SYNAGOGUE PRESENTS A College Students Weekend with Danny Siegel October 25, 26, 27-

Danny Siegel, witty lecturer, poet, author and philosopher, who has addressed many college groups and young people in North America and Israel, will spend an eventful weekend at Beth Sholom Synagogue as a scholar in residence.

Friday, October 25 - 8:00 p.m. Student participation service, followed by Oneg Shabbat, and light refreshments.

Topic: "Where Heaven and Earth Touch: Applications of Torah and Talmud to Real Life".
Discussion period follows.

Saturday, October 26 - 8:45 a.m. Services followed by Kiddish Luncheon (by advance registration only).

Topic: "The Transition from College to Real Life".
Also: An afternoon group study session.
8:00 p.m. - PUB (Licensed)

Sunday, October 27 - 9:00 a.m. Morning services, followed by breakfast.
Topic: "Every Day Miracles: Real Life Tzedaka".
Discussion follows.

Total cost for all events in the package is \$17 per person, payable to Beth Sholom Synagogue. Reservations will be appreciated on or before October 18. For further information and reservations for any or all of the events of the Danny Siegel weekend, contact Greta Reiss of the Jewish Student Federation, 667-3647.

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MICHAEL TAIT

Spontaneous Combustion, 1984

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Norman Bethune College Gallery (Room 320)
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(Room 109)

Winters College Gallery (Room 123)

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