

Academic intolerance

The ad hoc committee's decision not to recommend the addition of Professor Christopher Holmes' courses into the regular Psychology curriculum could really have been made in November. But perhaps, for the sake of appearances, the committee decided to wait. Sure, they collected several petitions in support of the course, and members were nice enough to show up to half of one class after reviewing the courses for five months. But members of the committee probably already had a preconceived notion about the whole case.

From their perspective, mystics studies simply does not belong in a prominent psychology department like York University's, a place committed to scholarly pursuit. What kind of discipline is mystics? It certainly doesn't fit into the accepted realms of psychology. But, either did Freud's work in psychoanalysis in the early 19th century, or Roger's phenomenological theory in the 1950s. One can really only understand the value of Holmes' courses by getting more involved in the classes. Perhaps before the Psychology Department makes its final decision over such an alternative field of study, they can at least grant him and his students that privilege.

CYSF acts in complete ignorance, again

The ignorance which so many student politicians sometimes display is simply astounding. A case in point is last Wednesday night's CYSF meeting, when Council voted unanimously to pull out of the Ontario Federation of Students (OFS). According to President Drew McCreadie, OFS was simply not living up to its \$30,000 membership fee.

Though it clearly states within the OFS constitution that each university must conduct a referendum to gain student support before pulling out, Council says they have a legal opinion which states otherwise. In reality, that legal opinion may not hold much water in court, because in the past there have been similar cases involving the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), and in each case the court found in favour of the CFS, saying that a university must hold a referendum before pulling out of such organizations.

But the legality of the situation is secondary to the flagrant irresponsibility Council demonstrated by passing such a ridiculous motion. Their action violated an already established precedent that each time such a move is considered, a university-wide debate is held followed by a referendum. As recently as two years ago, after hearing both sides of the issue, York students voted to stay in OFS. The new motion clearly flies in the face of student opinion, at least until another referendum is held which indicates otherwise.

In addition to ignoring the democratic tradition, the CYSF can be condemned for not following proper procedures, or standard logic. First, they never sent a copy of their report to OFS to see if perhaps after identifying their concerns things could be improved. Second, McCreadie believes the move will put next year's Council in a better bargaining position with OFS, because like this year's U of T, who pulled out of OFS five years ago, they will only have to pay a \$300 membership fee to join up. Wrong. University only get such reduced fees after being away from OFS for three years. Because CYSF currently does operate on a grant system, York in fact pays less relative to other universities. Western, for example, pays \$60,000. Third, McCreadie says that he's not prepared to pay this year's membership fee, even though the CYSF has overtly expressed their affiliation with OFS. Wonder how that will stand up in court?

What the CYSF really should be discussing is how frustrated they are over the fact that, unlike any other student council in Ontario, York's OFS membership fee comes directly out of their \$280,000 budget. This is precisely why the CYSF so desperately needs a direct levy. With a direct levy the CYSF can collect the OFS membership fee separately from the student government levy. And isn't it ironic that McCreadie also claims that the \$30,000 is needed to address a budgetary deficit. So, why doesn't McCreadie simply drop his retroactive pay raise that he passed at Council, increasing his wage from \$12,000 to \$15,000. If he's so concerned about fiscal restraint, it's the least he can do.



LETTERS

We will publish, space permitting, letters under 250 words. They must be typed, triple-spaced, accompanied by writer's name and phone number. We may edit for length. Libellous material will be rejected. Deliver to 111 Central Square during business hours.

Reader questions Flagal article

Dear Editor:

The sad truth about the college system at York, which must be said in response to James Flagal's exaggerated remarks in "Facing Change" (*Excalibur*, March 24, pp. 12-13), is that this system has never been given the resources to work effectively. Indeed, college administrations (as opposed to college councils) have been given just enough funding to perform poorly, thereby providing justification for the incessant criticisms and unending scrutiny of the college during at least seventeen of the twenty to twenty-three years of their existence on the Keele campus.

The sole reason why there has been so much recent pressure to integrate College and Faculty concerns is budgeting cutbacks which, under the Progressive-Conservative governments in Ontario between 1977 and 1985, amounted to a *de facto* abandonment of higher education. In addition, however, there is the view by successive administrations and deans that college councils have engaged in profligate and irresponsible spending intended to benefit a small core of residential students. This is the cutting edge which helps explain the different receptions accorded to President Arthurs' recent proposals and those of former President MacDonald defeated by the Senate in 1975 or 1976.

Evaluations of a centralized system of student government based on proposals which have never to date been implemented at York are, to say the least, premature. Representation of the non-resident majority is a red herring inasmuch as the option of Faculty or College identification, or even the presence of a student centre, will make little if any difference

to undergraduate students whose lack of participation is not based on either the inadequacies of the college system or a lack of options, but is instead a function of part (often full) time job commitments and/or family obligations. Both Faculty-College integration and centralized student government constitute a response to budgetary austerity, combined with a great deal of symbolic reassurance to concerned parties after protracted discussions and accusations over the past two and a half years.

Yours sincerely,
H.T. Wilson

Itwaru supporter reprehensible

Reply to Jay Benjamin's letter in *Excalibur*,

It is obvious that Jay Benjamin knows absolutely nothing about Prof. Arnold Itwaru, his teachings or his present predicament when he ignorantly reduces this complex issue to merely racist dimensions.

Benjamin's frequent usage of embarrassingly primordial terminology and totally illogical modes of reasoning are testament to the fact that this confused, misinformed and frustrated student sees it fit to slander Prof. Itwaru on the basis of having seriously misunderstood Itwaru's political opinion on various political issues which have aroused zeal in Mr. Benjamin but have absolutely no relevance to the issues concerning Prof. Itwaru, the students and the sociology dept.

Benjamin's assumption that Itwaru "advocates terrorism" is so ludicrous that a reply is unnecessary. Benjamin also feels that an injustice is justifiable if "it occurs every other day anyways" which indicates that he feels injustice is acceptable if it occurs frequently.

Benjamin claims that he believes

that Prof. Itwaru was not hired because other faculty members are "harmed and/or offended" by his views; consequently claiming that the sociology dept. practices academic censorship: an appalling claim with seriously disturbing implications inflicting a severe blow to the integrity and collegiality of the sociology dept.

It is deeply distressing that certain persons find it necessary to taint issues, slander people and meddle in the genuine concerns of students and faculty who are serious and sincere in their attempts to salvage what is to them an extremely significant and indispensable aspect of education at York.

Reprehensible and terroristic are the acts of persons who make serious statements concerning issues of which they are totally ignorant.

—Claudio Colaguori

Varsity athletes set poor example

Dear Editor,
I am writing to you regarding, most recently, an incident which occurred in the Stong College pub, The Orange Snail, but also more generally about alcohol related incidents here on campus.

As you know, at The Orange Snail there was recently an incident in which a York student was involved in an argument with another York student which eventually led to a fight. The students involved were York varsity athletes.

Subsequently, the York University Liquor Licence Holder, Mr. Norman Crandles, proceeded to suspend The Orange Snail's Liquor Licence indefinitely. At the same time, Mr. Crandles suspended all Thursday night licensed functions indefinitely. The reason for this was

cont'd on page five

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EDITORIAL: 736-5239
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MAILING ADDRESS:
Room 111, Central Square
York University
4700 Keele Street
Downsview M3J 1P3