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excalibur



by Jeannine Amber

This Wednesday marks the first National Day of Action Against Racism on Campus.

York, along with other universities in Ontario, will be sponsoring events aimed at increasing student awareness of institutional racism.

"We are not dealing with an easily identifiable form of racism. What we are dealing with is very insidious," explained Gillian Browne, member of the anti-racism coalition.

Jean Ghomeshi, who helped organize the event, said the coalition is primarily concerned with raising awareness on four key issues:

"Students have to think about the courses they are offered, the perspective from which they are taught, the slant of the books on the reading lists and the representation of marginalized people in the teaching faculty," Ghomeshi said.

According to Ghomeshi, all of these factors, especially when operating simultaneously, can lead to a "decidedly racist perspective offered to students."

The activities planned for Wednesday all take place in the East Bear Pit. Coalition members will unveil a declaration against racism and distribute information to students. Two films, Spike Lee's "Do the Right Thing" and Euzhan Palcy's "Dry White Season" will run at 10:30am and 3:00pm respectively. Professor Arun Mukherjee will speak at 11:00 am.

Although the coalition feels that many students are unaware of the nature of institutional racism, most students with whom *Excalibur* spoke were conscious of bias in their courses.

Josh Rubin, a second year history major, says he was disappointed by a course dealing with the history

of science, which only examined modern European discoveries.

"The question I have," said Rubin, "is why isn't there another natural science course devoted to other culture's contributions to science?"

Doug Saunders, former president of the english students association, sees a definite problem in the english department.

"I've seen a lot of Eurocentrism and ethnocentrism which I think contributes to racism," Saunders said.

Saunders said he had been in the english department for four years before having a black author on a reading list.

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