

TORONTO - an American traveller's view of our favourite city

The following is reprinted from the Wayne State newspaper the "South End". It describes the experiences of two Wayne State students visiting our famed culture centre - Yorkville.

Scene - You are sitting in Lower De-Roy and this cat walks onstage and starts talking while showing these really out of focus slides. He starts talking in a very dull monologue...

This whole thing started in a rather strange way. I was supposed to go to New York to pick up this girl. I had just awoke on Saturday morning when one of my roommates handed me this letter. I opened it and it said, "Due to circumstances beyond my control I don't want you to come to New York to pick me up."

What was I to do? I talked to my friend and he agreed that something must happen and we set about thinking of places to go. Chicago was out, he had just visited there and the constabulary was hostile. New York was out because we had no money for a place to stay. We decided that Toronto was a very nice place to go. Even if it was foreign, at least there are draft dodgers there and we could stay with one of them.

If you have never gone over the Ambassador bridge while looking like a freak, then you don't know what fun is. Personally I have never had any problems. Either I look like the kind of freak that wouldn't carry illegal things, or perhaps I am innocent looking.

Anyway, we drove up to the Canadian border guard and I rolled down my window. He asked us the stock question, "Where were you born?" We both answered Detroit and then he asked us, "What are you taking across?" We told him that we weren't taking anything across. Suddenly it hit me like a flash, I was holding some oranges. As everybody knows, it is illegal to take oranges across the border into Canada. I looked into the guard's eyes and told him that I was carrying some oranges. He stared back. "So what." I was amazed, either he wanted a bribe or he didn't know about oranges.

I told him that it wasn't legal to take oranges into Canada. He stared long and hard. "Is it a commercial shipment?"

We told him it wasn't. Then with a look of wonder on his face he told us to go on through.

Happiness exuded from our every pore. The only pictures that were running through my head were those of brave pirate smugglers. Swashbuckling, hearty, full of vitality, and operating outside of the law? (I didn't feel too good about the last part).

It takes four hours to get to Toronto from Detroit. We arrived in that frozen city at four in the morning, and it was cold and very snowy. (Headline in the morning paper; SNOW REMOVAL COST CITY ESTIMATED MILLION DOLLARS. Even though their dollar is worth less than ours, that was a lot of snow.

Anyway, we headed for Yorkville to see if perhaps there was any action or even if we could meet someone that would welcome us into their home or apartment to sleep. We found neither.

Yorkville in the winter is no prize. It is what Plum Street tried to be. The pretty stone houses that were made into shops all look alike and closed very early. The two coffee houses were closed too.

We headed for the Edgewater Hotel. We ended up sleeping in my car in the parking lot. The Edgewater Hotel wasn't as cheap as we had been led to believe. It was expensive.

After a surprisingly warm four hour sleep, my friend and I stretched ourselves out and headed for Yorkville again. It wasn't any better than the night before. It was now worse. Some of the stores were open.

Let me tell you what we found out about Yorkville from one of the first shop-owners around there. It started in 1960 as an artsy craftsy slightly liberal artist's meeting place and retail store. When hip came along, the hip people started to come to Yorkville to spend their time and money. More time than money, but that was okay, they did spend some. Now it looks like an artsy craftsy place trying to be hip.

Everything there is commercial. If you had the impression that all the people that live in Yorkville are draft dodgers and people sympathetic to them, forget it. The people that live in Yorkville don't really live there. It is a commuter type of thing. The high school kids come down after school and on holidays. The only time it even approaches being a melting

pot of people is during the summer. I can understand why.

If you were ever in San Francisco during the last two summers you probably met the San Franciscan who treated you with scorn because you weren't from the City. The same runs true for Toronto. The people that are supposed to be part of a large group of people country wide aren't, they are part of their own little cliques. That's alright, you wouldn't want to be part of it anyway.

My strongest impression of the people that I met was one of teeny-bopper drug scene pusher people. The citizens would sit around waiting for dope to arrive and then take it. There's nothing wrong with that except they don't seem to do anything else. There were three discotheques on the street and they all looked empty. No wonder, the citizens were all too broke paying 50c a cup of coffee, they had no money left after buying their coffee and dope. (The one price we were quoted was \$9 for a cap of Mescaline).

We finally found an empty seat in one of the coffee houses and sat down with a newly made acquaintance to find out more about the village of York. He told

a piano in the corner, and that was enough to make me decide that it was a nice place.

We hung around for a while, pounding on the piano and warming up. After we had warmed up, we decided that we had to do something while we were in Toronto, so we asked directions to the Museum, luckily it was close.

The one worthwhile thing we did in Toronto was to see the Royal Museum. It is a historical and natural museum in one package, along with a planetarium. We saw a half a floor on the Mid East alone. Egypt and Greece shared almost a whole floor, and the American Indian had the entire basement to himself. The whole thing was beautiful. As a matter of fact, it was the high point of our visit. As soon as we left the museum everything took a swing downward. We decided that staying wasn't worth the effort so we decided to leave.

After trying vainly for four more hours to locate people with which to communicate, we gave up and left. Four hours later we arrived in Detroit. What a drag, we hadn't expected to get back so soon and we had three days to sit around and talk about Toronto.

We didn't.

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A forum for comment and reaction. Excalibur will accept columns, comments, and cartoons from any member of the university.

us that winter was the worst time to come to Yorkville because it was cold, nobody else came, and there were very few places to crash for free. Being broke we asked where we could crash that night and he told us to go to the Goo Goo restaurant and go downstairs to sleep.

We decided that perhaps we should check it out first to see what we were getting into. The Goo Goo Restaurant is a health food restaurant. It is open 24 hours a day, and is probably going broke. The main floor has tables scattered all over and there are all manners of pictures and things hung on the walls. There was even

A view from the bottom of the pile

by Larry Goldstein

For Howard Mintz, who thinks I am uncouth because I said Rabbi Rosenberg is a Shmuck. If Rosenberg would stick to being rabbi of his rich congregation and not comment and write in public, I would be able to ignore him. I figure he and his congregation deserve each other. And this is in spite of Lennie Bruce, who said that "if a man called himself religious leader and owned two suits while someone had no suit at all then that man is a fraud" Rosenberg makes \$70,000 per year, last I heard.

But Rosenberg offends an honest man's sensibility with his column in the Star and his frequently-quoted comments. So for people who may not have understood when I said Rosenberg is a shmuck, it means he is a hypocrite, a charlatan, stupid, a fraud...as are most religious leaders, regardless of denomination.

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The following is an excerpt from Yorkvue, which was on last weekend. It is really too bad that so many of you missed it. The people who

performed and played in it were very, very good. Two of them, as a matter of fact, got offers to appear in a revue downtown. I am including this bit in the column because it is a fine example of satire and shows a good understanding of the situation. I'd like to thank Bill Schyven for permission to use it.

"But the real reason, Mother, (why he should be expelled) is that Mr. Goldstein wears a beard. Now, I know a lot of people back home wear beards but they don't look like Mr. Goldstein's beard at all, Mr. Goldstein's beard looks like a kind of trouble-making beard if you know what I mean, I mean it sort of scraggles. And that is the real reason they should kick out Mr. Goldstein.

I mean, if everybody goes around saying that we are getting a bad education when are we ever going to get the time to get educated?

I must close now, because it is time for my Modes of Reasoning Lecture. I hope I don't meet Mr. Goldstein on the way over there. Why doesn't he go back where he came from?"

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One of the more disheartening aspects of being concerned with education at the university level is the question of "academic standards".

When you approach those in power with proposals for more student participation they throw up this spectre. How can the University guard its high academic standards, which only the professional academic can understand, if students, that is, non-professionals, are given a say?

Meanwhile, untrammelled expansion at the insistence of businessmen and politicians is destroying intellectual endeavour. That is not to mention the status-seeking administration personnel who want to be in charge of a large University rather than a good one. Compared to this corruption, student agitation for a greater voice in decisions that govern their lives is puny indeed. (It's like those provincial government laws about dumping refuse from small boats after allowing big business to make cesspools of our most beautiful lakes and rivers.)

Now I believe that this sit-

uation obtains at York and that it didn't just happen by accident. Nor did it happen by design. This lack of control is a symptom of a lack of competence somewhere. And the most visible and powerful single man at this place is the president - another reason why it is his competence I question.

That is not to absolve the rest of the "chickenshit academics" who are watching and understanding this prostitution of the University and are doing nothing about it except to help it by their silence. No doubt they feel it is not their field. They're the good Germans.

The fact that most of you who read this can't understand or don't care about what I've just said leads me to believe that something essential is lacking in the education you're supposed to be getting here.


The reason I bring this up now is that the senate is meeting today and I don't want Professor Pritchard to think he's intimidated me.

FLASH! - Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan are going steady.

AD HOC


I am an ice cube.

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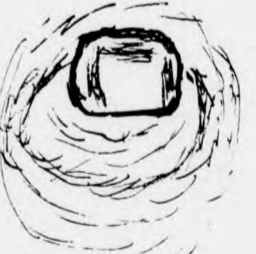
At Winter Carnivals people make all sorts of creative things out of me.

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Some people make ice castles out of me. Some make statues.

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At this campus. I'll probably end up in a Bloody Mary...

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