Letters to the Editor

Address letters to the Editor , EXCALIBUR, York University. Those typed (double-spaced) are appreciated. Letters must be signed for legal reasons. A pseudonym will be used if you have a good reason.

A song for academics

(Or, I'm not anti-publishing but pro-teaching)
(To be sung to the tune of "Put another nickle in".)

Send another article in,
Write another poem on sin,
Never mind what mag. it's in,
Just publish, publish, publish.

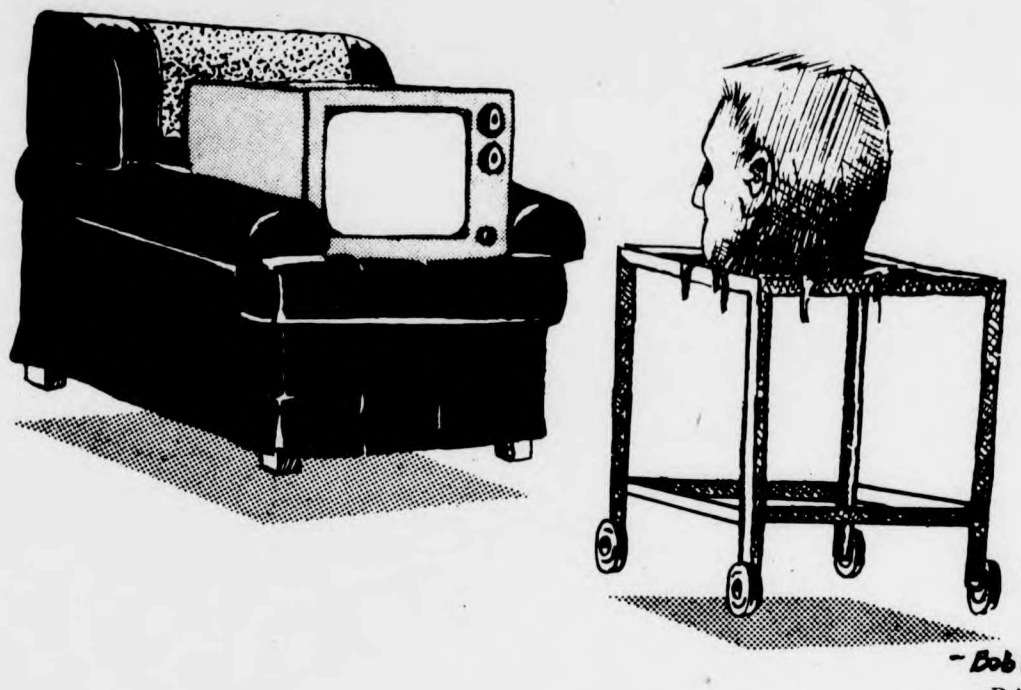
Teaching doesn't matter much,
Never put your faith in such,
If a job you want to clutch,
But publish, publish, publish.

Closer,
My dear, you're closer,
Some day you'll finally gain that coveted post,
If you can only write the most.

So . . . . . .
Send another article in,
Write another modern hymn,
Some day you will really win,
And publish, publish, publish.

G. Matheson

(Note to my students: Sorry that last tutorial was such a bore. But I was up late the night before polishing up an article for Texas Studies and writing this song. Snore!....zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz)



RAT/LNS

An open letter to York faculty

Dear YUFA:

The York University Faculty Association is reported in the Jan. 22 EXCALIBUR to be pushing for a wage hike of 20 per cent and Bruce Parkes, v-p in charge of finance, is reported as saying that this demand might mean that York's funds "might be stretched too thin" and tuition fees might go up.

I'm wondering if you know who usually gets the thinnest slice of the pie when York's funds are "stretched too thin"? If not, I can tell you.

It is that ubiquitous but strangely Invisible Woman, the secretary. In spite of her invisibility, she seems to have been singled out by Messrs. Trudeau, Benson, and the university as the guinea pig who is to bear the brunt of their 'Stop Inflation' policy. Because it has stopped, right there, in her pay packet.

Your president, Wesley Coons, is quoted as saying he "wouldn't feel guilty about a tuition increase next year if he got his salary increase."

You won a 10 per cent pay increase last year and this year you want 20 per cent. The Globe and Mail says Metro teachers want 35 per cent. Toronto school office staffs ask 50 per cent; Metro public school workers "demand" 80 per cent.

Your information officer, Ted Olson, who is also acting chairman of social science, may be interested in a few facts to work upon; e.g. the record of my salary increases at York University over the last eight years is as follows: 5 per cent, 5.8 per cent, 3.4 per cent, 0 per cent (yes, nil), 6.5 per cent, 4.6 per cent, 3.4 per cent, 7.5 per cent. An average, if my calculations are correct, of 4.5 per cent yearly.

As Mr. Olson may have discovered through his social studies, what really matters in paying one's way is take-home pay.

Due to added taxes and increased compulsory deductions, in March '69 I was taking home $6.53 less monthly than in September '68, and 98 cents less monthly than in July '67. In September '65 (the year I had a 'hike' of zero) my rent and parking charges increased by $10.00 per month; the next year by $18.00 per month, and in 1968 by $22.00 per month. I am now paying $49.00 a month more than in 1961, and as everyone knows, prices of other essentials have gone up in proportion. My monthly rent is now one-third of my gross monthly pay, and only slightly less than half my monthly take home pay.

The question is: how can I pay the increased taxes which will be necessary to meet your hike of 20 per cent and these other demands of 35 per cent, 50 per cent and 80 per cent, out of my average 4.5 per cent increase? How can I compete with you in the quest for accommodation, food and clothing? If there are landlords, supermarkets and department stores offering special discount prices to the Invisible Woman, I have yet to find them, and if your studies have discovered them, the secretaries would be delighted to have this information.

So, dear YUFA — and many of you are my friends and I don't blame you for putting in your bid to compete with plumbers and MPPs — II just ask you to defer your claims until something has been done to let me and the other Invisible Women at least catch up with you in the matter of percentage increases.

Somewhere in the bowels of the administration is a committee supposedly working on this problem. Could you, out of the kindness of those hearts which bleed (as mine does) for poor Biafran children, for war victims in Vietnam, for York kitchen and janitorial help, and for the poor oppressed Indian, give a thought to a problem a little closer to hand — that of the poor Invisible Women in your midst?

Could you please request that Mr. Parkes looks after us first this time?

Or are you going to say again: "I'm all right, Jack". . .I won't feel guilty"?

INVISIBLE WOMAN

Name withheld by request. EXCALIBUR, however, will pass on any messages and enquiries to the writer.

Americanization and Soc. Sci. 372

Sir:

The concern for the Americanization of York has been focussed so far, quite correctly, on how American-trained faculty are failing to develop research methods and courses that deal with Canadian PROBLEMS.

A group of students in Social Science 372: The Canadian State — A Problem of Viability have discovered that Americanization profoundly affects courses on Canada taught by Canadian faculty — including arts dean John Saywell. We have been raising this question all year, as in this leaflet distributed to the class:

"We cannot dissociate our restlessness about this course from our disappointment that we are not dealing with the reality of Canada in the 1960s that is the basis of our experience. The reality of Canada in the 1960s — documented by royal commissions and by a few courageous scholars — is that our country's economic development, our role in the world, our education system and our culture are dominated by the United States. No one disputes that this is the reality of Canada, but we continue to study the problems of Quebec, the dominant elite, federalism, poverty, regionalism, etc. as if they were unconnected with that reality we take for granted without critically examining it.

"We want to understand that reality so we can act to change Canada into an independent country where we can work to create a different, more humane society in this northern half of North America.

We want to understand and learn from the experience of the Quebec independence movement, and not seek to rationalize why Quebec would be better off as a sub-colony in the colony which Canada has become.

"These two fundamental realities — the re-colonization of Canada and Quebec in the U.S. empire and the possiblity of independence — is the context in which the problems of Canadian viability can be grasped and acted upon by us.

"These realities — imperialism-empire-colony-independence — used to be part of the Canadian political vocabulary. Canadians knew what these words meant and they knew what consequences followed from them. Our whole history can be summed up as a series of struggles against different brands of imperialism of which the latest is the American empire.

"There has been no serious challenge to the central thesis of Canadian history developed by Harold Innis and Donald Creighton 30 years ago. These men showed how developments within European and American capitalism and the interplay of rival empires determined the character and pattern of development of this country.

"As Innis wrote in the last years of his life: 'The change from British imperialism to American imperialism has been accompanied by friction and a vast re-alignment of the Canadian system. . .Canada (has) moved from colony to nation to colony.' 1945 is that the further we have moved into the American empire the less we have talked about it in specific terms. And the less we talk about it in specific terms the less we are capable of understanding why our country is disintegrating and why our political and economic elite cooperate in that process. Most of all, the less we see the possibility of acting to change what seems like an inevitable situation."

When a number of students got together to discuss how the reality of Canada could be injected into the course, they decided the best way was to ask that the lecturers acknowledge that their views of Canada's problems reflected not 'scholarly objectivity' but their personal, committed viewpoints. A partial solution for this year is that a group of students are taking over several lectures this term to examine the Americanization of Canada and the road to national independence for Canada.

The example of this course on Canada suggests to us that if Canadian problems are ignored in 'general' courses in political science, sociology and the social sciences, then the major Canadian problem — American domination — is ignored in courses dealing specifically with Canadian 'problems'. Canadianizing our universities thus involves Canadianizing courses on Canada, so we can begin to deal with the reality of Canada in the 1970s.

A group of Students
in Social Science 372.

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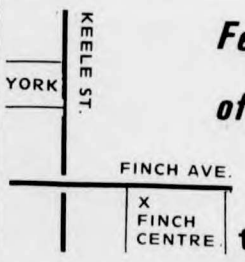

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