

Letters to the Editor

American "Film" in American "Society"

Sir:
Further to your remarks about Americanization at York. Social Science 377 is entitled Film and Society. It is a remarkable course - "... an exercise in the economic analysis of a major social institution. ... also a sociological analysis of a major social institution and of the role that institutions play in the wider society."

"It will be an instrument for throwing light on a great many other matters; e.g. leisure patterns, propaganda, standards of popular culture, the nature of mass society, etc."

Unfortunately, the "major social institutions" and the "wider society" referred to are American, as is virtually all the reading in this course.

Nowhere is there any mention of, for example, the National Film Board and its impact on the "wider society."

While a section of the course is entitled "Industrial Structure of the Film Industry," there is no mention of how that predominantly U.S. industrial structure prevents the emergence of a Canadian film industry through its monopolistic control of the distribution facilities.

Perhaps, someday, a professor will learn enough about Canada to teach such things.

After all, if the person teaching the course at present is sufficiently erudite to study the "Hollywood, British, and Japanese industries with some consideration of the film industries of continental Europe and elsewhere in Asia and the Middle East," it should not be TOO difficult to include something Canadian.

Or is Canada considered to be so much a part of the "wider society" that separate treatment is deemed to be unnecessary?

Name withheld by request

Olson figures out real prof figures

Sir:
Before your reporter published the citizenship breakdown on the division of social science, he was informed that the figures he had were highly inaccurate. They were published uncorrected.

I do not believe that citizenship is an accurate measure of commitment to Canadian identity. It is unfortunately the case that some Canadians see no reason not to follow U.S. leads in all things. It is also true that a number of U.S. citizens here are barred only by the five-year waiting period from becoming Canadians in name as well as in fact.

With these reservations here are the figures on citizenship within the division of social science as accurately as I can make them. The first set describes those with ranking appointments - lecturer and above - in the division. The second set of figures deals with these and all persons of all ranks who are seconded to us by departments and also our teaching assistants.

1. Divisional appointments
Canadian 12
U.S. 7



U.K. 2
Other Commonwealth 3
Other 3
2. All social science

Canadian 37
U.S. 32
U.K. 11
Other Commonwealth 8
Other 7

While these figures prove nothing positive, they may perhaps put to rest fears based on the inaccurate figures that were published.

Theodore Olson,
Acting Chairman,
Social Science

EXCALIBUR thanks Prof. Olson for going to the trouble of correcting the figures we published on Jan. 8.

As you may recall, Williams stated in the article that "I cannot swear that Saywell's figures are accurate down to the last decimal point, because I was twice refused permission to check his sources."

EXCALIBUR is also pleased to note that Dr. Olson recognizes that figures alone "prove nothing positive". — ed.

Reflections on being told that a recent Educational Testing Service Graduate Record Political Science Exam almost all American content

Social Science - value free
Oh, thy wisdom, how to quantify thee

Our students we must evaluate
Count their scores - don't hesitate - process them and out they go.

To grad school and law school
And ad infinitum - with degrees and with honours,

But how to pick and how to choose?
American Empire will not lose.
It's ETS to the rescue

American politics is wisdom supreme
Of the worthies who know it, we'll skim off the cream
Oh, ETS, we love you so.

McCormack wants a better answer

Sir:
The editor of EXCALIBUR has still not answered my question: Does Social Science 177 as described serve "Captain America"? Does it prepare students to be functionaries in a branch plant economy? If either he or Mr. Williams can demonstrate that it does, I will apologize to the class for abusing its confidence and trust. If they can not, then they owe both the staff and students an apology.

Since I am also an advisor to students, I would like to know specifically, and in detail which courses in the social sciences at York serve the interests of the government and/or economy of the United States. Incidentally, it would be helpful to explain what phrases like "American scholastic universalism" mean. I suggest this is a contradiction in terms.

Thelma McCormack
Sociology

Yes Prof. McCormack, there is a Captain America.

Oh, ETS, build our dream
From Princeton, like Eton,
An empire you run

With exams, with right answers,
Computers to check our Americanism
- the triumph of empire is sure

A question remains, with humblest demeanor,
Who gave you the right to tell us the Truth?

In fact, we suggest that you and your minions

FUCK OFF

Edward Weissman,
Political Science

As much as we would like to believe that the United States is our friendly neighbour to the south, with hands across the border and all that, our objective status is one of a colonial people.

Nothing, but nothing, has more importance in understanding Canadian economic, political, and social life than this simple fact - Canada is a colony.

York University, as a "seeker after knowledge", has somehow managed to avoid confronting this Canadian fact.

In so doing, it is distorting the truth.

And we all know who stands to benefit the most from this distortion - our old friend Captain America.

A colonial people which does not understand the nature of its oppression is a complacent colonial people. There are very few faculty at York who are teaching us "understanding".

Indeed, at York, complacency is our most important product.

To use your phrase, York "helps to serve the interests of the government and/or economy of the United States".

Read once again the questions we posed last week about your course.

Try to answer them honestly and we think you will understand how Social Science 177 fits into the overall York pattern.

"Canadian students are not provincial yahoos - their American professors are."

"How else can you explain them teaching this course in exactly the same way as they would teach it in Rhode Island?"

"How else can you explain the course being concerned with the American blacks and not with how Canadian native peoples have been treated by Canadian whites... or maybe this is not a problem for all mankind?"

"How else can you explain no attempt by the directors of the course to examine the nature and history of social change in Canada?"

"Without an understanding of the Canadian perspective on social change, students who take this course will be powerless to deal with social change in their own society."

We have no apologies to offer. We will have Canadian studies. — ed.

York Green member upset at EXCALIBUR

Sir:
I would like to draw your attention to two facets of your handling of James Bull's article in the most recent issue of EXCALIBUR which personally disturbed me.

First of all, I find quarrel with your declaration that the York Green Committee spurns anything that "smacks of the left." I myself am a member of the committee and yet my political beliefs are socialist, hardly right of centre. The committee, like your newspaper, should be a forum for all.

The second and much more disturbing facet was your printing of a corrections section as part of Bull's article. While I know that no newspaper can be expected to be objective, I would hope a newspaper would not be so afraid

of an article as to discourteously deface it with such a section.

Are you too lazy to print a proper reply, embodying your corrections there? After all, it is only common courtesy to let a person finish his arguments before you start your own.

Dan Tiffin,
McLaughlin 1

If you look again at Page 7 of last week's paper, you will notice that the Corrections section is separated from Bull's article by a thick bar. The section was printed to clear up some factual errors in Bull's article and to explain running unsigned articles (from Shades of Green). — ed.



"Susan said that Jane said that you said that I should try Tampax tampons."

"Why should I?"



"Yes, I know they're worn internally, but I'd never thought of the 'no show' idea. Why, that means I could wear anything I own without worrying. Even a bathing suit."

"You say I can actually go swimming, too? And that story about not washing your hair is just an old wives' tale, huh?"



"A doctor developed them? Well, he ought to know. Getting rid of those bulky pads sure sounds good to me. I'm going to try Tampax tampons next time."

"Thanks a lot, Ann, for telling it like it is."



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