

# Experts discuss affirmative action

Elizabeth Santia

Four expert speakers discussed "Affirmative Action: Women and Social Policy" at a public forum Tuesday, November 2. The discussion, held in the McLaughlin College Junior Common Room, is the second in the College's 1982-3 Public Policy Symposia series.

Affirmative action is "a necessary condition in women's advancement, but not sufficient", says Letty Anderson, Assistant Professor of Economics with York's Atkinson College. Provisions for training, education and policies against sexual harassment are a few critical details that must be conquered before any

type of affirmative action programme can succeed.

Sally Barnes, the newly-appointed head of Ontario's Status of Women Council, commented on the school boards' minimal involvement in affirmative action programmes. Pointing to the fact that only 14 school boards in Ontario were involved in such programmes, she said, "This is a disgrace," and "I am disgusted." The councillors and advisors in schools still do not encourage girls to reach their full academic potential. Both girls and boys in elementary school are being socialized according to traditional roles. Women, leaving high school are still headed straight for the

secretarial and bank-teller jobs, which may become obsolete in 10 years. Barnes states, "I am committed to affirmative action." When, during question period, she was asked what she planned to do in office, she replied, "Give me a bit more time, I've only been there six weeks."

The advisory board on the Status of Women at York wants to establish an affirmative action programme. Mrs. Macdonald, President of the Status of Women at York, has given her support.

The discussion was taped and for those interested in obtaining more information, contact Room 204 Founders College.



Photo: Barry Carson

Bob Roper: CPI promoter spoke at Career Centre series.

## Book Report:

# Former CYSF President publishes study

Barb Taylor is a former chairperson of the Ontario Federation of Students--now called the Canadian Federation of Students Ontario.

Barb Taylor

In an atmosphere of crowded classrooms, uncertainties about university funding, and increasing unemployment, Paul Axelrod's book *Scholars and Dollars: Politics and Economics in the Universities of Ontario 1945-1980* is particularly relevant.

*Scholars and Dollars* is a critical analysis of the political influences that have offered Ontario universities and it puts into an historical perspective the current problems of our universities.

Unlike many other examinations of the Ontario university system, Axelrod's book comes from the perspective of an activist who has attempted to better the system. In 1970-71, Axelrod was the President of the Council of the York Student Federation. In 1973-74 he was researcher for the then fledgling Ontario Federation of Students. Axelrod received both his BA and PhD from York, his MA from U of T and is currently a Professor in the Social Science Department at York.

Axelrod demonstrates that the current education crisis is not an isolated situation; university growth and decline are a response to the demands of industry and the business cycles of capitalism. After World War II business saw education as a means of expanding and recovering from the war; veterans were given the first student aid ever, possibly in an attempt to prevent them from filling the unemployment lines. In the 1960's growth was continued, because corporations saw universities as a training ground for future managers, regardless of whether students were enrolled in professional or arts programs.

In Ontario, universities did not become a major public issue until the growth period of the 60's which was followed by the decline of the 70's. As a result, Axelrod has focused on the academic and financial issues of these periods.

One of the most interesting sections of the book is a historical examination of the contribution of business to Ontario universities. Axelrod documents the role of corporations in establishing the newer universities in the 60's and early 70's, with a particular focus on York. He notes that those who were involved in establishing York also had substantial York funds invested in their businesses.

In this section, Axelrod provides evidence that corporate contributions have never played a major role in Ontario. He cites two reasons: most of

the large Canadian companies have head offices in the USA and thus they made their donations to American universities; and Canada has had a history of publically funded and controlled universities, unlike the United States.

Along with outlining the changing winds of corporate attitudes, Axelrod discusses one of the other major problems of universities: the lack of proper government funding and planning. He points out that a study to examine the role of universities in the 70's was not released until 1972. A recent study on universities in the 1980's was not released until 1982. Government policy has changed with the whims of business--in the 1960's the government proclaimed that everyone should have the opportunity to pursue post secondary education, in the 70's, the government called for fewer students. Axelrod states, "Apart from the governments intention of saving money, then, the constraint programme of the Treasury Board was conceived and carried out in the absence of a fully considered philosophy on the purpose of post secondary education."

With changing government policies and the move to cutbacks, reaction from those within the system is inevitable. Unionization on staff, faculty and teaching assistants, as well as student activism is treated in a section that will be of great interest to those within the system today.

As a past student activist, Axelrod is somewhat cynical about the ability of the Ontario Federation of Students to do anything: "The conditions which had given OFS new life as an organization were the same that limited its success as a movement. Escalating fees, growing unemployment, inadequate student aid, and expensive student housing all provided it with solid issues around which to agitate. All it lacked in the face of the quiescent, individualistic and depressed atmosphere of Ontario Universities was broadly and active student support." That is, those who are in the system already, really don't care about those who haven't made it." It's a depressing statement, and even considering the 20,000 students who demonstrated against cutbacks last year, a statement that reveals a lot about today's student.

Axelrod's closing remarks also hit hard. "This may not have been what idealistic supporters of higher education envisioned two decades earlier, but if they believed that universities could escape the combined impact of shifting economic conditions and internal institutional tensions, they had been living an illusion. Ontario's universities were reaping what materialistic province and business-oriented, culturally-blinded government had sown. The ivory was peeling off the tower."

Given recent developments in the educational system, such as the \$5.7 billion federal cutback last year, the system definitely is not an ideal academic atmosphere. However, Axelrod presents his book as a call for action. One who reads it cannot help but be concerned. Any member of the York community interested in their education or their workplace should take the time to read it.

## Career in promotion

Barry Carson

Bob Roper may have studied geography and political science at McMaster University, but he graduated with a 'degree' in rock and roll promotion. He is now Promotional Director for Concert Productions International, which promotes over 700 concerts, sports events and movies a year in Canada and the U.S. Roper was on campus to speak about careers in advertising and public relations.

Discussing how he broke into the business, Roper stressed that "first hand experience" is a necessity. Roper started his career while attending university which he said was the "perfect training grounds." He got involved with the campus radio and later wrote article for the school paper. He said that he learned by promoting "dances, and school social events" which led him to want to "promote anything he could get his hands on."

Roper met the members of the band 'Crowbar' who later hired him as their tour manager. From tour manager to promotional representative for CBS records was no problem because Roper had established connections and a good reputation.

He toured with several other bands before he came to work for C.P.I. Roper handles all aspects of the company's promotions and he is the one who must answer when sales are down.

Roper mentioned that the best part of his job was that "he loves music" and that "there is something different each week." The aspect of the job that he does not like is the "pressure and the politics" involved with the industry. In closing, Roper said that you have to "make sacrifices" and be "prepared to work" for what you want.

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