

# Polonsky's Complaint

## Two gods of pleasure

Once upon a time in the waning moments of the cold months of January, I found myself steeped in one of those rare educational encounters which also managed to double as a stimulating experience.

It was a conference on education called Schools '70 and present at the conference was a number of students who really gave a damn about what happened to them as the constituent members of the great Canadian educational process.

This last Friday afternoon was the only occasion at York, other than that Schools '70 conference, in which I felt that I was in a room with a group of students who were truly alive and alert to what was going on in the classroom about them.

The catalyst for this fleeting moment of stimulation was that apparent endurance test to end all tests, Natural Science 176A. The topic at hand was a discussion on whether to write or not to write a final examination. Despite the fact that the students in the course were practically assured of a "snap" exam, one third of the class chose to walk out.

They chose to do so because they did not feel that the content of the course merited the writing of a final exam. Here were a group of students willing to gamble their As and Bs (most of the vocal students had good marks at Christmas) for a cause that they considered to be more important than marks. These students were willing to stick their necks out in a protest which would for themselves net few concrete benefits.

At the time of writing, I have no idea on what will be the result of this whole nat. sci. dilemma. But whatever the outcome, the whole experience has perhaps provided this university with some just cause to be optimistic. At least we know, that there are 40 students wandering around this campus willing to get immersed in, of all things, their own education — their own lives.

And while on the subject of immersion I just cannot resist bringing to you my story of "A Night at Dionysus". For those of you not yet informed,

Dionysus in '69 is a form of theatre at the Studio Lab Theatre on Queen Street which is really more of an experience in group therapy than a play.

Last Friday night, after an afternoon full of natural science, a young lady (we shall call her Faith) and myself perched ourselves right in the front of the theatre preparing our souls for whatever events were about to pass before our eyes. After a few minutes, Faith and myself managed to get separated in the milieu of the opening moments of the play and did not sit together throughout the evening.

At one point in the production, the character Penthius is searching for someone who will love him. Naturally, he stumbles on to Faith. Now Faith, you must understand, is in somewhat of a dilemma, because if she loves him, he will in turn seduce her. So as Penthius is lying on Faith and pulling at her to love him, somebody from the audience drags Penthius off Faith and the two men get into a fight.

More people from the audience then get up and separate Penthius from his combatant. Penthius now throws himself onto the middle of the floor and starts to cry because nobody will love him. A few girls come up to him and try to console him — all somewhat superficially — but good old Faith approaches him with an expression of hurt and compassion on her face which makes it fairly obvious that for Faith, Dionysus had ceased being merely a play and had become a real life experience. For the whole evening Faith sat there almost in pain at the thought that it was her lack of affection that had moved Penthius to despair.

But for purposes of making this long story short, I would like to assure you that Faith finally did recover from her experience at Dionysus. I am afraid that I cannot guarantee all of you similar moments of inner reflection, as the whole scene at Dionysus is truly an incredible one and an individual one. But if you feel like having one of those involving experiences, try out Dionysus.

And barring that, you could always try walking out of a natural science class. You would save yourself \$2.



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