

A true story

The life of a chauvinized female

My parents named me Shelley. In grade school there was a boy with the same name, so I spelt it Shelli. But I still preferred my middle name, Jennifer — it was so feminine.

I remember trying to fix the toilet in my basement. It never flushed properly. One day I got daring and lifted the porcelain lid from the tank to examine the intricacies. Quite a brave little girl. After all, weren't toilets dirty little fixtures to be examined only by daddies or big men called plumbers? My mom told me to leave toilet fixing to these sort of men. Toilets were not playthings for little girls. My adventures into the mechanized world came to an abrupt end. Besides, what are daddies for?

The little girl named Shelli grew up into a world of lipstick, perfume and bubble bath.

Men liked pretty girls. Mummies liked pretty girls. I wallowed in the admiring gazes of neighbours who would comment, "My, isn't your daughter a pretty little thing. I suppose she has lots of boyfriends." Being pretty became my whole existence. I thrived on shaved legs, mascara and hair-curlers. Yet somehow through my beautiful face, I managed to scrape through school and graduate. I decided to go to university. Lots of cute guys there.

And so in the fall of 1970, I trotted off to York university, armed with my lipstick and my disarming smile. But I met some strange men there. Men who were more concerned with what I thought than with how I looked. Men who analyzed my literature rather than

my curvature. Men who expected me to fend for myself; to apply myself to the solutions of simple problems, not rely on them for help.

I also met some strange women there. Women who succeeded by using their heads, not their hips. Women who incited men's attention, not with perfume but with provocative thoughts.

I slowly realized that these people were interested in the new me. The real Shelli behind the blushed cheeks and red lips. So I slowly unmasked myself. I'm still in the process of doing so. It's tough. I've lived so long in the Cosmopolitan world.

It's sort of like that commercial where the Swedish girl says, "Take it off. Take it all off." Well, I'm trying. Trying still to let the real me out.

A male chauvinist pig grows up

"Aw come on, honey, if you really loved me you would." Sure it's crap but it worked when used with a little imagination.

When I was young I was scared to death of sexuality — most men I know were and a lot still are. With the apparent accent on James Bond style performance and the lack of any real information it's not surprising. I really believed the guys who said, "I was with this crazy nympho last night and we balled for six hours before I came."

I dealt with my fears like any normal male would — I faked it. I was the fastest talking, smoothest, understanding, kind, experienced, liar in the school and I was surrounded by girls — I didn't even own a car. But I wasn't really sleeping with them although I fumbled around a lot. I wasn't very happy.

When I finally started scoring regularly there was still something wrong. I slowly started to realize that there was a connection between seeing girls as a chalk mark on the bathroom wall and my loneliness.

When I started to become political the shit really hit the fan. The women I began to meet were different. They said I was an uncaring, insensitive, sexist, male-chauvinist pig. Aside from being right they were also intelligent, interesting and friendly and that was hard to deal with.

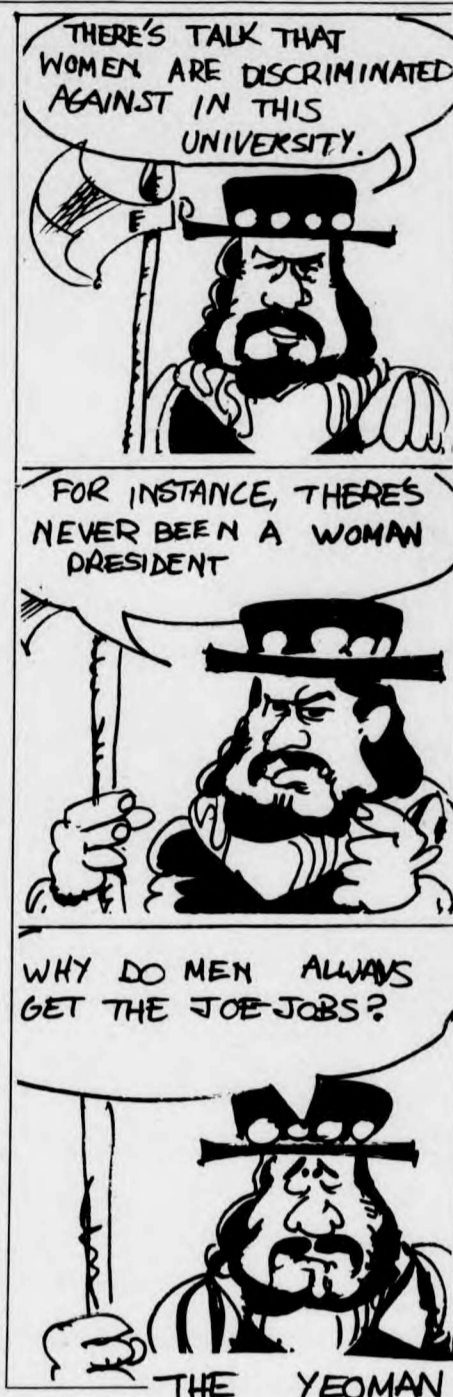
With a lot of help from my new friends I realized I was only interested in fucking women; not knowing them. I wasn't listening to them, taking them seriously or seeing them as people. That was why I was miserably lonely and my sex life was a sham.

When I finally began listening to the women I knew I found the support I needed to change my value system. What followed were some real relationships based on caring and learning from my partners.

It made a hell of a lot more sense.

I've learned the seemingly obvious fact that relationships are only the sum total of the love and understanding that are put into them. The friendships I have with women are creative and fulfilling and I feel more like a human being than a con man.

Yeah I know that we're all conditioned and breaking out seems like an uphill battle: but treating women like people instead of a fucking machine is a sure sign that men are starting to grow up. You really don't have much choice now that most women are getting hip to male bullshit anyway.



By Alan Risen and Peter Hsu

Letters to the Editor

Response to a personal attack

I would like to make a few comments in response to the crude personal attack on me, in the Feb. 22 Excalibur by S. Rose, a Calumet student. I was accused of being a false prophet, of trying to use Calumet college to further my own political aims. Rose states that he questions my "integrity" and not my "political ideology."

The true intention of this diatribe however becomes clear toward the end of the letter in the following quote. "I have little or no faith in would-be radicals whose revolutions always seem to lie somewhere in the future." Rose obviously is substituting an attack on my character, for an attack on the program and ideas that I defended in the recent election campaign.

According to Rose, I "cared little about the college or the people affiliated with it," and my attitudes went totally "against the community philosophy of the college." The latter accusation is true. The Calumet tribe is a tiny, social clique who carry out their sandbox activities in the name of Calumet students. This clique consciously attempted to sabotage Calumet's entry into CYSF sensing that CYSF challenged its own power.

The alienation affecting all university students, including those in Calumet, is rooted in the nature of the university, an institution of capitalist society. This alienation cannot be ended by groovy, "we're all a big family" cliques such as the Calumet tribe. The solution lies in students fighting for and winning, political power.

I care no more or no less about Calumet students than I do about other York students. We're all in the same boat together. The notion, that Calumet students have different interests and needs with regard to CYSF than other students, is foreign to me. The student council should be a political union that fights for the needs of all students. The reason that socialists run for student government is not to advance ourselves, but to offer our leadership skills and program to all students.

My admission to Calumet was blocked primarily because of a handful of the tribal bureaucrats. If I was such a threat to the students of Calumet why didn't these

bureaucrats allow me to join the college, run in the ensuing CYSF elections, and expose my opportunism to the eyes of all Calumet students? Why not leave the decision up to the students themselves?

Rose and the other members of the Calumet clique do not represent Calumet college, they are not interested in fighting for the real needs of its students, they are not even elected by popular mandate. The ULS on the other hand has consistently organized York students in defence of their interests, and defends its record and program openly. What is the program of S. Rose? What is his record?

DALE RITCH

Interview may be misleading

I agreed to be interviewed by Excalibur because I was persuaded by the argument that students had a right to know more about the person they had elected to head the student federation. Unfortunately, your "Excerpts from a taped interview with Michael Mouritsen" (March 1) excluded over half of the interview, misquoted me, quoted me out of context, and freely rearranged excerpts, some from different interviewing sessions. The result is that your readers have no clear idea of my positions on these questions, because your reporter was more concerned to find ways to discredit me than to report my answers accurately.

I sat for two interviewing sessions with your reporter. During the first, I asked at the end of only three questions that he stop the tape recorder. I explained that I wasn't feeling well, and we agreed to resume the interview later in the day. At the second session, we started from the top, with the first question again. The "excerpts" which appeared under the third question (what I meant by the quality of education), were taken from the first taping session including the request to stop the tape recorder. The impression created was that I was vague and evasive on this question, and that I have no concrete proposals. In fact, I answered this question at great length and in some detail, commenting on the evaluation of teaching staff, the first-year program, and the recruitment of students, among other topics.

What was the point in asking me to

"elaborate on your projections for future CYSF policy" if you only intended to misquote a few sentences? I only agreed to the interview after I was assured by your reporter that he would not edit it. When I was later informed by your news editor that the interview would be written as a news story, I still did not object. But I never would have agreed to the printing of "excerpts" in interview style. By cutting the bulk of the answers to each question, while still presenting them as verbatim replies, you convey the general impression that I offered pat answers.

The interview was an outrageous misrepresentation of my answers; it is unfortunate that you have such a low opinion of your readers. I refer those who are interested in learning about my policies to my campaign leaflet, copies of which are available in the CYSF office.

MICHAEL MOURITSEN,
President-elect,
York Student Federation

Abie Weisfeld: Mouritsen is wrong when he says I misquoted or quoted out of context in the interview. The quotes are accurate and constitute the essence of his arguments. The tape of the interview, which was too long to reprint entirely, is available in the Excalibur office for anyone wishing to hear it.

This letter is entitled Insight

Philosophy is based on observation. Observation and action are two very different things. Dostoevsky and Nietzsche admire action which is necessary to them for human survival. In fact, they say that there is nothing more worthwhile than the man of action. In short, these men say that action is life. Therefore, we can conclude that whatever is not action is death — death to the unity of mind, body, and soul. This can lead us to a conclusion of considerable importance. It is that philosophy, placed in the category of that which is not action, is just a fuckin' waste of time . . .

NAME WITHHELD

Give a Ph. D. to Socrates

As recent graduates of York university, we'd like to suggest a step whereby York can establish its reputation as one of the leading universities on this continent. As you most assuredly already know, at every commencement ceremony a scholar of singular renown is awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.). We suggest that York bestow this libation upon the father of philosophy, Socrates. What could be more appropriate? A man, now deceased, who lives with us in spirit today, if not in flesh. If only he could accept his degree in person!

His previous contributions to mankind are obvious: 1) his discovery that man is, by nature, a social creature (animal); 2) his doctrine that the State exists to serve its constituents (as Lincoln so succinctly put it ". . . Of the people, by the people, and for the people . . ."); 3) the cornerstone of our civilization, the inherent value of the individual life, and many others too numerous to mention.

Today, Socrates' influence is felt through all the departments of this sprawling university: Sociology, which uses Socrates' thoughts to help mankind; Philosophy — the Socratic method speaks for itself; Law — the rules of the orderly society that Socrates envisioned. Other brilliant manifestations of his profound impact leap readily to mind.

These notable contributions should be recognized by the community of scholars who tap the invigorating waters of this deep well. Too long has this mighty figure been denied full acceptance by the academic brotherhood. It is time for York to realize its place in history and to seize the moment. The bestowing of this doctoral degree not only honours the man, but may, indeed, bring further honours to our institution.

We elect not to release our last names, as we do not wish to accrue any honours unto ourselves. This is not our intent.

BOB (Class of '71)
AL (Class of '72)

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