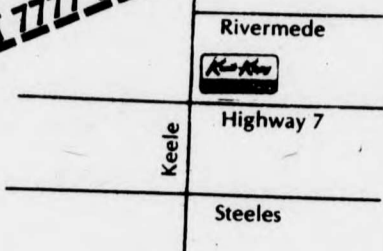


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EDITORIAL

Speakers bring the community to the ivory towers of York

This week was a banner one for guest speakers at York and is indicative of one of the best qualities the university has to offer—an eclectic range of interesting ideas on controversial topics presented in an academic atmosphere.

For the politically-minded, several distinguished individuals, including newscaster Lloyd Robertson and former Trudeau secretary, Jim Coutts, presented their views on the new Canadian constitution. York students in attendance were treated to a spirited discussion about a pressing and relevant national issue.

For the business-minded, North York mayor Mel Lastman shared his personal insights into the world of politics and business. Both entertaining and pertinent, Lastman more than captured the attention of his audience in a way that more than a few York professors could do.

Doris Anderson, an accomplished writer and editor, spoke her mind concerning women's rights, the media and a bevy of

other topics—adding insight that is blessed by experience.

The list of speakers goes on, as does the range of topics from racism to the physical abuse of women. In each instance students were put in touch with a piece of reality that exists outside of the cloistered university environment.

Universities are often perceived as ivory tower institutions, cut-off from the outside world of reality. And in certain respects this is true. The university does provide an insular quality which is both unique and secure, and in many ways desirable. But insularity should only be carried so far.

The university is at its best when it provides a total learning atmosphere. Input from the community provides a vital link between York and the issues and perspectives of the day. It unfolds the learning experience to extend past the classroom—and this is heartening. Intellectual stimulation and the learning experience should extend beyond the classroom setting and permeate the entire

university. It provides a foundation upon which the ivory tower and the concrete pavement can meet.

It may just be that a simple corollary is applicable. If York is interested in what transpires outside its boundaries, those who visit the campus may reciprocate that interest.

The speakers who appeared at York over the last week did not all speak before packed houses—but this is not crucial, although more participation is desirable. What is important is that they left something behind for the students who listened and took something away with them—an image of York and its population.

If nothing else the lines of communication are opened up and ideas are exchanged. Organizers of these events should be congratulated for contributing to the richness of the university atmosphere. Let's face it, there's nothing wrong with living in an ivory tower as long as you open the windows occasionally. To all those who provided such a splendid week of discussion, thanks for the breath of fresh air.



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