

R4
616

NEWS: Colleges try to make the last call on alcohol. Up front on page 3
ARTS: Would you believe, more Festival of Festivals coverage? See pages 13 and 14 and prepare to be amazed.
SPORTS: Michael Krestell looks at the Ice Palace. He is not amused. Read the evidence on page 19.

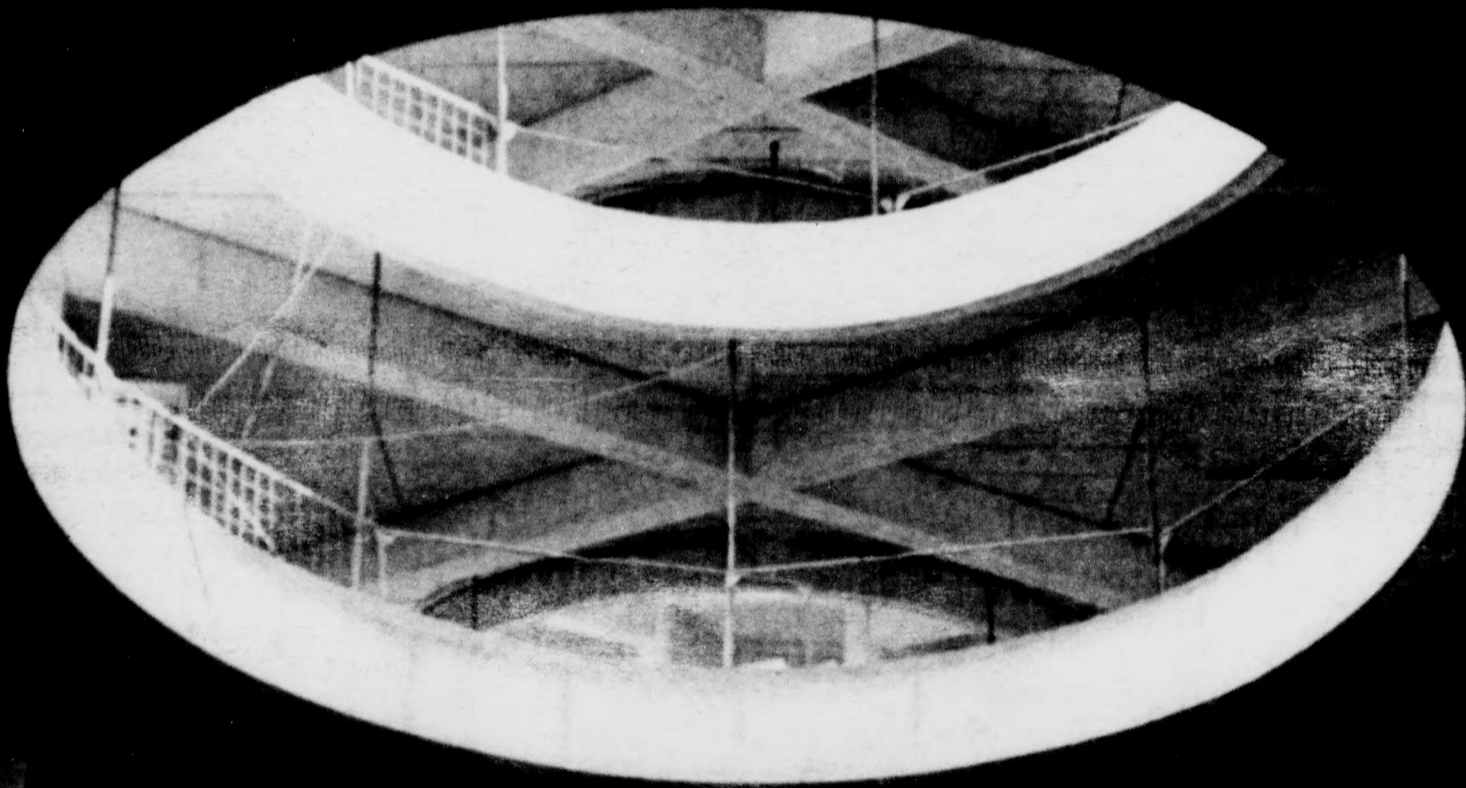
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SEPTEMBER 17, 1990

VOLUME 25, ISSUE 10

excalibur

YORK UNIVERSITY'S COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER



Student Centre 1991

The long-awaited monument to York Students looms on the horizon. Turn to the centre for more details.

DIRECTIONS

Published by the Office of Student Affairs, 124 Central Square, York University

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Get Involved!

Cora M. M. Dusk,
Director of Student Affairs

FACULTY OF ARTS SPECIAL EVENTS FOR OUTSTANDING STUDENTS 1990-91

Tuesday, September 18, 1990
Senate Chamber (S915 Ross) 4:00-5:30 p.m.

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Fall Convocation 1990

Friday, November 9 & Saturday, November 10, 1990
Main Gymnasium, Tait McKenzie Physical Education Centre

Friday November 9

10:00 a.m.

Faculty of Arts * Founders College
Stong College * Calumet College
Faculty of Education

2:30 p.m.

Glendon College * Faculty of Arts
Norman Bethune College * Faculty of Science
Osgoode Hall Law School
Faculty of Administrative Studies
Faculty of Environmental Studies
Faculty of Graduate Studies

Saturday, November 10

10:30 a.m.

Atkinson College

2:30 p.m.

Faculty of Arts * McLaughlin College
Vanier College * Winters College
Faculty of Fine Arts

For further information, please contact the Convocation Office
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Jeanie Mills,
former member of the People's Temple,
murdered a year after the Jonestown
suicides.

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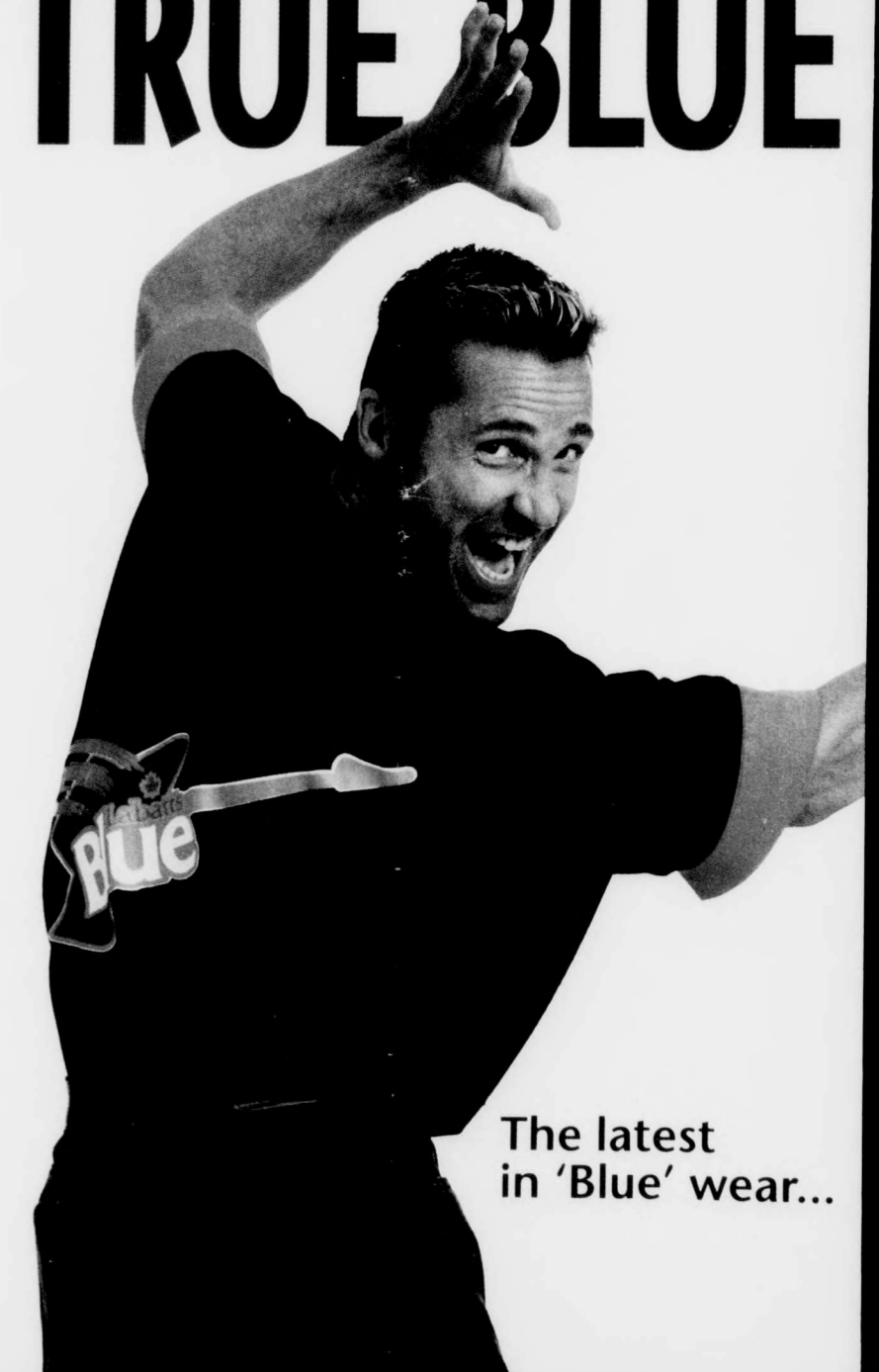
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NEWS

Caterer leaves Winters, sues York for lost profits

by Grayson Levy

Marky's, the former kosher caterer in Winters College, is taking legal action against York University after a dispute with the administration which led to the termination of their contract.

The 15 year on-again, off-again relationship between York and Marky's finally ended in June 1990, when the University Food Services Committee terminated Marky's contract.

"Marky's had a one-year trial with a five-year option depending on certain specific obligations. The University was unable to agree with Marky's on some of these specifics," said Norman Crandles, director of Housing & Food Services. Crandles refused to release details of the obligations.

Crandles would only say that "service was not the reason they went".

However, Erez Karp, who was proprietor of the now-closed campus Marky's told *Excalibur* "we're suing York University".

"It [the lawsuit] involves what we think we're entitled to under our contract," Karp said. He would not comment further due to the pending legal battle. Cran-

dles confirmed the lawsuit, but would not go any further.

Excalibur was unable to obtain a copy of the contract between York and Marky's because of University policy which Crandles said prohibits the release of sensitive business information.

Harriet Lewis, York's legal counsel, said that Marky's was "claiming for damages based on an estimate of their lost [potential] profits over the next four years."

Lewis stated Marky's was in breach of their contract because they withheld the RTU (return to University) monies they owed to York. According to Lewis, Marky's decided not to pay the RTU in early 1990 because they claimed that changes to the scrip meal programme would affect their business. After several failed negotiations, York terminated the contract and Marky's sued the university.

According to Lewis, Marky's claims for damage cannot be substantiated because the scrip meal plan has been revised again since Marky's originally had difficulties with it.

Marky's previously had their contract terminated by the University due to complaints about

food quality and service after the 1987-88 school year, but reopened with a one-year probation in September 1988. After the one-year trial period ended, Marky's was awarded a five-year contract.

"They [Marky's] have passed the stringent requirements we had of them and come through with flying colours," said Crandles at the time.

Student opinion, however, is not as kind to Marky's as Mr. Crandles is. "I ate there several times, I really didn't like it that much. I know a lot of people that didn't find it that good," said Caroline Winship, York Federation of Students Vice-President Internal, and added "I'm glad they [Marky's] are gone".

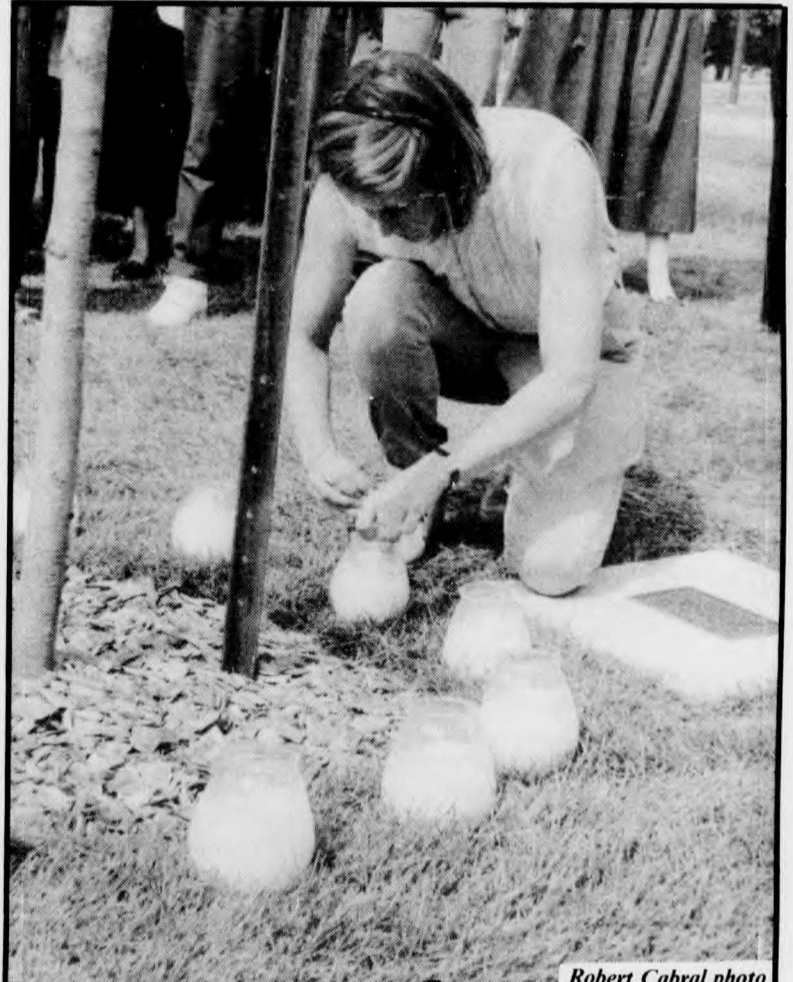
Students may rest easier, though, because York's new kosher caterer has already been selected, and Malmar Fine Foods will be open for business in early October. "Marky's food wasn't great, but I, like most people, was grateful to have hot kosher food on campus. We're excited about having a new place" said Menahem Neuer, Program Director of the Jewish Student Federation.

When asked why the University Food Services Selection Committee chose Malmar above the

other applicants, Neuer, who liaised with the committee, stated "they impressed the committee as being very professional and very intelligent in their marketing plan. They were committed to consistent customer satisfaction". Says Caroline Winship "The new caterers [Malmar] are really good. They offer a huge selection, they're totally service oriented, and the owner is a chef,

not just a cook".

All applicants were evaluated on the following: quality, prices, RTU, menu, variety, operational style, investment, and attitude. Malmar was unanimously selected over the other five applicants: L'echaim Caterers, Racheles Catering, North Y. Cafeteria, Migdash Chaim Restaurant.



Robert Cabral photo

A member of the Women's Centre lights a candle in memory of one of the 14 female students slain at L'ecole polytechnique in Montreal.

Initiated by the Women's Centre collective, the September 13 ceremony to install a memorial plaque was well supported by members of the York student body, faculty and CUPE. We will not be silenced. We shall overcome.

College Councils divided over beer material in orientation kits

Excalibur staff

College councils are divided over the inclusion of beer company material in their orientation kits, disagreeing on whether it promotes the use of alcohol at university.

Several colleges have included Molson and Labatt's promotional material in packages sold during September, while others have made a conscious decision to avoid associating alcohol with orientation.

Stong College's \$25 orientation package included a college T-shirt, coupons and pamphlets, club passes, Yeomen game tickets, an events pass, a Labatt's poster, a Molson key chain, Labatt's and Molson key chains/bottle openers, a Molson coaster, an Arrive Alive sticker, and an alcohol awareness pamphlet.

"Student organizations allow a medium for corporate advertising without adequate compensation."

YFS president
Jean Ghomeshi

It was distributed in a plastic bag featuring the Molson logo.

YFS president Jean Ghomeshi was surprised by Stong's orientation kit, and called it "a propaganda bag" and "a contradiction" by including both alcohol awareness and beer company material.

Ghomeshi added that he doesn't support corporate sponsorship of orientation events, and that YFS "stayed clear" of it.

"Student organizations allow a medium for corporate advertising without suitable compensation," he said.

YFS is currently working on a blacklist of companies it won't deal with "on the basis of things they stand for and the actions they take," Ghomeshi said. Molson is one of the companies on the list.

Founders College also included Molson material — a key chain, coaster and plastic bag — in its orientation package. The beer company also sponsored the Northern Pikes concert held at the college last week.

Markus Fairbairn, Founders' council chairperson, said he doesn't think the beer company's presence in orientation promotes alcohol use. He said the materials were included because of a financial decision.

"We just asked for bags to put everything in so we wouldn't have to pay for them," he said.

Fairbairn added that Molson threw in the coasters and key chains at no cost, and he included them in the package "because they were given to us."

He also said Founders College Council hadn't heard about the YFS blacklist.

Bethune College's orientation package, which sold for \$35, included an Arrive Alive sticker, a Canada's Wonderland pass, a pen and ruler, a YFS magnet and button, club passes, pamphlets, student handbook, an events pass for underage of licensed events, an alcohol awareness pamphlet, a Bethune T-shirt and pair of shorts, and a test tube with a coffee coupon for Jacs, the college's pub.

Sarah Payne, president of Bethune, said the test tube was meant to be a "joke" referring to the college's science affiliation, and the college council is not encouraging students to use them for shooters.

"There is the Jacs ad," she said. "The coupon stuffed inside the test tube says, 'Jacs Coffee Shop.'"

Payne added that Bethune College had received promotional material from Labatt's, but did not use it for the orientation kits, because "there was already enough stuff and we didn't want to promote drinking. We want

sponsorship from companies with integrity, and we didn't want (alcohol) in our profile."

Vanier College did not include alcohol-related material in its package.

Michelle Hughes, social/cultural director of Vanier College Council, said the college put forth an effort to "deemphasize" drinking during orientation. She added that Vanier knew about and followed YFS' Molson boycott.

University community hopes NDP will address post-secondary issues

by Daniel Wolgelerenter

In the wake of the surprising NDP majority win, student leaders and university administrators are only cautiously optimistic about the new government's commitment to problems facing colleges and universities.

Many members of the Ontario university community were disappointed to learn that post-secondary education was not a priority for any party during the recent provincial election campaign. This has left many in the Ontario university community fearing that colleges and universities might be low on the NDP's list of priorities.

York president Harry Arthurs said he was disappointed that the NDP's main policy document from the campaign, the *Agenda for People*, did not deal specifically with post-secondary education but he was hopeful that the NDP would provide some relief from chronic underfunding.

"They [the NDP] have a long and costly social agenda and I hope that they can find room for [colleges and universities] on that agenda," said York president Harry Arthurs.

He said that provincial operating grants over the last three years have been cut in real dollar terms because they were not indexed to inflation. This meant budgets themselves could not be indexed to inflation during a time of increased enrolment.

"We'd like to have lots of things but its all comes down to increased funding," Arthurs said.

"I'm optimistic in that I'm sure their heart is in the right place," he added. "We'll try all the harder to lobby because we'll hope that we'll have a sympathetic ear listening to us."

He said he thought the NDP may end up disappointing many people because there won't be enough revenue available in the upcoming recession to fulfil the party's entire social agenda.

In a separate statement of policy on education the party did pledge to increase post-secondary funding to cover increased enrolment, renovations, library renewal and pay equity programs. As well, it pledged to "improve accessibility through increased student assistance and affirmative action programs."

The party also promised in the *Agenda for People* to spend \$1.5

billion on education over two years, but did not detail how much of that, if any, would go to colleges or universities.

York Federation of Students (YFS) president Jean Ghomeshi said he hoped some of that money would go to post-secondary education. He added that relief under an NDP government from chronic underfunding and accessibility problems related to tuition and the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) would take a long time in coming, if it ever arrived at all.

"We'd like to have lots of things, but it all comes down to increased funding."

York president
Harry Arthurs

"Now that the NDP are in power, it doesn't mean that we have reached Utopia," he said. "The lobbying is certainly not over."

He said the YFS will work with the Ontario Federation of Students (OFS) and the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) to ensure that the NDP keeps its promises. The student groups

continued on page 5

EDITORIAL

Olympics: commercial grabbing

In ancient Rome slaves were thrown to the lions; today, athletes are thrown to the media. The Roman tradition was marginally less civilized, but it was a damn sight more honest.

The modern Olympics have degenerated into an ugly spectacle of greed and hubris.

For the athletes, a fraction of a second can spell the difference between ignominy and millions of dollars in promotional fees. While athletes shouldn't have to live in penury, sports fans have a right to wonder if anybody cares about honest competition any more.

Furthermore, very sophisticated, and expensive, selection and training programmes are undertaken by the countries which are ideologically motivated, and wealthy enough, to do so. As well as being a disadvantage to smaller countries, the sort of hyper-nationalism that takes place at modern Olympics further erodes the amateur competitive ideal.

Because so much more than personal achievement is involved, it should not be surprising that drug abuse is becoming widespread; it would be surprising if it weren't.

Yet, Toronto is making a great effort to host the Olympics in 1996. Politicians at all levels, but particularly on City Council, are looking forward to the international stage it would give them. They must believe the Olympics will cement Toronto's reputation as a "world class" city.

Somebody has got to bring these people back to reality! What always made Toronto a great place to live was that it didn't pander after world class status; the streets were safe and clean, different ethnic groups used to live in harmony; most people were able to afford to live here. What made Toronto "the Good" for many people is fast becoming a thing of the past.

The worst part of the Olympics is that the public ends up paying for a lot of the sorry spectacle. The organizing committee claims the Games will actually make \$10 million; city figures suggest that there will be a \$90 million "excess of payments over receipts;" the Bread Not Circuses Coalition believes the Olympic deficit could be as high as \$940 million.

The decision on which city will host the Olympics will be made by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on Tuesday, September 18. York University may benefit by having some of its sporting facilities upgraded.

Nonetheless, if one cent has to come from taxpayers in this city or province, the Olympics won't be worth it. The companies developing the grounds and facilities will profit. The television networks covering the Games will profit. The organizers and promoters (and politicians who backed them) will profit.

But the people of Toronto will lose. Big.

Ira Nayman

Excalibur is holding sub-editor elections this Wednesday at 4:00pm. Ho mates!



EXCALIBUR

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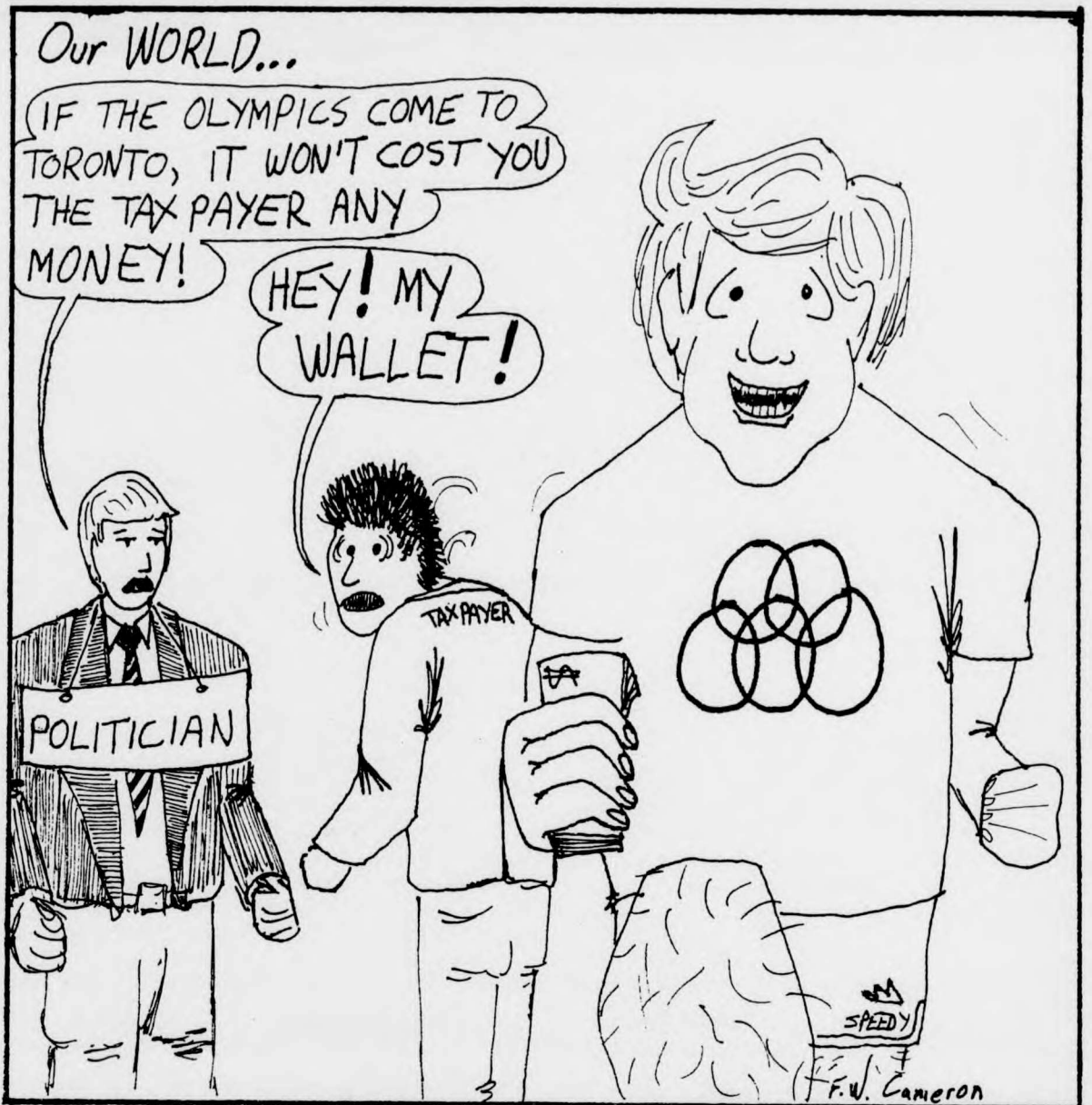
Excalibur is an autonomous corporation with a mandate to inform, educate and provoke thought among York University's diverse population.

The distinct opinions and articles appearing in Excalibur constitute our collective voice. However, they belong first and foremost to the individual writers and are not necessarily shared by any other Excalibur staff or board member.

Final editorial responsibility is retained by the Editor-in-Chief.

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LETTERS

Excalibur welcomes letters to the editor on all topics. We will publish, space permitting, letters up to 500 words in length. They must be typed, double spaced, and accompanied by the writer's name, signature and telephone number. The opinions expressed belong to the writers and do not necessarily reflect those of Excalibur staff or directors. However, letters judged to be racist, sexist or libellous by the editor will be refused. All material is subject to editing. All submissions must be addressed to the Editor-in-chief, Room 111, Central Square.

Excalibur stereotyped Natives

To the editor,

The front page story in the August 29 edition of Excalibur is all too representative of the well meaning, but simplistic and stereotypical approach taken toward Native people in Canada.

To say that "some people agree that aboriginal Canadians have been unfairly treated" easily qualifies as the understatement of the year. But to throw it into the same paragraph with hints that Mohawks at Kanasetake and Kanawake might be terrorists and statements about the violent reactions of non-Native Quebecois demonstrates an incredible naivete on the part of the writer about an extremely complex situation.

More amazingly, however, the story then switches to Manitoulin Island where, we are told, "Native North Americans from all over Canada and the United States held their annual pow-wow," as if the hundreds of different tribal and linguistic groups and thousands of Native communities could all be considered in one breath.

The pow-wow mentioned took place in Wikwemikong, an Ojibwa and Odawa First Nation, and is one of hundreds of pow-wows of several different types taking place annually. The importance to native communities of pow-wows varies considerably and

many do not hold them at all. But, as important as pow-wows and other cultural and spiritual events are, the "remedy for cultural assimilation" is more likely to come from actions like those at Kanasetake and Oldman River.

Tom Jewiss
Student
MES/LL.B. Programme

Bethune article "inaccurate"

To the editor,

I am responding to the article, "Bethune Handbook Censored," issue 8 volume 25. On behalf of Bethune College Council and the readers of the article, I would appreciate it if the Excalibur would correct the inaccuracies within the article and tell the real story.

The first error is seen in the title itself. Censorship, defined means "eliminated unauthorized material from writings" (Webster, 1986 ed). The article in the handbook was authorized, however it was later found to be libellous and so the dubious material was removed not "censored."

Secondly, Bethune College Council does not have its own lawyer. I'm not sure why you would think that we do.

Finally, if the students at Bethune and everywhere else on campus want to read the history of Norman Bethune College, they simply have to wait until September 26 when the Lexicon is

distributed including a history of the college.

Thank you for your time and I hope that we have both learned something.

Sarah Payne
President,
Bethune College Council

Reader sets the record straight

To the editor,

As a really big Bruce Cockburn fan, let me please point out to you a small error in Howard Kaman's review of Bruce Cockburn Live. In his review, Kaman implies that the live album representing Cockburn's earlier musical period was High Winds White Sky. This is not so. The album in question is the 1976 double-album Circles in the Stream.

As a matter of interest, it would have been really difficult for High Winds to be representative of earlier part of Cockburn's career, since the 1971 work was Cockburn's second album!

Hope you don't mind my pointing this out.

Yours truly,
Graeme Burk

«Assistant Editor's note: Howard Kaman brought the error to my attention, but, in the rush to get the newspaper out, it was not fixed. The fault lies entirely with me, not Howard.

NEWS

Student group looking for NDP to implement long-time policies

continued from page 3

also plan to lobby against more cuts to federal transfer payments, which have been cut by \$7 billion dollars for the years 1986 to 1994.

OFS chair Tim Jackson said the OFS is hoping the NDP will implement some long-time party planks such as an all-grant student loan program, adjustments to student aid based on cost of living, day care facilities at all colleges and universities, pay equity and affirmative action legislation for universities, and freezing tuition fees across the province with a plan to eventually eliminate them.

Jackson said that many of these policies are very similar to those of the OFS, which also supports the elimination of tuition fees. He said that in a questionnaire circulated by the OFS to the three major parties during the campaign, the NDP indicated

these policies were still part of their platform.

The OFS plans to lobby the new government hard over the next two months because government announcements on operating grants and tuition increases traditionally come in November.

Jackson said he hopes the NDP comes up with a long-term plan for colleges and universities, something both the Liberals and the Conservatives never had, because the annual November announcements do not allow post-secondary institutions to plan for periods beyond one year.

He said universities must be able to plan over four to five year periods in order to plan for faculty, renovation, staff and other expenditures.

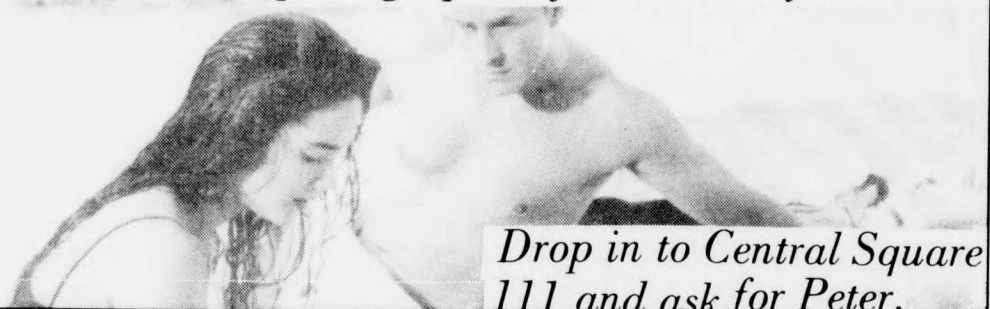
"On paper, [the NDP victory] looks great for post-secondary

education but we'll have to wait for the announcements in November and the budget in the spring," Jackson said. "If they don't follow through on their platform then we'll be quick to condemn them."

The Council of Ontario Universities (COU) executive director Edward Monahan said he would like to see the NDP appoint a minister for Colleges and Universities so that more attention can be given to the ministry. Under the Liberals, Sean Conway held three portfolios, one of which was Colleges and Universities.

He said the COU would also like to see the NDP reform the OSAP system to make it fairer and increase operating and capital grants to post-secondary institutions. He said the COU will hopefully discuss specifics with the new minister once the cabinet is formed.

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Drop in to Central Square 111 and ask for Peter.

JSF

IMPORTANT: NEW INFORMATION NOTICE OF MEETING

The Jewish Student Federation of York University will hold its annual election for the Board of Directors on **Monday October 1, 1990** at 7:00 pm in the Senate Chambers (9th floor, Ross Building).

No person shall be eligible for election as a Director of the Corporation unless he or she is nominated by not less than three members of the corporation, and the aforesaid nomination is submitted in writing to Claire Sookman (J.S.F. Director) not less than seven (7) days prior to the meeting at which an election of directors is to be held (J.S.F. By-Law No. 7).

Sample Nomination:

The undersigned nominate _____ for the election of Board of Directors for the October 1, 1990 Jewish Student Federation General Meeting

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

ATTENTION NEW MEMBERS

- ** Registration of new members will take place in the JSF office until Monday, October 1, at 7:00 p.m.
- ** Students are encouraged to register during the week of September 24th.
- ** Registration will not take place after 7:00 p.m. on October 1st, 1990.
- ** Current members who are on our mailing list should go directly to the Senate Chambers at 7:00 p.m. sharp.
- ** If you are not sure whether you are on the mailing list please call Claire at 736-5179.

Registration of new members will resume on October 2nd.

*Dinner will not be served
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please feel free to contact Claire at the J.S.F. at 736-5179.*

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*Peter Wong
York University*

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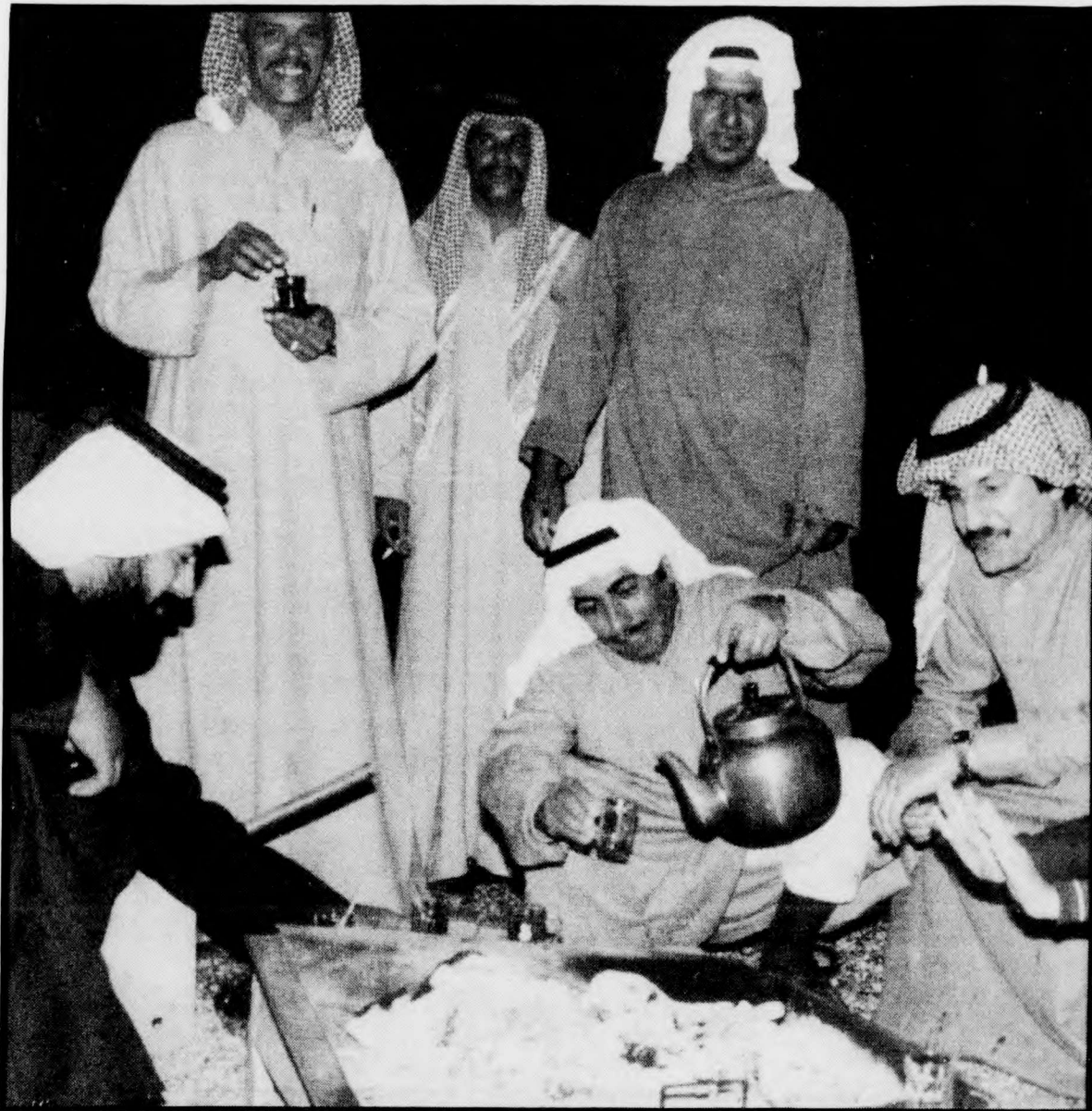
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INSIGHT

Kuwait; Putting faces on the headlines



John remembers the taste of salt in his dry mouth and the sand and dust that somehow always found its way through his clothes. His mind is filled with memories of an old and tranquil land . . .

by Linda Dias

In 1947, shortly after the end of the Second World War, a young man, recently discharged from the British Army, emigrated from India to Kuwait with his new wife. They were searching for a new beginning. Bearing with him the experience of fighting a war, the opportunity of settling down and starting from scratch seemed ideal, full of promise.

Forty years and eight children later, John and Sev finally emigrated from Kuwait to Canada to "retire" and spend time with some of their children who lived here.

Now, on a hot Sunday afternoon in mid-August, an anxious John and Sev hover around the television of their new home, watching with shock and pain the developments in the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Three weeks have gone by without any information of their sons and their families still residing there. Sev is especially frantic about her daughter-in-law, who is expecting a child any day now.

The bronzed skin and lines of John's face are well defined as he wearily contemplates the possibility of another war. He scans the news channel, where a report claims that the international military presence in Saudi Arabia is experiencing a temperature of 39C. He laughs to himself — it is a blistering 49C, perhaps 59C.

John remembers the taste of salt in his dry mouth and the sand and dust that somehow always

found its way through his clothes. His mind is filled with memories of an old and tranquil land with bedouin villages, donkey carts, dhows (Kuwaiti boats), mud houses and paraffin lanterns; nights in the diwaniya (a gathering room for men) eating dak-hous (a meat specialty).

It is a far cry from twentieth century condos, cars, Italian yachts and a string of fast food joints.

John is safe here, but fears for the safety of his children and their future. For all the years of sacrifice — putting in long hours, where his family didn't see him for days because he was an "employee," not of Kuwaiti blood — his labour seemed to be in vain.

To John, priorities consisted of providing for his wife and children, pouring thousands of dollars into their education abroad in the hope that some day they would take care of him and his wife. Somewhere in the back of his mind he realized that eventually he would no longer be able to work, and that this tradition would have to be carried on by his sons. His Indian passport and those of his Kuwaiti-born children did not strike him as a problem then.

Anyone living in Kuwait led the life of an expatriate, providing a service and returning to their country of citizenship. No provisions seem to have been made for those who were born and had lived there all their lives. You had to renew a residence permit,

obtain visas to enter or leave and save money for your future.

If you were a young woman, you were lucky to have your residency renewed periodically (you were not considered a threat to the economy). Being male and foreign was not easy. Then, there was the matter of "vasta." Everything seemed to work by connections — speeding up applications, obtaining a driver's licence, dental work, reserving seats, having a decent life.

No one seemed to complain. If you were Asian with connections (some rich Kuwaiti or a sheikh) you were fortunate; you could expect some respect and benefits (your relatives were sponsored or relieved of red tape). If you were white, you were even luckier — you would not require qualifications either.

The land and its people took what they could out of you. You gave and gave. You dared not refuse or complain for fear of repercussion. Besides, there were such things as loyalty and the belief that "inshallah" (God permitting) or "bukra, inshallah" (tomorrow, God permitting) all would pay off one day.

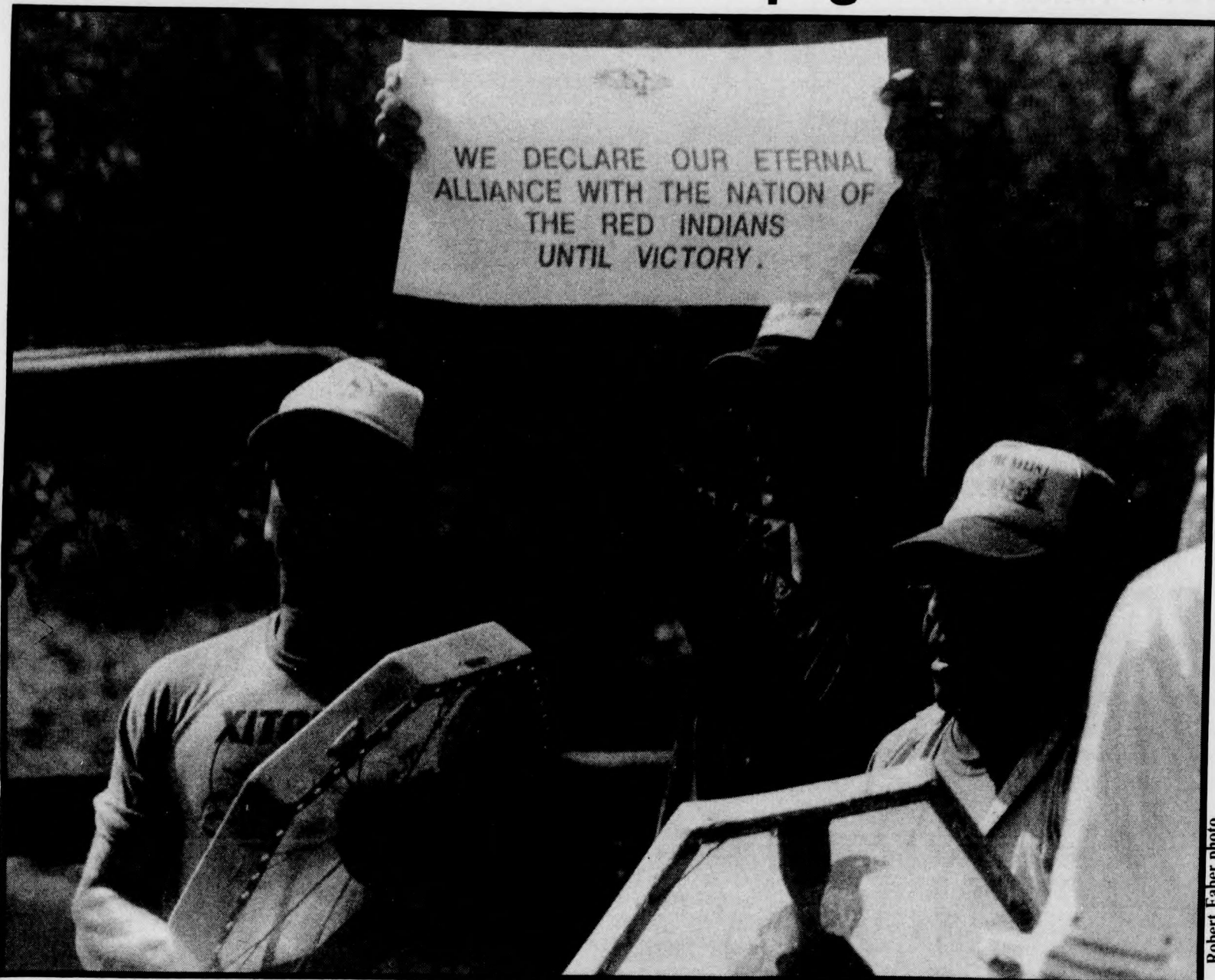
Immigration laws became tougher each day. Your family could not visit you if your salary was too low. Food was cheap, health care free and imports from Taiwan to Paris were all tax free. — Censorship and restriction of alcohol proved cumbersome for foreigners and non-Muslims who, on occasion, smuggled or made

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INSIGHT

Lil' Wat Nation indicative of plight of natives



Robert Faber photo

Roadblocks in B.C.: Many Natives across Canada have been actively supporting the Mohawks in Oka, Quebec. Native awareness and solidarity has never been higher in this country.

York student Robert Faber spent four months this year at the Lil' Wat Indian Reserve in western B.C. He was the only non-Native allowed to attend meetings at the reserve. The following is his account of the Native experience.

For the last month, the issue of the Mohawk Indians in Oka, Quebec has escalated to a near civil war. Most of us, and I am no exception, have very little knowledge of land claims. However, after having spent time on the Lil'Wat Reserve (or, as Indians prefer, Lil'Wat Nation), I was able to develop a better understanding of the natives' frustration.

Living with Wayne Daniel Andrews, the nephew of Mt. Currie's Chief Fraser Andrews, and the 1984 World Indian Saddle Bronc Champion, has given me a new outlook towards native Indian life. I had the opportunity to experience part of a culture which many Canadians never will.

During my four month stay, I grew to understand the feelings of utter helplessness felt by the Indians. The Lil'Wat Nation has had their land raped and stolen. Their mountains are used for clear cut logging. Their land has been turned into ski resorts without permission or notice.

Whistler Mountain, for example, which is now a luxury resort, was once the place where Wayne set his trap lines for martins. Also, a lot of the surrounding water supply is believed to have been

contaminated by the PCB plant that was built without permission on the Nation's land. Many fish in these waters, such as the spring salmon, come here to spawn.

Each morning for the first month of my stay, I awoke to the sounds of clear cut logging. The damage was clearly visible as the logging company made no attempt to hide its taking of trees from the Indian Nation.

Our government is partly responsible for this atrocity, as the Indians have never surrendered this land. The Forestry Ministry has sold land to these companies which initially belonged to the Lil'Wat Nation. The companies in return have sold the land back to the government after being logged out, so that they would not be the guilty-looking parties.

Billions of dollars worth of trees are being stolen from the Indians, not to mention the loss of trap lines used for generations as hunting grounds which most Indians depend on for food year round. Only recently has mining on this Nation stopped, but the damages to their burial grounds are irreversible.

The Natives can only hold on to small traces of their history. Small ochre pictographs of deer remain to indicate where Indians

lived before the white man came to settle.

It was clear cut logging that instigated the first road block. Logging companies had been given five year contracts to log out the Lil'Wat area. Meetings to inform the public were set up by the Ministry, which invited people from the nearby Pemberton Township, located just outside the Nation.

However, the Indians were not asked to attend this question and answer period. Due to the first road block, it was moved; organizers feared Indians would protest. I was unable to find the relocated meeting.

To better understand, let me explain the process of clear cut logging. First, chemicals are sprayed on a chosen area to kill the underbrush and make it easier to log. These chemicals are extremely poisonous, and the workers must wear heavy gloves to protect their skin. After their work is done, the area is too polluted and dangerous to support animals.

This ruthless method has a devastating impact on the Indians, as hunting is one of the means of their survival. Left behind is bare land that erodes and eventually leaves only rocks. Replanting rarely works, and the future success of newly planted trees is uncertain.

Confrontations with directors or head loggers has been aggravating for both parties. One of the logging company owners, Doug, believes that the land is his, fair and square. He claims he has a five year plan to log the mountains.

Once the land is stripped of its important elements, he would be happy to return it to the Indians.

He claims, "I own it," which, of course, is untrue. Not even the Indians claim to own the land; only Mother Nature can own it.

Others at the road block were just as ignorant. One dump truck driver attempted to drive his truck through a chain of Indians who stood in linked arms. Travellers were only asked to stop and receive a notice that informed them of the Native frustration with the treatment of clear cut logging and the abuse of their land claims. Some, like the truck driver, lacked interest in their peaceful demonstration. The Natives were bearing no weapons or other forms of protection.

This sort of behaviour left the Indians no alternative but retaliation. Their hearts were filled with

“... until the wrongs against (Natives) can be rectified, Canada cannot claim to be true, strong or free.”

frustration and anger. This was the beginning of the roadblock crisis.

The incidents in Oka escalated into a second roadblock, which became a necessity. This barricade has lasted over a month, and is still in existence. Being the first and only non-Indian allowed to cross the roadblock with a vehicle, I felt accepted by the Natives. I was also allowed to sit in on their meetings.

On the second roadblock, the Natives still wanted to maintain

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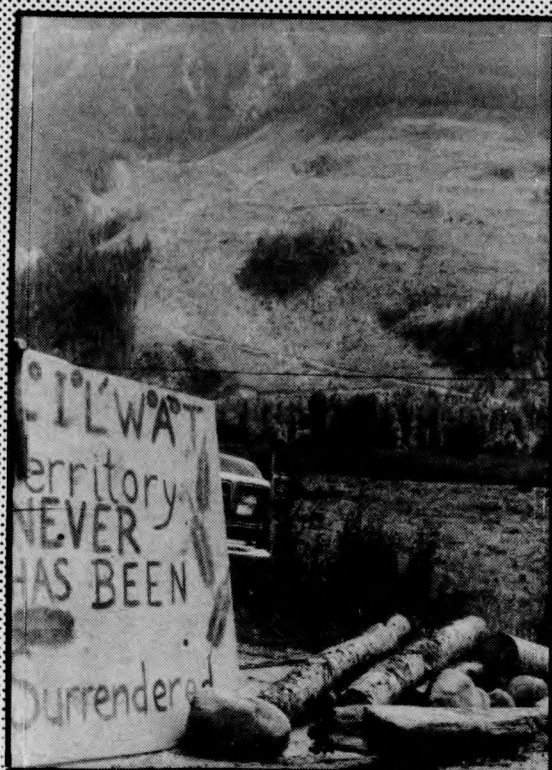
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INSIGHT

Each morning for the first month of my stay, I awake to the sounds of clear cut logging. The damage was clearly visible as the logging company made no attempt to hide its taking of trees from the Indian Nation.



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non-violence. Tight security would stop each vehicle. Only those who bared proper papers were permitted to pass, but anyone could walk, cycle or even canoe past the barricade.

The blockade consisted of large mountains of dirt, rocks and vehicles, which made crossing the road difficult. Given permission to take photos of their plight, I jumped at the opportunity. Unfortunately, these photos could not carry the sound of the drums or the cries of the Natives. The roadblock was located three kilometres north of Mt. Currie, cutting off access to the Duffy Lake roads.

Armed RCMP in squad cars and air conditioned vehicles were paid \$44 an hour to stand guard on opposite ends of the barricade. The threat of an outburst of violence and the destruction of this peaceful roadblock became intense. It was only because of the Oka issue and public concern that this has been the longest roadblock without police disturbance. Previous roadblocks were

crushed, and those involved were arrested and taken away. Only now has the government recognised the road as belonging to the Natives, even though Indians had built and maintained it since its construction.

The police and government road maintenance crews, as well as Forestry Ministry officials, used every excuse to get beyond the barricades. Some succeeded temporarily by using back roads and helicopters. Two motorcycles were confiscated, and a warning to the pilot of the aircraft was given. His crew was asked to walk to the airport and given a strict warning never to return.

A feeling of unity filled my soul as I witnessed the Native struggle first hand. It was only recently that they were allowed to practice their rituals and religious beliefs freely. Their language was once prohibited to be learned and spoken. Their land was their shelter, their water their strength.

At the sweat lodge, the air was filled with burning smudge, a

A feeling of unity filled my soul as I witnessed the struggle first hand

combination of the sweet grass and sage which has been used for hundreds of years to cleanse the soul of evil and to give it strength.

The Indians are not a violent people. They are a group which, because of media hype, is sadly misunderstood.

At this meeting, many speakers from all over North America spoke out with anger. Decorated Canadian soldiers who fought on the beaches of Normandy in World War II felt cheated as the country they once defended now put up arms against them. The land Natives have protected long before the arrival of the White Man is being stripped from beneath them.

Without question, our aboriginal people hold a strong link to Canadian history, and until the wrongs against them can be rectified, Canada cannot claim to be true, strong or free.

Canada is a multicultural country. Our government stands for a non-racist society. Why, then, do we treat our own people with such discrimination? We could help end this situation by supporting the Mohawks and the other Nations by encouraging our government to negotiate without violent measures.

The Lil'Wat people have shown me that their cause is important and vital for their survival. That leaves all Canadians with the responsibility of taking some sort of action.

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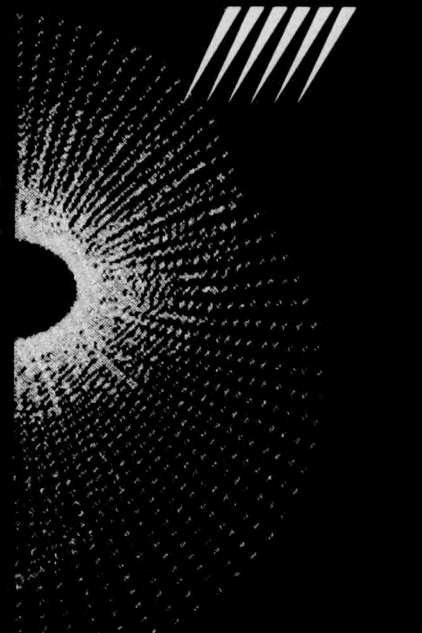
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INSIGHT

continued from page 6

the brew, paying the price in severe fines, jail sentences and subsequent deportation. Mug shots appeared in local newspapers. This was an alluring way of life, money always being an appealing incentive.

Those who invested abroad were wise; the experience of those who didn't is tragic. Their blood, sweat and tears, like the sand of the desert, has slipped through their fingers.

John's children have nothing now. They have no place to go, except, because of their passports, India, a land to which they do not really belong. One supposes that they are young, that they can start anew.

John looks on, feeling helpless and old. He is in a land he is of brief acquaintance with, one without any personal connections. The house and land where Sev bore all her children is gone. There cannot be any concern for friends or other relatives at this time, except your own blood.

John and Sev have hopes of one day reuniting with their sons in Canada. But, it seems this wish does not fit with current reality.



Saddam Hussein comes across as a saviour or hero to some. As the media unearths more truth and information about Kuwait, the royal family, the western concern for oil over people, the U.S. move to aid Saudi Arabia rather than Kuwait, one becomes aware that the Kuwaiti people are silent.

With the exodus of thousands of expatriates, one wonders just how many "asli" (genuine) Kuwaitis are left in Kuwait. Hussein chose a good time to invade the country; schools were officially closed and practically everyone was on vacation outside the country to beat the heat. Only a majority of expatriates were left to "keep the generators running."

To John, Kuwait has been home, and always will be; some of his children feel the same way. For him, loyalty remains and, therefore, the experience of the invasion has been received with sadness and dismay. He is not angry. He is quiet. Very quiet.

John knows the situation well. As an expatriate, your purpose was that of a cushion, to "make it all better," but remain submissive. You were conditioned that way. If one could interpret John's silence, one would hear stories of nothing but hard work, devoid of any kind of personality or social life except for purposes of employment.

While the United States and other countries assume they are out there to "kick ass," John is skeptical. His only concern is for his flesh and blood. It seems the legacy of having sponsored his children in Kuwait has now been a loss. He cringes and is frustrated with responses from agencies to aid in the search and relocation of his children.

If there was an invasion of Toronto, one would not send the Italians back to Italy, the Greeks back to Greece, or . . . But, if there was a storm and a town was wiped out, people would help. There would be government aid, compensation and a whole lot of sympathy.

For those who never had the opportunity to work in the Gulf (Kuwait being one of the most difficult states to enter), there is the sound of cruel laughter. The glamour of living and working in the Middle East is gone. Akin to the nature of a commodity, the value of people (expatriates) has depreciated as they find them-

For him, loyalty remains and, therefore, the experience of the invasion has been received with sadness and dismay

selves on the doorsteps of countries they do not know, and to which they do not belong.

While nations decide what line of action can be dictated to countries, other than using their own judgement within moral contexts and the debate over what strategy is favourable for the good of all, the grim aspect of impending

war escalates. As days become weeks, the situation in Kuwait becomes real, yet coverage of the crisis is slowly diminishing.

John knows that this is not fair. But, who said war was fair?

Linda Dias is a York student who was born and raised in Kuwait.

La route vers Glendon

La route vers Glendon is a weekly column which will keep York Main more closely in contact with its affiliated bilingual college.

York-Glendon shuttle

by Ed Drass

Welcome aboard the Glendon Shuttle. In this traffic-ridden fiefdom called North York, it's the best way between the two campuses of York University, failing a subway extension. (Ross Flaggpole. Keele Street. St. Regis Crescent. Sheppard Avenue. Wilson Heights. Yonge Blvd. Yonge Street. Lawrence East. The Glendon Mailbox.) This intercampus lifeline is available to any student, staff member, book or piece of mail that wants to go from Big to Little; from treed valley to oversized parking lot.

It comes in handy, for those who have courses on both campuses, and for those who discover that the book that they need is only available at the library at the other campus. "Where the hell is Frost?" The alternative to the shuttle is either getting a lift with someone (no car-pool/ride-sharing service is available at York) or the TTC. Et ca serait l'enfer si chaque personne conduisait sa propre voiture.

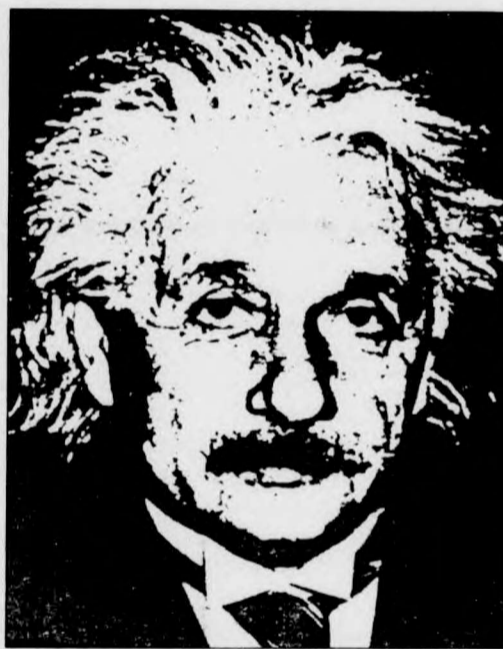
But try as it might, the TTC is at a disadvantage in a car-oriented

city, especially as York Main is as far away as possible while still remaining part of North York. A study would be worthwhile to see which combination of bus and subway will get you quickest from Glendon to York Main. Try Lawrence Subway to York Mills Subway, the Wilson 96 to Wilson Station and then the York Express 106A. If you have a better route, write me c/o *Excalibur*.

Ideally, the shuttle would be full all the time as York people considered themselves at home at either location. However, the average UofT student is probably more aware of the other two campuses and of the buses that link the Erindale, Scarborough and St. George grounds.

Alas, too few at York know about our own little umbilical cord with the tacky red and white "YU" logo and "Glendon Bus" stenciled on it. The shuttle is not well publicized and it is hard to find out when it leaves or how to get tickets. This information should be common knowledge. It's not. However, to be honest, the system could not handle a lot of people without improvement. There are only six trips a day, and there are no night-time shuttles for those with evening courses.

In any case, splurge on the 50 cents and take the half-hour ride down to check things out. Tickets seem to be available only at the bookstores, as is the schedule. Et finalement, telephonnez l'AECG/GCSU et la FEY/YFS et demandez l'amélioration du service. Toodle-oo.



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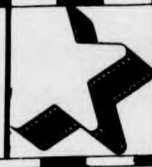
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ARTIS



FE

Reeves-Stevens figures out the trick

by Salman A. Nensi

The latest novel from Garfield Reeves-Stevens, *Dark Matter*, is a chilling tale of quantum physics, mad scientists, murder and intrigue, with just the right touch of Garfield magic.

Many writers base books on their own personal knowledge. Policemen write police novels; journalists write about journalism. More and more, this seems to be the trend followed by new writers.

Not Garfield. He writes with his mind's eye, using his imagination. The effect is startling. Garfield's stories have an air of confident omniscience, so much so that readers will wonder if he is privy to some secret information.

Dark Matter is Garfield's fifth horror/thriller. His first three — *Bloodshift*, *Dreamland* and *Children of the Shroud* — have only been published in Canada (by Bantam). *Nighteyes*, Garfield's fourth novel, was originally published in hardcover, simultaneously in the United States and Canada.

Born in Oakville, Reeves-Stevens grew up in the Toronto suburb of Don Mills. His fondness for horror/thrillers was fostered by regular trips to the local cinema, which reran old 50s horror movies on Saturday afternoons.

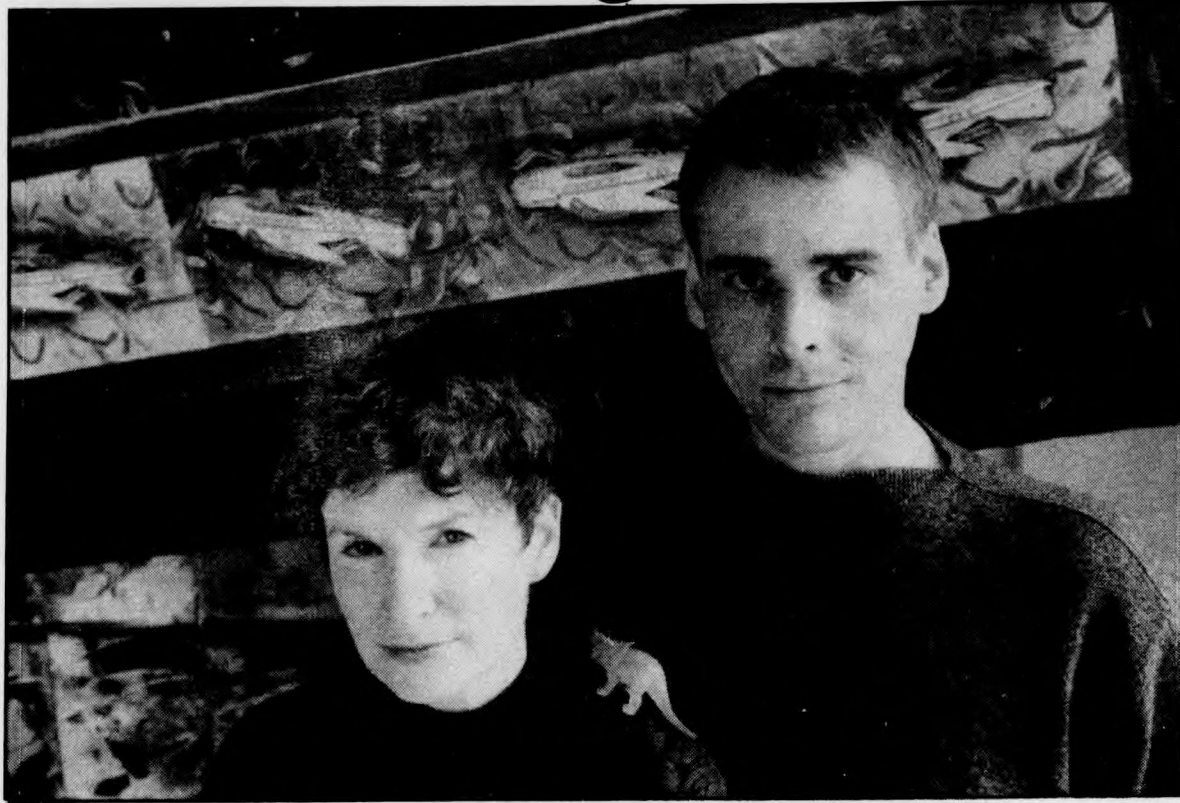
His passion for writing began when he was only eight. Unlike other youngsters who sat glued to their television set, Reeves-Stevens spent his spare time creating fantasy stories for his own amusement.

"I still write for myself," Reeves-Stevens says. "The stories I write are the ones I'd like to hear. Writing instructors say you're not supposed to do that, but it seems to work for me."

Reeves-Stevens became serious about his writing at the age of 15, when he submitted a short story about vampires set in the future to a few science fiction magazines. They all rejected his work. Rejection is hard enough on adults, but the 15 year-old Reeves-Stevens refused to listen to what others told him.

"I knew I could do it," he says. "It was just a question of figuring out the trick. At least, that's what I thought at the time. It turns out the trick is to have written thousands upon thousands of words, and then you get better. Because of those early rejection letters, I spent a lot of time writing and re-writing. That helped me to develop my writing skills."

Reeves-Stevens "big break" came in true Hollywood style — while he was having lunch! After studying book publishing in col-



lege, he began to work as a freelance graphic artist, designing book covers.

One day, he was introduced to a book publisher who wanted to start a new line of horror/thriller paperbacks. Reeves-Stevens told the publisher about an idea he had been toying with, a tale of intrigue, suspense and vampires. A year later (1981), his first novel, *Bloodshift*, was a reality.

Being so closely connected to the thriller genre might dampen the ability of some writers to enjoy the works of others, but not Reeves-Stevens. "I'm more aware now of how other writers present scary things, but, because I really want to experience the horror, I can. I think I have become a better reader. I'm probably more thoroughly affected these days than I was before I began writing professionally." Both Stephen King's *Misery* and *Tommyknockers* have scared Canada's Horror Master.

Reeves-Stevens first collaboration is *Memory Prime*, the 42nd *Star Trek* novel. The book was written with his wife of 13 years, Judith.

Although it is the first novel they have written together, *Memory Prime* is not their first project; together, they have created interactive computer games for children, as well as *Science Around Me*, a 45 title science textbook series for grades one, two and three.

Even though Reeves-Stevens is an established author, he is very positive about writing with a partner. "The story plotting goes a lot faster. Instead of me sitting at a pad of paper struggling to work out the story, Judy and I work it

out in brainstorming fashion. We go through this stage about twice as fast as I do when writing solo. Oddly enough, it takes the same length of time to actually write the novel, but the editing and refining stages do go a lot quicker."

Reeves-Stevens also likes the feeling that if either he or his wife get stuck, they have each other to turn to and can work out the problem together. To the couple, "getting stuck" simply refers to having difficulty with story points, which is quite different from the dreaded "writer's block," something they have yet to experience.

Surprisingly, the two creative egos have no difficulty writing together. "We honestly don't fight," said Reeves-Stevens as his stern expression softened into a smile. "Most of the time, our ideas flow together very well."

Steven H. Stern, who directed several Disney movies, recently expressed interest in directing *Children of the Shroud*. This is a great thrill for Reeves-Stevens.

"Mister Stern is a wonderful director," he said, "and he has a real talent for putting stories on the screen. His movies go like clockwork. They are really good to see. He has liked my other work, but *Children of the Shroud* caught his interest, and he thought there was potential for a good movie."

Reeves-Stevens wrote both the treatments and final script for the movie version of *Bloodshift*. He was forced to make major concessions, including changing the ending. How does an artist deal with such radical changing of his work?

"I am much harder to deal with in that sense when it comes to a book, because a book is my arena. I know what works there. While going through the final editing process on *Nighteyes*, there were some things the editor wanted to change, and there were some things I didn't want to change. So, we discussed them back and forth, but the interesting thing is that with a book, the author is the final authority.

"In the end, if my editor and I come to a real impasse, providing it is not something that is going to totally destroy the market for the book, I get my way. If I want to keep in a minor character who she [the editor] wants to take out, in

the end, unless she can convince me, we're going to keep the minor character in."

Movies are completely different; the producer is boss, and what he says, goes. Reeves-Stevens has learned to accept the writer's place in the creative process of film. The writer is involved in the beginning, until the script has evolved, at which point it becomes the director's story.

Reeves-Stevens will be doing treatments and a first draft script for *Children of the Shroud*. That is as far as his creative control goes; but, as he says, "The control quite rightly belongs in the hands of the director and the producer."

Fame and fortune change the lives of many people, but Reeves-Stevens does not envision his life changing much when fame comes knocking at his door. Most writers are not as readily recognizable as movie stars.

As for fortune, he says, "... even when they say you get a mil-

Dark Matter displays a professional quantum leap

by Dileep S. Rangan

Dark Matter
written by Garfield Reeves-Stevens
published by Doubleday

In his new and exciting science fiction/horror novel, Garfield Reeves-Stevens' writing skill has shown an increased maturity. With *Dark Matter*, Reeves-Stevens makes that quantum jump that distinguishes the rookie from the established writer.

The story finds its foundations in the early days of mad scientists cloistered away in eerie super-laboratories where the impossible is created through unspeakable means. Fortunately, the characters in *Dark Matter* are more than the two-dimensional cutouts typical of that era; they are complex and filled with enough life to allow the reader to relate and believe in them. Underlying virtually every aspect of the story is a vast amount of extrapolated science — quantum physics, to be precise. Not only does this make *Dark Matter* an intriguing read, but also lends it a somewhat mystical quality. In our empirical world it becomes harder and harder to suspend our disbelief when magic and the like are involved, but Reeves-Stevens' magic is created by a technological spiritualism which permeates the novel.

Anybody who would be interested enough to read something in this genre has likely heard or read something about the overall concepts of quantum physics, and is, therefore, able to comprehend the basis of the tale. All this science does not allow the reader to simply float along through the plot without thinking about what is going on. If one merely glosses over the concepts brought up in the story, one is bound to miss the experience and energy of *Dark Matter*.

Dark Matter is an exploration of genius and the line which separates it from insanity. The story brings into question accepted social hypocrisies, and compares them to those actions and ideas which are considered, by society at large, to be deranged. The true horrors of this tale are not the brutal slayings, these are merely a back-drop for greater evil.

lion dollars per book, it's not really a million... I think it will just be that my working conditions will change."

The stereotypical writer creates with a typewriter and a garbage can, which is always overflowing with crumpled paper. Reeves-Stevens has avoided the "crumpled paper syndrome" by using a word processor.

While he writes, though, his oversized desk and the floors and shelves are, "covered with half-open reference books and outlines and notes and all sorts of things. My work area is always covered with lots of visual things to look at."

And, while most people have "his and her" towels, the Reeves-Stevens have "his and her" computers. The fact that the computers are both Macintoshes reduces the technical difficulties of two people working on the same project.

Reeves-Stevens draws his inspiration from his childhood memories of watching *The Twilight Zone*, *Thriller* and scary movies. "I loved those stories as a kid, and I think that I am recreating a more sophisticated version for people who, like me, grew up on them."

Reeves-Stevens is currently working on his next novel. In addition, the writing duo has signed with Penguin Books' new science fiction line, Roc, for a series of science fiction adventure novels collectively titled *The Chronicles of Galen Sword*. The first *Galen Sword* is due in September. Also in the works are *Galen Sword Book Two* and *Slyde*, a novel of environmental disaster set against the Olympic Games of the year 2000.

As for his publishing plans beyond 1990, Reeves-Stevens says he has lots of ideas ready to develop. "I'm just as eager to find out what happens next as my readers are. I guess that's what speculative fiction is all about."

Next issue:
Festival of Festivals:
it's a wrap!

ARTS

The gospel according to Tackhead

by Peter Stathis

Tackhead
Friendly As A Hand Grenade
 TVT Records

Tackhead's latest offering is a gracious slab of creative nihilism on the otherwise gangrenous

sandwich that is modern music. Although toned-down from their last release with Gary Clail, *Tackhead Sound System, Friendly As A Hand Grenade* still succeeds in mixing the profit dance with critical chants. Bernie Fowler replaces Clail as lead orator in

a short sample trip around the microcosm that typifies the 20th century vision.

"Airborne Ranger" apes the famous training jingle: "I wanna be an airborne ranger/ I wanna live a life of danger/ I wanna go to Iran . . . / Kill/ Kill. The sample is set to crunching guitar, funk-up bass, and the obligatory military snare.

What about religious extortion? The televangelists' gospel according to Tackhead comes in a song aptly named "Stealing." "Yunno, music goes good with preachin' . . . I'm not a stealer/ I'm a healer/ . . . I take donations from all denominations/ big or small/ any currency."

With Adrian Sherwood's slick mixing and Keith Leblanc's superior drum programming as the pillars of creation, this album draws more heavily on Skip McDonald's guitar riffs and Fowler's soulful vocal melodies for its rasping texture. In contrast to Gary Clail's medicinally-smooth project, *End of the Century Party*, the rest of the Tackhead stormtroopers have gone on with a modified sound in a modified age of

treason.

As the veneer of street credibility starts to fade . . . so, too,

music exalts its own complicity in the narcotics-cartel that is the record industry.



Bloodletting best Blonde album yet

by Herschel Marshall

Concrete Blonde
Bloodletting
 IRS Records

Concrete Blonde is sanguine and sultry. Johnette Napolitano's alternately raspy/wispy vocals throw even the most jaded listener back to a time of romantic innocence, only to crack the mirror of passion. With love/hate imagery built around vampires, blood, fire, poison, alcohol, red roses, and twilight affairs, *Bloodletting* is beguiling, but, even more, dispiriting.

Napolitano is appealing at a profoundly personal level. Wary of the invitation to intrigue, always with the undercurrent of eventual sorrow and the fear of a lover's reprisal, her songs on *Bloodletting* are a vibrant presentation on the sour-sweet pangs of desire.

In the most disturbing moment

of the album, a track called "Beast," Napolitano sings, "Love is the ghost haunting your head/ Love is the killer you thought was your friend/ Love is the creature who lives in the dark/ Sneaks up, will stick you and painfully pick you apart." Malevolence that shatters innocence.

Between the three of them, Napolitano on bass and voice, Paul Thompson on drums and James Mankey on guitars, Concrete Blonde fill their songs with a rich, yet subtle, texture that gives *Bloodletting* a truly seductive quality. Compared to previous albums, the material is ostensibly less angry. Nevertheless, the music reaches deeper and endures longer than anything the Blondes have done before.

Bloodletting is unquestionably their finest achievement to date. Recommended as therapy/torture for your next break-up.

Songs For Drella is very moving

by Howard Kaman

Lou Reed and John Cale
Songs For Drella
 Sire/Warner Bros.

When pop artist Andy Warhol died in 1987, his life was shrouded in mystery. Few people knew him well enough in his lifetime to talk about him honestly and, frankly, Warhol seemed to prefer it that way.

Enter *Songs For Drella*. This album, a tribute by ex-Velvet Underground leaders Lou Reed and John Cale, is probably as close as we will ever get to knowing the real Warhol. The artist served as manager and mentor for the Velvets, and had a deep influence on Reed, in particular.

On his 1989 album, *New York*, Reed sang an elegy to Warhol with "Dime Store Mystery," a song which eloquently pondered the "duality of nature," and the ambiguity in Warhol's life. This song has been fleshed out on *Songs For Drella*, an album which creates a fuller picture of who Warhol was.

The work, which was commissioned by The Brooklyn Academy of Music and the Arts, takes its title from Reed and Cale's nickname for Warhol; Drella is a contraction of Cinderella and Dracula.

The duality of Warhol's life is well represented. *Songs For Drella* presents a picture of a man whose ideals were formed with religion, but explored through art. While religion gave him a rigid work ethic, as described in "Work," his art allowed him to explore the limits of his own freedom. He was constantly caught between the demands of the graphic art industry (in which he worked to supplement his income) and the freedom of his own imagination.

Of course, what made Warhol's work different was his preoccupation with repetitive imagery. As Reed notes on the record's opening track, "Smalltown," Warhol always preferred the city. "There's only one good use for a small town," he sings, "You hate it and you know you'll have to leave." This preference for cos-

mopolitan life led to an obsession with industrial repetition, as documented on "Images."

It was his emphasis on repetition that people found odd. Warhol made creative something that

and other objects, he perfectly represented his view of the world.

Reed and Cale have paid homage to Warhol, not only in the lyrical content, but also with the music. The repetitive riffs of



was previously thought of as mundane. Whereas previously, the term "art" brought to mind a one-of-a-kind masterpiece, Warhol interpreted it to mean the redundant repetitions of ordinary life. With his prints of soup cans

"Work," along with the playful simplicity of songs like "Smalltown," bring Warhol's artistic visions to mind. While the record may be harder to grasp than Reed's breakthrough *New York*, it is also quite moving.

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ARTS

Crazy brothers basis for brilliant film

by Azed Majeed

Vincent and Theo
directed by Robert Altman
produced by Belbo Films

Vincent Van Gogh was one of the greatest painters who ever lived; he was also a major fruitcake. Now, Vincent we know about, but what of his equally weird brother Theo?

Well, put these two weird bros together in a film by the even weirder Robert Altman (Hey, don't get me wrong — the man is a genius — I'm talking about a good kind of weird) and you get one exceptional film.

Vincent and Theo chronicles the life of the great painter, although it offers little insight into the consistently enigmatic source of creative inspiration. Rather, it focusses on the conflicted relationship between art and the marketplace, using the two brothers as symbols.

Theo (Paul Rhys) is an art dealer in Paris; although he is aware of Vincent's talent, he is unable to interest buyers. Vincent (Tim Roth) is not easy on his brother or himself. His paintings are ahead of their time and therefore he can make no money from his art.

This story accurately reflects the career of not only Van Gogh, but Altman, a man for whom art is

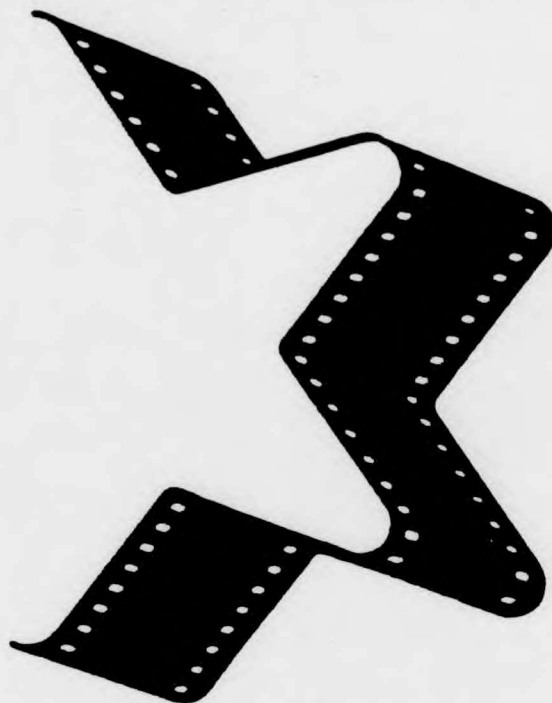
never compromised for the sake of commerciality. (He probably would have gotten a C+ in 1010.08 Film Production.)

Altman has had a tough time of it (this is me in my British mode). Although his films have been alternately praised and panned, there can be no contesting that he is a legendary film maker.

Still, he certainly does not carry the financial clout of Spielberg. This is not surprising considering the nature of the North American film industry, which is primarily concerned with suppressing anything resembling art. However, it is sad that the same man who has directed films such as *Nashville*, *M+A+S+H*, *Three Women*, *Streamers*, and *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*, as well as countless other dandy gems, is still overlooked by the film industry and the film-going public.

I SAY ENOUGH!! IT'S UP TO YOU — THAT'S RIGHT, YOU!! MR. AND MRS. FRONTPORCH!! — TO GET THE HELL OFF YER LAZY DUFFS AND SUPPORT THIS FILM!! THEN I WANT YOU ALL TO GET UP, GO TO YOUR WINDOWS, OPEN THEM AND SCREAM AT THE TOP OF YOUR VOICE, "I'M MAD AS HELL, AND I'M NOT GOING TO TAKE IT ANYMORE!!!"

Vincent and Theo is a great



study of the parallels between brothers and the frustration borne out of the familial bond. Paul Rhys (Theo) is really keen as the frustrated would-be artist repressing his artistic calling in order to live a life on conventional stability as an art dealer. It is clear then that Theo is motivated by the same passion as his brother, but the guy has one major super-ego, ya dig? The film is really more Theo's story than it is Vincent's, (boy, talk about fueling a family fight, eh?), for it is Theo who recognizes and understands the madness of art.

Not that Vincent is short-changed... no way joe-zeh! Tim

Roth is fuckin' amazing — this guy is gonna be really big. He is so good and utterly frightening as the Mad Painter that I really would not like to meet him in a seedy bar in Texas, if you get my meaning.

After viewing Tim Roth's performance, I came to the conclusion that either he a) is truly a psychopath b) used to be a postal carrier or c) has seen *The Shining* way too many times. Anyway, he is fun to watch, both in this film and in Tom Stoppard's film version of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*.

The true star of *Vincent and Theo* is not either of the afore-

mentioned actors, but Altman himself. This is Altman's persevering statement that he will not succumb to the Hollywood market, but will continue to make films his way, without the support of the filmmaking community.

In *Vincent and Theo*, there is no indication of a change in style. This film is beautiful to look at, and contains all of the subversive elements which are Altman's trademarks. Altman uses his camera as an objective tool, in the tradition of "cinema verite" documentaries, capturing subtle glances and periphery action, which nonetheless are imperative to the film.

Another Altman trademark is the use of multi-layered sound, which forces the viewer to choose what to listen to, while confusing the viewer beyond full understanding of any of the myriad conversations. It's all here: the extensive use of the telephoto lens, the slow zoom and the fabulous mise-en-scene (now that I've used "myriad" and "mise-en-scene" in the same paragraph, I can no longer deny that I am nothing but a pretentious goof... woe is me).

Altman truly deserves to be revered. Even if you don't care for his films, you must admire his gumption in the face of continual pessimism from the industry and the public.

The only negative thing I can say about Robert Altman is that as a result of M*A*S*H, we now have to put up with Alan Alda's films.

Defy Gravity falls flat

by Jim Russell

Defy Gravity
directed by Michael Gibson
distributed by Creative Exposure

Defy Gravity is a "practice film." The lead actor is practicing for Summer Stock, the writer is creating characters for some other movie and the photographer has taken this opportunity to practice his focusing. Even the opening credits for this drama are auditioning for a comedy.

Bill (R. H. Thomson), a man with serious emotional problems, is supposed to be Joe Average wife beater and self-centred father figure. His lines, though, and especially Thomson's delivery are contrived and exaggerated to the threshold of absurdity.

Michael Gibson, the film's writer, intended *Defy Gravity* to be, in part, a story about Bill's difficulty coping with middle age, but he missed the mark. Instead, we have a story about one family's struggle with mental illness and despair as Bill's deplorable business methods and unrealistic expectations drive his family farther and farther toward disaster.

Patrick, his 15 year-old son, played by Simon Reynolds, cannot cope with domestic strife, not in his own home or among his friends. Instead, he goes to desperate lengths to distract the protagonists. At school, Patrick steps between warring factions or fakes fainting spells. At home, he resorts to shutting off the power to his whole house in order to stop his father from beating his mother.

Patrick's "coming of age" is the other half of this film. It is his physical and emotional journey that defies gravity. An adoring son that constantly makes excuses for his father's

brutality, Patrick finally breaks free of his father's influence and has him arrested.

Patrick's emotional and physical struggle to free himself from the domination of a loved one is a trek that most have made in one form or another. Why, then, can't we empathize with him? The answer lies in the writer's development of the character.

In the midst of domestic turmoil, Gibson has the teen clowning in class, daydreaming about his teacher as a Nazi seductress and chasing girls around the school boiler room. Rather than complementing his character and contrasting it with the shambles of his family life, these juvenile sidebars, belonging more to a sitcom, distract from the story's drama.

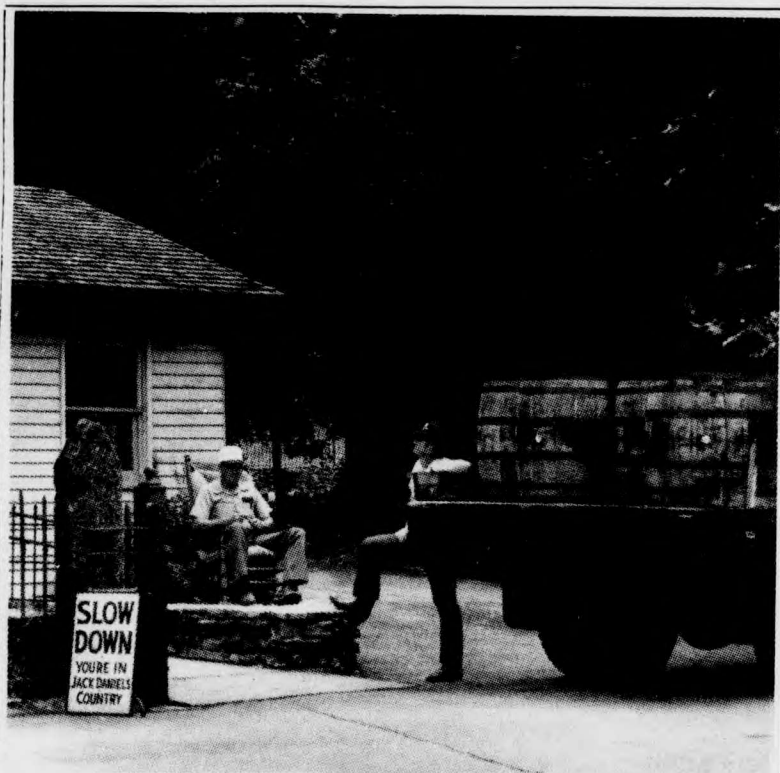
The same character weaknesses are found in his mother, a woman cloaked in white who carries her bruises with dignity; and his father, dressed in varying shades of black,

who vacillates between manic cheerfulness and violent rage.

The opening scene has the characters in this mess of a movie floating into the frame as if propelled by a trampoline. I had to switch on my penlight and give the press kit a scan. Could it be that *Defy Gravity* was really a comedy? Had I read the wrong movie description? No. Like Bill, the father, and Patrick, the son, the opening scene is IN THE WRONG FILM.

As if bad characterization, contrived acting and poor structure weren't enough, *Defy Gravity* is blessed (?) with a director of photography (Douglas Koch) who lights with skill and sensitivity, but... can't hold a focus! I felt I was in the middle of a home movie as I watched the cinematographer "search" for the right spot. Amateurish, to say the least — but, what the hell? They were just practicing.

I give *Defy Gravity* a one out of 10... only because they tried.



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Simon Reynolds and R.H. Thomson grin goofily in *Defy Gravity*. Can you tell it's Canadian?

ARTS

Put an end to end of empire films!

by Ira Nayman

Mister Johnson
directed by Bruce Beresford
produced by Avenue Pictures

End of empire movies have all the allure of autopsies: nobody really wants to cut into a corpse. Films about the end of the British empire, in particular, are reminiscent of a cadaver that has been exhumed so often there's next to nothing left.

Bruce Beresford's *Mister Johnson*, a world premiere at the Festival of Festivals, is a quiet film about a small episode in Nigeria in the twilight of colonial rule. The film has a lot of things to recommend it; unfortunately, it adds nothing new to the coroner's report.

Mister Johnson, a native played by Maynard Eziashi, helps a naive British judge (Pierce Brosnan) build a road connecting a remote village with a major trade route.

Although he venerates all things British, Mister Johnson cannot overcome the differences in culture and the entrenched racism of the colonial rulers.

Eziashi gives a remarkably nuanced performance in the title role, the focus of the film. At times innocent, at times manipulative, Eziashi's Johnson is a classic example of a capable, intelligent person forced into a subservient position. The character eventually identifies completely with his oppressors, even though he cannot escape his own cultural heritage.

(Okay, that was a mouthful. But, no more sociological insight, I promise...)

Brosnan (*Remington Steele*) is wooden and shallow as civil servant Harry Rudbeck, a case of perfect casting if I've ever seen one. Edward Woodward (*Breaker Morant*, *The Equalizer*) has a small, but pivotal part as a racist



Maynard Eziashi (left) and Pierce Brosnan build a road and confront racism in colonial Africa in Bruce Beresford's *Mister Johnson*. The movie has its moments, but it adds nothing to the coroner's report.

store owner; he manages to give the character more depth than you would expect from such an obvious stereotype.

Director Beresford (who may or may not have deserved last year's best picture Oscar for *Driving Miss Daisy*, as Festival director Helga Stephenson claimed) fills *Mister Johnson* with wonderful golden vistas punctuated by rich greens and browns. It must

be hard to make a film about Africa that isn't visually stunning.

Unfortunately, Beresford's development of the story is more problematic. Most of the scenes are short, no longer than three or four minutes; some are cut off so abruptly that the viewer is unnecessarily disoriented.

In addition, *Mister Johnson* has a strange, awkward lassitude. It is full of event, to be sure, with a

lot of conflict; yet, somehow, there is no tension. The ending, in particular, while expected, should pack more of a punch than it does.

Mister Johnson is a charming film, full of humour, with a pointed message about colonialism. It may be one of the better end of empire films made; but, there have been so many, the distinction may not be worth much.

Homemade Movie shows

by Jim Russell

Homemade Movie
directed by Fumiki Watanabe
produced by Malpas Productions

Homemade Movie is neither as amateurish as the title implies nor as satisfying as a homemade meal.

This bleak melodrama about two Japanese families whose lives are interconnected by teen love and their parent's adultery, plods along for nearly two hours before grinding to an end.

Fumiki Watanabe, the film's producer, writer, director and editor, in addition, directs the photography and stars in *Homemade Movie* as himself.

Fumiki (Mr. Watanabe) is an academic tutor hired by Yumiko (Naoko Kubo) to help her teenage daughter study for the upcoming high school entrance examination. Having met as perfect strangers, the next scene finds them in bed together. True to cliché (and quite often, reality) the husband arrives home early and catches Fumiki as he is making his getaway.

Fumiki's infidelity, brutality and deceit stains his relationship with his wife and children and completely destroys the family of his lover.

Concurrent to this drama and the resulting turmoil, Buntaro, the son of Fumiki, meets and begins to pursue Nobuko, the girl his father was hired to tutor. Neither of the two teens are aware of the full extent of what is going on at home, but the domestic tension serves to drive these already

rebellious teens farther from home and closer to each other.

If this story sounds familiar, you're right. The script for *Homemade Movie* is straight out of daytime television, and just as satisfying.

Watanabe being the lone exception, the acting tended to be wooden and artificial. Even the adulterous wife, long neglected by her drunken husband and ostracized from her home, did not elicit the sympathy that the character deserved.

Technically, *Homemade Movie* was quite good. Shot in 16mm and blown up to 35mm, it suffered from inherent contrast and grain problems but these were minimized by the cinematographer's skill and sensitivity.

According to the press release, Watanabe doesn't consider himself to be a professional filmmaker. Not so. He is not only a wonderful filmmaker, but a one man production company. All he needs is a decent script and the help of a professional cast.

I give it a 3 out of 10.



Bruce Beresford, director of *Mister Johnson*.

Fire Festival is powerful

by Kim Yu

Fire Festival
directed by Mitsuo Yanagimachi
produced by Genro/Seibu Group/-Cine Saison

Fire Festival or *Hi Matsuri*, directed by this year's spotlight director Mitsuo Yanagimachi, is a

Betrayed by bad filmmaking

by Jim Russell

Sleepy Betrayers
directed by Beat Lottaz
produced by Deutche Film und Fernsehakademie Berlin

Jerk gets what's coming to him. Now that you know what *Sleepy Betrayers* is about there is really no reason to watch this film. In fact, there was no reason to MAKE it!

John is a stereotypical womanizer with his reason for existence and a substantial portion of his IQ residing below his belt line. He is in love with himself. He is the villain.

Sandra is his caring, sensitive, creative, devoted live-in lover. She is in love with John. She is the

paradoxical film that mixes religion, tradition and modernized Japanese society.

The story revolves around a lumberjack's daily routine. He is a man who seems to embrace modern day society and accept progress — at least in regard to the way he lives his life — but he also

victim.

No grey areas in this film.

John is bored with Sandra and wants to end the relationship, but doesn't want to hurt her. He devises a plan which calls for him to excel to new heights of "jerkdom," thus forcing Sandra to end the relationship for him.

His plan backfires and (yawn... excuse me) he realizes too late that he really does love her. By then, though, she has disappeared from his life. Period.

The technical quality of this exercise in film wastage is as bad as the story. The cinematographer can't hold a skin tone and the sound seemed to have been recorded on a Sony Walkman.

I give it a zero out of 10.

appears to have some respect for nature.

The lumberjack seems to be indifferent to having affairs behind his wife's back, chalking it up to a man's nature, it seems. Even when his younger co-worker/sidekick is chastised for using a sacred tree's wood to make a trap, he feels that by merely exposing himself, the mountain goddess will be placated.

While it seems he belittles the forces of nature and has little respect for the old traditions, the lumberjack is the only one who refuses to sell his house for the development of a Marine Water Park that will generate more business for the town.

Many scenes depict him pondering the existence of a spiritual force, but the turning point is when he is in the midst of a storm, and he utters, "I understand". These two words prove to have dire consequences in the end.

Fire Festival is a powerful film, with various sub-plots that will make for interesting and insightful viewing. The cinematography is breathtaking.



Bleak and melodrama collide in Fumiki Watanabe's *Homemade Movie*

ARTS

Light shines on *Darkman* director

by T.J. Gillespie

It always gives me a great feeling of accomplishment to unravel the great mysteries of life. Things like, why does bread always land butter side down when you drop it? Or, why is my closet space so small? And, of course, Who is Darkman?

The ones about the bread and the closet I'm still workin' on, but I did manage to get an understanding of the last one, as I discovered who Darkman was direct from the source: director Sam Raimi.

Educated at Michigan State University, Raimi's best known efforts to date are the films *The Evil Dead* and *The Evil Dead II: Dead by Dawn*; *Darkman* marks Raimi's first venture into mainstream filmmaking.

The *Dead* pictures were intended to be shocking and off-beat, but Raimi didn't sacrifice his particular talent for tongue-in-cheek humour while making *Darkman*. As I spoke with him, he indicated that he had "fears to overcome while making this picture," just like the Darkman character.

"I had a lot more leeway making *Darkman*, but (we) didn't set out to make a blockbuster; I just wanted to try to make a picture that everyone would enjoy watching."

In fact, it struck me as funny when Raimi showed such a genuine concern over money. In a business where box-office receipts can make or break a director's career, it was truly inspiring to discover that Raimi didn't forego the techniques that had served him so well in the past for the sake of the almighty dollar. Then again, according to Raimi, he didn't have much choice.

"This was my first studio film, and it's much harder to put something together when you are spending someone else's money," he said.

"There were times when I didn't like the way a scene was going and while I was making changes, I had just spent a small fortune. The next time (it would happen) before I actually made changes, I would think about it first; but, by the time I lifted my head, turned around, and walked back to the camera, I had just spent another \$200. Finally, I just decided that I'd have to keep going and try to make the best film I could."

Raimi said that he "got lucky" when he was in school, and that good profs made a big difference. He decided early on that his interest would be film, and in his school years, he found himself already on the road to becoming a director.

He has refined his skills since the *Dead* films, which shows in the sleek look of *Darkman*. When I asked Raimi what the difference was between *Darkman* and other films like *Batman* and *Dick Tracy*, to which it has been compared, he said simply: "the character is completely different."

"The character of Darkman is driven by self-hatred. (He is) a rare case where the breakdown of his world works from the outside in. As his skin dissolves, so also does his spirit."

Great attention was paid to detail during the making of this picture. I asked Raimi why. He explained that he "wanted to create a comic book look to it, and the only way to do that on



Sam Raimi, director of *Darkman*.

film is to make spectacular scenes with something different to watch in every corner."

"I didn't want people to be scared to laugh," he said. "Because of the way *Darkman* was marketed, people wouldn't even really know what it was about until they saw it. When they do, I want them to laugh at the funny parts and not feel bad about chuckling during what they might think is supposed to be a serious thriller."

Raimi experimented with many different changes in the screenplay before the final draft came

out. Nonetheless, it didn't hinder the way he put it together. The level of suspense is always at an energetic level, and the ability to work with a character that undergoes changes right before your eyes gives *Darkman* a true "comic book look and feel."

For people who like comics, like Raimi, a Marvel adaptation of *Darkman* is available in a limited series of three issues. I would recommend the movie instead, though, and Raimi agreed with me.

"I don't like it," he said. "It looks like someone didn't really like

what they were doing when they drew it. It's missing a lot of smooth flow (and the illustrations) look too mechanical, like whoever did it wasn't enjoying themselves. I'd like to hope that people will go and see the movie, and watch a comic book come to life right in front of them; that's what I tried to do."

Raimi certainly lucked out when he managed to snag Liam Neeson for the title role. Neeson is best remembered for his role in *Suspect*, which has earned him acclaim. After seeing *Suspect*, I could never imagine anyone else

in that role; the same applies to *Darkman*.

"Liam has an incredible screen presence, and he is a very big man. He has the ability to show a lot of emotion just through things like his facial expressions or even just by standing there."

"*Darkman* turned out so well mostly because Liam understood the character. Liam the pers on helped to keep *Darkman* alive, and Liam as (Dr.) Peyton (Westlake) helped keep Darkman's emotions under control. He would go through about five hours of makeup every day, and when he looked into the mirror afterward, he would just say 'Okay, this is my face now.'"

Currently, there are no plans for a *Darkman II*, but who knows what the future will hold? "I'll have to wait and see," Raimi said. "If *Darkman* goes well, I may get the chance to make more studio films; and, if people like what I've done, then I might be able to pick the things I want to do."

As I left him, Raimi was about to go on a canoeing vacation. But, I did ask him what he was working at the present. Hang on to your heads folks, *The Evil Dead III* is in the works as we speak. It looks like the light that shines on every human except Darkman is beaming on director Sam Raimi.

Darkman is true epic adventure

by T.J. Gillespie

Darkman
directed by Sam Raimi
produced by Universal Pictures

Ever since I first saw *At the Movies* with Siskel and Ebert, I always hoped that one day, what I said as a movie critic would be listened to as gospel. Quotes from a prominent reviewer like "a pleasure to watch" and "this year's sleeper hit" can often mean increased receipts at the box office.

Though it doesn't need any help raking in the loot, we'll see if my quote does anything for this movie's success: "*Darkman* is an adventure that captures the true meaning of the word epic; it speeds along at a feverish pace

and leaves the audience clamouring for more."

It isn't necessarily that the story of *Darkman* is some bold new idea, but the film does poke fun at itself, which gives *Darkman* an edge. The result is that the audience reacts honestly to a very honestly made picture, and the emotional turmoil of our hero is reflected nicely in the emotional responses of the crowd.

Darkman was a much about summer release, but few people actually knew what it was going to deliver. The studio did a great job promoting this one, leaving the public wrapped up in a "Who is Darkman?" campaign.

This film is, in fact, the story of a scientist, Dr. Peyton Westlake,

who is in the midst of trying to perfect experimental procedures that will allow him to make long-lasting synthetic skin. His love interest, Julie Hastings, gets into some trouble when she stumbles across a memo about shady land dealings. Needless to say, the villains would like that memo back, and, in order to get their hands on it, they must liquidate Dr. Westlake.

Having been left for dead, the doctor survives and must use his synthetic skin not only to take revenge on his "killers," but also to win back his fiancée, played competently by Frances McDormand. The fun really starts when the newly created Darkman, face wrapped in bandages, must seek

out his enemies, because the skin that he has been working on lasts only a precious 99 minutes when exposed to light. The mayhem that follows Darkman throughout his search keeps the viewer glued to the screen right up to the final confrontation.

If you've heard that *Darkman* is better than *Dick Tracy* and *Batman*, believe it; the aforementioned simply gave the promise of being very visually exciting, whereas *Darkman* delivers. It is a feast for the eyes and senses. This comes from the influence of director Sam Raimi, who as a kid loved comic books, and who carried his hobby onto the screen. Raimi's quirky way of portraying his characters is the driving force in the film, and he never gets sidetracked from his goal. Don't you hate films that lead down a path for a big finish and then just cop out with some corny ending?

No worry about that here; Raimi sticks to his guns.

Good performances, including L.A. Law's, Larry Drake as villain Robert Durant, keep the action moving, and the incredible screen presence of Liam Neeson as Darkman provides the film with a character of unparalleled honesty. You truly feel the joy, pain and desperation that he feels.

Some may remember Neeson as the deaf, dumb defendant in *Suspect*. If you can remember how good he was there, imagine what he can do when actually has lines to speak. *Darkman* has enough truth and sincerity to keep it believable and yet enough schlotzy B Movie humour to keep it light.

So, now that you know who Darkman is, don't forget about him. And, the next time you see an ad for *Darkman* in a local newspaper, if they print my quote, tell me. Like Darkman, I like to know when I've made it big.



Liam Neeson haunts the night as Darkman

ARTS

Too many production meetings

by Simon Chung

Postcards From the Edge
directed by Mike Nichols
produced by Columbia Pictures

Postcards From the Edge, based on Carrie Fisher's 1987 novel, chronicles the life of a moderately famous actress as she tries to find life after rehab. The novel — when it works — is an amusing and flighty post-mod pastiche of the Hollywood set.

The film, directed by Mike Nichols (*The Graduate*, *Silkwood*), suffers under a heavy-weight cast that includes Shirley MacLaine and Meryl Streep. It never quite takes off.

Streep plays the aforementioned actress, Suzanne Vale, who must piece her life back together after a near-fatal overdose. MacLaine plays her overwhelming showbiz mother.

I am convinced that MacLaine's character (which occupied no more than half a page in the book) was suggested by some Harvard MBA studio exec — or by Nichols himself — at one of those brain-dead Hollywood production meetings to bolster the film's marketability. "Why don't we pair Meryl Streep with Shirley MacLaine? She's big with the New Age crowd and great on talk shows — just don't put her on Letterman."

Unfortunately, as we all know, Dame Streep (fabulous actress though she is) has sub-zero box office potential.

Carrie Fisher has a sharp ear for dialogue. The best part of *Postcards* is the use of hilarious rapid fire one liners (like: "Do you always talk in bumper stickers?" and "Instant gratification takes too long."). They are funniest when played small.

Nichols, however, insists on dragging us into the syrupy water of mother-daughter melodramas. The supposedly dramatic scenes between MacLaine and Streep are totally without spark, because their relationship seems so sanitized. Fisher pulls back from making MacLaine's character the monster she should be, as if she's afraid that we will associate the character with her real life mom, Debbie Reynolds. Consequently, the conflicts between mother and daughter are played out in a drab vacuum.

Somewhere along the way (must be at those production meetings), Fisher's script loses its



Shirley MacLaine makes a point to Meryl Streep in *Postcards From the Edge*. So much television, so many executive decisions . . .

sense of humour just when it needs it the most. The film definitely reaches its nadir near the end, when Streep, without apparent irony, renders a country and western song about checking out

of rehab clinic while Ms. MacLaine looks on with a big "everything's alright now" smile. One would think that if we are forced to endure melodrama, we could at least have *Mommy Dearest*

instead of a bargain basement *Terms of Endearment*.

The person who has the clout to attract the two high profile actresses is none other than Nichols, who has a reputation in the indus-

try as being an "actor's director." In practical terms, this means:

A. He can get big stars like Richard Dreyfuss and Gene Hackman to play 30 second bit parts that any Los Angeles area waiter could do equally as well (for a fraction of the salary).

B. He has absolutely zilch visual sense. With its faulty lighting and endless static waist-up shots, *Postcards* looks duller than your average daytime soap.

C. That he takes himself far too seriously, which makes him eminently unsuited to direct what should have been a whimsical, elliptical comedy.

Despite its many inadequacies, *Postcards from the Edge* may well be remembered by posterity for capturing the Robert De Niro award (to Shirley MacLaine) for the greatest personal sacrifice for a role. Not since the well known method actor put on a million pounds for *Raging Bull* has an actor given so much of himself, so to speak, for a part.

In a hospital scene, MacLaine does without the benefit of make-up or hair, and she looks like a cross between a late, late, Lillian Gish and a nuclear war survivor. Talk about out on a limb.

Doctors dying to deal with guilt

by Jim Russell

Flatliners
directed by Joel Schumacher
produced by Columbia Pictures

Remember that kid in grade two? Yeah . . . the one you were mean to. Remember the pain and suffering your name-calling caused? Remember his cries and tears when you and your friends pummeled him with chunks of dirt? Well . . . death remembers, even if you don't.

Or won't. *Flatliners* is about that kid, or that one night stand, or any one of a million acts of shame that each of us commit in our lives. *Flatliners* is about that guilt, which lies just below the surface of our consciousness, waiting to be freed from its bondage.

Kiefer Sutherland (Nelson), in his best performance to date, plays a moody, compulsive medical student who recruits four of his reluctant classmates to help him take a one minute vacation to a place that has always fascinated him: death.

Nelson dies and lives to tell about it, as do three of the others, but the price they pay for their foolishness is more than they could ever have imagined. Floating through the doorway of death, they are drawn directly to their guilt; in Nelson's case, the tragic death of a childhood friend.

In the case of Rachel (Julia Roberts, in her first movie since the certified fluff of *Pretty Woman*), it is her father's suicide. For Joe (William Baldwin), it is a legion of betrayed lovers; for David (Kevin Bacon), an abused schoolmate. The characters, returned to life by technology, bring back the guilt they had buried.

According to *Flatliners* press bump, writer Peter Filardi's past credits are just about nil. Before *Flatliners*, he had sold only one script, for the television series *MacGyver*. If that is true, he certainly is starting off in the business with a bang; *Flatliners* is expertly crafted from a wonderfully original idea, with dialogue



When Keifer and the gang get together, they kill each other to find out what happens after death in *Flatliners*.

that is well written and often funny.

It is truly unfortunate, however, that Filardi allowed the story to become subservient to his religious beliefs. *Flatliners* is about God and heaven and hell and, most of all, atonement. Those actual words were never used, but the concepts were ever present, right through to the end of the movie. Message films don't usually work, perhaps because the writer's passion for the message overpowers his objectivity. *Flatliners* is no exception.

The "message" is not the only villain in this film. There are others — not on the screen, but behind the camera, away from the set, in a room marked SPECIAL EFFECTS DEPT. "Gratuitous indignities to the human body" is the nicest description for their handiwork.

Hypodermic needles slide effortlessly into a patient's throat, scalpels slice smoothly into flesh, actors stitch gaping wounds and cadavers lie disembowelled before the camera. These "cheap chills" may add immeasurably to the special effects technicians' portfolios, but only detract from the already suspenseful script and direction.

On the plus side, Jan De Bont's cinematography was excellent. The lighting, less inspiring, was still good. The sound stage set, a university interior, combined Greek, Roman, Gothic and Renaissance architectural styles to give it that "plywood deco, Disney World" look.

Flatliners is a movie with sub-

stance that will stay with you long after the average film has faded from your memory.

Give it a seven out of 10.

Frankensteinian filmmaking

by Ira Nayman

Taking Care of Business
directed by Arthur Hiller
produced by Hollywood Pictures

Taking Care of Business has a wonderful title sequence. No, really; it's neat.

There's this adorable little cartoon figure pushing these huge dates into an oversized filofax while this other adorable little cartoon figure wanders around and tosses a baseball in the air. The dates start coming faster, then facts, then charts and graphs and, before you know it, the cartoon figure is being chased across the screen.

Nice titles. Shame about the movie.

Taking Care of Business is about a small time car thief (Jim Belushi) who breaks out of prison to see the Cubs play in the World Series. While out, he finds the filofax of a workaholic business-

man (Charles Grodin), and takes over his life for a couple of days.

If it sounds familiar, think of *Trading Places*, but with Eddie Murphy's character from *48 Hours*, mixed with any bad prison film you'd care to name. *Taking Care of Business* is Frankensteinian filmmaking at its worst.

This film panders to instincts in the audience that are better left untouched. The poor man getting the chance to live it up while a rich man gets a humiliating taste of poverty is a popular fantasy in our society, where wealth is people's major obsession and the yardstick by which they judge others.

The fact that, in this case, the rich man turns out to be very nice, and the poor man has no obvious redeeming qualities (making the switch in their circumstances more cruel than just) was completely ignored by the audience with which I saw the film. I would have attempted to look beyond

this if the film was funnier; unfortunately, it is predictable and riddled with cliches.

The script is sexist in its portrayal of women, which is surprising considering a woman (Jill Mazursky) co-wrote it. The characters are poorly drawn, the story is unbelievable and, well, let's face it: this was just not a good movie.

The only bright spot is Grodin's performance, which, in an understated way, is delightful. With Veronica Hamel (as his wife) Grodin gives *Taking Care of Business* its only moments of recognizable human life; unfortunately, they are almost immediately swamped by mechanistic plot complications.

Grodin continues to be vastly underrated in Hollywood. It's a shame, but films like *Taking Care of Business*, no matter how good he is in them, will do nothing to change that.

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ARTS



Andrea D. Lobel

**Part Two:
A Meeting of the Mimes**

"He's just a modern-day, visionary monk," I reassured myself, as I took my first carefully measured

step in B's direction. So wrapped up was I in my self-consciousness that I narrowly avoided denting a hitherto unnoticed telephone pole, at which juncture I looked up to find myself being observed by the man himself,

who, smiling maniacally (yet sweetly), seemed to radiate sympathy.

Not more than six feet away from my solar plexus, he summoned me to move ever-closer with a wave of his overly-long, ebony sleeve. Taking a few moments respite to peruse his facial features, I could not help but notice that he had aged but little since his text's 1967 printing.

"Tofu and garbanzo beans," he whispered, whereupon he claimed my right arm as his own, and set us both on a Northward course toward College Street. Sensing his composure, I too began to relax, and, remembering what I had read of his life, began to hum B's favourite commercial jingle. It was an obscure but catchy ditty about the 1956 Ford. Evincing powers greater than I had imagined, he hit a high C and proceeded to recreate George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*.

I was greatly impressed.

It had begun to drizzle, and, for a moment, I questioned the wisdom (or lack thereof) inherent in my decision to exit singin' in the rain with an off-centre, monastically inclined fellow twice my age. Before I had time to examine my infant neurosis, however, I felt myself being pulled to the left. . . I knew not whither.

The dreamlike quality of the hour that followed was undeniable, for here we were, a girl and her monk, side by side; playing pinball before several dozen mystified but curious eyes. Having exhausted our supply of quarters, we reassumed our locked-arm walking stance and continued along our route.

I had many questions for my companion, the great majority of which were concerned with such

matters as theology, providence, and his postulated link between telephone cables and increased psychic powers. Yes, I thought, the time had indeed come to pose them. And so, clearing my throat to make room for earnest queries, I began.

"B," I muttered anxiously, "how would you explain the fact of our impromptu meeting?" I paused for several seconds, noting only that his expression was one of bemused mirth. "And," I went on, "why me? Have I been chosen for some cosmic purpose? I mean . . ." B reached into the

pocket of his robe and pulled out what appeared to be a small, stuffed panda bear, nodding gleefully as he handed it to me.

Momentarily speechless, I examined the ursine plaything, only to discover that it had, in fact, once been mine. Had this mild-mannered monk stolen my beloved panda in the hope that I would one day search for it? My mind raced and lost; this transcended the dictionary definition of the word 'kickshaw,' and I was fast approaching muzziness of mind. "Alright," I asked, "what's going on here?"

Show is Ripper

by "Switch"

"In the Kookie World of Rock, We Crunch," are Eugene Ripper's words to sum up his live musical performances.

Ripper is a former member of the band Stark Naked and the Fleshtone and has now established a solo career. He is presently based in Vancouver, after living in Toronto for 20 years. Eugene Ripper and his band the Dead Head Kools will appear Friday September 21 at the Rivoli, in Toronto.

Ripper describes his sound as a combination of groove, rhythm, cajun, reggae, ska and punk — a cross between "Hank Williams and the Clash." His post-modern/new-modern influences include Big Drill Car, David Lyndley, ALL, Lyle Lovett, Bad Brains and most importantly (because he's a "huge" fan . . .) The Replacements. He is basically anti-production, at least when it comes to live performance, trying the exhibit the energy associated with punk bands of the mid '70s when

music was still fun.

Ripper will appear at the Rivoli next week with Popular Front (Acoustic Groovy Reggae Rock) and Freshwater Drum (echoes of great vocals and a Vox-guitar Amp Sound — Crunchy Country). His latest release is a single "Again and Again" which although having a decidedly country edge is about "Rocking In the Garage." Look for the release of the new single "Angel, She's Looking" this fall which is a mix of Reggae, Ska and Rock.

When asked to give an idea of what to expect from him live, Ripper replied "Friday night's show . . . What we're going to try and display is our particular twisted attitude of what good live rock music should be. There's going to be a lot of Boom Boom Boom, Crunch. There'll be Guitars going Drang, Drang, Drang, and a hell of a lot of fun."

Eugene Ripper will shortly be returning to the studio to record his next album (probably on Amok records).



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SPORTS

Dutch Treats & Maple Syrup: Davis Cup Preview

This weekend, Canada's national tennis squad will try to gain a berth in the Davis Cup's elite World Group. Excal's Josh Rubin previews both Canada and its oponent, the Netherlands. Please note that all York students presenting valid I.D. at the gate will be admitted free.

Although, as of late, the Netherlands is more famed for its exploits on the soccer pitch than on court, they still won't be easy pickings for the Canadians.

With a pair of young stars who are rapidly rising in the pro ranks and a couple of solid veterans, the Dutch have a very balanced

side.

They will be led by 24 year old Paul Haarhuis, who last year shot up to number 57 in the rankings during his first full year on the tour. Another top Dutch youngster is Mark Koevremans, who also started to shine last year, ending off '89 in 63rd spot.

One of the older players on the Dutch team, Tom Nijssen is also the only one to have played any of his potential Canadian oppo-



Canada's Davis Cup squad. From the left; Chris Pridham, Martin Wostenholme, Andrew Sznajder, Glenn Michabata and Grant Connell

nents. Nijssen defeated Grant Connell in 1989, but was dumped the same year by Glenn Michabata.

For both Canada's team and Tennis Canada, a win against the Netherlands would be a vindication of sorts.

For the team, it would show that they finally belong on tennis's top rung. For Tennis Canada, it would show that their much vaunted four year pro-

gramme (System 92) is paying off.

The Canadian side will be led by the talented but volatile Andrew Sznajder, who finished off last year in 56th spot. In Canada's two previous Davis Cup series (vs Brazil and Paraguay), the 23 year old Sznajder won all four of his singles matches.

Canada's other singles player is likely to be either Grant Connell or Martin Wostenholme.

Against Paraguay, Wostenholme swept both of his matches while Connell split his against Brazil.

Doubles should be the real strength of this Canadian squad, however, as Connell teams up with the veteran Glenn Michabata to form one of the top pairings on the ATP tour.

Other potential singles players for Canada include 25 year old serve and volleyer Chris Pridham and doubles specialist Michabata.

The Davis Cup explained (finally!!)

by Josh Rubin

To the novice fan of international tennis (and indeed to some veterans), the Davis Cup format can be pretty confusing.

Vague ramblings about zones, groups, ones and twos have become par for the course for many tennis lovers.

Adopted in 1981, the present Davis Cup system has three different tiers of play: Regional Zone Group Two, Regional Zone Group One and finally, the World Group.

It is this last level, the elite 16 team World Group, which Can-

ada hopes to enter by beating the Netherlands. The World Group is also where perennial tennis superpowers such as West Germany, Sweden and the U.S. do their playing.

For Davis Cup purposes, the world is divided up into three geographical zones: the Americas, Asia-Oceania and Europe-Africa. For administrative purposes, the Euro-African Zone has been divided into two sections, A and B.

In turn, each of these four sections are split into two levels of play: Group I and Group II. Each

year, the top teams from each Group II advance into their respective Group I. Obviously, then, the bottom teams in each Group I are relegated to Group II at the end of every season.

In Group I, the teams play in a single elimination format to determine both a group champion and runner up. For Canada, this step came when they defeated Paraguay this spring to become the American Zone Group I champs.

In order to finally qualify for the World Group, the Group I champs still have to get past the previous

year's first round losers. For Canada, this is the stage we're at right now. The losing country of our match against the Netherlands will once again be relegated to Group I play next year.

In the World Group itself, the sixteen teams are divided into four quarters, each of which has one strong, seeded team. From there, a straight-forward single elimination takes place. Eventually, the four quarter champions play semi-finals, and then lastly, the final is played to determine the Davis Cup champion.

The format for individual Davis

Cup series remains the same at all levels, however, with four singles matches and one doubles match. In a distinction from ATP match play, though, there is now a tie-breaking system; a set is won only after a player leads by two games or more (with at least six games).

The final puzzle in Davis Cup tennis is that all the matches in a series are played to their conclusion, whether or not the series outcome has already been decided. Thus, some 3-2 series wins are not really as close as they appear.

The Ice Palace: it's not in the boonies for nothing

Sporting Goods is a weekly column written by the CHRY sports department, examining Varsity athletics at York.

by Michael Krestell

With the glaring exception of the York Yeomen hockey team there are not many positive things associated with the Ice Palace. OK, maybe one thing: location, after all it is on campus. However, if you have spent more than a few minutes in this human meat freezer then you know what I am talking about. If not, then allow me to acquaint you with York University's biggest joke this side of the proposed entry pavilion.

From the moment you enter the "facility" (and I use the term lightly) you know you are in trouble. After all, shouldn't the home rink of the incredibly successful York University hockey programmes at least have a concession stand? And how about the size of the lobby; it holds approximately thirty people comfortably but because the temperature inside the arena is well below freezing, and I mean well below, between periods fans cram the

area in sardine-like fashion to avoid hypothermia.

Take heart, though, you can buy a coffee to warm your insides but you better have exact change and bring your own mug because the coffee machine rarely works and it often forgets to dispense a cup. Besides, you wouldn't want to drink too much in any case. Heaven forbid you have to use a bathroom. There is only one for each gender and I don't know

"... but somehow the improvement of athletic facilities is consistently sidestepped by the ninth floor brain trust."

about the women's but the men's has room for two, three if you count the sink.

Did I hear someone ask about the dressing rooms? The Yeomen quarters are completely inadequate. The entire team shares two showers and Coach Graham Wise's office is large enough to store a broom, dustpan and maybe a mop. But hey, it's better than the visitors' dressing room, they don't even have a working bathroom, and between periods they can often be found lining up behind the fans to use the men's

room.

Let's face it. When the Ice Box was erected some fifteen years ago it was a dinosaur of a building and now it's not only out of date, but also rundown.

When Coach Wise recruits future Yeomen he can't show them their new home rink because he is afraid they will go to Toronto or Western or anywhere else that has a real hockey facility.

What makes all of this so hard to swallow is that everywhere you turn on campus these days you see construction. Now don't get me wrong. I agree that York needs a student centre. It also needs new residences, and York Lanes will be a worthwhile addition to the University.

But what about the athletes who devote their own time and effort to York University. Don't you think it's about time they got something in return. The Ice Palace is obviously brutal, and The Tait Mackenzie Complex desperately needs expansion, but somehow the improvement of athletic facilities is consistently sidestepped by the ninth floor brain trust.

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