

Free Press
YOUTH PAGE
fresh tracks
by Barbara McIntosh

When I start to think about school and students and teachers, I find myself in a unique position this year.

Essentially, I still think from a student point of view. I love loud fast music, poetry that doesn't rhyme, protest marches, lost causes, Saturdays and changing rules. Just this week I bought a pair of giant round purple-lensed sunglasses. I avoid formal occasions, resent parents' criticism, hate conformity, loathe narrow-mindedness, and refuse to believe that merely because a system exists it has to be accepted.

Yet, this year for the first time I filled out my income tax form by myself and realized that when the government announced 77 per cent of the Ontario budget would go into education, they were talking about my money.

Suddenly this year, those friends who skipped classes with me, marched beside me for student reps on the administration board, swapped essays with me, and helped me anonymously cut up instructors in the school newspaper, are now teachers themselves. When they discuss students, there's a certain fear in their tired eyes. They complain of lack of respect and discipline in the classroom and invariably swear that if they'd known how much work was involved, they would have gone into something else.

I think I was as idealistic and as intent on making over society as anyone when I was a student. But looking back over essays I wrote, they don't seem all that profound now. In many cases my thinking was naive and incomplete, and in a few cases I was dead wrong.

Some will argue that the establishment is getting through to me and I'm falling into my little slot of mediocrity like all the other dead heads. Nevertheless, I find that this year I look on teachers with a more humanistic attitude, and students with a little less undivided support.

Word has trickled through the jungle grapevine that there is a current move on in the high school for student evaluation of teachers and student voice in choice of the curriculum. I can't resist throwing in my opinions.

While it is true that students in the senior grades are beginning to see some light, it is only a beginning. Personally I don't think they are capable of deciding what they should learn because the majority simply don't know what they want to do with their lives.

However, I do concede that teachers should be open to student evaluation. Nothing is more frustrating for a student than a teacher who can't teach, with a final exam looming on the horizon. Most poor teachers are intelligent people who could do with comprehensive courses in public speaking and public relations, and they won't realize this unless they are told.

Yet I shudder to think of school in which the student throws more weight than the teacher. For me, the best teachers were those who showed respect for our ideas and a genuine interest in us, but at the same time did not permit us to treat them as equals. We always knew that they were there to teach and we were there to learn.

In my opinion much of the problem with teachers is incomplete training. Teachers' college seems to ignore the communications aspect of teaching. Evaluation polls could do a great deal to fill this gap. At the same time teachers should not be made to feel their career rests on the mercy of 35 pre-voters.

I found a quote in an old year book by N. V. Peale (whoever he was) that seems to sum up the situation:

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
The courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.

Halton YPC dinner

Dr. Morton Shulman ruffles YPC feathers

Dr. Morton Shulman, the controversial M.P. from Toronto High Park, declared himself to be the NDP foster father of Halton county before a houseful of Conservatives last Wednesday night at the Holiday Inn, Oakville, as guest at the second dinner meeting of Halton Young Progressive Conservatives Distinguished Speaker series.

The evening proved to be a lively experiment in the democratic process with Dr. Shulman blasting out against public health, housing and justice, and the crowd of some 150 Conservatives firing back an indignant defence.

Basing his information largely on clippings from the Oakville daily paper, Dr. Shulman concluded, "This county is unique because so many things are not right."
He condemned the lack of a psychiatric centre in the Oakville hospital and the total absence of a counselling centre for young people who become involved with drugs.
He went on to criticize Oakville for wasting 10 years trying to establish a low cost housing project. "This whole

Students evaluate teachers?

By Debbie Winter 12B

Should students be allowed to evaluate their teachers? This question is definitely disputable. On one hand one may say a definite no. This person is not only narrow-minded and bigoted, he must assume that all students are irresponsible or immature. Some people (mainly students) will give an emphatic yes for an answer. These are too broadminded. They consider themselves mature and responsible which is often a miscalculation.

I believe that students should be allowed to evaluate their teachers, with certain stipulations. To begin with, all students aren't responsible enough. This irresponsibility reveals itself in student riots, resulting in damage and injury. But the majority are.

If an election was held (every year in every secondary school in Canada) in which a responsible council was elected to evaluate teachers and give any resulting evaluation to the Board of Education, a great step would have been taken to further student democracy.

Have you ever heard of student democracy? Probably not. You've heard a lot about student power, and yet you probably don't associate the two.

Each school is in effect, a small government system. Most schools have a student council. Sure, a few students get swelled heads if they get elected, and give the whole council a bad name. But remember, we elected them. That's democracy! Acton high even has a student-staff relations committee. That is democracy too!

Now comes the question whether or not we should be allowed to help choose our teachers. We definitely should. This is a changing world. It's about time the students of Canada got some teachers with individuality. It's about time the mold producing assembly-line white collar (and tie) teachers was broken.

Students have open minds. Let us choose religion or evolution, communism or democracy. Give us teachers who will guide us, not those who insist that we think like they do, or who don't think at all.

To go one step further, let the students have a hand in choosing what they are to be taught. I think that by the time students are in senior high school, they are beginning to develop ideas on what life is all about.

The students of today are no longer willing to be told that one plus one equals two. They're asking why. And we need teachers who know the answers, or at least try to answer our questions. Down with student power, and up with student democracy!

Sadie Hawkins dance at hall

Last Friday at St. Alban's parish hall, approximately 75 young people from Acton's two public schools gathered to dance in the celebrated Sadie Hawkins style.

The dance committee has further surprises in store. Don't drop out of public school, just think of the fun at St. Alban's parish hall.

CWOSSA champs move on to Ontario finals Monday



PHIL DUPUIS
Top scorer in last week's CWOSSA "B" basketball finals were:
PHIL DUPUIS, 14 points
Bob Turkoz, 13 points
Harry Gehrich, 12 points
Bill Landsborough, 10 points.
Dave Brocstad, 2 points.

Acton's first CWOSSA basketball champions are bound for the Ontario finals in Peterborough next week.

The three-day OFSSA tournament is being held in Lakeview and St. Peter's high schools in Peterborough. Coach Brian Skerrett expects competition to be stiff with both "A" and "B" teams from all across Ontario competing for top spot in a double elimination tournament.

A.D.H.S. is supporting the Redmen all the way. In addition to the team, the cheerleaders and about 40 fans are leaving Monday afternoon by bus and returning late Thursday night.

The organization only provides billets for ten players, so four Redmen will hide out in a hotel with Mr. Skerrett. Spectators have to arrange their own accommodations.

Acton competes in its first game at 8:00 Monday night in St. Peter's school. Sock it to 'em fellows.



PRAY FOR VICTORY

Mrs. Ann Sutherland teaches business and commerce to grades 11 and 12. She used to commute from Grand Valley, but now she has moved to town.

Pedagogues are people

"I had never heard of Acton before I started teaching here," admits Mrs. Sutherland. She was born in Scotland and taught for one year in a business school there. When she immigrated to Canada with her husband, she took time off to raise a daughter, now in grade seven at Robert Little school. She has been teaching here for three years.

Mrs. Sutherland has some definite ideas on how she would like commercial facilities to be modernized. For seniors the would like to see all electric typewriters, a complete set of dictaphones, a shorthand laboratory, and a special room set up as an office for the students in their last year.

"The people here have tried to modernize but behind it all there is a lack of funds for a small school," she explains. At the present time there are courses in typing, shorthand and office practice. The school owns five business machines. She hopes that under the new county board, more finances will be channelled into this field.

Mrs. Sutherland feels that in some cases, students in their last year think there is no little time left around this point in the year, that they begin to slack off or even give up. "They don't realize the importance of these last six months," she warns.

She does not believe that the proposed 50 per cent exemption is high enough, particularly in her field. "You have to be 100 per cent right in this type of

work." She encourages her students to find summer work in related businesses, because practical experience is important.

Mrs. Sutherland concludes that girls usually do better in her classes. The boys seem to think it isn't a manly thing to be doing. They also tend to be centered out when the class is discussing what type of clothes and make-up are appropriate for office work.

She definitely does not want to see slacks sitting behind her typewriters. "I think this is a very practical opinion considering the type of work we are training people for. You're certainly not going to be anyone's secretary in slacks."

Despite a heavy work-load from school, Mrs. Sutherland enjoys reading in her spare time, particularly psychology and

history books. She loves to dance and took modern jazz as a child. She also likes all kinds of music with the exception of chamber music and western types.

In the summer, she is an avid swimmer, and loves cycling, a hangover from life in Scotland. "If you want to lose weight I would think cycling is one of the nicest ways you can do it," she adds.

This summer she will be continuing a specialized course in business and commerce at the University of Toronto.

Working with students, and the mother of a teenager herself, Mrs. Sutherland claims she has never experienced the so-called "generation gap". Her philosophy: "I like people and people to me are from babyhood to 95. The secret is to try to think from their angle."



BLASTING OUT

impossible to restrain themselves. They interrupted, and angrily accused Dr. Shulman of basing his opinions on inaccurate newspaper clippings. "There have been no retractions," quipped Dr. Shulman.

Former Oakville solicitor John Dewey was among the most vocal hecklers. "You're just slandering everyone," he stormed. "You don't know anything about anything."

In a thank-you speech of sorts, YPC Terry O'Connor described Dr. Shulman's remarks as "witty, urbane, articulate—and largely hogwash."

But above it all, the five-foot former Toronto cornerer displayed his seasoned ability to keep his cool. "Hecklers always make a better meeting," he commented.

Dr. Shulman left the gathering with an honorary membership in Halton YPC, "conditional on good behavior," and a book on autographed by Halton East Progressive Conservative MP, Jim Snow.

YPC leaders agreed that so far, their speaker series has proven highly successful despite criticism from the senior organization, former Tory chief John Diefenbaker in particular. Last month Liberal Judy Lamarch left her mark with a witty criticism of the Conservative party.

Halton YPC president Bruce MacKinnon said he felt Wednesday's session was well worth while, and thanked Dr. Shulman warmly for coming. Education Minister William Davis is scheduled for April.

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