

OPEN LETTER

March 2⁷/₇, 1980

Professor Howard Robertson
Chairman
Policy and Planning Committee
Glendon College

Dear Howard,

Last night, in the company of Nancy, of Cliff and Anna Hanley, and of Cliff's daughter Jane and Jane's friend Hedi, I attended a performance in Theatre Glendon of a Glendon Student Theatre cabaret production entitled "A Rather Sleazy Operation". It is relevant to what I am going to say about the production that the two youngest members of our party, Jane and Hedi, both make their living in theatre and theatre-teaching in Great Britain.

"A Rather Sleazy Operation" was conceived, written and acted by two students: Pamela Mingo and Catherine Knights.

I thought it was breathtakingly good. Cabaret, as you know, is one of the most difficult of all kinds of theatre to do well. It is still more difficult to do well when both performers are of the same sex. But this was done very well indeed, an opinion in which I was supported by all the members of my own party, not to mention a sellout student audience that gave the show a standing ovation at the end. It was witty and topical, the timing was superb, the technical support was of that ideal kind that works so well you hardly notice it, the actors' singing, speaking and movement were all up to the very highest professional standards. I doubt if you could have seen a better show anywhere in Toronto last night. It was one of those occasions on which one's flagging energies are revived by pride in what Glendon is and does.

It seems to me absolutely essential to do everything we can to encourage this particular type of theatrical creativity at Glendon. Our approach to theatre must be pluralistic -- must allow ample room for student theatre to live, breathe and flourish. We need other kinds of theatre, too -- very much; but we also need this.

Perhaps, therefore, you'd be kind enough to pass this letter along to PPC's sub-committee on theatre, together with the enclosed copy of a document about theatre that I put out back in 1978. It stirred up vigorous controversy at the time, but I still think it outlines the right approach.

Yours sincerely,

David McQueen,
Principal

c.c. see distribution