

in imperialism is flawed because finally after wars and hatred, Israeli and Palestinian Arabs are finally talking. Most important, the Palestinians put away that outdated and silly notion of "Arab unity" and proceeded with the talks irrespective of Syrian rejection.

Knowing Mr. Shehid as I do, I cannot imagine that he would prefer to see the war continue between Israel and the Arabs which Madrid has sought to stop. However, after reading his analysis, it appears the he too will be another individual to say *no* to peace when the rest of the world is trying to equitably settle this age-long dispute.

Michael E. Kay

Restaurants for eating not studying

Dear Editor,

I have my doubts that this will be printed because I am not out to hang the manager of Company's Coming, but I am writing this in the hope that you are not as biased as you appear.

I am a full-time student at York, and like the majority, I live off campus. I go to Company's Coming a lot because the food is very good and the staff is very pleasant. Many times I have my tray with my soup or whatever I have purchased, and there is nowhere for me to sit and enjoy my meal, because so many of my fellow students are so inconsiderate. Lunch hour is not the time to study in a food outlet. I don't blame the owner for not allowing studying, that's what the library's for. I study in my home or in the library. If the York Lanes estab-

lishment was meant for studying, would not the store be called Company's Coming Study Parlor, or Tastes Study Area? These food places were built so that we would have the convenience of eating good food on campus.

Mary MacMasters



Where was York Security?

Dear Editor,

I was amazed the York Security was not in a position to prevent the vandalising of as many as 19 cars in various parking lots around the campus on Friday night November 1, 1991.

The extent of the damage included broken windows and stolen stereos. One car even had all four tires and the battery removed! Three of these cars were parked on Ottawa Rd., the only road leading to the security office. However, apparently not one security officer noticed these vandalized cars.

Why does the security department

exist? How is it that this could happen if regular patrols are carried out? If security is on the spot the minute a parking meter expires, why can't they do their jobs and insure the safety of cars in the lots?

Hamid Parakhodi,
Founders Residence

Students should practise democracy

Dear Editor,

Re: New rule restricts student referenda October 23, 1991

Recently there has been a great deal of concern raised about the possible threat to democratic decision-making at York. In particular these complaints have been voiced by the York Federation of Students.

The basis for their worry arises from a recent decision by the Board of Referendum Commissioners (BORC) to raise the voter turn-out mandate from 10 per cent - about 2000 students - to 20 per cent of the student population. In doing so, say YFS President Michelle Hughes and Internal V.P. Nikki Gershbnain, the BORC has made it impossible for referenda to be passed.

If history is our guide then they are absolutely correct; student turn-out at the polls has been shamefully low in the past. However, to say that this decision by the Board has potentially deleterious effects on the democratic process is misguided and misses the core of the problem entirely.

Let us take, for example, the United States of America - that bastion of democracy - where a mandate in a presidential election is a mere 28 per

cent of all registered voters; no, not 28 per cent of all eligible voters but registered voters. Would raising the percentage required for a mandate in this situation damage or vastly improve the democratic process there? This has been one of the most salient problems in the eyes of those who wish to reform the democratic process in the U.S.

To return to our own situation I believe it is clear that student democracy at York was ailing long before the Board of Referendum Commissioners stepped in with this decision.

That the YFS will now have an even harder time of carrying out the various referenda is amply clear, but if the goal of the student government is to improve democracy then they will applaud the fact that a larger percentage of the student population is now required to make important decisions which affect each and every paying student at York University.

The government must now try to impress upon students with even greater vigour, the importance of taking their turn at the polling station.

Renato Filice
B.A. Political Science

No love lost over tossed pasta

Dear Editor,

I feel it is incumbent upon me to address Steven Kates' letter ("Pasta protestors had point," Oct. 3). To refresh, we wrote a letter to the *Excalibur* expressing our concern over an egregious ad run by the paper calling one and all to come out, protest, and throw pasta at Michael Wilson. Mr. Kates accuses us of not being able to see the forest for the trees because we did not embrace the conventional wisdom that Michael Wilson is responsible for every ill that ails Canada. He then goes on to obfuscate "The problem with Canada" issue by blaming yuppies, BMWs and MBA salaries (is he a self-hating MBA?). I could debate for hours with Mr. Kates on why the problems of this country are not the result of any one politician or party, as he implies, but in order to avoid jumping on Mr. Kates bandwagon of platitudes, I won't.

We will publish, space permitting, any letters up to 400 words. They must be typed, double spaced, and accompanied by the writer's name and telephone number. Material deemed libelous or discriminatory by the staff of *Excalibur* will be rejected. Letters may be mailed or delivered to *Excalibur* • 426 Student Centre • York University • 4700 Keele Street • North York • Ontario • M3J 1P3

James Brown

While Mr. Kates glosses over what he regards as minor annoyances, namely, the disruption of exams and the mess that was created. He says that the exam should have been rescheduled. I'd like to see him tell that to the professor who booked that exam months in advance while adhering to everyone's time constraints. He says that the mess created was "nothing a few minutes of sweeping won't correct". Is he prepared to clean up the mess? If so, then maybe it's not such a bad idea to have a food fight in his halls of study.

Finally, Mr. Kates lovingly tells us to "get over it". Well, I can tell you Steve, it wasn't easy, but we're way above it. You can veer left and slowly descend the bannister or you can turn right and join us up here. Contrary to popular belief, we do have charitable hearts.

Yours truly,
Arthur Lofsky
MBA I

More to York than essays and lectures

Dear Editor,

We at the Association of Economics Students held a membership drive recently and by most standards were satisfied with the results. There is one disturbing fact: very few first year students participated.

There are a litany of reasons for joining a club (not just ours). The reasons extend from social contacts gained, to extra-curricular academic achievement but most importantly it is part of your total university experience. Attending class, taking notes, writing essays and taking final exams may get you a degree and ultimately a job. So what? You will have missed an opportunity to meet people with similar, and more importantly, dissimilar ideas. University is a place to open up your mind, not just to learn facts, but to gain new perspectives, even shift your paradigms of thought.

Don't wait until your third or fourth year to realize what you've been missing. Like the commercial says: Just Do It. Now.

Michael Crawford,
President,
Association of Economic Students

York Professor: that's not what I said

Dear Editor,

Your October 30 article on "Classes getting even bigger..." misquotes me. The main instance is "Sociology...should be embarrassed to be using the formats they are." In the context of the article, I appear to be making an oracular pronouncement about the way sociologists should teach Sociology. I wasn't. The issue I was discussing with your reporter was the effects of budgets cuts in the English Department, specifically, the tactics which I think the English Department should be using to resist the pressure to go to large lecture formats. However appropriate these formats are in other departments, they do not provide an effective means to develop the reading and interpretive skills

which are essential in English. I did explain this to your reporter on the telephone; and she, presumably, was scribbling notes on the other end, but what she got is substantially different from what I said. Although she called to check a couple of quotations with me, she did not check the one above.

There is one other detail I'd like to clarify. You say that I am "the sole part-time faculty representative on the university senate." I am the only CUEW representative, but there is currently one other part-time representative. Senate legislation, which does not yet seem to have been fully implemented, requires that there be 4 part-time faculty representatives. However, the main point that this section of your article makes is certainly right: part-time faculty will be

the group most affected by the budget cuts, and we have no significant input in the process by which these decisions are made.

The English Department, on the other hand, has very progressive policies on the participation of part-time faculty. Since the department is the level at which decisions about the format of courses are made, our ability to participate here is: very important. Any part-time faculty member in English who holds one Course Directorship has a vote at Department meetings, and there are many such members. Those full-time faculty in English, who last year voted to allow us into the collegium, deserve credit for having done so.

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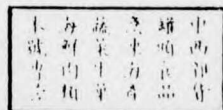
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