

spouting off

York's student politicians reveal themselves in a wide-ranging excal interview

by Angus Adair

Rob Centa Vice-President • External

How did you become a student politician?

I started by getting involved in my college athletics program. I then got involved with the residence committee at McLaughlin residence where I lived and then I became speaker of the college council and that sort of led into college politics.

I was president of McLaughlin college last year and realized that a lot of the issues I was really concerned about — like tuition and accessibility, violence against women on campus, racism, and homophobia — couldn't really be dealt with completely at the college level and decided to take it a step further and got involved with the YFS.

How would you describe your politics?

I am a pro-feminist, gay-positive, democratic socialist.

Where is the best place on campus to have sex?

Definitely for my money, undoubtedly the most erotic, sensual, empowering wonderful place to have sex would be on the marble staircase on the Student Centre's second level — right outside the childcare.

What are your weaknesses?

I tend to be a workaholic and I need to be able to delegate things better and not take everything onto myself. It just doesn't get done as well if I'm not surrounded by a bunch of people who are helping me out.

What is your worst political nightmare?

I have so many! My worst political nightmare would undoubtedly be Brian Mulroney calling an election right now and Preston Manning winning an unprecedented majority and having a Reform Party majority government. They would cut all funding to multicultural programs, native programs, women's programs; and post-secondary education would receive zero out of the federal budget.

What do you think you'll be doing in ten years?

I hope to at least have my B.A. I'd actually like, I think, to be practising law somewhere.

Describe your job in one sentence.

[I am] the link between York students and their provincial and federal [governments] or the Canadian and Ontario Federations of Students and I'm the advocate for students' rights and student issues to all external bodies.

Harry Arthurs is resigning in 1992. Who should replace him?

Who should replace him? A different question than: who will replace him?

Who would I like to see? [American black feminist writer] bell hooks.

Tell us three concrete things you plan to accomplish this year.



Andrew Brouse

•Left to right: Ziad Hafez (VP Finance), Michelle Hughes (President), Elissa Horscroft (VP-Equality & Social Affairs), Nikki Gershain (VP-Internal), Rob Centa (VP-External).

One: bring the Ontario Federation and Canadian Federation of Students onto campus in terms of running campaigns and making them seem like effective bodies for the students:

Two: channel the student anger that we are going to see over the 3% tax on loans and the continued OSAP cutbacks and tuition hikes into an effective year-long campaign for reforms in the post-secondary education system.

Three: Bring continued pressure to bear on the federal Tories to try and get them to reverse some of their policies which have had a detrimental impacts on students.

Do you think YFS has any power at York?

Not really. Not without the backing of the students. All we can do is provide the right voice at the right meetings. To make truly effective change we are going to need students: students lobbying, students demonstrating; it's not going to be just us. With students we can be really powerful.

If you had an extra \$50,000 in your budget how would you spend it?

I would probably like to see some of it go towards clubs and services on campus. I'd also like to see a little bit more of it go towards provincially and nationally-focused campaigns. I'd also like to see a little bit more computer equipment bought for this office.

Why is the sky blue?

The sky is blue because if it were green people would get it confused with the grass and wouldn't know which way was up.

Elissa Horscroft

V.P. of Equality & Social Affairs

How did you become a student politician?

I believe I got nagged into it, by Rob Centa.

How would you describe your politics?

Pink! Lavender!

Where is the best place on campus to have sex?

Personally I think it would be on top — having not done this actually — but on top of the Ross Platform right by where the library and all that is.

What are your weaknesses?

Tetris [a computer game].

What is your worst political nightmare?

A postal strike just as you are about to mail out to 24,000 students — right now, that is.

What do you think you will be doing in ten years?

I'll probably still be doing my B.A. at this rate. Writing.

Describe your job in one sentence.

Bureaucratic, eclectic, and emotional.

York President Harry Arthurs is retiring in 1992. Who should replace him?

Pee Wee Herman. He masturbated in a movie theatre; I think that's great!

Tell us three concrete things you plan to accomplish this year.

One: increasing the training for dons around sexual harassment, and racial relations and sexual orientation awareness for residents.

Two: taking some of the services away from the office of student affairs and putting them back in the hands of students.

Three: getting another computer for the YFS.

Do you think the YFS has any power at York?

Has any power? Yeah.