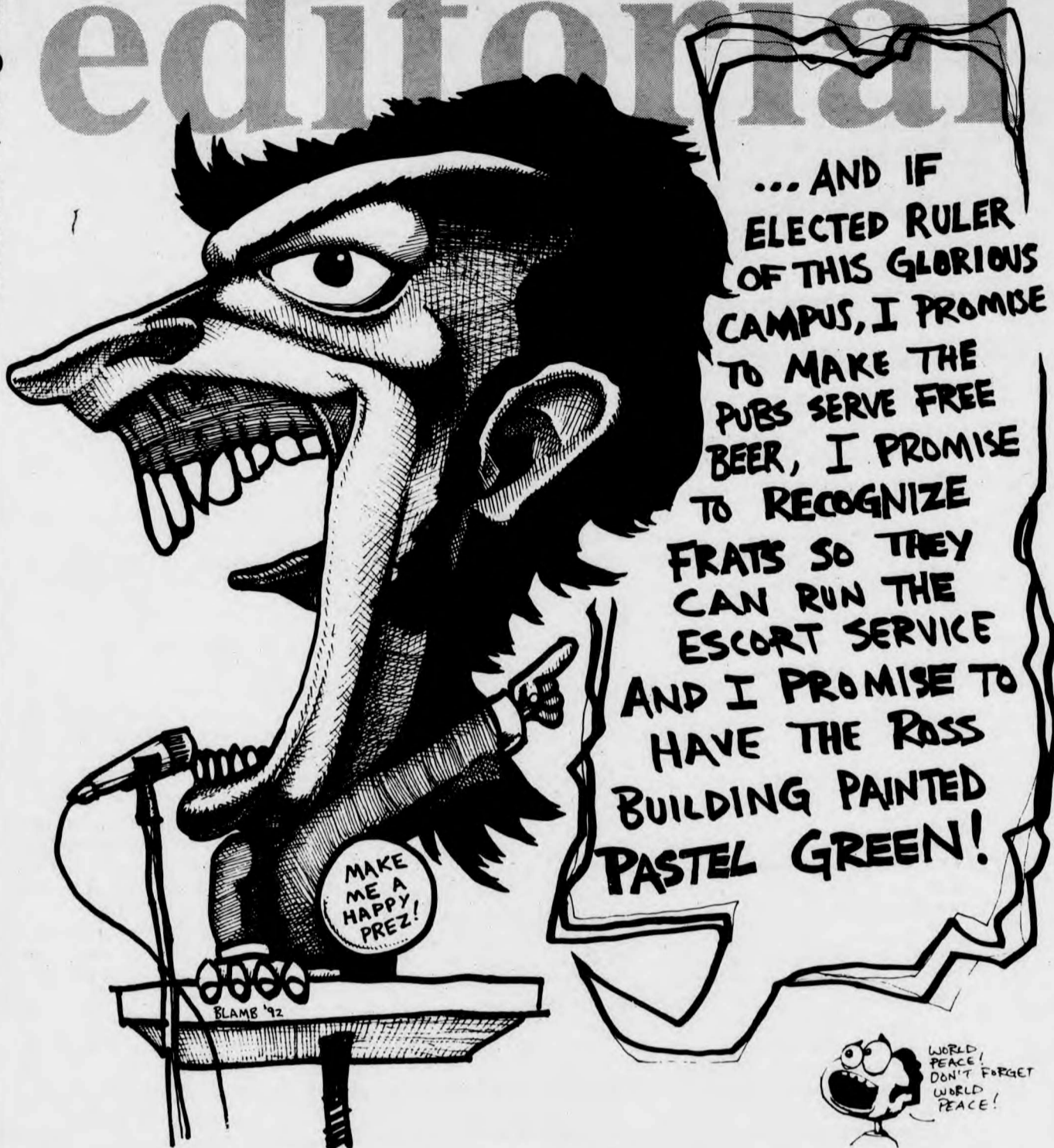


# editorial



## Dunderheaded democraphiles

Student government elections are a bewildering and slightly nauseating spectacle for most ordinary students. Normally an orderly and staid place to hang out, for a few weeks the campus turns into a cross between a bingo hall and a shriners' convention.

Why is it that hardly anyone votes here, you ask? Maybe it's because of all the hype. Forget about apathetic, we're just disgusted.

But there's hype and then there's hype. When someone takes a good idea, an intelligent view of the world, a commonly-held emotion, and pumps it full of air, it will probably fly.

And then there's the ones that crash. Democracy and foolishness have a close and well-established relationship, and the two can be seen together often at student government elections.

To be specific: there's a lot of stupid ideas out there. Some of them wind up on people's campaign platforms. Some of them become promises.

Here are the stupidest ideas we've heard this year:

**•Bring in the corporations.** A lot of people think we can solve our problems with gobs of money from some big corporations.

But big corporations don't often give out gobs of money without something in return. At best, they'll make you put their name all over your stuff. At worst, they'll threaten to pull the plug if you step out of line — their line.

The worst manifestation of this idea we've heard is the idea of getting companies to finance a safety lighting system for the campus — the "Blue Light blue light" or some such thing. If the university administration won't make our campus safe, we get them to fix it. We don't prostitute ourselves to somebody's disturbing marketing scheme.

If anyone promises more private-sector involvement or corporate fundraising, look out. The only way a student government should be involved with a business is if they own it.

**•Cut the payroll.** People have been saying the YFS executive are overpaid. They usually point at this year's nine per cent raise.

In fact, the vice presidents' paycheques still slide somewhere below the poverty line, and the president's only somewhat above. These people have rent to pay too.

Most students hope to earn a living wage someday. Perhaps we should pay one if we expect them to work for us.

**•Invite the Greeks over.** Fraternities and sororities are anachronistic relics which still cling tenuously to the ivy-encrusted walls of older universities.

Essentially, they are a means for more privileged students to

buy their way into an exclusive elite.

Their most notable feature is their segregation: at a time when anyone can sit in any part of the bus, and almost anywhere else, frats and sororities are a not-very-nostalgic throwback. And the frats' 'boys only' rule, we must add, has inspired some of the worst acts of misogynist abuse, violence and rape on other campuses.

These things have no place on this campus, and neither does anyone who makes promises about them.

**•Cooperate with the colleges.** Yes, the YFS and the colleges don't get along. And yes, this makes life miserable and prevents useful things from getting done.

But it's also been going on since 1966. Someday some YFS candidate will get the message: you *can't* cooperate with the colleges. That's like a dog cooperating with its fleas.

The people who sit in Canada's house of commons aren't representatives of the provincial governments. That would create chaos: you'd have a dozen agendas butting heads across the floor. Instead, they represent regions and political allegiances.

If people want to see cooperation in the YFS, they should think about federal politics — after all, York is a kind of federation — and think about changing the whole system of representation. In other words, they should get the colleges out.

We know at least one candidate who has mentioned this idea before and who, afraid of losing the college vote, buried it somewhere dark and deep.

So much for cooperation.

**•Cooperate with the administration.** Work with them, fight with them, join forces with them, fondle their greying assets.

York University is a huge corporation with a very pragmatic set of directors. They have one major concern: the long-term financial viability of their institution.

They also have lesser concerns — which they will instantly abandon if the major concern takes precedence — including the following: the quality of student life, the size of classes, the type of programs offered, the faculty hired, the safety of the campus, the usefulness of a degree.

And, hey, look around: all they're talking about is the big concern. This school is in big financial trouble. So, inevitably, all the lesser concerns are being abandoned.

As far as they're concerned, a student is just a slightly annoying two thousand-odd dollars. If you don't believe us, go to a Board of Governors meeting sometime.

If some student wants to help the people who run this university abandon their principles, they can do it. But not with our support.

## excalibur

Excalibur  
420, Student Centre  
York University  
4700 Keele Street  
North York, Ontario  
M3J 1P3

Telephone:  
Advertising • 736-5238  
Editorial • 736-5239

Excalibur is a volunteer organization. We will consider for publication all submissions that are not deemed libelous or discriminatory by the editors and staff. The opinions expressed are not necessarily shared by all members of the staff or board of publications.

Final responsibility resides with the editor-in-chief as outlined in the constitution.

Editor-in-chief Jeannine Amber  
Managing Editor Doug Saunders  
Production Manager Stephen Perry  
Production Assistant Pat Micelli  
Distribution Manager Riccardo Sala  
News Editor vacant  
Gay Issues Coordinator Brian Rigg  
Bisexual Womyn and Lesbian Issues Coordinator Frances Limfat  
CUP Editor vacant  
Letters Editor Catharine Soukoreff  
Arts Editor Ira Nayman  
Sports Editor Riccardo Sala  
Photo Editors Anthony Cohen and Alok Sharma  
Feature Supplement Editor Jill Skorochod  
Guest Headline Writer John Montesano

Staff Eric Alper, Elaine Bellio, Prasad Bidaye, David Black, Maggie Borch, Michele Bosener, Noah Bunnett, Clare Burke, Trevor Burnett, Rob Cabral, David Camfield, Lilac Cana, Aaron Dantowitz, Patrick Davila, Nick Davis, David Gardner, Adrian Graham, Jim Hounslow, Michael Hussey, Sheena Jarvis, Brett Lamb, Jennifer Lim, Moira MacDonald, Azed Majeed, Dwayne Morgan, Michael Nachoff, Daniel Naccarato, James Oscar, Judy Passley, Robert Pincomb, Samuel Putinja, Mike Raycraft, Cindy Reeves, Dave Rivait, Lee Romberg, Josh Rubin, Harry Rudolfs, Tom Schneider, Jim Sheppard, Sydney St. Nicholas, Kassia Mier y Teran.

Contributors The Mighty Billz, M. Blake, Maggie Borch, Nick Davis, Patrick Davila, Christine F. de Léon, Pedram Fouladianpour, Corey Goldman, Adrian Graham, Jim "the gift of ridicule" Hounslow, Michael Hussey, Moondog Jarvis, Sheena Jarvis, Jennifer Lim, Pat Micelli, Lee-Anne Moore, Colin P., Samuel Putinja, Josh Rubin, Chris Smets, Sally Szuster Catharine Soukoreff.

Business Manager Merle Menzies  
Advertising Assistant Patty Milton-Rao

Chair, Board of Publications Nancy Phillips

## EXCALENDAR

Tuesday March 10

Production Assistant Election at 12:00 pm (Noon)

Wednesday March 11

Staff Elections at 4:00 pm

Thursday March 12

Editorial Board Meeting at 2:00 pm  
Staff Elections at 4:00 pm

"I'm no Casanova, but I know when the administration is making love to promises they can't keep."