

Leaders discuss apathy as handful look on

A discussion of the state of student politics which featured many of the current Students' Union election candidates was sponsored by the Political Science Undergraduate Association (PSUA) last Friday.

And despite warnings that electioneering was forbidden, some of the most interesting discussion revolved around the upcoming student elections.

The invited speakers at the forum were SU president Cheryl Hume, NUS fieldworker Jeff Parr, *Gateway* editor Loreen Lennon and arts representatives Alan Fenna and Harvey Groberman. Also present, however, were candidates Greg Michaud, Chanchal Bhattacharya, Brian O'Kurley, Tema Frank and Bruce Webster.

The initial discussion compared student politics of the 1960s to student involvement in the 70s.

Gateway editor Lennon denied there was more apathy now than there had been ten years ago. Groberman added that many of the confrontations between university administration and students has arisen from crisis situations when no avenues

for change were available.

The role of student leaders was also discussed by forum participants. Groberman said student leaders should direct and shape the issues. Frank disagreed, however, suggesting that leaders should inform students but not take positions on issues themselves.

Finally, speakers attempted to define this year's election issues. Lennon said that NUS is an issue on which candidates could take a stand. Bhattacharya suggested the way the university treats clubs is another important issue.

All speakers agreed the fate of student government in residence is one of the single most important issues of the election. Groberman then pointed out these are "apple-pie" issues—all slates will have the same position on them. He added that students vote for personalities and "vague political bents".

The forum was attended by an audience of about 25 people—perhaps the most telling statement about the state of students politics made all afternoon.



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