

Student asks: "YFS condoning homophobia?"

Dear Editor,

As a student who is actively involved in varsity athletics, co-president of a student organization, and tackling a full course load, the last thing that I have time to do is write a letter to *Excilibur*. However, YFS' lack of concern about York University's endorsement of two "charities" that condone homophobia has left me no other alternative. This week I discovered that York supports the United Way and the Canadian Red Cross Society, and these organizations perpetuate discrimination against gay men. YFS' apathy towards these instances of institutionalized homophobia undermines the apparent support Elissa Horscroft has for "those voices that are not heard at York"

Although the United Way finances many noble causes, it also funds Big Brothers, which will not allow gay men to volunteer their time to "little brothers." York's endorsement of the United Way is irresponsible, because it indirectly condones homophobia. What is perhaps more disturbing than York's behaviour is the silence displayed by YFS — "Hello! I thought you guys/gals were suppose to be looking out for the little people." Moreover, BLGAY's silence is equally appalling — it's disturbing to know that a club that is operating on a \$7,000.00 budget has failed to voice an opinion about the United Way campaign. Perhaps the presence of a United Way Poster in the BLGAY office says it all.

The Red Cross is another organization that discriminates against gay men. For the record, the Red Cross will not accept blood from any man that has had sex with another man since 1977 — regardless of safe sex practices. Their treatment of gay men is dramatically different from the treatment of everyone else, who are only questioned about their sexual history six months prior to their donation. In an attempt to forgive York

letters continued

Administrators and YFS, I'll pretend that they were not aware of this discrimination — despite the fact that during the past academic year four letters about this discrimination were published in *Excilibur*. Perhaps more research should be done before York University puts its name behind, or donates space to a charity.

What has just occurred to me is that perhaps YFS is homophobic. Not only have they failed to speak out against these instances of homophobia but sections of *Up York* help marginalize homosexuals. For ex-

ample, the information on date rape that appears in *Up York* is presented from a complete heterosexual perspective. This perspective contributes to the silencing of the "homosexual voice," because it does not encourage them to report date rape. Perhaps YFS has never thought about this, which would explain (not justify) their apathy for gay men.

The bottom line is this: it's disgusting to know that when my gay friends graduate from York they will be able to practice law, run international corporations and write for respected journals — but they will not be able to be a big brother, donate blood or report date rape. Way to go YFS, with your silence gay men will continue to be deprived of freedoms that are essential to human dignity

Steve Cooney,
Varsity Swimmer

Stamping out democracy at York

Dear Editor:

What's the most effective means to stamp out democracy? I think that it would have to be what the University's Board of Referendum Commissioners (BORC) has just done: making it next to impossible for people to participate in the decision-making process while maintaining the appearance of democracy. The recent action by BORC to raise the minimum participation rate of students in referenda from 10% to 20% is reprehensible. Brian Mulroney would be proud!

How can BORC, at a time when Canadian citizens are crying out for more democracy, turn around and attempt to keep university students in apathy? They're cynical and listless enough as it is! Or has BORC con-

vinced itself that participation will remain the same or increase after its decision? I hope that York University students will resist this mistake and will have it reversed.

As far as BORC is concerned, they should be ashamed, very ashamed, to be standing in the way of the democratic education of university students. Yes, it's true that the participation rate in referenda is low and it'd be nice to have referendum issues pass with more support — but is the answer to block off the participation of unapathetic students? Instead, how about asking why participation rates are low and doing something about it, rather than sabotaging what little direct democracy York University does have?

Victor Wilson,
York Direct Democrats

Odyssey by Pinc



Tom by McCan



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