

Close the **AINGER!!!**  
 Student governments don't generate revenue,  
 they're supposed to develop  
 programmes &  
 services.



Acting Dean Meininger, tired & cranky from a sleepless night of decision making, proves that he's unable to see a correlation.

4

## Just who are these thought police?

Is your freedom to think being threatened?

According to critics in the mass media it is. During the past month magazines, newspapers and TV have lashed out at a group they call the new "campus thought police"—students and professors who they say are enforcing "totalitarian" ideas about how universities should be run.

As the argument goes, a new wave of "political correctness," poses a threat not only to free speech but also to the maintenance of academic standards.

But what is really going on? Just what are the freedom threatening ideas and actions that have brought on all the criticism?

For the past couple of decades there have been a few faculty and students who have been pushing for more diversity in course offerings and readings lists. They are rejecting the notion that the tradition of European thinkers represents the height of academic achievement.

Their goal is not, as critics would have us believe, to wipe out academic tradition but to challenge and enrich the curricula by including writers and ideas from cultures that are often overlooked.

Yet for this they have been called "tyrants" and "totalitarian dictators" in books and newspaper columns.

Efforts to introduce policies which deal with discrimination have also been attacked. At the University of Waterloo a recent campaign against date rape featuring the slogan "NO means NO" was ridiculed by male stu-

dents at a varsity hockey game who held a banner reading "No Means Harder."

Waterloo University officials met with the two men after the game and told them to write a formal apology. The students also had to help campus women's groups with their campaigns against date rape.

Critics in the media felt that by punishing the students' behaviour they were infringing on the students' freedom of speech. What these advocates of free speech fail to realize is that freedom of speech is not an absolute, but is relative to all other freedoms.

In the case of rape, the right of a few men to endorse rape is in direct conflict with the freedom of a large group of women to protect themselves.

In education, the right of one group to impose exclusively a white, male-oriented cultural tradition is opposed to the right of many groups to learn a variety of histories.

What the critics are arguing is that by refusing to allow a dominant group to impinge on the rights of others in a university setting, students and professors are limiting that group's freedoms.

In their view, living in a true democracy means having the right to dominate.

Only in this context can students who challenge the status quo be portrayed as moral tyrants threatening the quality of education.

While the media has given extensive coverage to this irrational fear, little has been said about the real threat: a return to the old tradition of the university as a haven for a select and privileged few.

**excalibur**

Excalibur  
 Room 111, Central Square  
 York University  
 4700 Keele Street  
 North York, Ontario  
 M3J 1P3

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

Excalibur is York University's community newspaper.

Excalibur is an autonomous corporation with a mandate to inform, educate, and provoke thought among York University's diverse population.

The distinct opinions in articles appearing in Excalibur constitute our collective voice. However, they belong first and foremost to the individual writers and are not necessarily shared by any other Excalibur staff or board member.

Final editorial responsibility is retained by the editor-in-chief.

Editor-in-chief Jeannine Amber  
 Managing Editor Doug Saunders  
 Production Manager Stephen Perry

Contributors Bruce Adamson, Mike Adler, Stephen Basky, Steven Bergson, Andrew Brouse, David Camfield, Simon Chung, Stanley Feldman, Jim Hounslow, Brett Lamb, Mattia Magnatta, Shane McChesney, Pat Micelli, Ira Nayman, Sam Putinja, Cindy Reeves, Josh Rubin, Jim Russell, Tom Schneider, Joanne White

Business Manager Merle Menzies  
 Advertising Assistant Patty Milton-Rao

Board of Publications Chair  
 Kevin Connolly

This week's  
 staff meeting  
 Thurs. May 30th  
 at 5:00pm

**excalibur**

general meetings  
 in the future will be held every

Wednesday  
 at 5:00pm

• everyone is  
 welcome •

editorial