

Editorial

Shibou is best choice to tackle issues facing York students

Drew McCreadie may profess to be a joke candidate, but in many respects he demonstrates a greater understanding about the problems besetting York's central student government than the other CYSF presidential hopefuls.

McCreadie's candidacy exemplifies the general state of stagnation which debilitates CYSF's effectiveness in fulfilling its role as a student government. McCreadie's campaign, even though it was run on a lark, possessed ingredients that the CYSF executive could have learned a lot from in determining and communicating its policies: innovation, creativity, a comprehensive stance on issues, and the maintenance of a high profile through sound marketing schemes to get the message out to the students. CYSF will probably be remembered by students this year more because of Drew McCreadie's posters and policies than President Gerard Blink's actions, specifically for these reasons.

In effect, CYSF was a one issue government this year, concentrating only on the Student Centre initiative while neglecting other policy areas which deserved equal attention. Already the Hare and Gilmor Commission have been debating the futures of student government and the college system at York. CYSF, however, still has yet to table their own proposals on what kind of changes they would like to see.

But that's only scratching the surface of what the new CYSF president will be forced to deal with. Two colleges still refuse to come under the CYSF umbrella, underfunding and chronic overcrowding still persist at York, and finally a new caterer will be coming on campus to replace outgoing Rill. Except for isolated comments in the press, or a few scheduled events to address these areas, CYSF has successfully evaded its primary role this year: to articulate and communicate a strong student stance on issues affecting York.

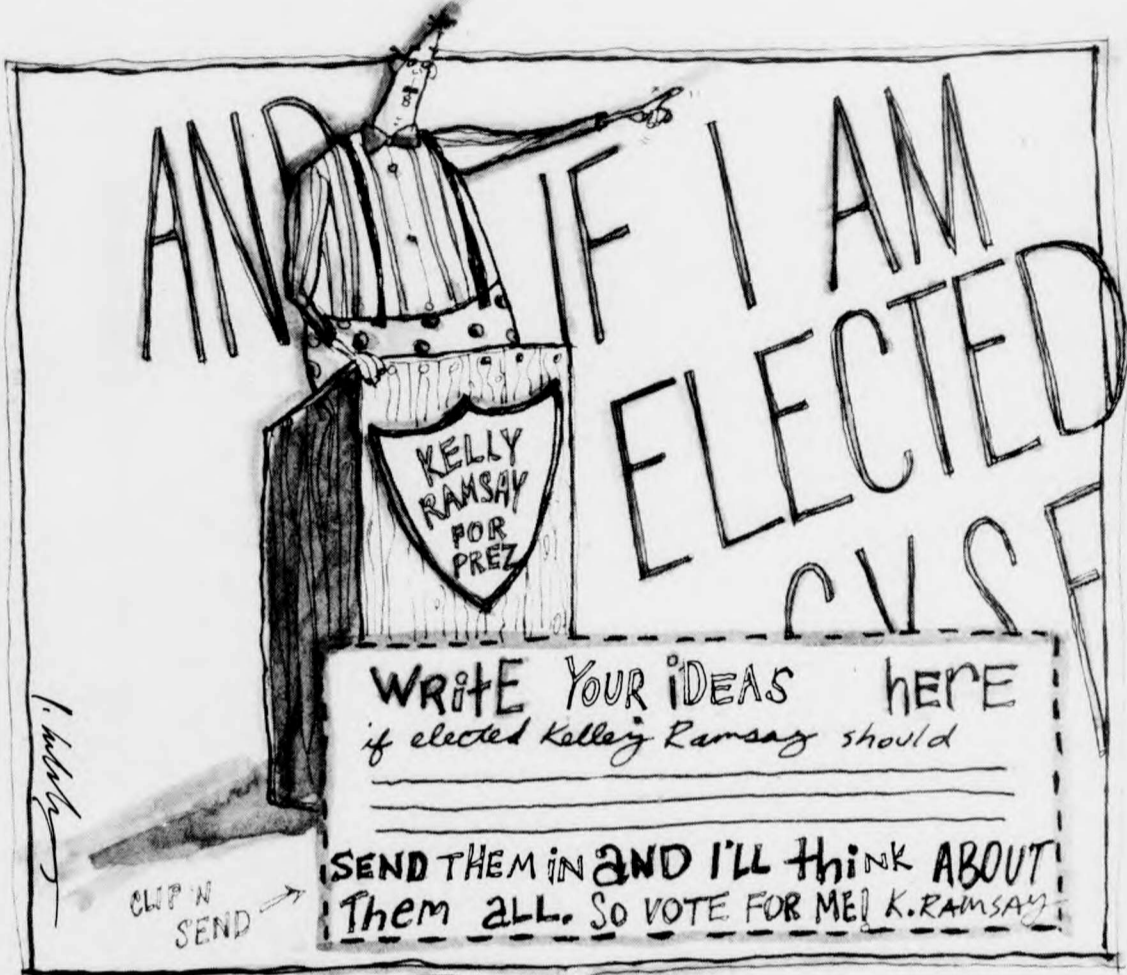
Jill Shibou may possess the prerequisites necessary to end CYSF's age of limbo, and begin transforming this sluggish administrative body into a more responsive, active and creative student forum. Out of all the candidates on the ballot for 1987-88 CYSF President, Shibou tabled the most detailed agenda simply because of her grasp of the issues presently facing York. This understanding eluded the other candidates in varying degrees, and allowed Shibou to articulate the most informed and comprehensive positions.

Kelly Ramsay, for instance, had difficulty in recalling the particulars of the two commissions (Hare and Gilmor), while he consistently resisted expressing an opinion on many issues which will be before student government in the coming year such as security.

Ramsay's conception of CYSF's role as a mere lobby group to act on behalf of student opinion underscores the entire problem with his campaign. Ramsay has ignored articulating the specifics of his rather ambiguous platform, waiting for public opinion to do this for him. However, it is up to the candidate to table a detailed agenda so voters are able to choose more effectively, and to give the incoming executive direction towards pursuing certain goals. Ramsay's platform is overwhelmingly based on nice abstract ideas, not substantial objectives which will improve the situation of students at this University.

Michael Latchana, on the other hand, did illustrate an extensive background on student politics at York, but failed to propose any original or commanding strategies to effectively deal with the dilemmas student government will face next year. For a member of the CYSF executive, it was surprising that he did not come up with more comprehensive and innovative policies to address student issues.

Therefore, after querying the candidates about their platforms, we are left with only one conclusion: Jill Shibou is the best choice for CYSF President.



Letters

Multiculturalism is the strength of our character

Editor:

I am writing in response to Lisa De Sprit's letter to the Editor entitled "Canada has no united culture." I was quite grieved by the tone of Ms. De Sprit's letter which not only condones racial intolerance but also disregards the fact that Canada has been and still is a land made up of immigrants. Irish potato farmers escaping the Great Potato Famine arrived in Canada as immigrants as well as the Ukrainian wheat growers who immigrated to Canada to escape the terrors of their war torn homeland are just two examples of immigrants who have established themselves into the backbone and fabric of Canadian society.

One must be careful what it is in the society which is labelled as the cultural norm. Is it the culture of the earliest immigrants of mostly whites that must become the symbol of Canada? How about the indigenous aboriginal population of Canadian Indians and Inuits; they have a claim to Canadian culture too!

Ms. De Sprit's remarks regarding immigrants also show a total lack of empathy with and understanding for those people who are forced by political or economic reasons to leave their beloved homeland. The process of dislocation is psychologically stressful and if one clings to their traditions it is because one cannot divorce one's background from one's identity. In a country which is new and foreign people will strain to retain some source of stability and self identity.

Yet if Ms. De Sprit would spend some time talking to the immigrants which she holds in such disdain I am sure she will be surprised to discover the amount of gratitude and loyalty they have towards Canada and that they do not conveniently forget what Canada has done for them. Most importantly, if she looks at the children of these people, the first and future generations of Canadians, of which I am sure she is one, she will see that the cultural diversity which

Canada has allowed to flourish with them has made them a tolerant and understanding population. This is the strength of Canada's character and culture.

—Ruby Young

Review bemuses Dance Chairman

Editor:

I was somewhat bemused by Loren Arduini's March 12 review of the Dance Department's first-ever downtown performance ("York Dancers Head Downtown").

In her dance by dance description of the program, there was criticism of student performance in one dance, of the choreographic ending of another and an out of hand dismissal of a third dance on the basis of aesthetics. The remaining six dances were described in more or less "glowing" terms.

Granted that the performance was an integrated one with students, faculty and alumni participating, there would necessarily be some differences in the level of experience, skill, styles and aesthetics choices of the various contributors.

Granted the wide expressive range of modern dance choreography, in any balanced, representative program some choreographies will appeal to an individual more than others. All dance artists and educators know this.

Therefore, what bemused me was how Ms Arduini came to the conclusion that the Premiere Dance Theatre performance did not achieve its objectives. She simply has not indicated her reasoning (artistic, critical or logical) for such a conclusion.

Lastly, I have not spoken to anyone from within the Dance Department and the University or from the audience in general who did not find the project an unqualified success.

I believe that critics have the right and sometimes the obligation to express minority opinions and even totally personal responses, but the critic must give reasons for conclusions which seem totally unrelated to observable events and unsubstantiated by the reviewer's own descrip-

tion of the event.

—Keith Urban
Chairman

Admin avoiding acting on asbestos

Editor:

I am writing regarding a matter I have been concerned about for three years. The matter is the asbestos problem in Osgoode Hall Law School.

As an undergraduate student at Trent University, I became acquainted with the full implications and health risks of exposure to this "silent assailant" through my studies of environmental toxicology. In my graduate work at York in the Faculty of Environmental Studies, I had further opportunity to study the nature of the technocratic machinery that allowed the use of asbestos to expand throughout the middle decades of this century despite weighty evidence that the material posed significant risks to people working with the material. I have prepared reports and papers on aspects of risk assessment and environmental health in the past and I think I am well informed about the problem. Moreover, I have been at York long enough to know that the Administration has a tendency to ignore nagging problems unless they are pushed to do something.

I believe that Osgoode staff, students and faculty are being exposed to an unnecessary risk of injury to their health on an almost daily basis. It was with surprise and dismay that I learned Osgoode had a problem with the material when I first began classes in the fall of 1984. I feel very strongly that the material should be removed as soon as possible.

It is this type of concern that motivated myself and others to join in the protest on Thursday, March 12th, 1987. We are grateful that the protest attracted the attention of the media and I think that it highlights the need for President Arthurs to act on the problem. I have not heard anything from him or Vice-President Lithgow that reassures me that the Administration plans to do something soon.

While I agree that the removal

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