

Excessive board rulings should DIE

STUDENTS' UNION ELECTIONS TEND TO BE BLAND and uninteresting, and this year has been no different. However, in previous years, despite the slate of lackluster candidates, I can't say that I've ever been ashamed of our SU—until now, that is.

This election has been sullied by the Bobby Samuel quagmire and has caused me to lose what little faith I had in the student government. The whole affair has been bogged down in needless bureaucracy that is little more than a reflection of the animosity that some individuals have against Samuel.

Coming into the election I agreed that he had no business running, because if you make a colossal mistake right before an election, you should have the grace to back down and take your medicine. And though some may believe that he's some kind of hero of democracy who persevered in the face of adversity—like Dustin Miller, who stopped just shy of endorsing his opponent—he's really just stubborn.

He was too stubborn to apologize to his colleagues for the whole pamphlet debacle—which led to his censuring and the initial DIE board hearing—and he was too stubborn to call it quits on his campaign, which led to the three subsequent hearings. But as much as I'd like to blame this whole debacle solely on Samuel's thickheadedness, it's also the fault of maliciousness on the part of the complainants.

The initial complaint was valid because it ensured that Samuel couldn't get away with pre-campaigning due to a technicality—essentially, showing that he couldn't outwit the system. But what followed wasn't much more than petty squabbling that was a waste of the Board's—and students'—time.

Basically, Samuel was expected to back down, and when he chose not to go gently into the night, they decided to end his campaign for him by way of fines.

Let's face it: his campaign was doomed from the start, and there's nothing we can do to him that he hasn't already done to himself. The students who actively follow the elections (or who were dragged to one of the forums) are already aware of his underhanded tactics—and of Council's general disapproval of him. But aside from that, it's hard to want to throw your support behind somebody who asks you to “take a chance” on them and believes in establishing an ethics officer because they don't have the ability to decide what's right and wrong for themselves.

His posters are painfully bland, and the chances of any student actually taking the time to read his 8x11 mini-essays are slim-to-none—hell, I had to look at them for the Poster Slam, and I still couldn't bring myself to read his points. Even if they did violate the initial DIE Board ruling, wanting them removed from campus was an overreaction, as they're unimaginative to the point where they're virtually invisible, and I wouldn't be surprised if the ballot is the first place that many of the more apathetic students see his name.

But even then, he's gone ahead and ensured that these students won't somehow mistake him for a likeable candidate due to his annoying habit of holding “rallies” in Quad—though I use the term loosely, because someone shouting at you as you walk to class hardly constitutes a political upheaval.

I don't see this as an example of the SU taking itself too seriously, however—quite the opposite. This behaviour is childish at best, and should be settled in the playground instead of the boardroom. Unfortunately, it's an example of why most students don't take the SU seriously, or even give a shit about the elections at all. But perhaps worst of all is that this entire affair could have been avoided by the simple act of apologizing—a lesson that someone never managed to pick up during those recess skirmishes.

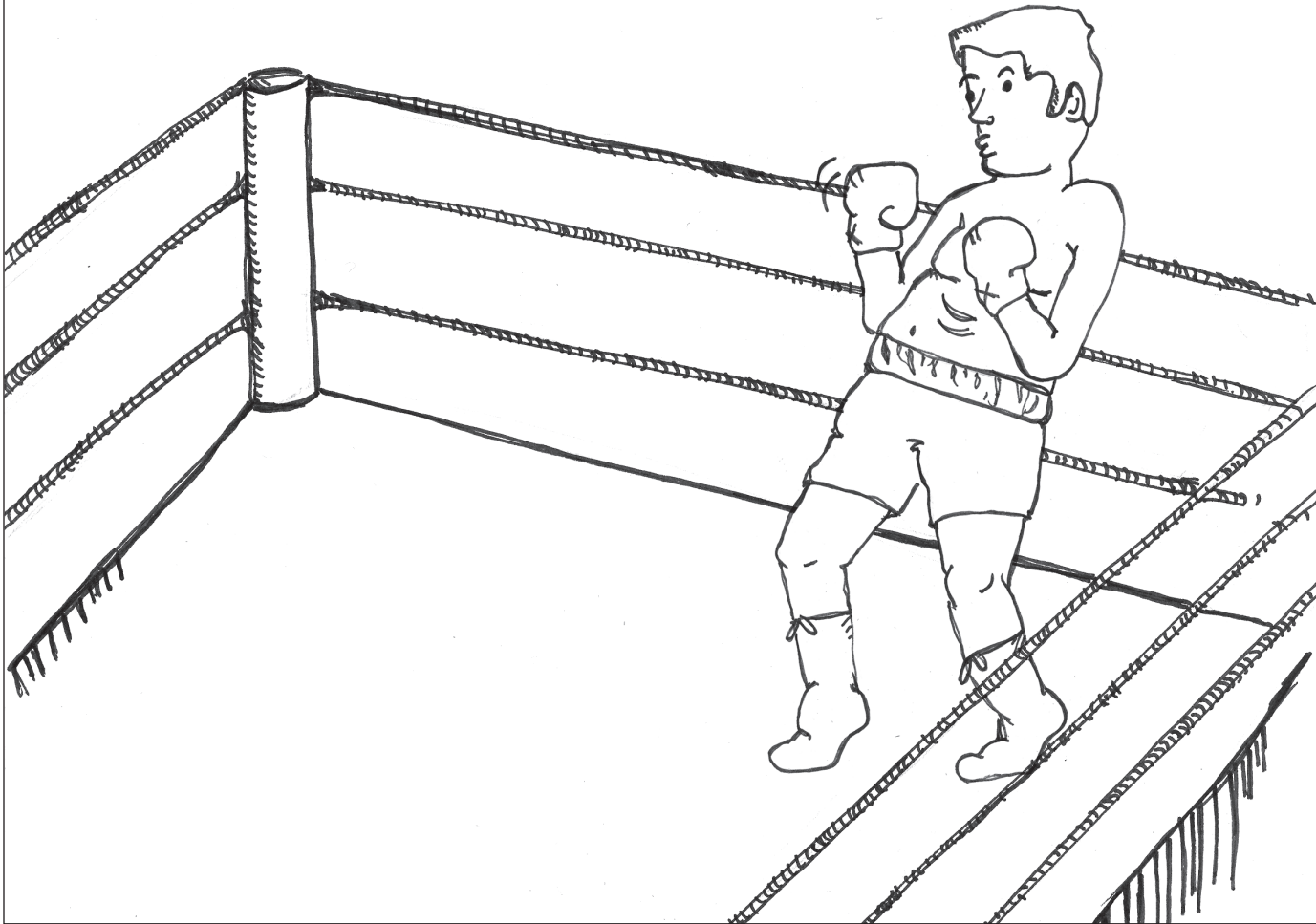
CONAL PIERSE
Opinion Editor

Failed saving throw

Gary Gygar's gone
Rolling natural twenties
At the Pearly Gates.

RYAN HEISE
Deputy News Editor

6 MARCH JANZ vs NOTA FIGHT OF THE CENTURY!



ANDREA FOHT

LETTERS

Botched election autopsy

The SU Election Dissection was particularly poor this year, with content that was sorely lacking—when not simply contradictory (re: “Election Dissection—SU edition,” 4 March).

This was no more evident than in Sam Power's view of the SU's relationship with the University. She begins by criticizing Janelle and Bobby, stating that “the University is not on our side,” but notes later that “you've got to have the University behind you.” Poor Sam seems confused. But really, the issue here isn't a failure to recognize that sometimes you must work with the University just as you will inevitably have to fight it; rather, the issue seems to be that the panellists failed to understand the platforms candidates were presenting. It seems they gave a quick read of their brochures and moved to discussion; I would certainly be surprised if they were in attendance at the Myer Horowitz forum.

And other races weren't portrayed any better. Instead of focusing on either the issues or the candidates in the VP (Operations & Finance) race, the panel criticized Steven Dollansky for running during the provincial election campaign. As a result, they split the vote between him and NOTA, despite applauding his platform.

The final contradiction came in the VP (Student Life) race, where Kirkham noted that “Alena's not quite as prepared but I see greater potential in that” which was immediately followed by Power's criticism that “Kristen's platform is comprehensive, but it doesn't seem like she knows where she would place emphasis.”

So what's good for one is bad for the other? The panellists have missed the major issue in this race, which again

was made clear in the Myer Horowitz forum: Alena hopes to move toward programming, while Kristen would move toward advocacy.

All in all, it was a poor job by the panel, and I was left with little insight into the candidates or the issues. Hopefully we can just chalk it up to the distraction of the provincial election, and look forward to something worthwhile next year.

KELSEY MASCIOLA
Nutrition IV

Leaders need better hair

It was disappointing to see the Gateway panel give two unfounded votes to some guy with a mohawk. They claim that he's the only one with a vision to get excited about, but I don't see anything exciting about holding a ton of rallies that the media and students alike will only tire of—without even getting a turnout in the first place. If we haven't accepted by now that tuition rallies don't work, when will we? Sure they can create media, but we have to use other means to get our arguments across.

And what about the rest of the SU? Does this guy even know what services the SU runs? Doubtful. He seems to think that everything else will magically work itself out while he's rocking out to some band at one of his rallies. Yeah, watching our Students' Union fall apart is something to get excited about. When a presidential candidate spouts off the same old speech about tuition when you ask about community, you should be concerned.

Then there was the Myer forum, where he teamed up with good ol' Bobby, complimenting him for his ability to fight. I don't know, maybe you should ask yourself why he's been fighting? Maybe it's not just SU groups and services that he

didn't look into, but the bylaws as well. Oh right, *that's* why Bobby was fighting—because he did something wrong. Miller was probably too busy listening to himself speak to notice.

But hey, at least he's got a mohawk. That means when he represents us at BoG, he'll look badass. They would have to listen, right? Nothing screams professionalism like a mohawk.

Okay, so maybe I'm being too hard on him. In the end, he was still right about one thing: in your time to choose, choose leadership. I just don't get why he's telling us to vote for him.

BRIAN GEOGHEGAN
Engineering IV

Plenty of joke candidates

I'm writing this letter in response to Paul Knoechel's lament about the lack of joke candidates in this year's SU election (re: “SU Jokers fight apathy,” 4 March). Clearly, Paul hasn't been looking hard enough as there are three joke candidates running for president—or at least that is what I have to assume.

First there's the gentleman who appears to have just woken up one day to say “I think I'll run for SU president.” No one who's seriously running could really wear pajama pants to the Q&A, could they? I hope God didn't give him that idea too.

Second, there's the gentleman that I have had the pleasure of listening to before several of my classes. There's no way a serious candidate could be using “Accountability” as one of his campaign pillars while simultaneously trying to blame others for “trying to make his campaign materials illegal” when it was his own fault for reusing them after his first DIE reprimand.

I can only assume this is an annoying joke. I know these two

candidates have entertained me out of my apathy.

ERIN CHORNEY
Science III

Failure to vote not apathy

I refused to inherit my parents' voter apathy. I kept myself informed and hadn't missed a single election ever since I was eligible to vote. That is, until a few days ago.

I missed the advanced poll [in the provincial election] on Saturday due to academic commitments that kept me occupied for all but three of the eleven hours that it was open. It didn't help that the advanced poll slipped my mind, but one can hardly blame a stressed-out student for forgetting.

Monday classes and what-not kept me so busy that I couldn't leave the university until after seven in the evening. By then, I had only three-quarters of an hour left to vote, but the wonderful transit system of Edmonton sucked out all but ten minutes of that spare time.

I then rushed into the nearest polling station to my house, where I was promptly directed to another polling station even further away from where I lived. Dumbfounded but unwavering, I dashed off to make it in time. But I could only run so fast carrying my school luggage, and I ended up missing the poll by two minutes. Dejected, perspiring, and exhausted, I dragged myself home through the dark, cold, blizzard-like weather—a befitting end to a fruitless adventure. At least my sister, who had a night midterm to write, didn't have to go to all that trouble to not vote.

And people wonder why students are “apathetic” toward elections.

PHILIP CHOW
Engineering III

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