

On the street

We asked people at Loyalist College the following question:

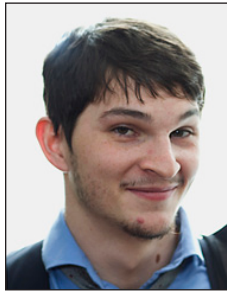
What would the Liberal Party have to do to get your vote?



Adam Radziwinowski, 22, television new media – “The legalization of marijuana is just another promise, they need to do more, like something to do with the tuition prices.”



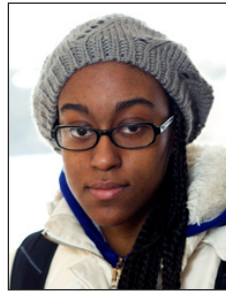
Mark Hansen, 20, radio broadcasting – “I would like to see an action plan that would work for the Canada we live in today, not the ideal, poverty-free Canada we wish for.”



Kylee Boicey Macdonald, 20, general arts and science – “I would like to see a good party plan, one that looks at all the issues, like creating jobs and fixing our economical situation.”



Sara Prinzen, 19, early childhood education – “There is nothing they could do. I focus more on the conservative values.”



Gweniece Gordon, 18, nursing student – “If they dealt with more student-inclined issues such as tuition prices, I might pay more attention to them.”



Courtnie Trahan, 20, chemical engineering – “Definitely not the legalization of marijuana. They should focus more on tuitions. I honestly don't follow politics too closely.”

Editorial

Student grants not for everyone

The government of Ontario has come out with a new grant for students, a 30 per cent tuition refund, a generous gift in a time of economic hardship for post-secondary students.

At first glance, this seems like an excellent refund that will help many students make it through the winter and into the summer, when jobs often allow for a bit looser purse strings. Starting this term, students in degree programs can receive up to \$800 per semester directly deposited in their bank accounts. College diploma and certificate students can receive up to \$365 per semester. The funds come from \$430 million set aside for education funding by the provincial Liberal government as part of their election promises, but other grants are also suffering.

Soon, the conditions start appearing. You must be a full-time student at a public college or university in Ontario. You must be in a first entry program that you applied to and entered directly from high school. You must have left high school sometime after December 2007. Your parents' gross income must be below \$160,000. You must be a Canadian citizen, permanent resident, or a protected person. Finally, you must meet Ontario residency conditions, meaning you must have lived in Ontario for at least a year prior to starting post-secondary education.

All of a sudden, the generous gift is torn away from the hands of a huge number of students. Mature students (although the age of maturity can be debated, because even if you're just 21 years old you might be ineligible), students who've come to Ontario from out of province for their post-secondary studies, students who are enrolled professional programs such as medicine or law, part-time students, students whose parents make more than \$160,000, and those who go to private institutions are all ineligible.

The government's explanation is simple, but doesn't tell the full story. “The purpose of this tuition grant is to help students make a smooth transition from high school into postsecondary studies,” responded team leader of media relations at Ontario's Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities Tanya Blazina in an email. “Students who are more than four years out of high school do not have their parents' income considered in their OSAP application and are therefore generally eligible for more OSAP assistance.”

But this is still so limiting to so many. Ontario's post-secondary institutions attract students from all walks of life, from all over Canada and the world. There's no data to indicate that older students, out-of-province students, and the like are better off financially and couldn't benefit from a rebate. Further, we all pay the same tuition (with the obvious exception of international students, whose atrocious fees are a topic for a whole other editorial), so this so-called rebate is essentially creating a two-tier system for tuition fees in Ontario. This leaves the clear preference: Ontario wants to attract its own residents, straight out of high school, to enrol in its institutions. It fails to recognize that these are the students who are most likely to attend colleges and universities at home in the first place, and are the least likely to need the incentive to stay. Ontario should be focusing on attracting out-of-province and mature students who, upon graduation, will be paying taxes and contributing to Ontario's economy.

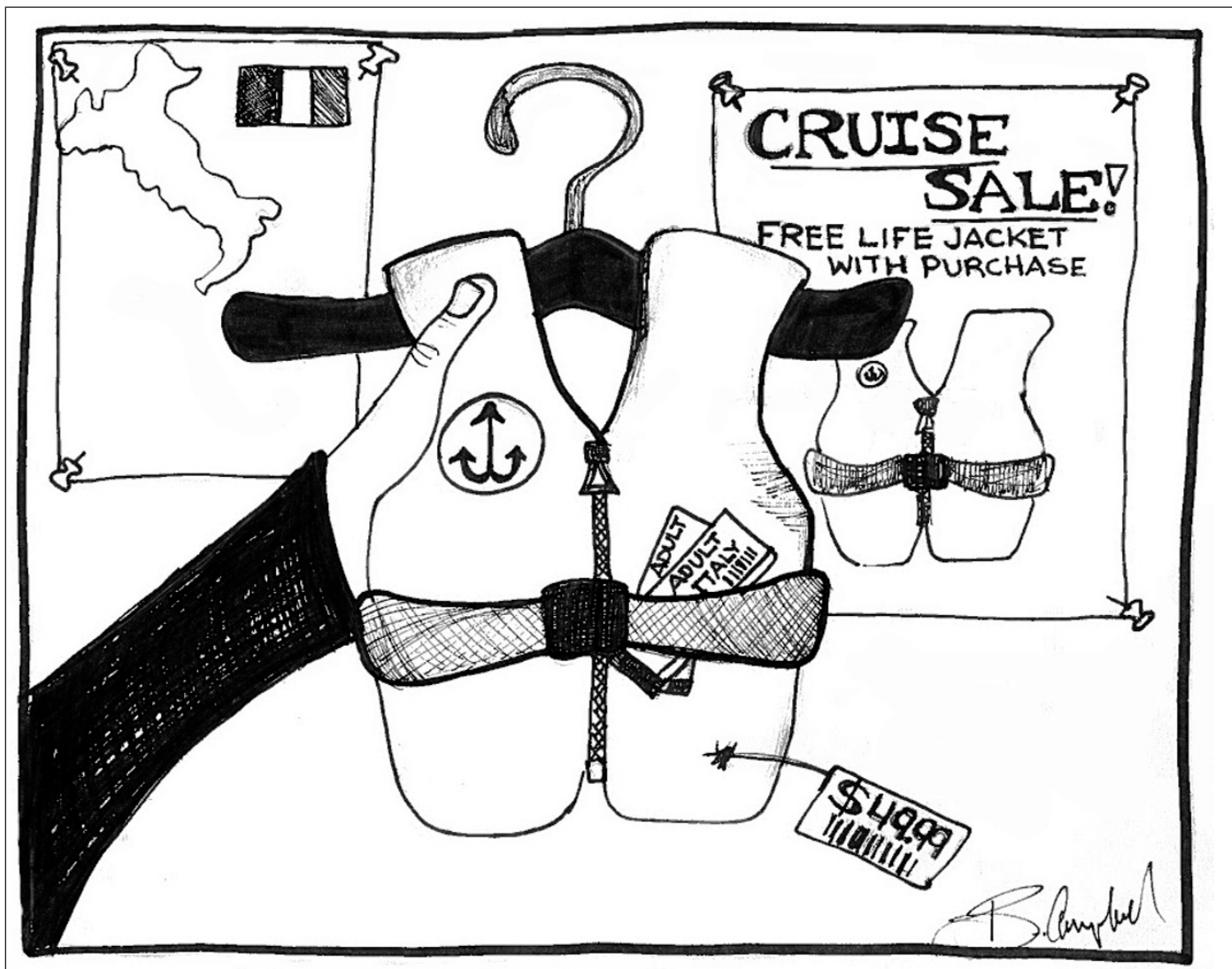
Krishna Saravanamuttu, national executive representative for the Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario, agreed.

“The grant is a welcome move,” said Saravanamuttu. “For years we've been calling for more grants. But only one-third of all college and university students can get this grant. We're calling for an up-front tuition fee reduction instead so that all students can have access to these funds.”

According to Saravanamuttu, Ontario continues to have the highest tuition fees in Canada, with some of the lowest amounts of grants available.

“It's a start, but there's always more work to be done,” said Saravanamuttu. “As one of the many students who won't be walking around with an extra couple hundred in their pockets, I agree.”

Rachel Psutka



Opinion

Advertising puts pressure on kids to be slim

By Kristen Haveman

Thank god for advertising -- you can learn so much that you may have never known.

Lessons such as being overweight is not healthy and the best way to get people to stop being fat is to insult them publicly by saying things like, “Being fat takes the fun out of being a kid.”

The Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, a pediatric hospital in Georgia defends their new obesity ads by saying it's time to stop “sugar-coating.” In this case, they seem to mean they need to stop sugar-coating their words and not the food we eat, which may in fact be more helpful.

The ads were mimicked from the shock ads for anti-smoking and anti-meth that proved successful in the past. There is a difference here -- most smokers and meth addicts are adults. Even underage smokers are making a choice. However when it comes to diet, the age group of some of the children in these ads their diets

are still completely controlled by their parents.

So guilt trip the parents; might work... Except the kids are still seeing these ads and how is it making them feel? I can remember a few years ago reading about increases in anorexia and bulimia in children. Apparently that's not a worry anymore, as long as a kid is not fat right?

Let's not forget that these are children in these ads. Imagine the pressure on these particular children to slim down. They are now literally the “poster-child” for obesity. Pressure can be a good thing, but children are generally not emotionally equipped to handle severe pressure. It's why we have seen child suicides and homicides committed by children because of bullying. Not to say these kids will go on a rampage -- but extreme dieting or exercising, maybe.

If bullying worked on kids there would already be fewer chubby children and more children who loved baths and didn't pee their pants. Anyone who remembers their child-

hood knows that the fat kid, among others generally gets picked on. Kids are much crueler than most adults and the parents who don't recognize that their kid is severely overweight are probably ignoring more than just that. They are ignoring the fact that more than likely their kids are being picked on. They have shut it out maybe because they don't know what to do. Telling them they are fat is not going to help that.

Georgia has high obesity rates. That does need to change but perhaps officials should look at constructive ways to change that, not just point fingers. Money has always seemed to be a bigger motivator than name-calling anyway. An ad about how much obesity costs in doctor's visits, especially in the United States, may have parents thinking harder about changing habits.

So just remember that next time you hear little Johnny yelling “Tubby” across the schoolyard he may just be trying to save a life -- or so some people seem to think.

Time to put a price on news

We've heard it all before: print newspapers are on the path to extinction and will be non-existent in as early as five years.

It is unknown what the newspaper will look like in the future, but people will always rely on news sources for information. The newspaper industry is evolving, not dying and we need to figure out how to change with it, readers included.

Advances in technology now give readers more access to news anywhere, at anytime through the use of tablets, smart phones and computers. This digital platform offers readers a more in-depth experience that print is unable to, delivering not only text but audio, video and multiple photographs for a single story. If that's not more bang for your dollar, than I don't know what is.

With this new level of quick content comes a greater demand for online news. This effortless access needs to come with a price, but unfortunately the industry seems to be paying the toll.

According to a survey done by Canadian Media Research Consortium (CMRC) and Vision Critical, Canadians are greatly opposed to fees for online content. Eighty-one percent said they would be unwilling to pay, while only four per cent agreed to the fee.

The collaborative survey also showed that 85 per cent of Internet users in Canada get news online at least once a month.

If online news is so desirable and preferred, why are readers reluctant to pay for access?

The rise of the Internet has made infinite amounts of information available for free since the 1990's. At the time, newspapers made the grave mistake to offer websites that gave away their valuable content for free. This left little motivation for loyal readers to continue paying for subscriptions.

It doesn't matter whether you are reading your news on paper or portable device news is news and should not be devalued simply because it is easily accessible.

Days and weeks are invested into producing quality news stories and this hard work should not be given away for free.

News is provided so you, a citizen of society, can make informed decisions and stay up-to-date on local, national and international events and issues that affect you in countless ways.

Michelle Cochrane

Eastern teams get more coverage in NHL

By Andre Lodder

Ever heard of the East Coast bias? Sport leagues and media outlets are often accused of it, and often that's because it exists.

It's no secret, really. The concept involves organizations such as the National Hockey League and its media outlets having biased viewpoints in favour of eastern teams.

In a world where the dollar reigns supreme, the bias is almost justifiable.

There are a few variables that lead to this inequality, one of them being that the NHL is simply trying to make as much money as possible.

From the NHL's standpoint, directing most of the attention to the eastern teams makes sense. More teams mean more fans, and more fans means more money.

Only eight of the 30 teams in the NHL lie in the west. With Winnipeg and Dallas being right in the middle, that leaves 20 teams in the

east.

What the league's commissioner, Gary Bettman, seemingly fails to recognize is that the western teams, specifically Canadian teams -- the Oilers, Flames and Canucks -- are like lotto tickets that always have the right numbers, a cash guarantee.

Bettman isn't the only one who's guilty of the bias -- some western fans are also upset with how their teams have been represented in the media.

Media outlets such as NHL.com, the league's official website, direct most of their attention towards eastern teams for the same reasons the NHL does -- the fans.

For example, if it were up to the NHL.com analysts, the All-Star Game would be heavy with eastern players. One day prior to the actual selection for the All-Star Game, the analysts released their version of the roster and 61 per cent of it consisted of players representing eastern teams, including nine of their 12 selected

defencemen.

It doesn't stop with giving eastern teams more attention. Catering to the fans is understandable, but questions have been raised as to whether the NHL is swinging games to make them more entertaining.

John Tortorella, the coach of the New York Rangers was recently fined for accusations made toward the NHL and its referees for trying to extend the Winter Classic into overtime for entertainment purposes.

Tortorella later apologized and retracted those accusations but was still given a fine worth \$30,000.

Despite what Bettman seems to think, the NHL's focus should be on building the presence and appreciation for hockey in North America, not sacrificing the integrity of the NHL to make a good buck.

With the integrity of a national sports league in question, it might be time for the NHL to step back and evaluate its priorities.

The Pioneer

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