

QUEENIE YU'S BYELECTION BID AIMS TO RALLY PC CANDIDATE TO THE SO-CON CAUSE

01.11.2016 [Sabrina Nanji byelection, Niagara West-Glanbrook 0](#)



Independent **Queenie Yu** is hoping her candidacy in the Nov. 17 Niagara West-Glanbrook byelection will encourage the Tory candidate to publicly boast his social conservative badge.

The anti-sex-ed activist filed nomination papers with Elections Ontario this week, but is telling voters to cast ballots for 19-year-old Brock University student and Progressive Conservative candidate **Sam Oosterhoff**, whom she charges is being gagged by party Leader **Patrick Brown** and isn't free to voice his so-con leanings that he has trumpeted on social media (more on this below).

Brown maintains that Oosterhoff backs his position on sex education, which – after [much back-and-forth](#) that led to a divorce with the party's social conservative camp – is that Brown now supports Premier **Kathleen Wynne's** updated curriculum. But Oosterhoff, who pledged on his campaign website to support "pro-family" policy and said parents should be "primary educators," has not been available to comment on his current views with Queen's Park reporters for more than a week, despite Brown's repeated assurances that interviews would happen "at some point in the near future."

"I'd like to help get to the bottom of Patrick Brown's claim that Sam supports Brown's views regarding sex-ed," Yu said. She is encouraging voters in the riding to cast ballots for Oosterhoff, whom she believes will trumpet social conservative views if he winds up at the legislature, which is a fair possibility considering former PC leader and MPP **Tim Hudak** kept the seat for two decades.

"When people [saw Brown's comment on Oosterhoff's position], they're, like, 'what's going on here?' Some had thought Sam had flip-flopped, just like Patrick Brown. But there are others ... and they say no one can trust what Patrick Brown says anymore; just vote for Sam – he has great values, he just isn't allowed to talk about them, because Patrick Brown thinks differently. Nobody trusts Brown and what he says. If we can prove this, if we can see that Brown has misrepresented Sam in this regard, really we can see that Patrick Brown is unreliable in what he says," Yu said.

But Brown, who has been recalibrating the party toward the centre, repeated that his candidate will fall into the party line, saying: "Sam has told me he supports the direction I'm taking the party, unequivocally. He's excited to be a member of our team."

"Queenie Yu is entitled to run, she is entitled to campaign on her anti-sex-ed efforts, but I disagree with her. And I can tell you Sam supports the direction that I'm taking the party. If Queenie Yu supported the direction I'm taking the party, and supported my candidate in that byelection, she would not be running," Brown told reporters at Queen's Park. "

Brown also denied he has been muzzling the candidate, who has not been available to comment on his own beliefs with Queen's Park reporters.

Yu and Brown have a bit of history when it comes to sex education: When she was a candidate in September's Scarborough-Rouge River byelection, she broke word that Brown's chief of staff, **Nicolas Pappalardo**, had given her notice of a letter going out in the riding that promised to "scrap" the updated curriculum and included the party leader's signature. That contradicted Brown's initial claims that the letter came only from the local campaign, and not his office.

Yu's platform is much like the one she ran on in the Scarborough contest, only now she has tacked on concerns regarding the government's Bill 28, the *All Families Are Equal Act*. (All parties support the bill that would fix the law so that same-sex couples wouldn't have to adopt their own children. The bill is going for clause-by-clause consideration at committee this week, but Yu, fundamentally opposed to swapping out traditional markers "mother" and "father" for gender-neutral identifiers, is worried there has not been enough consultation with the public.)

Yu has publicly spoken out against the Premier's updated sex-ed curriculum and ran on that single issue as an independent in Scarborough-Rouge River, placing fourth behind the NDP and Liberal candidates. Former Toronto councillor **Raymond Cho** ended up taking the seat for the PCs.

Back in Niagara West-Glanbrook, Oosterhoff broke his silence in a CHCH interview, which [has been posted in its entirety online](#). In it, Oosterhoff said the moratorium on provincial political reporters was a personal decision as he brushes up on party policy, and that, "this isn't about riding the media coattails in Toronto. I'm not there to ride the Queen's Park pony, I'm there to represent them [constituents] and their concerns."

When asked to clarify his position on sex education in the classroom, Oosterhoff replied: "We need to ensure that parental rights are respected ... I think that there is definitely a need to ensure that the consultation that's being done the next time around is inclusive of all parents' concerns and their responsibilities."

He also offers CHCH a smidgen of insight into his personal life. Oosterhoff said he was home-schooled by his mother, has seven siblings, grew up working on the family farm, calls his pro-life stance "a deeply held personal conviction," and is reading "Both My Houses" by Father **Sean O'Sullivan**, a former MP for Hamilton who left politics for the priesthood in the 1970s. It's a fitting read – at 20, O'Sullivan was the youngest MP to be elected federally at the time; should Oosterhoff win the byelection in Niagara, he would be the youngest MPP in provincial history.

A fundraising email from Oosterhoff's campaign dated Nov. 1 makes no explicit mention of so-called so-con issues. It reads in part: "I'm working hard to keep my riding blue. But more than that, I'm fighting for the values that inspired my political activism: free markets, low taxes, and affordable hydro for hard working families."

Oosterhoff has not returned *QP Briefing's* requests for comment since he beat out Tory heavy-hitters **Rick Dykstra**, party president, and **Tony Quirk**, vice-president, to win the nomination on Oct. 22.