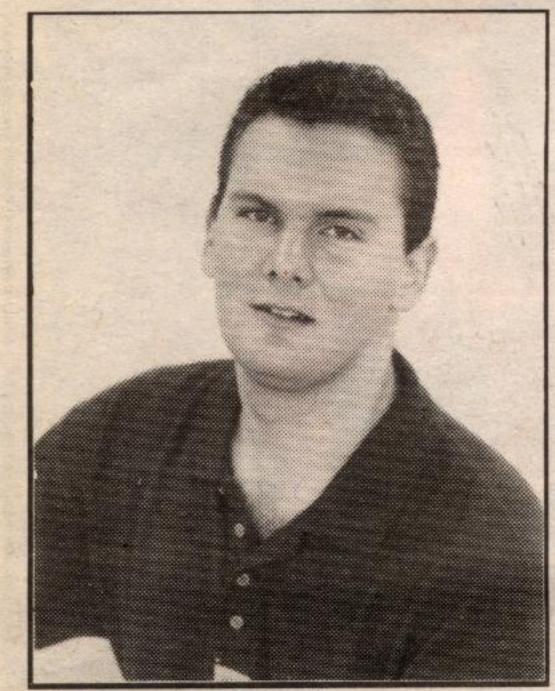
## Musings:

## What about this word "not"?



By Jamie Harrison

endorse the use of the word "not" in everyday language. Not!

Okay, if I'm a hypocrite it is only to make the point. The usage of the word "not" has gone too far, it has got to stop.

Until recently I was totally unaffected by the use of "not". Quite frankly, I couldn't care less if people used the word until they were blue in the face.

However, last week I read something in this very paper, something which was the straw that broke the proverbial camel's back.

It wasn't something which one of the people on the editorial staff wrote, but rather a contributing columnist.

This is not a personal indictment of the author, just a questioning of proper word usage.

In his weekly Parliamentary Report, Halton-Peel MP Garth Turner ended his weekly column with a resounding "not".

Our elected representative resorting to pop culture slanguage? Eegads! Who'd have thought?

It has long been known that politicians of all stripe are not above inventing and modifying language for their particular pur-

pose, but this is just too much.

For better or for worse, Garth Turner was elected as Member of Parliament for this riding, Mike Meyers was not.

I saw Wayne's World on the day it was released (at the expense of my Political Science lecture don't tell my folks), which happened to coincide with Valentine's Day. My girlfriend at the time, who did not accompany me to the screening, was less than impressed with my attending the afternoon matinee.

Of course, I countered saying that normally I would have been learning about the vicissitudes of the teachings of Karl Marx and Frederick Hegels, however on this particular day, I was more interested in the teachings of Meyers. She didn't buy it. Needless to say, she is no longer my girlfriend.

But I digress; I saw Wayne's World and I liked Wayne's World.

It was an amusing movie full of Toronto-esque references, in particular, the use of a specific word. Yes, you guessed it, the word "not".

When I was just a lowly ninth grader, back in those misty, water colored days of 1984, the Grade 12 students had this odd response to any statement posed in a positive manner.

"Nice pants — not!", "Cool song — not!", "He's/She's hot not!"; you get the idea.

Maybe it's only coincidence, but by my calculations, my editor would have been in Grade 12 in 1984. I don't know if he ever used the cursed word in that context, but it makes one wonder, doesn't

Even as a Grade 9 student, at the tender age of 14, I found the use of the word to be amusing at best. I also thought it would be little more than a linguistic fad on the same

level as "groovy", "swell" and "hip". By the end of the 1984-85 school year the word "not" seemed to have mercifully disappeared from usage at Georgetown High.

Little did I realize that Mike Meyers, a Toronto boy, would reintroduce the word to the English language via his character of Wayne Campbell on Saturday Night Live. Who knew that it would snowball into one of the largest grossing movies thus far in 1992?

But from Mike Meyers to Garth Turner? Now I'm sure it's just a coincidence that Meyers character's best friend and side kick is also named Garth. Hmmm...

I watched Wayne's World again a few weeks ago, on video this time. It was still a cute movie, but somehow it lost much of it's original appeal.

The original charm of faddish language has given way to triteness. "Not" just was not that funny anymore. Instead it had fallen victim to linguistic cliché. Maybe, hopefully, this time it will die out and fade away.

Call me a prescriptivist when it comes to proper language usage, and the dislike of pop slanguage. I just consider the word "not" in it s present form, to be a knot in the grain of the English language.

Besides, I hear that Wayne's World II is gonna be real swell, a groovy kind of movie with characters that are hip — not!

Ed. Note: The editor has never used the word "not" in a sentence...Not!

This will be Jamie's last regular Musings as he is returning to Ryerson Polytechnical Institute school to complete his studies in journalism — hopefully attending his classes.



GEORGETOWN



## Man escapes injury when car destroyed by train

Police say a Mercury Topaz was northbound on Trafalgar Road at 7:40 a.m. when the driver swerved to avoid rear-ending another vehicle that had stopped at the railway tracks when the warning signals were activated by the train.

When the vehicle swerved it became caught on the tracks, but was off the roadway. The driver, 22, attempted to move the vehicle "but had to jump away from his car

The train — which was carrying about 700 commuters — sustained "minimal superficial damage," while the Topaz was "totally demolished" as a result of the collision, a Halton Regional Police media release said.

Railroad worker took about 50 minutes to make sure the tracks were safe before allowing further train traffic.

Police are continuing their inves-



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