

CROSSCANADA

Anal penetration just fine

TORONTO (CUP) — A recent change to Canada Customs guidelines removing anal penetration as grounds for obscenity is little cause for celebration, say gay and lesbian bookstores.

The changes to the guidelines took place Sept. 29, several days before a challenge to Customs Canada's right to seize materials on the basis of obscenity got underway in the British Columbia Supreme Court.

Canada Customs says the changes came about because of court cases over the past several years which have redefined what obscenity is.

An employee of Toronto's Glad Day bookstore, which stocks gay and lesbian material, says Customs will use other parts of the guidelines to stop material destined for the store. The arbitrary nature by which customs officials can apply the guidelines compounds the problem, he said.

Gentes-Hawn says that Canada Customs, while not being arbitrary, does have to exercise judgment at the border. She added that Customs officials do not, nor will they, discriminate against gay and lesbian material.

OPIRG handbook racist

TORONTO (CUP) — Some Jewish student groups at York University have requested a refund from the Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG) since they say the group distributed anti-Semitic literature on campus during orientation week.

A section of the University of Toronto's OPIRG handbook, Making the Links, categorized Zionism as racist, something which the Jewish Student Federation (JSF) and TAGAR, a Zionist group affiliated with the JSF, find offensive.

Student members of JSF and TAGAR say the section contradicts OPIRG's statements that the group is committed to social justice.

OPIRG-York said it takes responsibility for displaying the booklet and is sorry some people interpreted the statement in the booklet as racist.

Michael Brown, a York professor of humanities and Hebrew studies, said Zionism is "Jewish nationalism," not racism.

Although students had the chance to have their money refunded, many students support OPIRG and their causes.

Marijuana literature OK

TORONTO (CUP) — The law that made it illegal to manufacture, promote, or sell literature on illicit drugs is unconstitutional, a recent court decision said.

The ruling came as a result of a lawsuit launched by the National Organization for Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML).

NORML challenged section 462.2 of the Criminal Code after its offices were raided because the group was distributing literature about the various uses of hemp.

An Ontario court justice concluded in a verdict handed down Oct. 5 that the search and confiscation of drug literature in a raid on NORML president Umberto Iorfida's house and office violated Iorfida's freedom of expression guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

According to Iorfida, NORML's literature encouraged people to voice their opinion about another law, which he also considers unjust.

NORML's chief concern is section 3-1 of the Narcotics Control Act, pertaining to personal possession.

Iorfida said Canada does not have a war on drugs — only a war on the people who use them.

Queen's cafeteria strike over

OTTAWA (CUP) — Six months of poor service and picketing from early in the morning until late at night came to an end Oct. 22 after striking cafeteria workers voted 38-29 to accept Marriott's proposal.

The new contract includes a two per cent wage increase in each of the first two years. In the third year, Marriott will make a contribution to a pension plan that matches an employees' contribution, up to a maximum of two per cent of their wages.

The contract is retroactive to May 1, 1993. As well, Marriott management signed a letter saying it does not intend to replace full-time employees with part-time employees, nor does it intend to shorten the 37.5-hour work week.

However, "should operational parameters change significantly, Marriott has retained the option to examine the labour force," says Jim Fougere, director of Marriott management services.

This means if Queen's shuts down some services and doesn't need Marriott to do as much as they do now, Marriott has the option to reduce the work force as required. Long-term changes, such as a reduction in enrolment, or the closure of a residence building could result in layoffs.

In the short term, though, change is already taking place. The Main Campus Residence Council voted unanimously Oct. 24 to eliminate the extra security measures taken as a result of a food-poisoning threat received Sept. 20.

Canadian University Press (CUP) is a national organization made of over 40 student papers from St. John's to Victoria. CUP enables student papers to exchange stories and ideas through the web service, regional and national conferences. As a founding member of CUP, the DalhousieGazette makes sure that our university news becomes national news.



Fired up about guns

by Lisa Lachance

"It seems to me that your side is talking about statistics and money, while this side is talking about bullets ripping through flesh," commented one audience member, on the lines between those who support gun control and those who oppose it.

On Monday, October, 31 the issue of gun control was argued out in Room 105 of the Weldon Law Building. Those speaking against gun control included Tony Rogers, Executive Director of the Nova Scotia Wildlife Federation. He believes that the real problem with crime in Canada lies in the leniency of the law enforcement system. He voiced the concern that gun registration would result in confiscation of guns. He also maintained that the current registration system does not work.

The first speaker in favour of gun control was Heidi Rathjen, Executive Director of the Coalition for Gun Control. She agreed that there were many societal problems which led to violence, but that gun control was part of an overall crime prevention strategy.

Ms. Rathjen commented that those against gun control "see [gun

control] as a threat to their sport, even if gun control does not mean gun abolition."

Dr. Susan Natress, Olympic shooting Champion and six time World Champion also spoke against gun control. She commented that she had not been participating in this type of activity long, but felt she had to stand up for her sport. In response to a comment that gun ownership had a lot to do with power.

She quipped that "I'm not into the power. I wanted to make the Olympic Volleyball team... but I'm a good shooter."

Suzanne Laplante Edward, former President and founder of the December 6th Victims Foundation Against Violence spoke passionately in favour of gun control. Her approach to the gun control issue is to put a "face on the victims" of guns. Her daughter Anne Marie Edward was killed at l'Ecole Polytechnique on December 6, 1989 along with thirteen other women. Ms. Laplante Edward pointed out that the military type of assault weapon used in this attack continues to be available in Canada. She demanded to know why registering guns is any different from registering cars or dogs in Canada.

Kevin MacMaster, Co-Chair of the Responsible Gun Owners Association of N.S., was also present to answer questions for the gun lobby. During the question and answer period following the formal debate, those who opposed gun control centred their arguments on the fact that Canada already has some of the toughest gun control laws in the world. All three feared that their sports would be hampered by further restrictions. They continually commented that it was underlying societal problems, like drugs and alcohol, that lead to the abuse of guns.

One audience member commented on Suzanne Laplante Edward's presentation stating that emotion had no part in this debate. Ms. Laplante Edward replied that it was common for people to want "the victims to lie low... but my daughter cannot speak for herself so I will do it."

There was dispute on both sides over which statistics were relevant and reliable. Despite whichever statistics are true, federal Minister of Justice Allan Rock intends to introduce a "tough package" of gun control legislation by December.

CFS no, CASA yes?

by Jessica Berry

Last week Dalhousie students elected to withdraw their membership from the Canadian Federation of Students. While this year's fees have already been paid, 899 students voted against remaining in the national organization after June 30, 1995.

The general consensus among students who voted 'No' was that the Canadian Federation of Students was not providing anything in return for the \$4.00 per student membership fee. By leaving the organization, 'No' advocates hope to send a message to the organization and other students that any national organization of students must be more accountable to its members.

But now that Dalhousie has decided to leave CFS, who and what will be lobbying for students in Ottawa? Hal Maclean, a member of the 'No' committee, believes there is "a viable alternative to the Canadian Federation of Students".

For many years, non-aligned student unions and frustrated CFS mem-

bers have been discussing the formation of a new student association. This past summer in Ottawa, 26 schools — including Dalhousie — met to begin formalizing such a body.

The Canadian Alliance of Student Associations is being designed in hopes of creating an effective, open and accountable student voice. CASA's aim is to focus solely on student issues and avoid cumbersome bureaucracy. The main concerns of CASA are student aid, post-secondary funding, student employment, tuition fees, transferability and child care on campus.

Unlike the Canadian Federation of Students, CASA will not be advocating social issues or sponsoring campaigns such as "No means No" which addressed acquaintance rape.

However, CASA unlike the CFS, is intent on making the new alliance accessible and open to all universities, no matter their size. Current CASA members are devoted to ensuring membership fees stay low and that both CFS members and non-aligned schools can join. Furthermore, the Canadian Alliance of Stu-

dent Associations plans to treat universities equally. In a CASA document put out in July 1994, Alex Stephens, a policy analyst, stated "CASA endorses the principle of 'one school, one vote, one fee'".

On paper it appears as if Dalhousie and other Canadian student unions, have little to fear and everything to gain from CASA. However, as Candida Rifkind pointed out last week, "being effective in Ottawa takes years and years."

This November, CASA proponents meet in Alberta to draft a final constitution and make CASA a reality. It will be, on paper, a very open and progressive organization. However, the Canadian Federation of Students looked like that once too.

In politics, whether it is national or student organized, it is always easier to criticize than to perform. What the future holds for the CFS and CASA, and most importantly the student national voice, is undoubtedly going to make very interesting news.