

Well, what's a body to do?

By SHEILA HIRD

We are all interested in our bodies, whether it's a concern to get out of them or a concern with legal and political authorities telling us what to do with them, according to York sociology professor John O'Neill in a lecture last Wednesday at Bethune College.

At least 50 students attended Professor O'Neill's "Five Bodies" talk. The lecture was part of the Faculty of Graduate Studies' series of lunchtime seminars on contemporary cultural studies.

O'Neill discussed several ways in which we can view ourselves and our place in society. The "five bodies" O'Neill spoke of are: the Biological, Medical, Consumer, Communicative and Symbolic, and Political.

The effects of technological developments on the individual and on society were also discussed. O'Neill said that many of those who are working towards a career will end up in boring, mindless jobs.

"The general tendency of industrialization is to replace the human being altogether," said O'Neill. He jokingly admitted that "this is easier said than done because we would then have to learn how to apprentice men to do nothing. After all, even God was unsuccessful

in apprenticing Adam and Eve to this goal."

O'Neill's cynical humor turned to apprehension as he explained that "the industrial age bypassed our bodies, the technological age is now in the process of bypassing our minds, and the next age will bypass our hearts (in the moral sense)."

O'Neill said women are also subjected to technological development. "As technology advances, women are in greater demand because the work is less demanding."

Near the end of his lecture, O'Neill widened the usage of the word "body" to encompass political bodies in order to question democratic methods of asserting power over society. He said that democratic governments subtly assert power by using therapeutic techniques such as love, brotherhood, and desire. The TV program "20 Minute Workout" was sarcastically cited as an example of these techniques. O'Neill said that "it is one of society's punitive orders that the individual must not act, think, value, or disvalue. The individual must not use his mind." O'Neill expressed puzzlement over "this new aesthetic of sweating bodies caused by a search for an identity, an identity that is between the legs, in one's physical shape, and in one's capacity to do the 20 Minute Workout."

Accuracy of job placement survey contested by Student Federation

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two surveys and they must be considered when comparing the two.

Sands also said that Statistics Canada was conducting a nation-wide survey of 1982 graduates which could be used as a follow-up but that it would not be as accurate a sample as it was a survey.

Richard Balnis, a researcher for the Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario, acknowledged the value of the report but "the survey took the sample as genuine for the whole group when 40 percent did not respond."

Balnis did offer some evidence to suggest that the Ministry's figures were not far off, however. He said the employment statistics of university graduates compiled by his department show the same trend illustrated by the Ministry's survey.

Balnis said his figures for university graduates were somewhat different from those of the survey as his statistics included students who had a degree whether they graduated recently or 30 years ago.

Balnis said he agreed with the observations made by Stephenson in her conclusion to the

survey that it is still apparent "a university degree is valuable in obtaining employment."

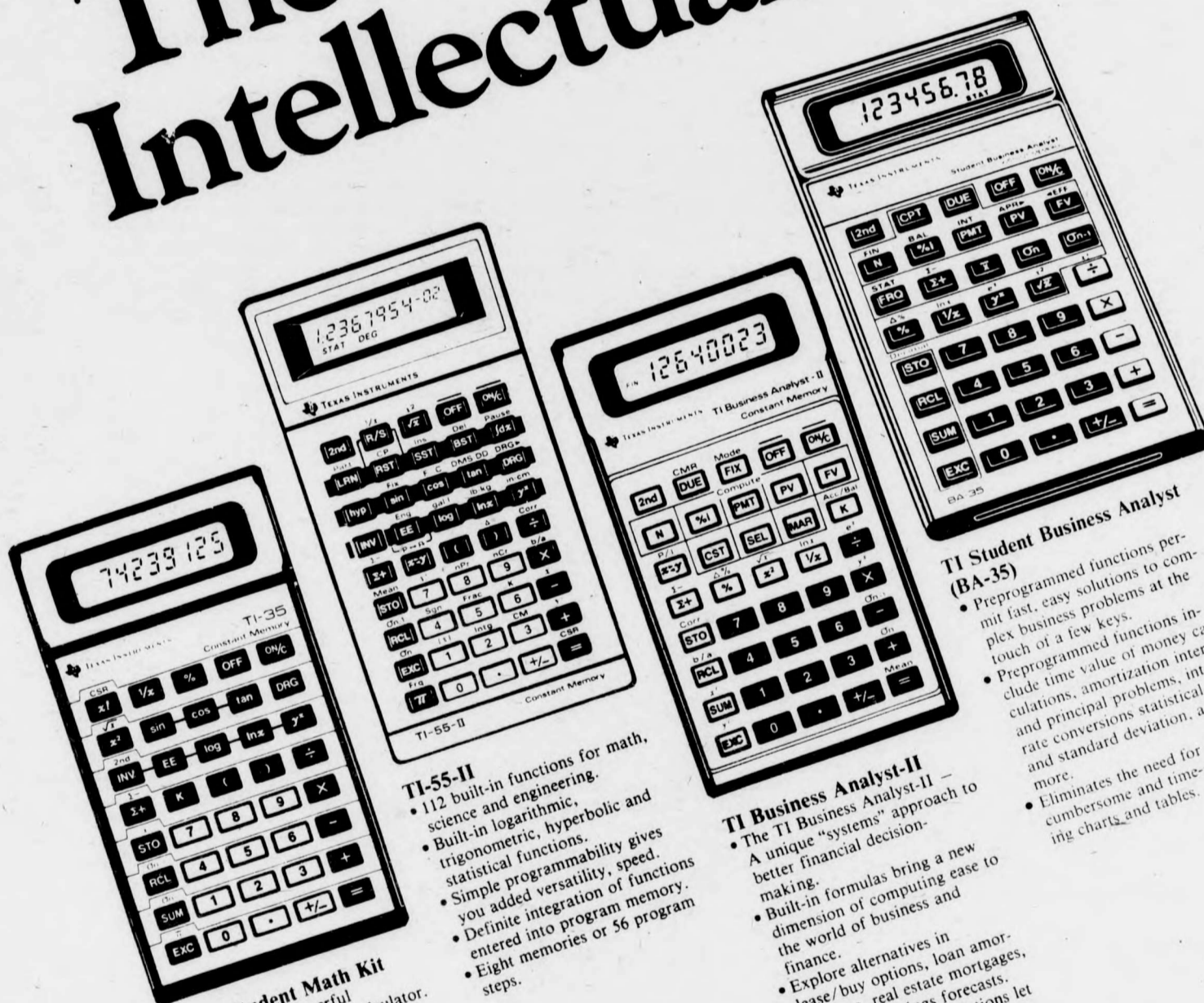
Balnis offered some advice to graduating students. "Our data shows that the first 12 or 18 months after graduation are the most difficult in terms of finding satisfactory employment, but if you can hang on for this period, the degree proves to be beneficial in the long run."

The York Faculty of Education keeps its own statistics concerning the rate of employment for graduates. Figures released for 1982 graduates support both the Ministry's survey as well as illustrating Anisef's point that holders of degrees in specialized and graduate-professional programs represent a higher level of employment.

A more comprehensive and detailed examination of the Ministry's survey and its data is being undertaken at York. Anisef, who's heading the study, said the main objective of the project is to determine the implications of the survey at York.

"At this time I am not authorized to release any information on it but I can tell you that we have already come up with some very interesting findings," said Anisef.

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