

Report notes increased drug use

# Federal bill will moderate marijuana laws

By DEBBIE PEKILIS

A bill to make cannabis laws more flexible, while also discouraging the drug's use, was recently introduced by the federal government.

According to the January, 1975, issue of the Addiction Research Foundation's monthly newspaper, The Journal, the bill, "which might not become law until mid-winter or later, after committee study by the

Senate and the Commons", will remove cannabis laws from their hard-drug association in the Narcotic Control Act and place them in the Food and Drugs Act, with such presumably less dangerous drugs as LSD.

The journal further states that health minister Marc Lalonde told a news conference that, under the new law, people found guilty of possession could no longer be imprisoned

"unless they default on payment of fines", but that they "will still have a criminal record and a court appearance by which to remember the occasion".

"A main feature of the bill is the freedom of choice it offers courts in the method of prosecution," said the journal. "At present, all offenses except for possession result in criminal proceedings by indictment, which is a more formal and lengthy court

proceeding usually followed on conviction by a prison term.

"Under the new law, prosecutors would have the choice of proceeding by summary conviction (which often draws only a fine) or indictment for all offences except simple possession. For this, the prosecutor is limited to a summary conviction."

The Journal also contains the results of the ARF's fourth survey on student drug use. The survey has been conducted every two years since 1968.

According to the report, the results of this survey indicate that although "use of most dangerous illicit drugs has declined since 1970 when it peaked... use of alcohol and marijuana has increased consistently and significantly over the past six years".

The survey also found that drug use by females increased last year, in contrast to 1968 and 1972 when it was "largely a male-dominated activity".

Student use of alcohol during 1974 jumped to 72.9 per cent from 46.3 per cent in 1968 and 70.6 per cent in 1972, according to the survey.

The study also found that smoking declined between 1972 and 1974 by five per cent, to a level of 33.7 per cent, "the lowest rate in surveys to date".

"In 1968 and 1970, males smoked tobacco significantly more often than females," said the report on the survey. "There was no difference between the groups in 1972, but in 1974, 34.8 per cent of females smoked tobacco compared to 32.6 per cent of males.

"Females were also found to use barbiturates and tranquillizers more frequently than males, although males continue to use alcohol, marijuana, and LSD more often than females."

Marijuana use was found to have increased from 6.7 per cent in 1968 to

22.9 per cent in 1974.

Another report contains the conclusions of a two-part survey of adult cannabis use, first conducted in 1971 and repeated in 1974.

This survey found that although cannabis use increased greatly among adults aged 18 to 24 years, "the highest proportional increase was among the 25 years and older group; the 3.3 per cent who reported use in 1971 increased to 7.5 per cent in 1974".

The ARF recently released the results of a four-year study of health risks related to cannabis use, carried out by the ARF in conjunction with the University of Toronto department of pharmacology.

The research indicated that marijuana smoke has "nearly 50 per cent more tar than the smoke of one of the highest tar tobacco cigarettes, and from eight to 10 times that of the lowest-tar tobacco cigarettes".

According to the study, after a dose of marijuana, traces of the major active ingredient, tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), stays in the body for "as long as 48 hours". If the drug is used daily, THC levels build up in the body and there is a "more or less continuous state of partial intoxication".

Anyone who would like further information is invited to contact the ARF Information Centre at 595-6100.

## Glendon's creative writers improvise, complain, discuss and sometimes publish

By STEVE HAIN

Every Saturday morning, room A105 in Glendon's York Hall lends itself to a stimulating and involving experience.

One moment may find a frustrated woman complaining to the director about the activity's lack of excite-

ment, while the next will witness the programme's head reader analyzing the thoughts flowing from the top of his subjects' heads.

The participants are members of a creative writing course, influenced in its direction by course director Ed Parker. The first part of the class is spent discussing the past week's

current events. After a coffee break, the remainder of the class deals with performing improvisational sketches and discussing what material has been sent to Parker's post office box during the week.

The course offers writers a place to develop their writing techniques, and the class situations develop ideas and influences that can be used as frameworks from which to operate. As well, by sending their material to Parker, the lazy are provided with an incentive to write.

The people taking the course are a diversified lot. Comprising teachers, a producer, an actress, housewives and businessmen, the group shares a general penchant for writing. Some pieces are published, some aren't. It is from the class that the constructive criticism needed to improve a person's writing springs, a service not performed by a publications' rejection slip.

The course runs for 13 weeks at the cost of \$100 and begins every Saturday at 10 a.m.

Parker contends that we see people in a fixed view, in which we anticipate what role the individual is going to play.

"We observe people as characters by what they do and the manner by which they say things and handle themselves in public," he explains. "It's a metaphysical taking off of your clothes. Writers must look at a situation without anticipating the outcome."



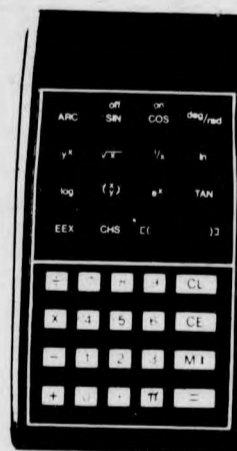
A creative writing class at Glendon.

Steve Hain photo

## Foreign students celebrate talent

Founders College celebrates its 10th anniversary on March 4 with an international night organized by the foreign student committee. Any foreign students with a particular talent and a desire to join the event are invited to call Izidore Musallam at 667-6054.

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