

CROSS-CANADA BRIEFS

Ryerson prof under investigation for supporting pedophilia

BY CHRIS PURDY

TORONTO (CUP) — If Ryerson professor Gerald Hannon raised the issue of pedophilia in his classroom, it didn't make much of an impression on his students. But it has made an impression on university administrators, who are launching an investigation into Hannon's classroom conduct.

"We have a complaint of Hannon talking about his views, that a criminal act — sex between adults and children — is okay, and we're going to investigate that," said Michael Dewson, a vice-president at Ryerson Polytechnic University.

The investigation originated from a complaint by Toronto Sun columnist Heather Bird. Bird wrote a column suggesting Hannon came out in support of pedophilia during his lectures.

However, several students in Hannon's Freelance Writing class strongly dispute the column's charges.

"I don't really remember him mentioning anything," said student Carolyn Gleeson. "As a teacher, he's great — it's not an issue."

"This is gutter journalism," said student Dan Brown. "Instead of debating this intelligently, it's going to turn into another witch hunt."

Once, in class, Hannon mentioned his story "Men Loving Boys Loving Men," which was written for the Body Politic, a gay publication. Another time Hannon made reference to a story he wrote for the Globe and Mail, "The Kiddie-Porn Ring that Wasn't."

Hannon says he likes to raise provocative issues in class and believes in the "importance of talking freely and frankly" on certain issues.

However, Hannon says he has never put out the topic of pedophilia for discussion.

Student papers to run tobacco ads

BY SAMER MUSCATI & STU CLARK

OTTAWA (CUP) — Student newspapers will be among the first Canadian media outlets to profit from a Supreme Court decision to overturn a ban on tobacco advertisements.

On Sept. 21, the Supreme Court of Canada lifted a seven-year-old ban on tobacco advertising because it threatened the right of the tobacco companies to free speech.

After cautiously pondering their options for a month, tobacco companies seem ready to take advantage of the decision, and make a move on the student market.

RJR Macdonald Inc., which produces Export 'A' cigarettes, has approached the student press through Campus Plus, Canada's largest national advertising company for student newspapers. Student papers in Ottawa and Windsor will accept the full-page advertisements which are due out later this month. The two cities will serve as a test market for the tobacco corporation, and may open up the doors to national tobacco-advertising in student newspapers across the country.

"Depending on what kind of response they get to that advertising will determine whether they roll it out into a national campaign," said Bill Cotric, executive director of Campus Plus. "I'm actually surprised at how quickly the [tobacco corporations] have jumped on, considering this type of thing."

The full-colour ads will generate as much as an additional \$12 thousand in revenue, says Jill Perry, business manager for The Charlatan. Perry says that the advertisements are ethical, since the intentions of the tobacco corporation "are not to get people to smoke more, but to get people to switch brands."

However, not everyone agrees. Charlatan staff writer Alex Bustos says it is ironic that his paper readily criticizes government cut-backs, and then places profit before its own principles.

Tuition fees on continual up-surge

BY SAMER MUSCATI

OTTAWA (CUP) — Times are tough for university students in Canada, and according to a new report by Statistics Canada, the future does not look any brighter.

Tuition fees have more than doubled over the past decade, and student leaders fear that the situation will become bleaker as financially strapped universities desperately find ways to cut costs and increase revenues.

Last year alone, tuition fees for university students nation wide increased on average by 7.3 per cent. Alberta and Ontario led the way with average hikes of 10.7 per cent and 9.8 per cent, respectively, according to Statistics Canada.

In British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, fees rose between 5 and 6 per cent, while in Atlantic Canada, the hikes ranged between 6 to 8 per cent. Quebec fees rose on average only 0.3 per cent, despite massive hikes in the province's previous 5 years.

The figures come as no surprise to Michael Mancinelli, national deputy chairperson for the Canadian Federation of Students. He says that if current trends continue, only the rich will be able to afford a decent university education.

Federal Human Resources Minister Lloyd Axworthy said that there is not a lot more that he could do to help students since ultimately, each province decides how much funding it will provide its universities.

Brouhaha erupts over parking space

BY LYNN O'TOOLE

The repaving of a Dalhousie University Parking lot has resulted in the relocation of a disabled parking space, moving it approximately 20 feet from its original location.

"With the repaving, it was necessary to repaint the lines," said Bill Lord, director of the Dalhousie Physical Plant and Planning Department. "When the repaving was done, another loading zone space was added and the handicapped space was moved back."

The additional loading space was necessary to accommodate the high traffic area and to prevent the frequent occurrences of double parking by delivery trucks.

Since all correspondence such as mail and courier packages come through the loading zone, one space was not enough.

Lord felt the previous location of the disabled parking space was hazardous: "I wanted the space out of harm's way."

He added that although the spot was further away and inconvenient, it was "out of the line of traffic." He suggested that the time needed for a person with a disability to vacate their car may obstruct oncoming traffic, and that people may be putting themselves at risk by parking in such a location.

Lord said he received one complaint from a student and is concerned about the situation. But he

does feel that his judgement was reasonable, adding, "I get paid to make these decisions."

The student who submitted the complaint will meet with Lord and Dalhousie Student University Executive Vice-President Lilli Ju to discuss her concerns.

"The student is very adamant about having the space moved and finds the new spot inconvenient," said Ju.

The meeting will address not only the future of disabled spaces' accessibility, but also the process by which these decisions are made.

Lord is not adverse to moving the space and hopes to resolve the matter so that all parties are satisfied.

FEATURE

Nova Scotia changes benefits to single parent students

BY EMILY REED

Single parents who are students are trying to survive the financial change in policy for those who also receive family benefits.

Jackie Proulx is one of those students.

"Everybody has got a piece of us and we have to manoeuvre amongst these rules just to keep our heads above the water," said Proulx.

Proulx, as well as 800 other family benefits recipients in Nova Scotia, received a notice in May that she felt "entailed ambiguous details" about cuts in the living expenses they would be entitled to borrow when the school year began.

Royden Trainor, the Policy Advisor for the Department of Education, explained that "both family benefits and the student aid programs were providing funding to cover living expenses. [From now on] family benefits will continue to provide living expenses while student assistance will cover educational costs."

The change in policy is to avoid double funding of costs. However, according to Proulx, this has never occurred. Previously, single parents on family benefits were able to borrow the living expenses they needed and, like all other students, were able to live a moderate existence.

Now, since the funding for housing is the duty of family benefits, single parents in school are receiving less for living expenses than single students. Proulx said the family benefits regulation changes have revoked \$70 per week from single parent budgets due to this alteration in funding.

The Nova Scotia government has also changed the Career Planning Program which Proulx and other family benefits recipients could apply for if they were upgrading job skills. This program formerly allotted \$200 each month for transportation and child care which is now no longer offered.

Trainor spoke of a new and seemingly helpful "grandparenting clause."

"For clients who have received student assistance in past years, we have increased the \$18 for miscellaneous costs to \$50 per week," said Douglas Nauss, the Executive Director of Finance and Operations in the Department of Education.

This clause only applies to students currently enrolled in a program; if they change programs or continue their education after the completion of their present program, they will no longer receive the \$50.

Also, single parents entering first year in September 1996 will only be able to borrow \$18 each week. The only people affected by this "grandparenting clause" are those 800 family benefits recipients for the next few years. This appears

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to exist only to silence complaints during the implementation of these funding changes.

There are breaks that single parents are given. For instance, they do not have to list bursaries or scholarships as "resources" when they apply for loans.

"The Student Assistant Programme provides approximately \$4,000 for child care," said Nauss.

The child care expenses must be documented to be funded.

This works well when parents take their children to day

care agencies which issue receipts but when babysitters are needed for evening study groups or time at the library, receipts are rarely offered. Since this form of care is not documented, it is also unfunded. Single parents face enough barriers already without having more imposed upon them by the government.

A new addition to the policy is being implemented also for emergency financial cases. When, for whatever reason, a single parent cannot make ends meet, she is able to speak with a councillor to make an appeal for extraordinary funds.

Chris Webb, the president of the Students' Union of Nova Scotia (SUNS), feels that this "could benefit everyone if the parents could quickly receive the money."

There is no funding formula for this new change and the individuality involved causes one to question the fairness and objectivity involved.

This issue is complex and multi-faceted. Saint Mary's, St. Francis Xavier, the University College of Cape Breton, and Dalhousie all have representatives for single parents who receive family benefits and these people are becoming increasingly vocal. Letter-writing campaigns are continually being encouraged on campuses.

This is not only an issue of family benefits; it also directly affects social issues, women's issues, and poverty issues.

Proulx said she and others in her position find the changes "discriminatory since family benefits recipients in school are the only individuals being unjustly targeted."

She added that they are being denied the funding that every other student has at their fingertips.

"We've been told that the only way out of poverty is through education," said Proulx. "We're trying to do what we've been told all along, but because we're the poorest of the poor we're being penalized. It just doesn't make sense."

For more information or to get involved with other single parents at Dalhousie who are demanding equal funding, phone Proulx at 423-2742.