



Oh, Oh. Somebody must not have studied for their final, 'cause there was another bomb threat last night, this time in the Education Building. Those darn play-terrorists. Photo Tim Hellum

Ex-student sues Ryerson

TORONTO CUP — Students disgruntled with the way a course is taught can sue the institution offering it, an Ontario court has ruled.

Provincial court Judge Pamela Thomson Sigurdson concluded recently that a 37-year-old former student at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute can sue the school because one of its professors allegedly departed from the official course outline.

Hughes Chicoine, a professional photographer in an upgrading programme, failed a compulsory third-year course in 1981-82. He was expelled from the programme.

Chicoine appealed using internal university procedures and was eventually offered the chance to repeat the course.

Unsatisfied, he took the case to small claims court to recover about \$630 in tuition and some \$800 in student loans.

Ryerson challenged the court's jurisdiction in the case.

Although the courts traditionally stay out of internal university disputes, Judge Thomson Sigurdson found that the rules governing Ryerson do not exclude courts from deciding on a breach of contract.

"The purpose of Ryerson Institute is to provide programmes and courses of study in a variety of areas; not to adjudicate complaints arising from student/university relations," she said in her judgement.

Chicoine's lawyer, Frank Hubscher, said the decision "certainly opens up the situation" for students to take legal action against their schools.

"The precedent has been established. Yes, you can sue for a breach of a course outline," he said.

Hubscher couldn't speculate on how widespread the impact of the judgement will be, but he said his phones "have been ringing off the hook from students who want to retain my services."

Ryerson's lawyer, Alison Young, argued in court that allowing the action to proceed would open the floodgates for lawsuits but afterward she downplayed the ruling.

"I don't think it's that big a deal," she said. "In the final analysis I don't think students care enough about the course outline being adhered to."

Young said that having gone through the university appeal process, Chicoine should not have been given recourse to the courts.

"Our position is that he's really complaining because of the mark he got rather than a breach of contract," she said.

Council of Ontario Universities information officer Will Sayers agreed with the two lawyers that education malpractice is a burgeoning area.

"It's the kind of litigation whose time has probably come," he said

of Chicoine's lawsuit.

He said university presidents are likely following the case with interest, but added "there's no reason to think that there's a groundswell of protest coming" from students who think an institution hasn't kept its part of the bargain.

Christmas Pig-Out

by Bill Doskoch

So. You're stuck by yourself in Edmonchuk over Christmas with the spectre of a 7-11 Slurpee and Super Sub for Christmas dinner staring you in the face.

You may not find that an intolerable scenario, but if you do, you can call the International Student Organization. They have dozens of families willing to share a Christmas dinner with a needy student.

In fact, says Len Todd, this year's organizer, "We had sixty families last year and only twenty students."

Todd said there were no restrictions on who could qualify for a spot with a Christmas-spirited family, only that they contact him on or before Dec. 19 so that he can organize things.

He also encouraged students to apply in pairs or threesomes if they wish.

If you'd like to take advantage of this service, you can contact Todd at either 432-5782 or 437-2761.

Lunchroom fascism

BURNABY, B.C. (CUP)—An over-zealous security guard refused to allow students and faculty members carrying books into the Simon Fraser University cafeteria because he thought the rule not allowing reading in the cafeteria meant no books either.

Bill Stewart, SFU student services director, said he ordered guards to enforce the "no reading" rule in the cafeteria after faculty and staff complained. Students took up space studying, leaving no place to eat.

Although study space has always been limited at SFU, Stewart says the current crunch comes after a student lounge was turned into office space for the engineering sciences department.

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See page 17

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