

CFS debates voting issue

Universities. . . Is bigger better?

by Corilee Fox

OTTAWA (CUP) — Delegates to the annual meeting of Canada's national student lobby group were accused of navel-gazing after big schools again tried to convince the membership that large universities deserved more than one vote.

Steven Howard, Simon Fraser University student council resource worker and long-time participant in CFS, said members are looking inward because they lack direction.

"There's a fear of dealing with the real issues so people are left with worrying about internal matters," he said.

The Canadian Federation of Students, representing 400,000 students across the country, held its annual week-long conference representatives from 63 schools.

Brought forward by the University of Saskatchewan, the weighted voting proposal — which has nagged members at other recent CFS conferences — would give schools votes based on their enrolment.

Larger schools could therefore conceivably control a vote and the smaller schools would have much less say.

The motion was defeated.

"I'm getting dirty looks from the other Atlantic region schools, but why should I be for weighted voting? Our school would be screwed," said Nova Scotia College of Art and Design student council president Allison Lewis.

All Atlantic schools but NSCAD, which has a student population of 500, were in favour of the proposal.

But the 15 members of the Pacific region were against the motion — including the University of Victoria and Simon Fraser.

Those in favour said that schools which pay more money into CFS should have more votes. Each student pays \$4 a year into CFS, and proponents of weighted voting see it as more accurate and more representative.

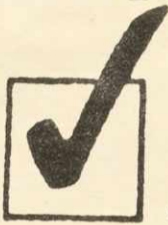
A francophone from Université de Moncton gave a well received speech on how francophones, natives and other disadvantaged groups would be affected by weighted voting. She said members of minority groups usually go to smaller schools — weighted voting would help large anglophone schools while disadvantaging the others.

Others felt weighted voting would be a good selling point for getting other large schools into the federation.

The motion — which needed a two-thirds majority — was defeated 26 in favour, 25 against. The University of Ottawa abstained.

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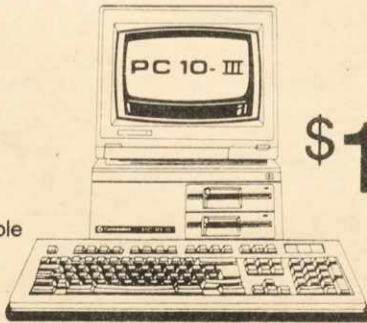
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CUP Briefs

Satan burns in Toronto

TORONTO (CUP) — For sale: one book. Slightly burnt.

Don't be surprised if you see an ad to that effect somewhere soon, after an unidentified pyromaniac slipped into the University of Toronto bookstore Nov. 17 and torched a copy of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*.

Bookstore employee Nicholas Pashley was the first to notice something was amiss.

"Two or three of my colleagues and I started sniffing around," he said. "There was a smell of butane in the air."

The book was discovered smouldering on a pile of books in an alcove, where someone had brought it from a main display area. "It was just sort of smoking," said Pashley, so "one of my colleagues put it under a tap."

Michael Jackel, a bookstore manager, said *The Satanic Verses* may have been targeted from what some have called its unflattering portrait of the Muslim prophet Mohammed. The book has been banned in India and South Africa.

Besides the one copy of *The Satanic Verses*, two other books that were under it and an adjoining book shelf were damaged.

For bookstore general manager John Watson, the expense of replacing the books is not an issue. "The concern is not the damage. We don't want this to happen again."

U of T police say they have no suspects, though they would like to find the anonymous tipster who phoned the student newspaper minutes after the incident occurred. "We're looking for him as a witness and we'd like to talk to him," said investigator Kevin Ward.

Jackel said the bookstore is not planning to make any changes as a result of the burning. "I don't think it's a trend or anything," he said, though "it is still very strange. I think it's the work of some crazy person."

Pashley, the bookstore's fiction buyer, just can't understand the mentality of bookburners.

"If people are going to burn books I wish they'd at least buy them first."

Microwaving molecules

SUDBURY (CUP) — A new use for the microwave oven has been discovered — in Laurentian University's chemistry laboratory.

Three scientists have found that microwave ovens can speed up chemical reactions as much as a thousand times faster than normal.

A microwave oven took 35 seconds to create a compound that usually takes 12 hours to produce, according to a recent article in the Canadian Journal of Chemistry.

And the secret of microwave chemistry lies in the solvent used, say the scientists. They found that "highly polar" solvents work best.

A highly polar solvent is one in which the electrons of each molecule are distributed unevenly so that one end of the molecule is negative and the other end is positive. Only with this imbalance can a molecule absorb microwave energy.

The chemists — Richard Gedye, Frank Smith and Kenneth Westaway — report that their culinary experiments ran into a few troubles. So powerful is a microwave oven that some of the reactions were explosive. Also, the researchers found they could only use sealed Teflon bottles, which are strong enough to withstand the pressures created inside them by microwave energy.

Boozing it up

SUDBURY (CUP) — The next time you attend class, look around for your peers. If you can't find them, chances are they were boozing it up the night before.

In fact, 40 percent of the Ontario university students have missed a class because of a hangover, according to a recently-released report called *The Drinking, Drug Use and Lifestyle Patterns of Ontario's University Students*.

The survey was answered by about 5,000 students at four provincial universities in the fall of 1987.

Almost 50 percent of respondents reported having a hangover in the last month, and 10 percent thought they had a drinking problem. Thirty percent of students are heavy drinkers.

Co-writer Louis Glikzman of the University of Western Ontario isn't alarmed with the numbers. "The alcohol consumption rate is lower than in American universities. Our average is around 12 drinks per week. In American universities the average is 15 drinks per week."

"What was most surprising was the low incidence of other drug use on campus, particularly cocaine," he said.

Only 4.5 percent of students use cocaine, 5 percent take stimulants, 7 percent consume hallucinogens, and 30 percent use cannabis.

Smoking isn't cool anymore. Sixty percent of the respondents report that they never smoke, and 25 percent smoke fewer than one cigarette per day.

According to the "Lifestyles" section of the survey, 75 percent of students have engaged in sexual activity in the last year and one-fifth had sex as many as three times a week.

However, about half have never had a love relationship, and only 14 percent have had more than two.