

YORKSCIENCE

Addiction Ethics

Dr. Richard Gilbert of the Addiction Research Foundation has worked out how much money smokers save Canada. "The savings to the community of not having to fund people in their old age," he said, "comes to two billion dollars a year, just considering that smokers die early and don't draw on savings or pension funds, and that old people have incredible health costs."

As a participant in the conference on "Ethics in Psychological Research" that was recently held at York, Gilbert was speaking on "The Ethics of Drug Abuse Programs." With this example about smoking, Gilbert was questioning the government's justifications for "getting into lifestyle manipulation."

"Years ago," he commented, "people used to talk about the society, the family... now discussion is almost exclusively about money. Most of it concerns attaching a dollar value to alcoholism, drug abuse, or smoking."

With his own cost/benefit analysis of smoking, Gilbert tried to show that this approach is often absurd and one-sided. "This economic analysis," he said, "is somewhat of a

nonsense...people who have chosen to go the economic route have the rug pulled out from under them if you take them at face value."

Nor is Gilbert happy with justifications based on analyses of health risks, as these too, he believes, have been one-sided. The most well known study on the effects of smoking, for example, showed that people who quit died less often from cancer and lung diseases than people who didn't quit. However, Gilbert pointed out what was not widely publicized was that they died more often from suicide and stress related diseases.

Similarly, Gilbert said, "There is now fairly good evidence that drinking one or two or three drinks a day is actually good for you," as it may reduce the risk of heart disease. If government advertising campaigns and increases in the price of alcohol reduce the average consumption, they may be helping the 5 per cent who drink excessively, but they are harming the larger proportion who drink in moderation.

Perhaps the government does have a responsibility, Gilbert allowed, to balance out the advertising by the alcohol and tobacco industries with more

objective information. However, he is frightened by how willing the public is to let government intervene in their lifestyles. Someone recently wrote to the editor of the *Toronto Star*, for example, suggesting that there should be a special tax on those who smoke, refuse to exercise, or whose diet is unsound. "Should governments be in the business of preventing drug abuse at all?" Gilbert asked. "How do you draw the line?"

Debbie Bodinger

Shock Tubes

To create an environment needed to study space re-entry satellites and supersonic aircraft, scientists at York's Petrie science building are

using equipment that has generated interest around the world.

A few weeks ago, high level scientific administrators from the People's Republic of China visited the laboratory of York physics graduate, Blair Evans, to examine his experiments with shock heated molecular beams. Blair, under the direction of York physics professor, Dr. Hobson, creates shock waves in long stainless steel tubes (shock tubes) at pressures similar to those found in outer space. The shock wave that forms within these shock tubes may exceed mach 30—or thirty times the speed of sound.

"We can create the tempera-

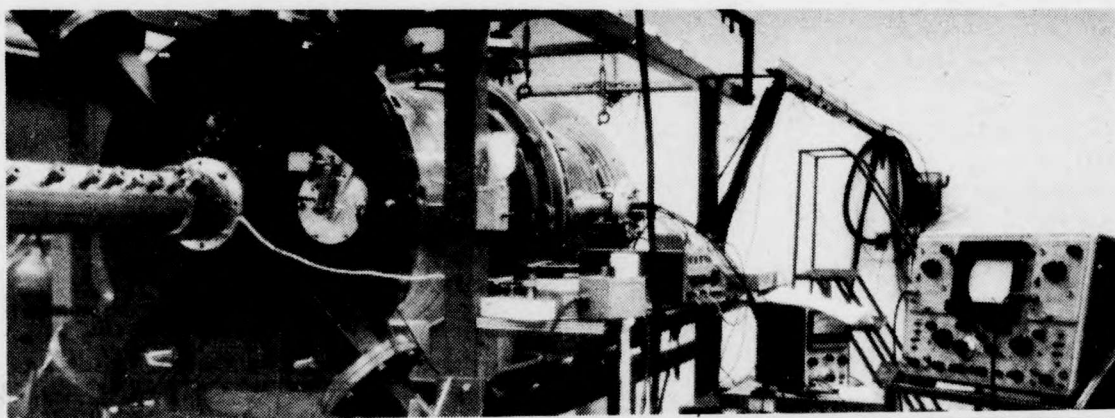
ture of the sun and the environment of outer space right here in the laboratory," explained Blair.

Under these conditions an environment is created in which complex upper atmospheric reactions with surfaces of space vehicles and supersonic aircraft can be studied.

A molecular beam is created during the process and Evans says there is a possibility of lasers being used in the future to create even more selective energy states.

Having spent six years studying shock heated molecular beams, Evans is soon to start work with the Department of National Defence. He received his Ph.D. last Monday.

Richard Dubinsky



Goldfarb Consultants

Interviewers Needed To Conduct Opinion and Attitudinal Studies

Must be articulate and empathetic
Part-time evening positions

Willowdale locations

Call 224-5223 7—9 p.m. only

WOMEN

ARE YOU SAFE WHEN YOU'RE ALONE?

Self-defense for women

A short, practical course not
relying on:
Size
Strength
Physical conditioning
for effectiveness.

Individual or group instruction.

CALL

Ronald Vaughan
225-0379

for further details and free
demonstration.



Rum flavoured.
Wine dipped.

Crack a pack of Colts along with the cards.