

Prof questions legitimacy of "concrete factual science"

Dear Editors:

We are often met with derogatory sentiments in this age when we study anything but what is considered to be "concrete factual science."

However, today even science itself is beginning to recognize that what it thought was "concrete factual reality" is now less than secure. Perception influences "reality" wherever it is sought. All one needs to do is think about Heisenberg and his indeterminacy principle which affirms only one thing with some degree of confidence: change and relation are the only things which we can call "essential reality." All else is theoretical construction which pursues a particular.

More importantly however, is the point that we must question our desire for certainty which is at the basis of seeing social science as "pseudo science" or less than deserving of full "scientific" credibility. For some reason we have become enslaved by the "objective" to the point where only material constructions are seen as gully tangible.

This, in turn, has led us to a pervasive respect for the wide and wondrous material accomplishments of physics, chemistry, engineering, medical science etc.

Yet, these developments have not come without great social and environmental costs. In all our fascinations with what can be physically built, we have left to neglect many other areas of concern. On the one hand, we now have the physical ability to travel

around the globe with astonishing ease; leave the earth and inhabit space; prolong life almost twice as long as 100 years ago; live in opulent material comfort beyond our ancestors wildest dreams (nightmares?); and destroy the entire planet in a moment of conflict.

Unfortunately, in the process, we have ignored many of the most important aspects of human existence such as: the effects that this pursuit of material dominance has on our parents and grandparents; our children; our relationships with each other; our heritage and history; our sense of culture and self; our ultimate needs as humans; and our earthly home.

Thus, it is apparent that your role in the future of our world will be a crucial one. It will be one which demands the subtlety of understanding to do more than build technological devices. We are at a point where understanding social relations and fostering cooperative living will be on the leading edge of our survival as a species.

So if you feel less than scientific or undermined by the pervasive view that your discipline is "soft" or "non-essential" to the survival of our species and our planet, let me assure you that it is not. Do not be deceived in to believing that your life or education are insignificant. The future depends upon social and human understanding . . . and you are its basis.

John Ferguson
Social and Political Thought

Guyana

Dear Editors:

In response to your "Troubled country seeks a 'new political force,'" in the October 5 issue of *Excalibur*, the situation with Guyana and the IMF illustrates the debt crisis faced with Third World countries in general.

Whenever one thinks of problems in the Third World, an overbearing financial debt comes to mind. But usually the real problem, at least in the situation with Guyana, is its internal politics. For 21 years no free elections have taken place, democratic rights have been abused and yet the Canadian and American governments continue to support such a corrupt regime. I think that if Guyanese people decide ever to return from their "volunteer-exile" it would be to return for political change.

Chris Premdas

Horton's location unhealthy

This letter is directed to the manager of Tim Horton's Donuts.

Dear Editors:

This is a short note to express my disappointment at the new location of your establishment. My associates and I no longer patronise you for reasons such as the following:

1. We do not smoke and hence avoid the irritating smoke, ash and tars of tobacco as well as the several hundred persons who frequent the enclosed area east of the Curtis Lecture Halls.
2. We consider this an unhealthy environment in which to sell food. If the aforementioned conditions are capable of changing the colour of our hair and causing our clothes to become sticky and smelly because of condensing gases then . . . surely doughnuts do not stand a chance.

I believe that the fact that Tim Horton's is situated away from the main thoroughfares of Central Square is not a deterrent, provided that patrons know where to find you. Many people, potential customers, do not even know that you exist at York. And some 1989 Winter/Summer students are wondering why you "left" York.

May I suggest a clean, quiet spot with some benches anywhere within a reasonable walk, possibly with separate areas to accommodate both the non-smoking and smoking patrons. And, of course, some pressing questions remain: Do doughnuts get lung cancer? Are "Timbits" immune? Are they jealous because they have no holes? Can a "Timbit attack" overpower the common sense and reasoning of the university community? Does anybody care? Respectfully,

P. Ali

opinion

Another Osgoode asbestos scare

Staff Story

There was another asbestos scare at Osgoode Hall Law School last week, although tests revealed there was no danger.

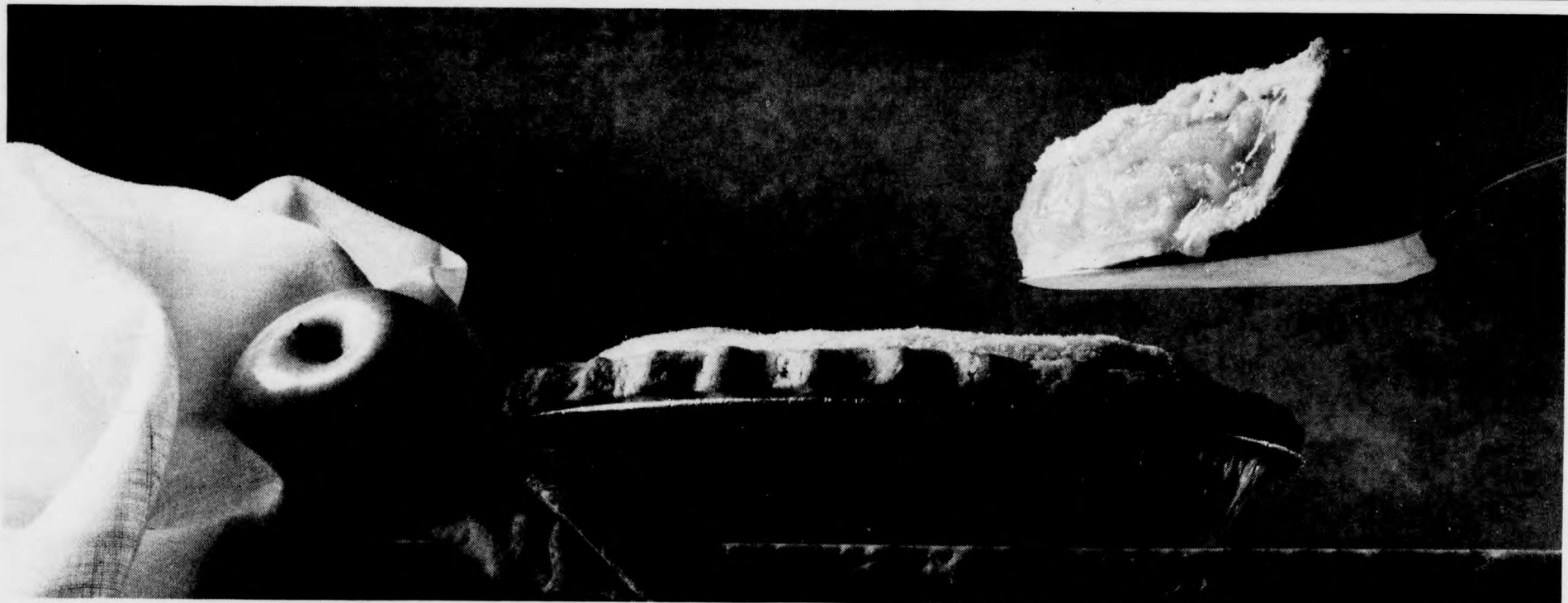
On Thursday a clump of material fell from the ceiling of the elevator, said acting law librarian Judy Ginsberg. She said this was "strange as there is no asbestos in the shaft." The area was cleared at 4:30 p.m., and two FAM tests for asbestos in the

were done at 10-minute intervals. Both were negative. The clump was sent for analysis and was discovered to be made up primarily of hair and dirt, said Ginsberg.

On Friday a ceiling panel dropped open in the reading room on the first floor of Osgoode's library. The area was cordoned off as, "We think there are beams with asbestos up there," said Ginsberg. Tests were done for asbestos in the

ambient air, which were all negative.

Although no asbestos was found in either case, the fear of this deadly material, which causes asbestosis, mesothelioma and lung cancer, is real enough to cause interruptions whenever the possibility of exposure arises. Everyone in the York community, not only Osgoode students, faculty and staff, should demand that the asbestos be removed immediately.



AMERICAN PIE.

ALCAN ALUMINUM.

Vivian Merrill's famous Northern Spy apple pie. Photo: Adrien Duey.

Your Piece of the

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