

Fehr preaching drug awareness

by Dragos Ruiu

Dr. Kevin Fehr, a noted drug specialist, will be coming to SUB Theatre on Friday, March 20th, at 8:00 p.m. to deliver a free lecture to the public about drugs.

Fehr completed her PhD in pharmacology at the U of T, specializing in long term heavy cannabis exposure in animals. Author of, and contributor to, several articles, books, and studies, Dr. Fehr has focused her research on the effects of drugs like alcohol, cannabis, and other psychoactive drugs like cocaine and heroin.

"I deal mostly with the illicit

drugs, cocaine, cannabis, designer drugs, and the variety of other strange things that are beginning to become available," she says.

Drug awareness is a subject that interests many people for different reasons, but media coverage of the issue is sporadic. "There was a lot of media interest in 'crack' last summer," says Dr. Fehr, but the media interest is now fading even if the drug isn't.

"It's hard to say whether the use of drugs in our society is increasing or decreasing, there are no reliable statistics. But from my impression, from increasingly larger seizures

being made by Toronto police, and deaths due to overdose for instance, I don't think the interest in psychoactive substances is declining."

"There is and isn't enough public awareness about drugs. People are very well informed about some drugs, but ignorance about some things like alcohol is amazing. We need education on two levels, the first dealing with caffeine, alcohol, and the other common drugs, and the other dealing with the variety of illicit psychoactives."

When asked if people are sticking to the 'usual' drugs like 'coke'

and 'pot' or branching out to more unusual drugs like mescaline, she replied: "Again, it's hard to say. There is a lot of misrepresentation on the street. When people think they are getting something like mescaline for instance, often they are just getting LSD. People have to learn never to trust any street pusher."

The concept of getting drugs off the street is the impetus behind some peoples' desires to legalize some substances. Dr. Fehr does not concur because "the more readily something is available, the more likely it is to cause trouble. Legal-

izing some drugs would imply we are saying it's okay to use them."

As far as university students go, "there is a lot of interest in drugs in that whole age group, experimenting with new modes of living. Students tend to use less drugs than people their age in the workforce."

"On the whole, the field is so complex, anyone who gives you a 'pat' answer is being idealistic." Dr. Fehr's lecture will discuss the long and short term physiological, psychological, and sociological effects of drugs in our society.

UBC to improve U access for Natives

VANCOUVER (CUP) — A \$300,000 grant from a Toronto-based foundation will make it easier for native students to attend and benefit from studies at the University of British Columbia.

The Donner Canadian Foundation will fund a program known as the First Nations House of Learning over the next three years. UBC has also agreed to raise \$150,000 from outside sources in the second and third years, giving total funding of \$450,000.

"We want to access more Indian people to the university," said Jo-

ann Archibald, one of three executive members of the project's advisory committee and supervisor of the Native Indian Teacher Education Program at UBC.

"It is important to start communication with other faculties and schools to see how they can better meet the needs of Indian students for post-secondary education," she said.

At present, there are about 200 native students at UBC, or less than three-quarters of one per cent of the student body of nearly 27,000.

In B.C. as a whole, however,

native people count for about three per cent of the total population.

At present the First Nations House of Learning is still in the planning stages, but the advisory committee, chaired by former B.C. supreme court justice Thomas Berger, intends to have a director and support staff working by September.

While many native students at UBC are currently in the native education and law programs, Archibald says one goal will be to improve course offerings and enrollment in other faculties as

well.

"Some native communities are looking at self-determination and self-government, which really need skills and knowledge to be in control of business, economics, social services, and natural resources," Archibald said.

But she stressed that skills gained at university would give native graduates the opportunity to work either in native communities or in the general workforce.

The second purpose of the First Nations House of Learning is to promote research that will help

native people in B.C., with the long-term possibility of benefiting indigenous people around the world.

Another long range goal will be to establish a permanent centre. The project is currently seeking funding for the building, which could take the form of a longhouse overlooking Georgia Strait.

"We should have a First Nations House out here at UBC," said Archibald. "After all, we were the first people here."

WLU students nix the pill frill

WATERLOO (CUP) — Students at Wilfrid Laurier University said no to the Pill in a recent referendum on adding a \$16 birth control pill option to their existing health plan.

Some students say the vote may have been swayed by a Christian group which set up an information table near the referendum polling booths.

"They should not have been there. There is no way to tell if it affected voting," said Alvin Campbell, a student who asked Laurier Christian Fellowship member Scott Dalton to stop a speech during polling hours.

But Fellowship president Tom Wills, who was leading the referendum's "NO" campaign, said the group's presence near the polling stations was "coincidental."

"I did commit infractions, but it was unknowingly... it was 100 per cent an accident. We had nothing to say about the Pill," said Wills.

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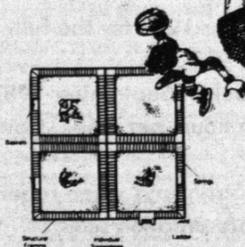
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VOLUNTEER ACTION CENTRE

The Volunteer Action Centre (432-6431), a United Way agency, has urgent requests for the following volunteer assignments that are of interest to students:

Corrections: A youth detention home needs recreation assistants and a city institution needs a sewing instructor for female inmates.

Instructors: Craft instructor needed at a youth correctional centre and a dance teacher is needed at a singles council.

Crisis Line: Volunteers needed to staff the Sexual Assault Line and the Distress Line. Both services offer excellent training.

Ukrainian Village: Volunteers needed in variety of research jobs about pioneer Ukrainians in the province, maintenance and restoration of equipment and tools, operation of audio visual and theatre equipment, manufacture of replica pioneer vehicles, costume making, translating and clerical work.