

\$11 million in strategic funds

Feds direct new research

by Peter Michalshyn

The major government granting body for social sciences and humanities in Canada has moved sharply towards the theme of strategic research.

The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) received an extra \$11 million on January 14. The new money will specifically "support research in Canadian Studies, to fill the gaps in our knowledge of Canada in all its social, cultural, and political complexity," said federal Minister of Communications Francis Fox in a recent announcement.

The \$11 million is split between three years: one million in 1981/82, and five million for two years to 83/84. That will bring next year's SSHRC budget to \$46.6 million.

While money available for 'strategic' research will increase, funds for independent research by Canadian scholars will remain the same.

This apparent shift of emphasis has been criticized in the academic community, most of which relies on the Council for research grants in the social sciences and humanities.

There have been protests that the decision could lead to a situation where money is available to study the history of Shakespearean theatrical productions in Canada, but not to study Shakespeare.

Professor James Lightbody, the Alberta representative on the Council, disputes these fears.

Lightbody said in an interview that the Council was faced with a decision to ask for money it thought it could get, i.e. money for strategic, Canadian studies, with the side-effect of maintaining the level of support strictly for independent research.

He called it a "very complicated" process of getting funds from Ottawa where money is tight these days.

"We decided (unanimously) we would go for greater strategic funding," Lightbody said, instead of hoping the government would

merely increase funding across the board.

"It worked," he said. "If we had not acted, money for independent research would have declined," Lightbody predicted.

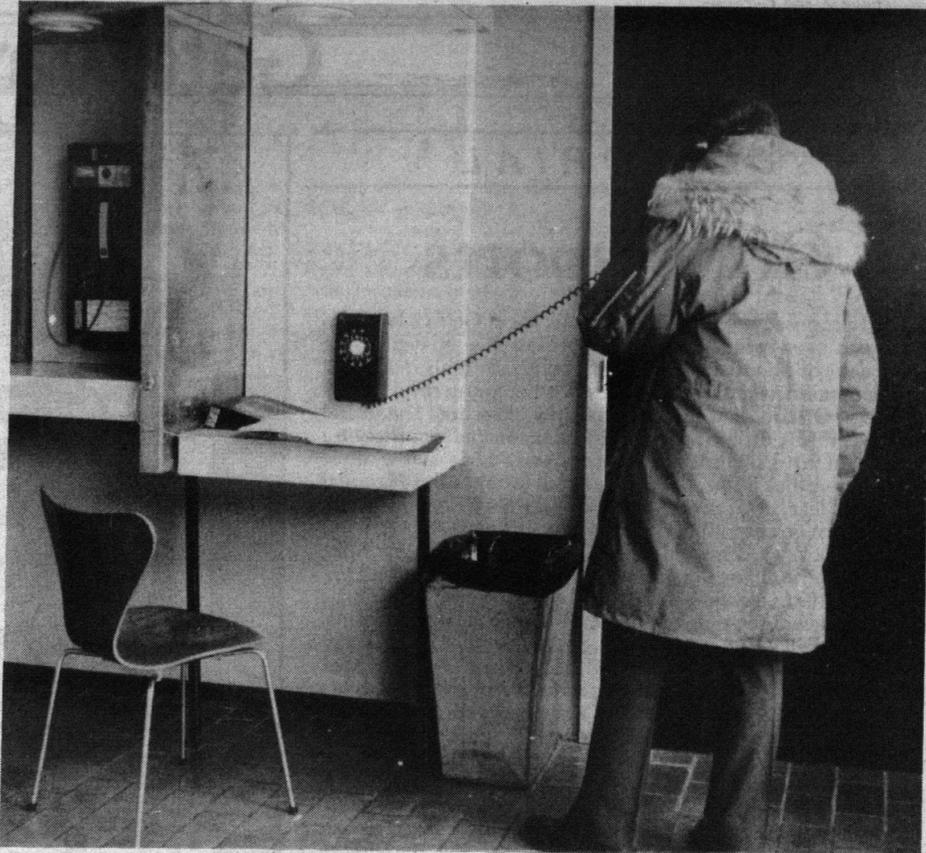
Lightbody also disputes that strategic research is directed by political imperatives from Ottawa.

"I've never seen any evidence of direction," he said.

Strategic themes are identified by the academic community itself, Lightbody says, via a thorough system of advisory committees and peer assessments.

However, SSHRC President Andre Fortier, has said:

"...clear that our priorities for research on subjects of national concern...which we had worked out in consultation with the research community... matched those for the government very closely."



Yes, folks, it's back. Our intrepid investigative photographer tracked down that mysterious missing Students' Union phone. It seems the SU removed it by accident, when no one answered the phone when they checked to see if anybody was home. Rumor has it they asked George to take all calls.

Satellite project really reaches out

by Richard Watts

Monday evening saw the launching of Project Outreach, an exciting experiment in educational television.

Using satellite technology, two-way interactive educational programs will be transmitted to seven locations in Alberta: Calgary, Edmonton, Grande Prairie, High Level, Peace River, Fairview and Grouard.

This means viewers will not only be able to watch live educational programs on television but will also be able to communicate instantly with the instructor on the air over the telephone toll free.

This ability to conduct interactive communication with teachers is the major characteristic of Project Outreach.

"It is indeed an exciting new technology," says Ian James project director.

Project Outreach will be a 6-month experiment by the Alberta

Educational Communications Corporation (ACCESS).

ACCESS will be working in conjunction with the provincial government, the Federal Department of Communications, the Knowledge Network in B.C. and the educational cable T.V. consortia in Calgary, Edmonton, and Grande Prairie.

Programming will cover a wide range of topics including credit courses in first year French from Athabasca University and a Library Technician course from

Grant McEwan Community College. Other topics include cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, energy efficient housing construction and a food-safety series.

ACCESS will broadcast six hours of interactive educational T.V. for the next six months. Project Outreach will then undergo extensive review and technical evaluation.

Says James, "This is a learning experience for everyone, including us."

Project Outreach is part of a

five year plan looking at the feasibility and effectiveness of satellite broadcasted interactive educational television.

"The Knowledge Network in B.C. is already fully operational but here in Alberta we tend to be more cautious," says James.

Says Sherrel Beresh the project co-ordinator; "If all goes well, and subject to budget approval, this program should be implemented permanently within the next five years."

Olivia Butti's Diary

Tuesday, January 19, 1982

Dear Diary:

I really didn't think I would, but I loved it! Now I've always tried to uphold the moral standards of this city and especially our community. I'm proud to say I led the fight to get that disgusting strip joint out of decent God-fearing Wolf Willow. I also stood up against unbalancing our neighborhood with low income housing. (I'm sure most of those people are honest but why put them where they'll be so tempted to steal?) So when my neighbor Hillary told me a video games arcade had opened up by the beauty parlor I was enraged.

"Video games! They're worse than pool halls," I told Hillary (by the way Diary, they really did a wonderful job on Hillary's hair. You can't see that little bald spot at all now). "They're pits of smoking and cursing and they drag little children into the back room and shoot them up with marijuana and make them miss school."

Well that's what I really thought Diary and all in a dither I phoned city hall and tried to order an emergency council meeting but all I could get was a recording that said everyone had gone to lunch until contract problems were settled. I really don't know what is ever going on down there so I said to heck (pardon my french, diary) with it and Hillary and I decided to take care of matters ourselves.

We were going to march down to that arcade and run it out of town, or at least Wolf Willow. But when we got there and went inside it was so dark that I couldn't see a thing.

By the time my eyes adjusted I'm afraid I'd lost Hillary. All I could see were people standing in front of little lights. What scared me was the horrible music they were playing all beeps and crashes and electric squeals. I thought it must be

some sort of modern jazz.

Still, everyone looked well behaved and quiet. I saw a yellow light across the room and went to see what it was.

"So this is a video game," I thought. It didn't look so evil; in fact it was really cute. A little happy face zipped through a maze eating cookies. It reminded me of Ethel Dalquist at the Toast-mistress's smorgasboard banquet. It was called a Pac-man machine and it cost a quarter. Well, diary, I was feeling that maybe I'd been a bit too quick to judge and so I thought it was only fair to give it a try. I put in a quarter and moved the happy face through the maze but it wouldn't go like it did before and a red jellyfish sat on it.

I was sure I could do better if I just tried again but I was out of quarters. I went up to a counter to change a dollar but I must have given them a 20 by mistake because they gave me some rolls of quarters.

Well, I tried and I tried again and it seemed just when I was getting so I could eat all the cookies in the maze a man came up to me and said it was time to go home. I looked at my watch and heavens, it was nine in the evening.

Outside I finally found Hillary. She told me she had been shooting centipeeds and asteroids and space invaders going on about defending Gorf and Targ. She was babbling but she'd had a wonderful time.

Pete was sure angry that I got home so late but I just told him I was in a special secret city council meeting and that I couldn't say anything about it. On the way home Hillary and I decided we would take our Tuesday bridge club to the arcade next week. Meanwhile, I'm going to hurry over to city hall tomorrow and requisition a Pac-man machine. I definitely think this is something city council should investigate further.

