

Montreal students marry in protest for more aid

by Catherine Bainbridge
of Canadian University Press
MONTREAL (CUP) — Montreal students are being invited to tie the knot in a mass marriage for student aid money at Concordia University Mar. 14, and one "couple" will win an endowment of a year's free tuition.

The mock marriage licenses will read: "These persons were joined in monetary matrimony for the purpose of obtaining Quebec student aid witnessed by many other students joined together for the same reason."

The engagement documents read: "We understand that should either of us get cold feet, neither of us will get cold cash."

The symbolic marriage ceremony at Concordia's Loyola campus auditorium is intended to show that many university students are not eligible for provincial student aid because they are not considered to be "independent" from their parents. Some resort to marriage to change that.

"The 'independence' criteria have absolutely nothing to do with age, whether you live at home or not, or whether your parents will actually pay for your education," said Pete Wheeland, Concordia student council vice-president, an organizer of the event.

The only way to gain "independent" status in Quebec is to either get married, divorced, pregnant and keep the child, finish 90 credits towards a degree, or work for two years without going to school full-time.

Independent status brings in a possible \$2,000 extra a year. The maximum amount a dependent student can receive is \$4,000 in loans and bursaries.

"We consider it ludicrous that students have to resort to marriage to make it through school," Wheeland said.

"It's really, really dangerous for people to get married this way," he said. "Most students don't know the legal problems it can cause until it's too late."

If a spouse decides to drop out of school and get a job, for example, they must pay into the education of the spouse still in school and can be sued for continued payment even if the couple gets a divorce, said Wheeland.

Dividing up the estate can also be thorny if no marriage contract was drawn up before divorce, he added.

"If you're going to do it, get good legal advice," he said.

Wheeland said there was no way to estimate how many marriages of convenience take place, but during the recent Quebec election campaign the Liberals acknowledged the problem as widespread.

He believes students should be considered independent of their parent if they are living away from home and are over 18.

Most students are considered dependents by the Quebec government. Their parents' combined income determines how much aid they get. At present, only parents earning incomes below the poverty line are exempt from contributing to their children's higher education.

"Dependent" students whose parents have a combined income of \$28,000 and over (with no assets) cannot ask for any financial aid - even if their parents refuse to give them a cent.

"If a student's parents refuse to give them money, their only recourse is to sue their parents for it," said Roger Cote, Director of Concordia's Financial Aid Office.

Cote said the biggest problem lies with students of farmers and fishers. A family's assets is also used by the government to determine how much it should pay towards its children's education. A farmer's income is generally very low, but

his assets (tractor, trucks, grain elevator) are generally extremely high. Such a family would be expected to pay handsomely into their children's education, even though they probably have no actual cash, said Cote.

"People are selling their homes, cars and taking on mortgages to put their kids through school," Wheeland said.

The Quebec Liberals have only promised to raise the combined income level from below the pov-

erty line to right on the poverty line for access to full loans and bursaries.

"It would cost the Quebec government alone hundreds of millions of dollars if the system changed," said Cote.

The wedding ceremony will be

presided over by a former cleric. One lucky couple will win "the love lottery" of a bursary equivalent to one year's full-time tuition (\$450). Same sex couples are encouraged to marry, said Wheeland. Also and "instant divorce" booth will be on site at the ceremony.

TELEPHONE REGISTRATION

Winter Session 1986-87

All currently registered students MUST secure their Registration materials from their Faculty office during the period noted below.

Students who are planning on changing Faculties and/or Programs are advised that they SHOULD obtain their registration materials NOW from their current Faculty office. Students MAY register in their current program, and when admitted to their new program, will be given the opportunity to cancel their previous registration and re-register in the new program. Students changing programs SHOULD register in their new programs as soon as they are admitted.

NOTE: SINCE MOST STUDENTS WILL BE REGISTERING USING THE TELEPHONE REGISTRATION SYSTEM, IT IS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE TO REGISTER AS SOON AS YOU ARE PERMITTED!

PROGRAMS:	LOCATION:	ROOM:	DURING:
Agriculture & Forestry	Agriculture-Forestry Centre	2-19	March 18 - April 11
Arts	Humanities	5-20	March 17-20
Business	Business	2-20	March 17 - April 30
Education	Education Building - South	833	Commencing March 17
Engineering			
Current 2nd & 3rd Year Students			
Chemical	Chemical & Mineral Engineering	536	March 17 - 21
Civil	Civil & Electrical Engineering	220	March 17 - 21
Electrical & Computer	Civil & Electrical Engineering	238	March 17 - 21
Mechanical	Mechanical Engineering	4-9	March 17-21
Mineral	Chemical & Mineral Engineering	606	March 17 - 21
Home Economics	Home Economics	115	March 17 - April 11
Medical Laboratory Science	Clinical Sciences	B117	Commencing March 17
Physical Education & Recreation			
Bachelor of Physical Education	Van Vliet Phys. Ed. & Rec. Centre	Pav-421	March 17 - 27
B.A. Recreation Administration	Van Vliet Phys. Ed. & Rec. Centre	E-401	March 17 - 27
Rehabilitation Medicine			
Occupational Therapy	Corbet Hall	316	March 17 - April 11
Physical Therapy	Corbett Hall	316	March 17 - 27
Speech Pathology and Audiology	Corbett Hall	316	March 17 - April 11
Faculte Saint-Jean	8406 - 91e rue	102B	du 17 mars au 18 avril
Science (Honor & Special)			
(General)	Biological Sciences	CW223	march 17 - 27
	Biological Sciences	CW223	March 17 - April 11
Graduate Studies & Research	University Hall	2 - 8	Commencing March 17

(Graduate students should contact their Departments first)

Other Faculties

to obtain registration information, please contact your Faculty Office after March 17.

THE TIMETABLE WHICH CONFIRMS YOUR REGISTRATION MUST BE CLAIMED AT THE TIMES NOTED IN THE REGISTRATION PROCEDURES BOOKLET. TIMETABLES WHICH ARE NOT CLAIMED WILL BE CANCELLED. ONCE CANCELLED, REGISTRATIONS CANNOT BE RE-INSTATED.