

CROSSCANADA

Ontario students drink like fish

by John Besley

OTTAWA (CUP)—Ontario students drink almost five times more than the general population's average of three drinks a week.

This was the conclusion of a report released early February by the Addictions Research Foundation, which was based on survey results gathered in 1993.

The \$45,000 study, called "University Student Drug Use and Lifestyles Behaviours," surveyed more than 6,000 students at six Ontario universities. The universities were not named.

About 95 per cent of Ontario students drank in 1993, and the average amount was 15 drinks per week.

The survey also showed that students living on campus are almost three times more likely to be heavy drinkers than those living offcampus.

The study also found science students were less likely to drink than arts students.

The study found that one-third of university drinkers drank 15 or more drinks a week, a level it calls "hazardous."

About 16 percent of drinkers also claimed to have consumed more than 28 drinks a week during the survey.

Drinking 15 times a week for eight months at university costs about \$1,170, even at \$2 a drink.

Heavy drinking, defined as more than five drinks per occasion, was engaged in by 52 per cent of surveyed students.

Drinking habits seem to begin in high school, the survey notes, peak around the first year of university and then gradually slack off.

New electronic journal in limbo

by Jennifer Ditchburn

MONTREAL (CUP)—An innovative academic journal, produced at Concordia and accessible through the Internet, might become another victim of budget cuts.

CTheory, formerly known as the Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory, was founded in 1981 through the Political Science department. Two years ago it was put on-line, and is currently read by scholars and students in 27 countries through the World Wide Web.

CTheory editors Arthur and Marilouise Kroker were informed by Concordia's administration that the salary allocated to the journal's listserver manager would be frozen. The Krokers say that without a salaried worker to oversee the technical operations, *CTheory* cannot survive.

Touted as "an international, electronic review of theory, technology and culture," the journal's articles range from book reviews to analyses of events and cultural phenomena. Subscribers are able to discuss the material interactively through the Internet, and subjects touched upon in the articles are cross-referenced to other sources in the Internet.

Since hearing about the funding freeze, the Krokers sent out a notice over the Internet informing their readers about their situation. In less than a week, *CTheory* received more than 300 letters from university deans, professors, artists, journalists and students from around the world.

The journal has a much-lauded editorial board, which includes postmodern icons such as writers Bruce Sterling, Kathy Acker and Jean Baudrillard. The National Library of Canada has said it will be using *CTheory*'s format as a prototype for its future archiving system.

Low dollar hurts library acquisitions

by Lisa Draho

WINNIPEG (CUP)—Libraries at the University of Manitoba will not be purchasing \$80,000 worth of new books this year, thanks to the low value of the Canadian dollar.

"It's a serious problem because the purchasing power of the dollar has declined so we have to buy fewer books," said U of M director of libraries Carolyn Presser.

With the current exchange rate, a book that costs \$100 coming from the United States will now cost the library \$144. According to Presser, at least 90 per cent of the books come from outside Canada, with at least half coming from the U.S.

"We can't get around buying material from the U.S.," said Presser. She went on to say that if the dollar doesn't improve soon, next year's acquisitions could be affected adversely as well.

As for finding additional funds to compensate for the loss, Presser says there really are no options. "If we were to take money out of the operating budget then we would have to close the library early. It's a balance," says Presser.

So far the money collected in fines on overdue material is between \$45,000-\$50,000, which Presser says was intended to be used to purchase more books, not offset a sagging dollar.

The budget for new acquisitions this year is \$2.45 million. So far this year, U of M libraries have spent \$1.3 million towards purchasing material.

Canadian University Press (CUP) is a national organization made up of over 40 student papers from St. John's to Victoria. CUP enables student papers to exchange stories and ideas through the wire service, regional and national conferences. As a founding member of CUP, the Dalhousie *Gazette* makes sure that our university news becomes national news.

news

Some support Axworthy

by Lori Coolican, The Carillon

REGINA (CUP)—Rare though they may be, some students actually support Human Resources Minister Lloyd Axworthy's plan to cut transfer payments to post-secondary education and introduce a new system of income-contingent student loans.

When university students across the country protested over the proposals, some such people were reluctant to talk.

One student at the University of Regina spoke on the condition that he remain anonymous. "Someone always gets hurt when you make cuts," he said, adding that predictions of tuition rates quadrupling are pure speculation.

Other students support Axworthy's plan out of concern for what they think is the greater good of society.

"Changes to how post-secondary education is funded would increase the accessibility of universities to people who are not members of the upper and middle classes," said Chris Myrick, a graduate of political science from Memorial University.

Myrick's opinion is contrary to that

of many student protesters, who believe that a hike in tuition would make education even more elitist. Myrick points to research that suggests unfairness in the current system, allowing universities to be dominated by upper and middle class students.

"While students have a right to strike and protest, they do it out of self-interest, not concern for society as a whole," Myrick said.

Bryan Larson, an education major at U of R, agrees with Myrick's assessment. His main reason for supporting Axworthy, however, is linked to the national debt.

According to Larson, Canada's financial crisis justifies making cuts to education. "It's going to hurt now...but I know it's necessary."

When asked about the prospect of university closures, Larson said, "I would be willing to accept it if this occurred."

In answer to this same question, Myrick replied, "I'm not sure every university should be open, really."

University of Regina economics professor Michael Rushton points out that increased tuition fees would be the result of provincial decisions, not Axworthy's plan. This is because edu-

cation falls under provincial jurisdiction according to the constitution.

"It's a complicated issue," he says, and describes the student strike as a "knee-jerk reaction."

Rushton speculates that increasing the availability of student loans would benefit the larger, more established universities who are better at attracting students to their campuses.

Other students, while opposed to funding cuts, are strongly in favour of income-contingent loans. Christine Hardacker is one such person.

"I'm currently attempting to organize support for Axworthy based on his proposal of income-contingent loans, but not the proposed cuts," said Hardacker, who is having trouble making payments on the loan that allowed her to attend Simon Fraser University.

Of course, critics argue that people who believe government arguments about the inevitability of social program cuts have been hoodwinked by propaganda and are not able to frame Canada's problems differently.

Thousands not enough

by Mohammad Ghiasvand

OTTAWA (CUP)—Although thousands of students across the country turned out in support of the Canadian Federation of Students' call for strike and action Jan. 25, mainstream media covered it as a failure, student groups charge.

The Ottawa Citizen's coverage ran the headline, "Student strike fails to make the grade" and the Globe and Mail only published a picture with the cutline, "Although protest rallies took place across the country, most students stayed in class."

Student groups criticize the media's coverage of the demonstration, saying the media failed to represent the actual number of students who participated in the demonstration.

"The total number across the country was 75,000 to 80,000," says Guy Caron, national chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students. Most media reported about half that number.

"That was the largest Canadian student protest since the Vietnam War. In spite of that, the media was calling that a failure."

Alex Taylor of Canadian Union of Public Employee Local 2323, which represents about 1,100 research and teaching assistants at Carleton University, goes further. He says, "The number of students was deliberately turned down."

"The message was that students should not protest, that exercising that democratic right was wasting time," Taylor says. "The majority of students were in favour of the rally. Nobody wants to pay \$8,000 in tuition fees."

Bob Cox, the Canadian Press reporter who covered the student protest on Parliament Hill Jan. 25, does not agree. He says there is no way to count the exact number of people in such events.

"They [the student groups] build it up as a national day of strike, but that did not happen."

Student groups and their leaders say the media focused on the student division more than the reasons behind the protest.

"The perception was that the students were split in two parts," says Caron. "There were only about 10 to 20 student associations which signed a press release saying that they were opposed to the demonstration. They [the media] did not say that the [demonstration on the] 25th was supported by 80 to 90 associations."

Chris Cobb, media writer for the Ottawa Citizen, says coverage was "balanced."

"When you have different opinion in student body, which obviously existed in that protest, it is very fair to mention that in the story."

Caron also argues that the media ignored the support of the student demonstration by more than 100 organizations, such as the Canadian Association of University Teachers, the Canadian Labour Congress, the Canadian Auto Workers, and the National Anti-Poverty Organization.

"The coverage was negative. The media looked at it as a local issue [rather] than national. They failed to see it as a national movement."

But Cox says the supporters are not unusual and the media do not have room to mention all of them.

"These groups support one another. We have only limited room for any story and we cannot mention all of them."

Get Aware...

Disability Awareness Week

by Nora Bednarski

In recognition of Disability Awareness week, there will be several events taking place in the Dalhousie Student Union Building from Monday, February 27 to Friday, March 3.

The events for Monday and Tuesday are tentative at this point, but a Deaf Theatre Troupe performance is being planned for noon Monday and a presentation/discussion for noon Tuesday, both in the SUB lobby.

Wednesday through Friday the CARAVAN 94-95 will be occupying the SUB lobby. This is a leading edge multi-media show on new attitudes, technology and capabilities for, by and about Canadians with disabilities. The aim is to sensitize post-secondary students and faculty to the new age of ability for people with a physical disability.

CARAVAN 94-95 is an interactive look at disability. State-of-the-art appliances and equipment serv-

ing the needs and interests of people with disabilities are exhibited in nine distinct theme stations or pods: telecommunications, prosthetics, sensitivity theatre, visual and hearing impairment simulation, computer technology, prevention, daily living, sports, and transportation.

Show-goers can take control of an actual mio-electric artificial hand. They can make a phone call using a TTY (telecommunications type-writer for the deaf). They can test their speed and endurance on an authentic racing wheelchair. This first-of-a-kind learning centre is showing at twenty-six Canadian universities and colleges across Canada.

The Dal/King's Association of Students with Disabilities is very excited that this presentation will be at Dalhousie and it is hoped that there will be considerable interest paid by the students to the exhibits.

Please contact Nora Bednarski at 492-3267 for more info.