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MARY HUGHES, UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S CLUB CAREER DAY 1976 CONVENOR, CHATS WITH KEN MCGAN AND MICHELLE PURDY, 60 professionals at Career Day

Grade 12 and 13 Georgetown and district high school (GDHS) students had the opportunity to meet 60 professionals Thursday. University Women's Club members Eleanor Scarth, Mary Hughes, and Carol Lusby started organizing Career Expo 1976 last spring. "I think it was probably very successful," said UWC president Mrs. Scarth, adding that some of the career representatives offered to come back another year and many students told her they enjoyed learning more about lucrative careers. Career day was kicked off with a speech by director of Sheridan College's Centre for Women Sheila Wilkinson. An education consultant, she urged young people to enter any career which attracts them, regardless of traditional sex-stereotyped occupations. "Show were two films, 'Welcome to the Working World', depicting people in a wide variety of jobs, and 'The Fable of He and She', satirizing the he-doctor-she-nurse syndrome. Following the movies, students gathered in the gymnasium to chat with the 60 professionals

Computers pose a threat to individual privacy, Ontario government lawyer tells women's club

By HELEN TAZZMAN
Diane Saxe, solicitor for the Ontario Government, addressed the University Women's Club on the issue of invasion of privacy. Computers, rather than wiretapping, pose a threat to the individual. While wiretapping is governed by law, the accumulation of data is largely uncontrolled. Every time an individual enrolls in a class, fills out an application for a job, or subscribes to a magazine, he adds to the computer data on himself. Credit cards, medicare, and unemployment insurance contribute to the fund of information. Thanks to computers, private matters such as one's personal income and medical records are available to any organization that can give a business reason for purchasing data. For three dollars an agency can buy computerized information on you. The collection of information is often justified by the interests of a good cause. National security and studies in sociology are among those recognized as legitimate. Records are also necessary to confine welfare rolls to genuine cases of need. Again, the Children's Aid Society requires reliable information on prospective foster parents. There is no end to the proper uses of computerized data. However worthwhile some of its uses, the spread of information on the individual has many unfortunate side effects. Loss of spontaneity is a possible result of the psychological stress of living under surveillance. "A simple thing like a record of enrolment in a sewing class could cause a man embarrassment or mean the loss of job opportunities. As a result, a man might pass up the chance to learn a useful skill just to be on the safe side. Computer data may have even more serious repercussions on the hiring situation. Where once it was possible to make a good first impression, it is now likely that the applicant for a job is up against preconceived notions about him based on computer files. Such reports are apt to be quantitative, disregarding the personality factor. Again, computer records may be detrimental to society as it deprives people of a chance to make a fresh start. In the past, people who made mistakes often left town to live a better life elsewhere. Now damaging records may frustrate attempts at reform. Computer data may also be a threat to society as it is open to political abuse. Records of personal weaknesses may be used in a totalitarian state for purposes of manipulation. A situation like that in 1984 could become a reality. Imagine what Hitler could have done with a complete dossier on everyone in Germany. In any country, there is danger when too much information gives power to the few. Were computers less prone to error, Canadians would be less conscious of the dangers. However, infuriating mistakes continue to cause unnecessary problems. These can range from inability to buy insurance-use credit, or get a job. Usually individuals are not told why they are meeting unforeseen obstacles. The high incidence of error may be attributed to the fact that investigators are largely untrained. Since they tend to be poorly paid, it is not surprising that many fail to take a professional interest in their job. Once an error is fed into a computer pool, it may be repeated any number of times. Unfortunately, a computer print out has an authoritative appearance no matter how loaded with errors. In 1973 the government placed some restrictions on information to protect the individual. All references to race, colour, or creed are banned from the record. Data may not be sold after seven years, though it may be kept on file. An insurance company must notify a person in writing of it getting a credit report. The individual has the legal right to request the name of the agency submitting the report. He may then demand to see his files. The agency must submit to all such written requests. A member of its staff must explain the coded report. An individual has the right to take someone with him when he visits the agency. In addition, he has the right to copy the report. He may also demand to know all the firms or individuals to whom the information was sold. In the case of error, the individual may demand a correction. It is the responsibility of the agency to send the correction to all the companies that bought the original record. Often this applies to records of debts that have been paid. Faulty records can ruin credit rating. Should an agency fail to correct an error, the individual can notify the Ontario Government Registrar at 555 Young Street, Toronto. This action can result in the cancellation of an agency's licence. Though the Ontario Government acknowledges the need for strong laws to protect the individual, the problem of computer information has not yet been solved. Several large firms send data on Canadians to the U.S.A. A further complication is the electronic funds transfer system which may be expected to be in operation within the next five to ten years. Under this system, the price of a purchase will be electronically deducted from one's bank account before one has left the store. What errors and frustrations this will lead to can only be guessed. Diane Saxe concluded that the need for well defined laws to protect the individual from invasion of privacy becomes urgent as more sophisticated uses of computer information become common.

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Official plan meetings a success, Munro says

Halton Region official plan meetings held during September in a number of regional centres were a success, Coun. Mary Munro, chairman of the planning committee said last week. Halton Hills Coun. Ric Morrow echoed the comment saying that the Georgetown meeting, the last of the series, held Sept. 28, provided "good, solid comments." The meetings averaged about 30 to 60 people each. Mrs. Munro said that more than 550 responses have been received to the forms distributed by flyers and in local newspapers across the region. The survey sought public comment on the direction land use and social goals of Halton Region should take for inclusion in the regional official plan. She said the responses are quite high since the normal response to such surveys is about one to three per cent.

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