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Porter speaks

Public education creates inequality

By AGNES KRUCHIO
Public education has failed to equalize opportunities and to make up for social inequality, John Porter, author of the *Vertical Mosaic* and a professor at Carleton

University told a York audience last week.

Porter was speaking at the first session of the annual series of Lectures to be held by the Faculty of Arts.

"Public education's false promise was that it would be one of the chief instruments to achieve social equality," Porter said.

"Public education was to challenge inherited privilege by providing opportunity for children of less well off sectors," Porter said. Besides these lofty ideals, educating the children of the less well-off sectors also served to provide a more highly skilled labour force to meet "the needs of the developing industrial nations".

Equality of opportunity, Porter said, "implies a society in which resources are distributed unequally - but in which access to the structural inequality should be open to all without regard to the individuals' social class origins, their parental resources, their religious affiliation and their membership in minority group or sex", Porter said.

"Educational and occupational opportunity as it now exists can be regarded as a series of prizes to be awarded through competition, but with really disproportionate odds

in favor of those who come from better off origins winning," Porter continued.

Thus, Porter said, inequalities have not been ironed out. While more people may indeed have more access to upper level education, there have been people who already have had more opportunities by virtue of coming from a higher socio-economic class. This, Porter called a lack of "equality of condition". This inequality of condition cannot be eliminated except by the elimination of families.

Equality of condition can be achieved by, for example, the abolition of "unjustified levels of inheritance, progressive taxation, reduction of differential wage structures, and the elimination of occupational monopolies." Education, Porter said, has recently been "condemned in the United States because it has failed to achieve equality of condition".

Even though the educational level of today's labor force is higher than previously, Porter said, there is no evidence of equalized opportunity.

"What develops is an educationally segmented labor market where educational credentials become a screening device. While there may be some

equalization of incomes within educational levels, there will be continuing inequalities between them..."

"Thus, while it seems logical to think that when an advantage becomes as widespread as education has, it ceases to be an advantage and becomes valueless through debasement, that equalizing consequence does not seem to have happened."

If not public education, what makes a difference in what children learn?

"The only answer" Porter said, "is the differences in family background, and cultural milieu which are favourable to learning; resources, that is, which children bring to school. These cultural differences are a reflection of the already existing inequalities of our social class structures."

Thus, Porter argued, the evidence against schooling as it presently exists mounts. "It does little to equalize cognitive skills; variations in the resources employed have little effect on educational outcomes, and has little consequence for the reduction of income inequality," Porter said.

"Rather than offset the inequalities of class, public education has served to perpetuate them," he said.

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South Africa loans should be condemned say U of T profs.

TORONTO (CUP) — Two University of Toronto professors have asked that loans to South Africa by Canadian banks, of which the university is a shareholder, be publically condemned

Professors Conrad Pratt and Martin Klein told the U of T proxies subcommittee that four Canadian banks—the Royal Bank, the Bank of Montreal, the Toronto-Dominion Bank and the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce are involved in a 28 bank consortium planning to lend South Africa \$200 million.

Pratt asked the committee to formally recommend that the university call on the banks to cease the loans. The committee was set up to consider complaints about socially or morally questionable practices of corporations which the university holds shares in.

Pratt pointed out that three churches — the Roman Catholic, Anglican and United — had already taken such a stand.

Official figures on the university's holding in the banks were not available at the meeting. As a result, the committee asked the two professors to appear at its next meeting February 23 with more information.

"We feel the loans are wrong," Pratt told the committee.

"They shore up an oppressive regime, they link us with the oppressors, and we become benefactors of the oppression.

"South Africa is at a crucial turning point. Whether they have the courage to make significant changes is not clear. What is clear is that if they continue in the present direction, there will be increasing conflict. These bank loans encourage them in a false sense of security."

Klein added that "a creditor is always involved in the fate of the debtor. These loans give Canadians a direct interest in the survival of South Africa's pro-apartheid government."

Pot potent in refrigerator, dark places, THC is destroyed in six 'light' days

LONDON, ENG. (ENS-CUP) — Keep your pot in the dark.

That's the word from a group of University of London pharmacists who found that darkness — not a cold temperature — is the essential factor in keeping cannabis at its original level of potency.

According to High Times magazine, the group used several methods to test marijuana, hash and THC solutions for potency before and after storage. They discovered that cannabis keeps reasonably well for up to two years

when stored in tight, closed, dark containers at room temperature. Refrigeration helps only slightly they report. However, laboratory solutions of THC are totally destroyed after only six days exposure to light.

The researchers also suggested that smokers only clean as much weed as they plan to use immediately, because crumbling it destroys the gland cells that store the resin and help protect it from light and oxygen.

Opposition leader doesn't oppose pot possession

KINGSTON (CUP) — Progressive Conservative leader Joe Clark said he favors the legalization of marijuana possession. In response to a question at Queen's University January 21 "Do you favor the legalization of marijuana?", Clark said, "of possession, yes."

He said, "I have some worries about trafficking ... and I am just not current with how the term trafficking is being applied in the

courts. I wouldn't want ... to have a criminal record attached to somebody who occasionally ... supplied marijuana to a roommate. That I don't think is trafficking, and the court definitions might suggest it is.

"I would not have criminal records attached to possession."

Clark made the remarks in an interview with the student paper, *Queen's Journal*.

