

NOTES FROM THE IVORY TOWER

The Culture of Speed (pt II)
by Daniel Goodwin
continued from last week

I realize that there will always be a few students who can make the Dean's List doing a double honours degree in Mechanical Engineering and Nineteenth Century German Philosophy; while playing goalie for the varsity hockey team; while serving as president of the debating team; while volunteering at the local literacy centre; while working part-time at Zellers. But most of us find it hard enough just to meet the demands of academia along with maybe a part-time job.

To prove my point about the way the system operates now, try to think back over last semester. Try to recall everything you learned. How much of it do you really remember?

For English majors, this conspiracy against time is embodied in the "one novel a week syndrome," referring to the one novel a week which professors routinely assign for reading. In theory, one novel a week is fairly innocuous. But multiply that by five courses and you've suddenly got five novels a week.

And of course, there's more to reading than just reading: there's answering questions, writing papers, studying for exams, and if there's any time left over, there's also thinking about what you've just read. If you're "reading" five novels a week you're not going to have much time to think. Which brings me to my radical suggestion: why not lower the course load?

This is not a simple argument to make. It is very easy for people who have real jobs in the real world to envy the privileged lives of students who attend classes for fifteen hours a week. (That's based on most Arts programs: I know science and engineering students have a lot more).

It's easy to say how good we have it. And we do have it good. I'm not

arguing with that. All I'm suggesting is that the way the system operates now is not the most effective way for us to learn. And the last time I checked, universities were about learning, not about making life difficult.

In the absence of any fundamental restructuring on the horizon, many students have devised strategies to deal with the chronic shortage of time. And many of these strategies involve cutting corners, or cheating.

I'm not referring to the flashy type of cheating that gets you expelled: bringing in crib notes to finals, or paying someone else to write your exam for you as one member of the illustrious Kennedy clan saw fit to do. That kind of cheating does not occur all the time, and it's not the most insidious kind.

What I'm talking about are students I knew who are now members of respected professions who helped themselves along by altering a couple of words in papers that their friend had written two years earlier for another course and then handing them in as their own.

I'm talking about a friend studying for a profession in which physical safety is a priority who regularly gets together with classmates just before class to copy each other's assignments.

I'm talking about reading the intro and conclusion to a book and passing that off as having read it. I'm talking about padding essays, not because one has something meaningful or important to say, but just to be able to hand in the mandatory number of pages. I'm talking about the systemic cheating which has become an expected part of the academic routine.

In his latest book, *The Unconscious Civilization*, philosopher John Ralston Saul criticises the current political mindset which views higher education as merely a tool of the economy, a sort of intellectual factory designed to produce workers. Saul writes that what this "approach seems to miss is the simple role of higher education - to teach thought."

One of the prerequisites of thought is time, and it is very difficult to make the time to think when one is constantly scrambling to cram for tomorrow's quiz or cobble together that umpteenth paper.

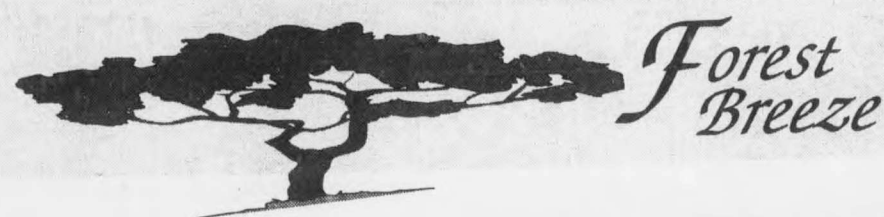
Left Jab continued from page 9

The answer is simple: Our student unions have a top-heavy approach to student politics. It's a game of fun-loving political opportunism. That's why "Roly" and any Tory who'll say the "right" thing was allowed to speak, while the rest of us stood around like mushrooms. And that's why, when Lamrock plans a demo, the last thing he thinks to do is call the rest of us.

And what next? "Roly" didn't sign the paper" (the main chant at the demo).

Do Lamrock, NBSA President Linda Gionet, etc., have any plans to build on the momentum of the 15th? Unlikely. Lamrock and his CASA buddies won't call anything bigger unless we push them. But we also need something more....

For those interested in building an alternative to the "Lamrock Lobby Machine", check out the next public meeting of the International Socialists: "The Politics of Malcolm X." Date: Feb. 27; time: 7pm; place: MacLaggan Hall, Rm 109. Info.? Call 454-9233.



The debate between sappy treehuggers and chainsaw wielding foresters continue

Christmas Mountains II by Jason Northcott

Contrary to popular stereotypic ideas that all foresters carry a Pioneer chainsaw in the back on their 1/4 ton 4X4 pickup, I felt that it was necessary to express that not all foresters see the

province received the second lowest grade in Canada, a D-, by the World Wildlife Fund in its Endangered Spaces Campaign. (Alberta was the lowest with an F) Maybe we can start by protecting some of the Christmas Mountains from harvesting, by not looking at the forest as a renewable resource, but as an intricate part of the community of which we are a part.

The mandate of the environmental groups (except the extremists in Earth First), is not at all to bring the forestry industry to a halt.

forest in volume per cubic metre. There was an article that recently appeared in the Forest Breeze which warranted such clarification concerning the harvesting within the Christmas Mountains.

The mandate of the environmental groups (except the extremists in Earth First), is not at all to bring the forestry industry to a halt. We are aware of the harvesting operations that occur within the Christmas Mountains, but I wonder how many of us consider this area to be ecologically unique. That is the concern for groups such as the Friends of the Christmas Mountains. As ecological managers, foresters must be willing to take the responsibility of their decisions. The Christmas Mountains is the largest remaining virgin balsam fir forest in New Brunswick. And are we willing to cut it down cause we undo progress and return to a natural state?

New Brunswick itself does not rank well with the mandate to protect Canada's ecoregions, actually this

second to nothing, paper is used by everyone, everyday, sanitary products, boats, the list is endless. However, some luxuries need to be questioned; excess packaging, junk mail, etc., are wasteful and detrimental to our dependence on wood and wood by-products. New Brunswick is harvesting at the maximum limits of the annual cut effect, thus if anything should happen to the wood supply in the future (fire, bugs...), 'the bottom will far out of her.' That's one of the reasons why the mad dash is

...we are willing to cut down the largest remaining virgin balsam forest in NB

occurring within the Christmas Mountains; industry does not want to lose one cubic metre of timber due to blowdown. If something is not done to protect a portion of the Christmas Mountains to maintain New Brunswick's original biodiversity, it'll be

lost and missed. Due to our country's drive to be an economic world power, the environment has suffered proportionally. Fortunately there exist groups that are gaining public support in regards

to the degradation of the out of doors. With industry on one side and environmentalists occupying the other side, somewhere a balance of ethics and opinions may be obtained in the middle. So as a forester, I think that we have a responsibility to consider the ideals and agendas of others, despite that they may counteract our management plans.

STOP
WAL-MART PHOTO LAB
Go Back Valuable
Coupons on Page 4

Announcing The Fabulous

GRECO MUNCHIE MEALS

Tasty, crispy Carrot & Celery Sticks with dipping sauce!

Our delicious 12" Grecoworks Pan Pizza Perfectly proofed!

10 delicious Greco Chicken Wings Delicately baked to a crispy golden brown.

9 Crispy, golden Garlic Fingers with mozzarella cheese and Greco's famous donair dipping sauce

It's a Buffet in a Box!

*12" GRECOWORKS Pizza
* 9" Garlic Fingers & Sauce
*10 Chicken Wings * Veggie Sticks

\$16.99

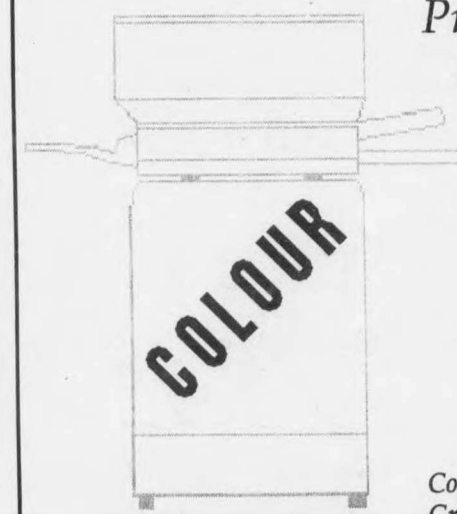
The Greco PIZZANUMBER™ is the number to know!

310.3030

Your call goes directly to your local Greco Restaurant. 30 minute delivery.*

Now Available:

High-End Kodak COLOUR Copier
Science Library



Prices:

Colour 8.5 x 11
\$2.00

Colour 11 x 17
\$3.50

Colour
Transparencies
\$3.25

Colour copier also available at
Graphic Services