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Culture or Politics?

If French Canada Week was a flop, it was not because of the reasons mouthed by the local press, but because of a basic misunderstanding on the part of the Week's guiding Committee.

Whatever the present problem in Quebec, it is not primarily political. There are political manifestations of the problem, of course, but that is a very different matter. Approaching a problem by studying its manifestations must, perforce, be a secondary and more superficial investigation.

By placing too much emphasis upon the political aspects, there was necessary underplaying of those elements—the social, cultural, linguistic and religious differences—which ought to be central to any discussion of the "Quebec situation."

Because, it seems to us, the present "revolution" is being led by intellectuals, there should have been more representatives from that camp, even at the expense of Sauve and MacLennan. Though Madame Chaput-Rolland was here, she is not so much a writer as she is a journalist, a distinction we should keep clear.

One French-Canadian writer could have told us more than a dozen cabinet ministers.

One sociologist could have told us more about the demographic, economic and cultural facets of the situation than any six English speaking novelists from Montreal.

It is clear from the attendance at the panel discussions that the students of this campus suspected there was more to be learned from artists than from politicians. Or it may be that literature and the arts is a better drawing card than professional oratory.

Whatever the case may be, there is no extreme dissatisfaction with what the week presented or attempted to do. But if the attempt is repeated in the near future, we hope those who are responsible will accept our criticism so the results will be more satisfying.

There was a beginning to the dialogue, which has, we think, something to do with that ever-new bugaboo, the "Canadian identity," but that beginning came too late in French-Canada Week. Live and learn!

Mickey Mouse Revisited

Not so long ago we suggested a number of courses that the Faculty of Science should offer.

Now, if we may be permitted to change feet, we offer a suggestion to the English Department.

As those concerned know only too well, science students have to take arts options in their second and third years. Students in honours programs have to take senior arts options.

The study of literature is one of the major entrances to the enjoyment of all cultural entertainment—movies, drama, television, painting, music, ballet et al.

But the science student who wishes to proceed further in the study of literature finds that all the senior courses in English are, to a greater or lesser extent, relatively specialized; and that they require as well, quite a bit of time both in the reading of the material on the course and in the research of term papers.

The science student has not the time that the arts man has for such work. Labs and lab reports can chew up the available hours very rapidly.

Is it any wonder then that we hear

so many students taking "Mickey Mouse" arts courses in Classics and Philosophy, courses that no respectable artsman would venture near?

We suggest the English department present a course, not unlike the present English 210 course, in which a number of genres can be approached from a variety of critical positions, a course without a large amount of extra-textual study, that can still provide more vistas in literature to the student than he gets in English 210.

We suggest that the novels, short stories, plays and poetry that will make up this course be drawn from as wide a range of literature as the junior course, the nationality and period not be given too much consideration, and that the writing allotment for the course be less than that of other senior English courses, while the reading allotment remains about the same.

And, may we suggest that these courses be taught by the best lecturers available—a number of them if necessary, in rotation—and that it be not open to arts students.

Are you listening, Dr. Kreisel?



"SHALL WE TRY HIM?"



One look at the slumbering hulks of Pybus should be enough to convince anyone that the New Students' Union Building is a necessity — couch space is even now at a premium, and by 1972 there will be only one cushion to every three students.

The lounges in the Cameron Library have taken on the appearance of bedrooms—student behavior there is not inappropriate to this new designation. The Education Library staff have posted polite notices requesting that students not sleep on couches, with various rational arguments for not doing so.

The reason for this return to the horizontal during daylight hours is the inexplicable ability of students to avoid sleep at night.

For some the problem is insomnia. But more commonly, one cannot stay awake long enough. In the great huge hours of the morning, when my typewriter is beginning to leer at me and the sun is cresting over the mound of unread notes, I think back wistfully to the time when eight hours' sleep was not the exception.

One can catch up at home during the day or early evening, to be sure. A friend of mine went to bed at 6 p.m. the night before a test, in order to study more clearly later on. She woke up at 4 o'clock the next morning.

Some students say they have trouble falling asleep. Their problem is that they are going to bed too early. When I finally turn in, the bed receives an inert bulk that has fallen asleep in mid-air.

Of course, going to bed early does have its advantages. They tell me that in residence the other night some girl by a fantastic display of will-power to go to bed by 9:00. It did happen that there was a fire in the Men's residence that same night, and

someone called her up at 11:00, but otherwise the manoeuvre succeeded.

But one should always look on the lighter side. I once had a roommate who was an insomniac, and who insisted on reading with the light on until two or three in the morning.

This began to get on my nerves. Though I could put up with his other peccadillos—a bushel and a half of chestnuts he was storing in our room, the wiring to an unfinished seaker system that constantly entangled my feet, and the various socks, shirts, etc. that he left inartistically littered on the floor—the light and the reading were just too much.

So one day I bought a flasher—a small, round, metal disk that fits into a light socket and causes the light to flash off and on when someone turns it on—and fitted into the reading lamp of my roommate.

That evening Ed came in, bringing with him a fifty-foot extension cord that he dropped in the middle of the floor along with the other mess. He got ready for bed, climbed in the upper bunk, and turned on his light. It started flashing.

With appropriate profane exclamations he tried to fix the light. Finding it impossible without taking out the wall plug, he jumped out of bed, falling heavily on the chestnuts, still cursing, he jerked out the plug, unscrewed the bulb, and extracted the flasher.

Thinking this was the end of the fun, I started to go to sleep. But this was not all.

Ed could not find the plug to his lamp. It took him fifteen minutes of pawing through extension cord, speaker wire, socks, and chestnuts to locate it again, while I lay in a state of collapse from the utter hilarity of my roommate's misadventures.