

Suzuki discusses impact of science

by Byrl Mason

David Suzuki, Professor of Biology at U.B.C. and a winner of the Master Teacher award there, spoke to a captivated audience at the Rebecca Cohn auditorium, Feb. 4.

He is the host of the T.V. series "Science Magazine" and the radio, "Quirks and Quacks", programmes he hopes will help demystify science. As well he has received the E.W.R. Steacie Memorial Fellowship for the outstanding Canadian scientist under thirty-five years of age.

The impact of scientific discoveries on the future of life on this planet is of great concern to few people. Suzuki, in his attempts to enlighten the public about the all too mystifying community of the Scientist, raises once again the question of the worth of knowledge for knowledge sake.

Scientists are often victims. Given problems to solve they are specialists working for wages. The results are that not even they realize what extent their discoveries may affect the lives of generations of people to come. This is not to say scientists are justifiably in or even very responsible about the research they are involved with. No one really seems willing to accept the responsibility of challenging the validity of scientific research. Something an ignorant public is not even capable of doing.

The Titans Return: Science in the Modern Age was the lecture Suzuki delivered Friday night. The Cohn Auditorium was packed, so seats for some of the overflow were provided. However, as the stage was filled, many people were turned away at 7:40. The lecture began at 8:00.

Suzuki's ability to hold the interest of his audience was exceeded only by the honesty of his concern over what is happening in the world scientific community.

Scientists are often coerced in continuing research they themselves do not believe should be continued. This coercion comes from institutions, both military and industrial, in their struggle to lead



the race for power. Suzuki pointed out that the military and industrial complex employ the most scientists. It is these monopolies that have so little control imposed on them. The lack of control society as a whole maintains over them is maintained successfully by keeping all but a select few, in the dark. The exact type of research going on in laboratories and the intentions for the use of the discoveries made are vaguely, if at all, publicized.

It is, as though we are living in the dark ages. Why do so few people know of the DNA recombinant experiments being carried on at the present that pose a great danger to life as we know it? Scientists have, according to Suzuki, successfully combined human and plant cells. The obvious comparison is to the macabre Frankenstein stories of Mary Shelley.

Suzuki also mentioned the development of a new tool of war. It will be a type of nuclear missile that, once launched, is virtually impossible to stop. The weapon will zip fifty feet above the ground and will be undetectable to modern radar. Highly maneuverable, the missile, besides having the ability to avoid stationary objects will be capable of avoiding other defensive warheads.

The human race has come to believe that it is possible to improve upon everything. Even the human race itself is not excluded from this Orwellian creed. The time has come for the public to become aware of what the Scientific community is moving toward. To remain ignorant is to shirk responsibility for the well being of all.

THE OLD BITCH,

The old bitch,
she'd been condemned as senile
a good fifty years ago,
but well, the old battle ax
hobbles on regardless, no
she never paid no mind
to her death notice,
hands and legs halfway
to the grave by any account,
and if you turn your head
for a minute,
more of her goes to dust.
The steel plant.
The blessed steel plant.



And the one crowd
hanging on to her
for the chance of a job,
no matter if she gives them
the cold shoulder after a month,
and the other crowd, well, they're
trying to bloody well choke
the last inch of life out of her,
keep her coughing out
every desperate last nickel
they can squeeze.
The steel plant.
That blessed steel plant.

Meanwhile, the rest of us
are off to hell in a merry handcart.

Palms up for pogy!
Full steam ahead!

-SUE PERLY



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