

The editor

Is the university really

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Gateway Casserole Editor

Welcome to university.

Welcome to the unwashed, picket-carrying, un-informed, deluded, and protesting minority.

Welcome to the clean-cut, clean-thinking, and job-hungry majority.

Welcome to the salary escalator.

Welcome to our poorly-designed production line. We won't be able to do a complete job in a weekend, but we can make a good start.

There are mass lectures in the center ring.

The chemists will perform miracles from the podium. The psychologists will give fragmented insights into human nature.

But you aren't really in yet—you don't have a student number.

That lapel card isn't real varsity, because if it were, it would say 658342 or 642385 or 622435.

But don't worry, there's a comfortable little pigeon-hole . . . guest.

Go to the lecture and don't ask questions, because the opinion of the un-educated isn't worth anything. The same as the opinion of semi-educated students isn't worth anything.

Look at the lecture halls. They are designed to rule out professor-student interaction. A discussion in a hall with one-way acoustics and stadium seating is impossible.

Anyway no one would hear the question, and those who did would laugh. Just sit there and wait until you've completed this step in the Varsity Guest Weekend production line.

Students sit there all year. They sponge at the fountain of truth. They keep a passive and stupefied silence just like guests.

They are on the way to a nice fat-paying job—a job others would like if they had the chance.

And the student will get that job as soon as he's finished the process and the IBM, which keeps the records, has stamped him with a degree, just as they stamp a steak "Alberta Red Brand—Grade A" at the packing plant.

Students sit and sponge at the fountain of truth. They keep a passive and stupefied silence, just like guests.

The student probably didn't care much about his education. He probably had one or two courses he can remember anything about. And he will forget these in time.

He has memorized and forgotten a vast pile of irrelevant and unnecessary material, and now he is ready to take a place in the upper-middle class.

He may have asked one or two questions and had smart, deprecating answers to some of them.

He was more than likely not personally involved in any of his work.

He has been processed.

And this processing comes in little lumps called English and History and Economics.

The professor will tell the assembled mass what they need to know to pass. He will tell them his pet theories which most will write down and feed back.

They will feed back on essays. They will compromise what ideas they have for a few marks in some cases.

The professor will tell all. No need to think. The final is multiple-choice.

Take the truth, because it's on a tarnished platter.

The university is a factory and treats its student as raw material to be processed into products.

The student will get a job as soon as he's finished the process and the IBM has stamped him with a degree.

And these products go out into society where what little is left of them will be beaten into a company hierarchy.

They will become human machines who argue the law, heal the sick, keep accounts, sell insurance.

Their humanity has been smashed, because at no time has their humanity been respected. In school they have been exposed to the fountain of knowledge system which is Alberta education. A system which makes students view teachers as enemies.

A system which even encourages this view.

Alberta education makes material irrelevant for the student by drawing all the conclusions for him. In English he has learned to avoid the message of great literature by fragmenting it into imagery, plot, structure, theme, setting, and all the rest.

He has been shown its relevance in cosmic terms, but he doesn't understand literature because he has done none of his own thinking. When he finds a truth himself he identifies with it. In school he is told—he doesn't discover.

Kids are looking outside the school for their cultural satisfaction. They have pop culture. It's their own artistic creation. Listen to the words and the music for one night. It will come as a shock.

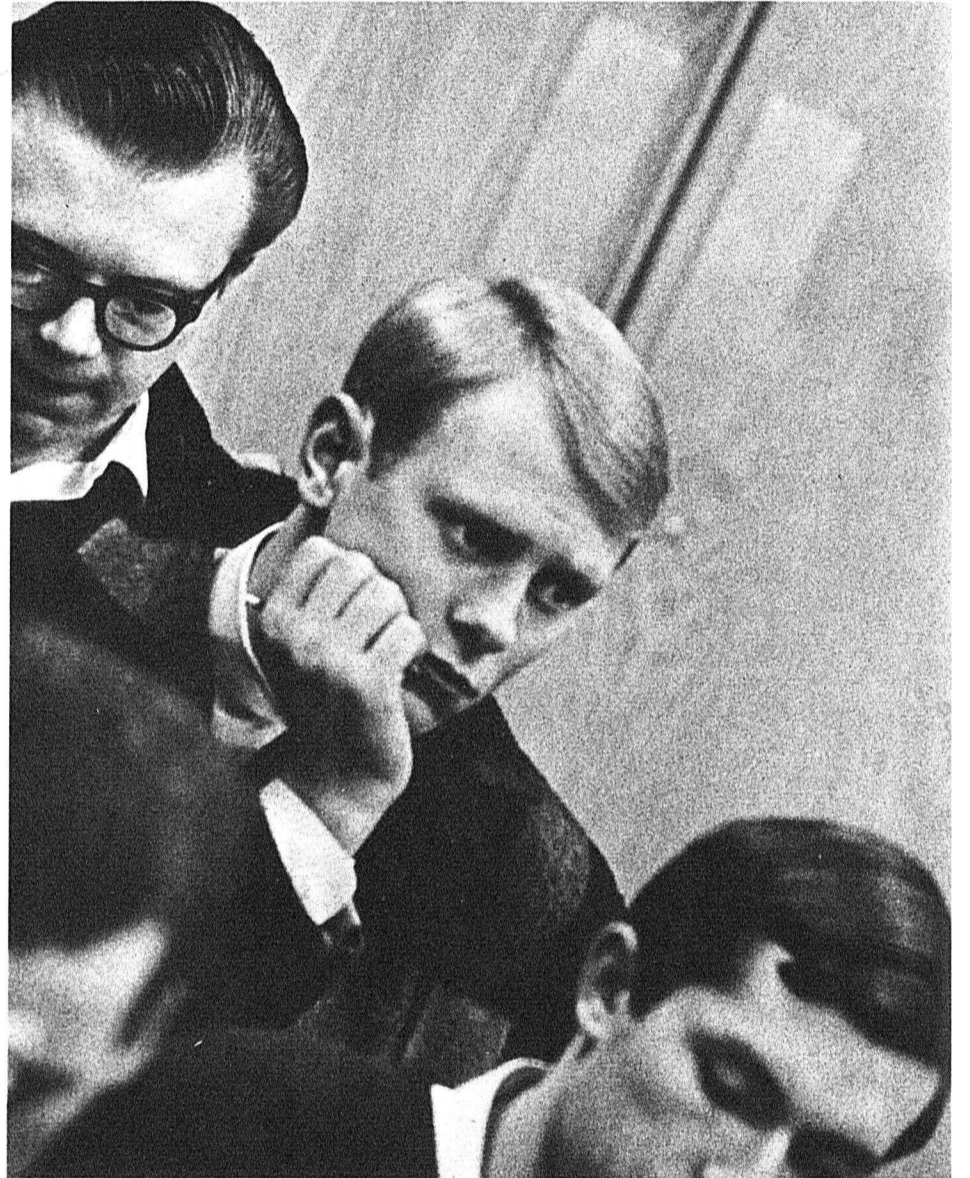
The school is not the centre of adolescent life. It is not part of the culture. It is not part of themselves. The real school is somewhere outside the austere walls of the government's instructional palaces.

"Hey there, Georgy Girl, Swinging down the street so fancy free,

Nobody you meet could ever see, The loneliness there."

And so it goes.

They want treatment as human beings.



HE HAS BEEN SHOWN

—Al Scarth photo

. . . its relevance in cosmic terms

And the same problem is happening in industry. They have found that the authoritative relations between management and employee, higher employee and lower employee, have killed creativity. Telling people doesn't work.

The authoritative outlook has built sanctions against being one's self in all areas of life. People are afraid of being wrong.

Donald MacLaren, a staff sociologist with Air Canada visited this campus last month in an effort to change the goals of education. He drew a parallel between industry and education.

In industry employees no longer find "intrinsic satisfaction" in their jobs, he said. They are only working for a pay cheque. They do not care what happens. The result is trouble.

To deal with this they have introduced "systems analysis." This means they make changes in the social organization of the company.

It means they start treating people as individuals. It means "the authoritarian stance is giving way, in some instances, to more participation in decision making, to freer and more open communication with one's superior; the concept of 'economic man' and the mechanical

views of the organization are being questioned; the human side of enterprise is being talked about; and perhaps most important, the expression of one's feelings has been by and large legitimized."

The quotation, in case there is any doubt about its reliability, comes from *Social Change In Industry: From Insight To Implementation*, by Alexander Winn, printed in *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, June 1966. The article is about social change in the Aluminum Company of Canada, a rather large corporation.

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But the authoritarian stance has not given away at all in our schools. They are black, teacher-ridden, holes. Dissent is not tolerated. Expression is a cardinal sin.

Students have no role in determining the environment. Students, who are the only ones who know whether their classes are irrelevant, whether their classes relate to the problems they face, are rarely, or never, consulted.