

—Al Scarth photos

THE BASIC THINKER POSITION, NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH THE MISSIONARY POSITION. PSYCH STUDENTS ILLUSTRATE VARIATIONS.

Let's look

at lectures

A short study in futility

Knees in nylons . . . sequined stockings . . . long greens . . . jeans. That's all you see as you try to reach the lone seat in the middle.

There's hardly room to get by so you squeeze past, murmuring apologies.

Five minutes to go and the girl beside you pretends you aren't there. Yak it up with thing on the left, or sit and stare cool off in space.

Humm, buzzz, mutter, whisper. And a blonde makes the grand entrance. Man, poetry in motion, but this is the only time you ever see her and you can't make time in a lecture hall.

background

This article was made possible only through the kind co-operation of Dr. Paul Swartz, who lectures the Psychology 202 class described. The story was written by 19-year-old arts student, Wayne Burns, and photographs were taken by a pesky photographic crew consisting of Al Scarth, George Barr and Chuck Lyall. Burns's remarks are only the view from one side of the fence and are not intended to reflect on Swartz's competence as a professor. The students say he is one of the best. But he seems trapped by the lecture system in the same way they are. Next week Burns will present the lecture hall from the Swartz view.

In the far back corner, in an ivory tower sits The Redhead.

She had to arrive first to get that seat.

At the back, are two girls making small talk. One sits frustrated, starring straight ahead—the other consoles her weakly. "Don't worry, you'll pass," she says.

ENTER PROF

Brack. The bell shatters the atmosphere and the prof enters.

Like Pavlov's dogs, trained to reaction, some students automatically swing their attention to the front and sit waiting silently.

The prof's opening gambit is strained humor and it gets a few nervous titters and polite smiles.

Ho, hum. The prof starts to dictate and pens move, burning up paper. Nearly everyone writes at first.

Over in the corner sits Alienation. He stares straight ahead, not responding to the jokes or taking notes.

The frenzy of note-taking lasts five minutes.

In the corner closest to the aisle sits the Quiet Man.

His hand is on his chin in The Thinker's position.

ROVING ORBS

His eyes rove the audience.

Not too far away sits Ecstasy. Long black hair flowing down her back, she tosses it like a young colt and waves flow backward.

The Quiet Man thinks the thoughts of wishful thinkers.

Prof cracks a joke. Even Quiet Man responds—it was a sex joke.

Half-way back sit Adam and Eve. Shoulders are touching and she leans toward him slightly. His fingers carress the soft hair on her arm, and she looks up from her note-taking and smiles.

Then his attention wanders again, he has a lump in his throat. He can't swallow. He looks anguished.

HYPNOTIC GAMS

Front row center, a sequined stocking in a cassock boot is bobbing and swaying hypnotically.

They gaze at the long blonde hair which obscures the swinger's face.

She yawns and stretches full profile. The spectators sigh and look pained.

Ten minutes are gone. Basic boredom sets in. Try to stay awake.

There are 300 in the hall and it is hot and stuffy. Here and there variations on The Thinker's position. A few light cigarettes and someone coughs.

A splinter group is still taking notes, and the lovers are resigned

to their fate. Her head rests on his shoulder and their hands are locked.

Twenty minutes are gone.

MOMENTS OF CONTEMPLATION

The Quiet Man sits gazing off into space. A grin slides across his face and his eyebrows raise as he reflects on some Zen truth. The prof starts to write on the board and hands brag for pens.

Heads bob like syncopated ducks. A girl looks at the boy's notes beside her.

What does it mean?

I don't know. Write it down and memorize it.

The sequined stockings pull another profile—the spectators groan.

Time again. Wake up. Fight it off. A chain reaction of motion and everyone changes position.

Here and there a girl strokes her hair and legs swing hypnotically. The voice drones on and several people seem asleep, gazing down at the floor.

TO EACH HIS OWN

Doodlers doodle and The Thinkers think.

Thirty minutes are gone.

Another joke. "What is rattle snake potion good for?" A laugh. Boredom returns.

Foot swingers, and all over gum chewers, eye rubbers and hair strokers.

A cute blonde gives me side glances and flicks her head like a gopher. Not a pen is moving.

He writes on the board and heads move. Bob, dip, bob, dip.

The conservative in white jeans and Chicago Boxcar haircut. His

fingers beat a silent tattoo on his brief case. Five minutes left and he inches his foot closer to the girl's.

THE END IS NEAR

The Redhead is putting her ring on. A girl in the back is gazing at the ring on her left hand.

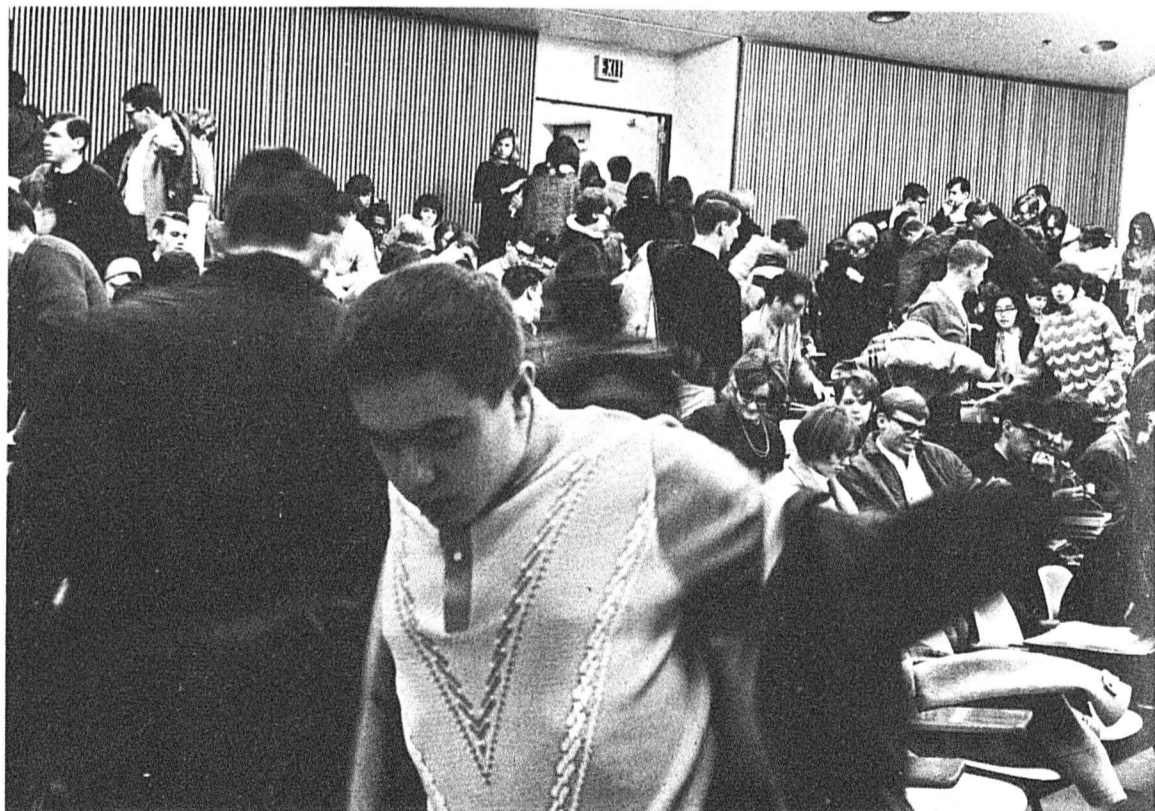
The Quiet Man is sucking his pen and fondling his head. Impatience sweeps the spectators with anarchistic frenzy. Like the second coming.

Braaaaaaaack! The Bell! Oblivion!

The Quiet Man leaves in a rush. The lovers leave pawing each other. Congested humanity stampedes. The door.

Here and there are questioning looks. Eyes lost in blankness.

Nothing.



—Al Scarth photo

ALL THINGS CHANGETH

. . . and so does this class, in a rush usually