

Letters to the Editor

Soc. 180A Critique

It must be seen, finally, that Social Science 180A is plagued by problems common to all social sciences and these can be relieved by nothing short of a revolutionary movement.

For Social Science, despite what its disciples proclaim, is not a value-free, objective science. It is full of definitions and assumptions which are the products of biased minds. It is a tool of the bureaucracy and economic elite and loaded with capitalist, liberal-democratic ideology.

Social science is broken-down into various disciplines and it is presumed that the social scientist will become a specialist in his field. This is an ingenious means of preventing him from drawing conclusions about the whole system, of which his field of study is only a part.

Using the same method, social science 180A has isolated a number of problems, Spadina, Americanization, Western Discontent and the Indians. But never has the possibility of their interrelation, under a common problem—the exploitation of capitalism been considered.

Social scientists are expected to be blind to the power of the military, economic, scientific and political systems. All authority is legitimate and conflict to it, an alternative to it, cannot be considered. The disenchanting are encouraged to work for reforms within the established institutional framework. Revolution is never a solution.

In Social Science 180A, a Canadian Problems course, we find the major problem to be a lack of solutions. Perhaps those responsible for the setting up of this course, feel that the average student's good sense will lead him to the conclusion that parliamentary democracy is the answer? Fortunately, the average students of this tutorial reject such a meaningless and already disproven solution, to the problems we have studied.

The Canadian Indian, Toronto's poor who are expropriated from their homes to make room for an Expressway, the Canadian worker

who is laid off by an American branch-plant, the western farmer who is paid not to grow wheat - all these individuals and their individual troubles are but a microcosm of single public issue - EXPLOITATION. Yet we are continually told that there is no connection between these private concerns and any wide public issues. It is the individual who must adjust to society or he is labelled as unadjusted or abnormal - in need of psychiatric or other correctional treatment. It is never an UNJUST SOCIETY, always an UNADJUSTED MAN. That capitalism and the institutions it has bred and supports are basically unquestioned and immune to criticism is partly a reflection of the ideological penetration of capitalism into the social sciences.

Geoff Gibbons

Security perspective

Perhaps a consideration of the following comments may help to put the question of security at York in its proper perspective.

1) Maximum security such as is found at military establishments which are surrounded by a wire fence, and where all persons seeking admission are required to identify themselves to security personnel is unacceptable to the university community. It is also prohibitively expensive. (It would however reduce thefts very considerably).

2) On the York campus the non-residential buildings do not close at 5:00 p.m. and re-open at 8:00 a.m. the following morning, but are used extensively both on weekday evenings and at weekends not only by thousands of students, faculty and staff, but by visitors to the Burton Auditorium, the Tait McKenzie Building and the Arena. Of necessity the university must facilitate the free movement of all these people, but the potential for those persons having no legitimate business on campus is obvious.

3) Certain areas such as the College Complex, and the Ross Building, Library, Central Plaza and Lecture Hall No. 2, which form one massive complex have multi-purpose uses. Access to these areas is necessary not only during the week but at weekends, and admission to any one part of either

complex affords unrestricted access to other buildings in the same complex.

4) Increased security results in making life more difficult for those persons having legitimate needs for almost unrestricted access to certain buildings for the purpose of research, conducting experiments, or using their offices at other than normal working hours. It also results in cries of "Police State" from those who view the sight of a blue uniform as a restraint on their academic or personal freedom.

5) Security at York is based on providing at reasonable cost a degree of security which while it is tolerable to members of the community is sufficient to keep thefts and damage to property at acceptable levels. To provide one additional security officer for twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week would cost the university \$35,000.00 a year. The provision of a security officer on each of the peripheral parking areas from midnight to 8:00 a.m. and on weekends as has been suggested, would cost \$100,000.00 annually. By contrast total thefts (including those from parking lots) at the university reported in 1969-70 amounted to \$15,000.00, and while this figure is not regarded with equanimity by Security it may be considered that this is not excessive bearing in mind the size of the community and the prevailing social climate. (Metropolitan Toronto Police 1970 crime statistics show an increase in some areas of 100 per cent over those for 1969.)

6) Apart from one sporadic outburst in January thefts from parking lots have decreased substantially since October as a result of the extra attention being paid to these areas by University Security Staff and support of the Metropolitan Toronto Police.

As in any community the necessity for security services must be thoughtfully related to need and the degree of their provision dependent on acceptability and support by the community and the ability of the University to provide the necessary funds. We will continue to endeavour to maintain a realistic balance between the various elements in the equation.

C.G. Dunn
Director of Safety and Security Services.

Rothchild repent

To Mr. E. Rothchild, tutorial leader, Sociology 201.

We have written this paper in order to express our feelings and frustrations with Sociology 201D. Having, at first, believed that we had derived nothing whatsoever from this course, upon a closer examination, we have found that we did benefit, to some extent.

This is not to say that we're in complete agreement with all you have said, or even with the majority of it - but we have, as an indirect result of this course, learned to critically evaluate everything.

Sociology 201D has been useful in demonstrating the meaning of the word, "hypocrisy." We have been fortunate enough to have a course director who is willing, in September, to conduct an 'unstructured' and 'ungraded' course, even though he is well-aware that this action could seriously affect his job at the university. In April, when the real test of his convictions can be taken, he backs down (following the directions of the Institution) and demands final grades for each student registered in the course. By conforming to the standards of the administration, Mr. Crowder has probably been successful in securing his position for another year (a desirable job and one which offers comfort with relatively little work).

Another complaint we have of this course, is your desire to change the educational institution. Desire changes be made, why do you conform so readily to the university's definition of a tutorial leader? You will, at this point, probably disagree with the previous statement. But you do stand at the front of the room (or at least in a central location); all or at least the majority of the comments are directed to you or your Liberated Learning group and on many occasions you have come into the class and proceeded to read us your "latest" letter to the CYSF or EXCALIBUR.

You, as a sociologist, if nothing else, should realize that we cannot change our concept of 'education' over-night. We have, for the most part, spent 16 years being educated in the traditional manner and most

of us are not prepared for the total freedom, you assume you are offering. We think, that given our freedom more gradually, we could be much more susceptible to change.

We are still convinced that there is a need for a grading system of some type, but the reasons we have would be disqualified in your usual subtle and reasonable manner of dealing with such suggestions. At least by writing our thoughts down on paper, we are spared the constant shouting and obscenities which would accompany our thoughts, had we decided to present them in class.

You played the game according to the rules of the Institution which you attended - is it so wrong that we should do the same thing? From the tutorials, which you have conducted, throughout the year you have 'won' several students over to your side, to be converted from 'uncaring' and 'apathetic' York students to your concept of the ideal university student. These students are your puppets in the same way you accuse us of being the puppets of the York administration. We don't find our education being threatened any more with marks than it would be in the system which you are proposing. But this feeling may only be true because of the particular course which we are registered in - Physical Education.

Perhaps you could learn to listen to other people, without antagonizing them and forcing your opinion on them.

In the tutorials, we have gained an increased awareness of the problems, both at York and in the rest of society, but we have also been made aware of the futility of rationally discussing them with a Sociologist, such as yourself.

As you have probably concluded by now, we are somewhat disappointed in this course (which is required for Physical Education). Perhaps the organizers of Soc 201D will profit from any mistakes which they have made? and will be able to present a more logical and therefore more successful course in the 1971-72 academic year.

Marg Cook
Karen Shinn.

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