

casserole

a supplement section
of the gateway

editor

marjorie bell

photo editor

b.s.p. bayer

layout editor

dan carroll

As we go to press with *The Christmas Special* the *Great Mess In Sociology* is coming to a head with accusations flowing back and forth like the tide.

Just what is going on over there in the Tory Building has never really come out. Monday two reporters were excluded from a meeting. Perhaps the department was having a private cry.

And so things move along. By the time this reaches you we will no doubt know whether or not this has ruined the credibility of SDU and the Sociology Department. Given enough time and more issues like this one, I can only see trouble for the activists and their followers, many of whom are running on borderline commitment and need a gut-feel issue to keep them active.

The *Sociology Mess* is too blurry, too confused, and not essential enough.

Which brings us to the major thrust of this issue, other than B.S.P. Bayer's Christmas centre-page and the Cy Hampson—W. B. Yeats picture-poem, the treatise by Matt Cohen on the arts student as second-class citizen.

The article is reprinted from the *International Union of Students'* publication DE '68. The IUS, incidentally, is the nasty communist organization, but their publication, and this article in particular, are primary material for anyone interested in the university.

And now the Christmas Question, which carries a reward of one free beer at the expense of the phantom critic for the first person coming up with the correct answer.

The question—wait for it—WHO IS AUDAX MINOR?

—BC, the phantom critic

Ties that bind:



KEN MILLS PUTTING IT ON THE LINE

... they do not serve, who only sit and rot

(Matt Cohen was one of the founders of the short-lived school for social theory in Toronto, one of the first "Free Schools" in Canada. He now teaches at McMaster University.)

By MATT COHEN

As a social institution, the university exists in relation to mod-

ern industrialized society. So, therefore, do its members and products.

Within the modern university is a group which can be accurately termed second-class. The second-class student is second-class not because he is more immoral, more stupid or more neurotic than his peers but because he is in the process of becoming social cannon-fodder.



THE STUDENT

... I promise, on my honor, to do my best, to do my duty, to God and the Machine?

Who are these students? Those in the general courses, the liberal arts and humanities courses. What they formally learn in the university will be of no consequence with regard to what they do afterwards. Their first-class counterparts—the students in the professional faculties—have a different future. They are the ones who will be the managers of society and supply the skills necessary for its smooth functioning. The second-class student is, as an individual, irrelevant within the university and irrelevant outside it for the same reasons. He is essentially only in the mass, as a social instrument.

MERRY-GO-ROUND

He is a prime part of the marketing-consumption merry-go-round of an highly industrialized society. His future role is that of a banker—a middleman who receives his salary and spends a little more.

An unknowingly sophisticated ideologue, the second-class student absorbs culture so that he may embody it. He is the future opinion-maker. He is the future guarantor of the status quo. His thoughts and actions will fall within the limits imposed by this training.

The second-class student is a phenomenon resulting from two factors. The first is an anachronism: the idea that the university is the dispenser of truth. The second is the effect of democracy upon education: the idea that equal social opportunity will arise from equal educational opportunity.

THE MYTHS

The myth of the university as the dispenser of truth is the great public myth that sustains it. If that myth were destroyed, the entire educational system would be revolutionized.

Besides the myth of truth for the public, the university has a myth of practicality for the managerial elite. It is generally be-

lieved that those with a university education gain some intangible executive ability from their degree. The sustenance of this myth is the basis of the university's corporate monopoly as a trainer for the job market.

The second-class student is the victim of the myth and the commodity of the corporate university. But there is a difference between saying that anyone can have a good job and saying that everyone can have a good job. If we didn't live in a society with first and second-class roles, with a predominance and homogenization of the latter, then there could be no second-class student.

The university, together with other great institutions in this society, has a corporate structure. It has a function—the production of various commodities—and members who participate in that production in various ways. Some of those members have a double status: they are members of the university whose job it is to make themselves commodities. These members are the students.

SELF-DESTRUCTION

In the process of turning themselves into a mass commodity, students are engaged in a self-destructive process. Having no way to deal with this situation—and this is true powerlessness—the student isolates himself from the future he is making while at the same time practising the major skill he will need in later life.

This skill might be called sinecurization—the art of turning any job into a sinecure. It is a single equation: model maximum income for minimum effort.

Sinecurization is not a skill newly learned at the university. In public school it is mainly practised in the form of day-dreaming. Every public-school student knows how to keep his attention to the minimum required to know when his name is called.

In high school the art, because of the exam system, becomes more