

Phony response to phony demand

If teachers don't teach, students plagiarize

continued from page 1

"It must be said that perhaps too many essays are being given the students", replies Rathé and he offers an explanation. "There's been a swing away from exams ever since York existed. I'm not suggesting that we should go back, but the system now constantly harasses students to hand in many and varied assignments".

Perhaps, then, the present system at York is to blame. Rathé wonders if part of the problem is that instructors are not varying topics for essays. Identical essays are handed in to the same prof and he doesn't even know it," says one student.

"Somebody will get on to this and commercialize," adds Rathé.

A Graduate student from York,

now writing for an essay service downtown calls universities "factories that demand quantity rather than quality."

Goranson's analysis of the 1968 survey at York seems to confirm this.

He discovered that when teachers actively helped and worked with students in planning, researching and revising their papers, there was very little plagiarism. Goranson concludes that plagiarism "in a sense, is a phony response to a phony demand. Where teachers have laid down production-line requirements (without really teaching), students have responded with production-line plagiarism (without really learning). None of this justifies the practice, but it certainly makes it understandable."

If the problem of plagiarism lies within the university's structure, are there any solutions? Should courses become more specialized? Should a policy of frequent interviews and consultations with professors be enforced? Should course loads be reduced? Should grades and assignments be abolished altogether?

Or, is the problem rooted in the society? The fact that term paper services are perfectly legal within the Canadian legal system must suggest something. But what?

"It is a sign of a morally sick society," says Rathé.

"People don't see anything wrong with buying essays," says one concerned student. "They feel people who think it's wrong are off."

One York student involved in a term paper company takes an "if

you can't beat them, join them" attitude. "Borrowing essays will always go on," he says. "So why not sell them?"

But unfortunately, his attitude is understandable. "You're always going to have cheating; you can't prevent this. If you make these services illegal, there will still be borrowing. You have to relate it to the whole society, and it's corrupt! I think when it's being practiced on a wide scale, there are no more ethics to the situation."

But what about the idea of education? "In a way, society has caused the problem" says Watson. "It has said that you have to get a degree to get a job, and students here for that reason aren't interested in education. A job that requires a B.A. to get your foot in the door is certainly dishonest."

The ideas of status and priorities come into play here. Are students cheating because all they want is

that piece of paper and the social status that comes with it? What about education for pure education?

"I still think the majority of students are here to broaden their horizons," says David Lumsden, Chairman of the anthropology department. "That piece of paper is merely an emblem for the learning experience."

But others, such as Doug Tindal, a former Excalibur editor, are less optimistic. "People are caught up in a system in which a degree or mark is the goal, not education."

Koenig suggests a solution if this is the case. "Why not just buy a degree and show it to the world?"

As term paper companies continue to be supported by willing students, that just may happen. It's a lucrative business for some, but certainly not for students. They lose out economically, morally and educationally.

If students want to plagiarize, there are lots of ways to do it

By MICHELINA TRIGIANI

There are at least five registered essay writing services in Toronto and thousands in North America. That is the consensus of people in the business. But it is difficult to determine the exact number.

These companies range from shoddy mail-order outfits to modern sophisticated operations.

If you phone Essay Services, located on Spadina Avenue, you may find a gentleman on the line who answers to the name of Larry Anderson. He will tell you nothing about the business but, for \$21, he'll provide written answers to all your questions at \$7 per page. That will be an original, not a ready-made, essay. He will claim that David Milne runs the business, that he has lots of other deals going and that he "just screws around with students".

Essay Services is a perfectly legal company that turns out "academic" papers for students. A sign on the wall says, "Students beware. Your prof may know you better than you think." Writers are asked to compose essays using simplistic language so that the teachers won't think their students too intelligent and one employee there thinks that, "intellectually, it's shameful."

Not all term paper companies

operate in this manner. Two others in the city, Custom Essays run by Derek Sim and Termpapers Service run by Ronald Connort, are well-organized, thriving businesses and appear to be honest and open with customers.

Sim's business is merely an after-hours operation, but Connort's company is full-time employing as many as 15 to 20 writers.

Connort founded Termpapers Service in 1971 when he discovered that an American company planned to establish an operation in Toronto. "I decided a Canadian company should get first crack at it."

Sim's business survives from his old Ryerson days and he maintains it for other than purely venal purposes. "Derek's (Sims) is not a full-time thing," explains Bruce Moran, a close friend. "Students get good essays here, writers make money and Derek gets a little extra. It's a far more personal business."

Basically, both companies operate in the same manner. A student who wants an essay written provides the essay topic, instructions and the books needed. Often, a student is asked for a sample of his work so that writing styles may be copied.

Prices for term papers run fairly

high and are usually double what the writer gets paid. Connort charges \$6 per page for undergraduate essays and \$8.50 or more for graduate essays. There is also a minimum number of pages you must buy. For the former, it is five; the latter, eight. This means that a student must be prepared to pay at least \$30, for any essay.

Sim's prices are slightly cheaper, \$5 per typed page. The writers on staff for both companies are usually graduate students who cannot find other writing jobs.

Custom Essays sells only original papers and after the student purchases one, he may do with it whatever he wishes. Termpapers keeps all essays on file for re-sale and also maintains an exchange system with other companies. Ready-made essays cost \$3 per page and there is no minimum charge.

If a student obtains a mark lower than a C on an essay, Custom gives him a re-write. The company boasts that "no one has ever failed a course."

Connort does not guarantee a mark on his papers. If the student proves that instructions were not followed and the essay is off-topic, he'll give a re-write. Neither of the companies refunds money.

Many newspapers and publications refuse to advertise essay services. "The Star hates our guts," says Connort. "They wrote an editorial when we first set up. In it, they felt we should be sent to jail. The Globe and Mail also wrote an editorial, but they accept our ads."

Both Excalibur and The Varsity refuse to run essay service ads.

"We felt there was a feeling in the university community that didn't want this type of service advertised," explains Dave Simmonds, secretary-treasurer of the U. of T. paper. "It's only a gesture. We're not saying it eliminates them."

"The whole principle of students purchasing term papers which they will claim to be their own work is illegal and immoral," says Excalibur editor Julian Beltrame. "We do not feel we should be encouraging this type of thing for pure commercial profit."

Connort feels the university news papers are abusing his rights as a businessman in a free enterprise system. "It is a legal service," he says. "And refusing advertisements without discussion is down-right censorship."

He realizes, though, that after 4 years in the business, blocking out his ads will not break the company. "It's a little too late," he chuckles.

Rodney lectures at York

By GARY KINSMAN

Marxism is relevant as a method of analysis, in the third world, and the adherence to Marxism of intellectuals in all disciplines in the third world is increasing, said noted Guyanese scholar Dr. Walter Rodney before an audience of 500 students at York recently. The lecture ("Marxism as a third world ideology") was sponsored by the York Third World Student Union.

Rodney's presentation was generally quite well received and sparked a lively discussion among third world students from the audience.

According to Rodney, the growing acceptance of Marxism in the third world stems from "the growth of classes", particularly the "petit-bourgeoisie", in third world countries, from as well as "the failure of bourgeois thought to deliver the goods" in the third world. In a number of countries the beginning of the building of socialism has shown that socialism can work, according to Rodney.

Rodney responded to the suggestion that Marxism is "a foreign ideology" in the third world

by showing how the same people who objected to this "foreign ideology" didn't feel any problems with using western technology.

Rodney's conception of Marxism is not that of a "static" doctrine but of a body of thought "capable of integrating new ideas". He sees it "as an independent ideology seeking clear alternatives to capitalism."

Rodney concluded his presentation by talking about the educational institutions in the "metropolitan" countries. He pointed out that in these institutions Marxism was discriminated against and "submerged under the dominant ideology of the ruling class". He proposed that third world students practice "intellectual guerrilla war" against the ideology of the ruling class to develop a Marxism which could be of use to struggles in the third world.

Rodney has written several books, including The Groundings With My Brothers, A History of the Upper Guinea Coast 1,545-1,800 and How Europe Underdeveloped Africa.

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