

# the brunswickan

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Jo Gauthier, Stephanie London, Tina Hadlin, Kathy Makela, Kate MacKay and David Morrison

The *Brunswickan*, in its 121st year, is Canada's oldest official student publication. The *Brunswickan's* offices are located in Room 35 of the University of New Brunswick's Student Union Building, P.O. Box 4400, College Hill, Fredericton, N.B., E3B 5A3.

The *Brunswickan* is printed with flair by Henley Printing, Ltd., Woodstock, N.B.

Subscriptions are \$20 per year. National and local advertising rates are available at (506) 453-4974. General phone 453-4983. News line 453-4973.

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# Opinion

## WHAT IS TEACHING?

Teaching is not like selling goods. Learning is not buying. To the extent that factual information can be transmitted through books and machines, a professor can now be dispensed with. But machines do not transmit attitudes, a machine cannot discern a question from a facial expression and answer an unasked question, it cannot add a word of cheer to remove boredom, or change plans in the middle of a discourse. The machines and books cannot give encouragement to the disheartened, allay the fear of the unknown, bring a smile to a worried face, or foresee the problems of a novice. Books and machines cannot create a desire or lust for beauty, in form, words, relations or equations.

Teaching is to transmit something of oneself. It is not a business transaction; it must be voluntary. Usually, it is giving rather than bartering. A word of advice at the right moment which may change the course of one's life, cannot be repaid except in terms of appreciation and respect. Teaching, even in the most technical and apparently feelingless subjects, brings human emotions into play.

Not every professor is a born teacher, but assuming that he is interested in intellectual pursuit and is dedicated to his work, he is likely to transmit, in spite of his idiosyncracies, a love of learning, if he is content and free.

## WHY SOME PROFESSORS ARE NOT THE GOOD TEACHERS THAT THEY CAN BE

The reason for some professors to "look down" at undergraduate teaching, or lack of concern for the students, is a simple one. They are not rewarded for good teaching and are threatened for not publishing regularly. While a compromise is possible, to achieve excellence in both, is very difficult and rare.

The universities have increased their enrolment to teach different trades to students who are usually of low calibre, and not motivated for intellectual pursuits. These students can be taught, perhaps better taught, by teachers whose primary interest is teaching and not creating under pressure. Instead, the universities insist on professors motivated for research, tell them that their motto is "Publish or Perish", and of course to teach, as if teaching was a side business.

Since it is difficult to evaluate teaching qualities (student reaction is a small part of such evaluation), and much easier to count the number of papers published, on which is based promotion, tenure and other conveniences of scholarly life, a average professor is willing to take a chance on doing the minimum to keep the students (some of them want less than minimum any way) happy and spend most of his time on something which will insure his physical and intellectual well-being.

At universities where "university service" and "community service" can be substituted for publication at the time of tenure and promotion, a professor is tempted to concentrate more on things that can be easily ascertained like the numbers of committees served and things that will put him in the limelight, rather than teaching which is almost taken for granted.

It must be said that it is physically impossible in terms of time and energy, to achieve excellence in teaching courses that one is not particularly interested in, and also conduct research to produce papers at regular intervals to satisfy the present norm for excellence as a university professor. Assuming an nine hours teaching load per week, 18 hours for preparation of lectures, only 13 hours out of the present standard 40 hour week, are left for making and marking of papers, counselling or helping students, attending meetings, and doing committee work. The time required for self study, experimentation or meditation and research must come from beyond 40-50 hours per week.

Matin Yaqzan Feb. 28, 1975

# Blood and Thunder

## Thank You

Dear Editor:

I am writing on behalf of Tools for Peace to publicly thank the many people who helped with our campaign this fall, which raised funds and collected material aid for the people of Nicaragua.

For their generous assistance and support, we wish to thank Co-op Atlantic, the Fredericton Direct Charge Co-op, Fredericton and District Labour Coun-

cil, CUPE Local 1326 and Aura Whole Foods. We also extend our appreciation to UNB President Dr. James Downey, STU President Msgr. George Martin and Mayor Brad Woodside for endorsing the 1987 campaign.

Also deserving special mention is Prof. Michael Clow, STU, for his help in organizing campus fund raising, as well as Profs. Peter Weeks, Stephen Chappell, David Rehorick and Tony House for their jazz benefit concert.

With the support of many community groups, churches and individuals, over \$3800 in goods and/or donations was raised in the Fredericton area. Funds raised will help to buy roofing for people displaced by

the war and goods are being transported to Vancouver, from where they will be shipped to Nicaragua. Finally, our thanks go out to the staff at Conserver House, the CUSO committee and other volunteers who helped pack goods and to the Fredericton office of Day and Ross for their cooperation.

On behalf of the Tools for Peace Committee and the people of Nicaragua, thanks to everyone who helped make the campaign a success.

Dawn Leavitt and Beth Paynter, Coordinators  
 Fredericton Tools for Peace Committee