

Education no laughing matter but



priorities for University concern? Or is this all a vicious circle for which the blame lies initially in the Department of Education in this University and sister departments elsewhere?

Methods courses which are 'quickies' in high-school geography course content, cram sessions in grade three math, all with little consideration for actual teaching method, degenerate into forums of trivia with little value for actual teaching experience. This certainly was evident in the examinations offered in 'methods' by the Department, examinations which included such questions as the following: "List 10 purposes of instructional aids in the teaching of history" (a rebarf of a sheet of "facts" being expected) examinations which indicate the mechanical approach of the department as a whole, an approach dangerous in its duplication by "blotter" minds in the schools of our Province, for whom the situation is a cause for security.

Courses which offer a weak regurgitation of world history as an excuse for the history of education, certainly underline this attitude. Guidance courses which are an amazing maze of formulae and statistical wand-waving, show a dangerous attitude towards students.

In addition to all this, there is no study of the existing school system in our Province, and, certainly, no criticism is allowed. How can constructive thought be born in such conditions?

There is no philosophy attempted within the Education department. Some students complain that there is not enough practice teaching to allow them to use what little they have learned, but very little has been done to help them decide what education means, what its purpose is, what the different philosophies of learning are. These are difficult concepts to grasp, but should be dealt with in all education departments, in order that teachers have an understanding of what it means to be a part of the learning process.

The statements above may seem to be exaggerated, but let us look at some experiences of the education student as he begins his course in September.

Forced by lack of choice to endure the courses set up by the education department such as elementary methods, statistics, and a poor history-of-education course, the student finds himself immersed in a round of frenzied activity revolving around map-coloring, poster-painting, chart-making, and other activities consumptive of time but unedifying for an understanding of purposes in education and method. The first day in geography methods, the students were told that they were expected to color four maps using colors to show weather, etc. This was done with little explanation of purpose in the context of an education. The Professor continued for the rest of the term to cover the content of a grade ten geography text.

One wonders if this is indicative of a helpful method in the teaching of Geography.

Another experience is to be found in Education 4, an elementary methods course in Math, Science and English. The Math section was taught mostly as a content course in Grades 4 - 6 Math and the Christmas examination was one which tested a grade 5 knowledge of Math. Although most students were grateful for an easy examination, it was an insult and discouragement to some.

The few examples cited above are given in order that a dialogue between students and professors might come about. There is an obvious unrest among students of education, created by the many unmet needs and new concerns in the field of education. It is when these needs and concerns are apparently ignored that students sense a dangerous situation which they do not wish to see perpetuated. Hence the source of complaint.

NEXT WEEK THE GAZETTE WILL PRESENT A FEATURED SECTION ON EDUCATION.

Fun Fun

All that mankind has done, thought, gained or been it is lying as in magic preservation in the pages of books.



Conscientious students have put hours of diligent work into many tasteful decorations now adorning the walls of an Education professor. (Note spelling on poster).



Playing 'footsies' with Education, Professor Blake exhorts his students to play the numbers game with no mistake, in Education 8 (Guidance and Statistics).

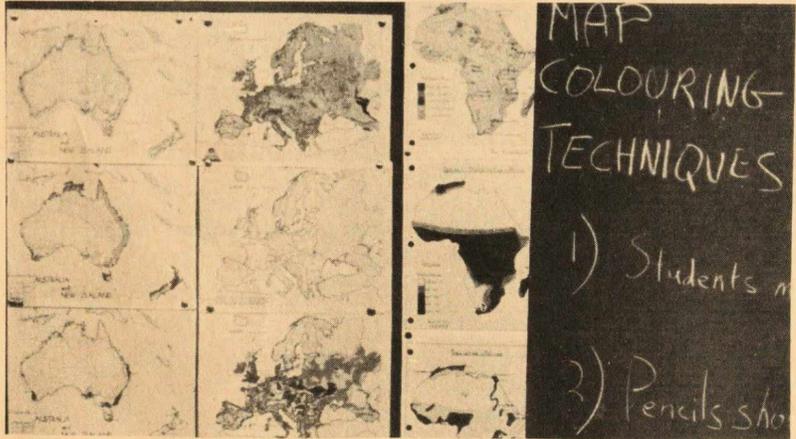
Professor B.M. Engel, author of the Education 4 math exam quoted on page 1, "Love that math, Love that math, Love that math, I... love... that... math."

TO THE EDITOR

The reputation enjoyed by our department of Education is something less than enviable. Described both inside and outside the department as a 'farce', a 'school for morons', a 'year to be endured', a 'waste of time', the course of Education would seem to lack certain strength and vitality.

What is it that this arouses contempt? Does this indicate that Education is a secure refuge for those academically inadequate to enter other professions? Does the low prestige of the teaching profession affect the type of instruction offered in the department, and the position of the department in the list of

It is no accident that the letter printed here is unsigned. The article is the result of a coordinated effort by a number of education students.



Education students chart their future with coloured pencils. These maps were done by university graduates (thus explaining their quality).

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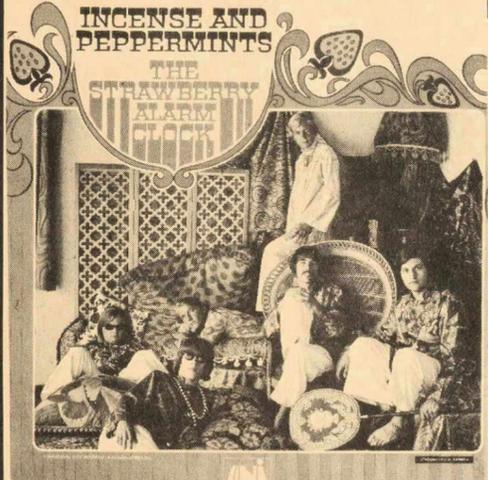
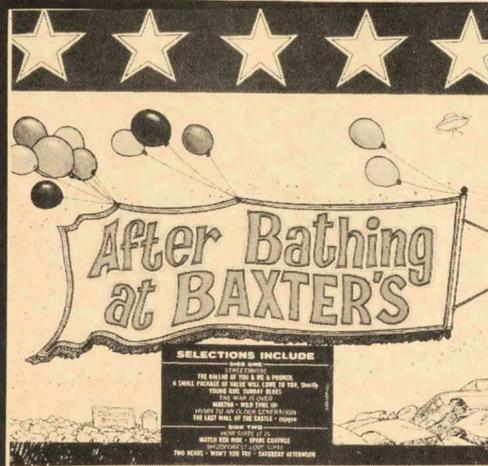
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