

Senate President's Actions Questionable

John R. Miner, President of the Faculty Senate, appears to have launched a campaign against the inter-disciplinary courses offered at Providence College, taking special aim at the Western Civilization program initiated this past year. Strangely enough, Miner is expressing his opinions in a questionable method, in the guise of an honest, reasonable man fulfilling his duties to the College as President of the Faculty Senate. What I am specifically referring to is a questionnaire sent out by Miner to teachers of the interdisciplinary courses.

Miner introduces his questionnaire by referring to "an enormous gap between directing legislation and effective implementation" in the new curriculum. "The Senate must now move to close this gap and this questionnaire is a first necessary step in that direction." Attempts to close this gap, and I'm not too certain how wide or serious it is, should be commended, and I have no complaints at this point.

Miner hopes the questionnaire will encourage the teachers to begin "accounting to ourselves and to each other." His fear is that the students will demand an accounting. According to Miner, "If the students do come to demand an accounting of such courses it will most likely begin as a semi-genial kind of teacher baiting. If the teacher cannot reply to such probes then it is apt, this questioning, to turn into something much more unpleasant for the teacher and much more destructive of liberal education here at the College." First, I think that a calling for accountability, or critical analysis, of any course is a necessary ingredient of a proper education, and is therefore an outlook to be encouraged, not feared. Second, I fail to see the harm in questioning by the student, instead of solely the teacher. Both student and teacher should be involved in a continual analysis of the course. Third, no one expects the teacher to have a ready-made answer concerning the applicability, presumably on any number of levels, of each course for each student. So I fail to understand how critical analysis by the student will be destructive of a liberal education.

Miner concludes the introduction to the questionnaire by stating that "the connection between the general principle" of a liberal arts education and "the particular course was never established." I'll have more to say about this connection when I review the questions themselves. He concludes "It is hoped that the information gained from these questionnaires will help to correct that great logical defect in the rationale of the present program." Miner is distributing these questionnaires in the name of objective data-collecting, yet this sentence so clearly indicates that he is approaching this study from anything but an objective viewpoint. His one concern is to correct a "great logical defect," which he has not shown to be either a logical defect or a serious one, never mind "great."

The questions forwarded by Miner ask for an evaluation of the interdisciplinary courses. What is striking about these questions is that they repeatedly ask the teacher "to demonstrate in tangible concrete ways that its goals are in fact being realized." If the goals of the courses are in part to provide a broader, more meaningful education, how can one demonstrate in concrete facts and figures that they have indeed been achieved? Surely one cannot expect immediate results from any course. And there is no concrete means of measuring the results. Look back to the previous paragraph and the "great logical defect" becomes an inability to establish a "tangible, concrete" relationship between the "general principle" and the "particular course" Miner referred to.

These questions all lead up to a final, decisive one. "If there are no concrete, tangible, specific points by which to demonstrate the superiority of this course or program over what has gone over before, how do you either explain or justify the change in the curriculum or justify keeping the present arrangements rather than moving on to completely different courses and programs?" So, according to Miner, if members of the faculty cannot offer concrete proofs of the success of the new curriculum, after only one semester of operation, it should be summarily discarded.

That John R. Miner is opposed to the new curriculum and wishes to speak out against it is his prerogative. But that John R. Miner should use his position as President of the Faculty Senate to plug his views in the guise of an "objective study" does not seem to be responsible. He should be made to answer for the questionable use of such an important and influential position within the college community.

Statement Of Purpose

This week's issue is, shall we say, a departure from tradition. The Editorial on the opposite page deserves, we believe, considerable attention. We are seeking new directions, new concepts, and some fresh insights. This is, indeed, a break from the past tradition of publishing only on full weeks, as it is from the rule of thumb of trying to avoid controversial matters. Almost all members of this community make many commentaries on the functioning of this college; it is about time we had a frank discussion.

Calendar

The Calendar for the rest of this month is as follows:
 February 23 — Rhode Island State Ballet, Union, 8:00 p.m.
 February 24 — Civilisation XIII, Union, 1:30 and 7:30 p.m.
 Bridge and Chess
 La Traviata; Union, 8:30 p.m.
 Religious Studies
 February 25 — Movie: *Taking Off*
 February 26 — Sadie Hawkins Dance, 8:00 p.m., Alumni Hall.
 February 27 — Movie: *Picnic in the Grass*
 February 28 — Bill Dawson, U.S. Navy, in Piano Concert, Union, 8:00 p.m.
 February 29 — Movie: *The Night of the Living Dead*

Fine Arts Report

The P.C. Fine Arts Committee related to this reporter their tentative schedule of events, upcoming this semester. The last week of February, alone, will feature three cultural events.

On February 23rd, the Rhode Island State Ballet, featuring Herci and Myles Marsden, will perform in the College Union, at 8:00. The performance will be in two parts. The first part includes themes from "Ryan's Daughter", "Romeo and Juliet", "The Yard That Went On Forever", "Summer of '42", the song "Aquarius" and "Classical Interlude." Part two will be act two of "Stranger", a story of a

Yugoslav mountain village ravished by the plague. The entire night promises to be a rare cultural experience.

The next night, February 24th at 8:30 in the Multi-Purpose Room, the Fine Arts Committee will sponsor the Film *La Traviata*. Directed by Mario Lanfranchi, *La Traviata* is a musical love drama, starring Metropolitan Opera soprano Anna Moffo. The Verdi score has a libretto based on "The Lady of the Camellias". The Orchestra and chorus of the Rome Opera accompany Miss Moffo in this important film.

Bill Dawson, piano soloist of the Boston Navy Band will present a classical/semi-classical program in the Union on Monday February 28th at 8:00. Mr. Dawson has studied under

Frances Marsh Buntin, Rudolf Serkin and Myecylsaw Horzowski, an accompanist of Pablo Casal. Having completed two tours of Europe, including playing at the Festival of Two Worlds in Spolito, Italy, at the invitation of composer Gian Carlo Menotti, Mr. Dawson has received widespread critical acclaim.

March 2nd will welcome Franco Zeffirelli's *The Taming of the Shrew*, to Providence College. Starring Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor, this version of Shakespeare's Romantic Comedy has been described by Time Magazine as "A salty salvo of the war between the sexes." This movie along with *La Traviata* has no admission charge.

Jazz comes to P.C. in April.

The Evolution of American Jazz, featuring Tony Eira and Alan Dawson, will disrupt the Multi-purpose Room, beginning at 9:00 on April 12th. Tony Eira, spokesman, narrator and bass player, has played with Jaki Byard, Teddy Wilson and Earl "Fatha" Hines. Alan Dawson, playing drums, is a member of the Dave Brubeck Quartet. Others in the group are pianist Ray Santisi, formally with the Stan Getz Quartet; Trumpeter Lenny Johnson who has played with Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Quincy Jones; and saxophonist Andy McGhee who has teamed with jazz greats Lionel Hampton and Woody Herman. The show will follow what the name implies — Jazz, where it came from and where it is going. Admission to P.C. students is free.

Notice: Security Tightened

Jack Donahue, Chairman of the Student Congress Security Committee, announced that the security guards patrolling the Huxley Avenue entrance from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m., will begin in the near future spot checks of cars entering and leaving, for identification. It is felt that this system will provide greater insurance for the car owner against theft. This policy was instituted, Donahue emphasized for the protection of those affected by it.

Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor:

Since singing is for many people a beautiful mode of communication, I found it quite unifying to know that the Black Chorus of Brown University performed in the Multi-Purpose Room of our Union, this past Friday February 11th. Their performance was very informal, yet very well presented; and their music, arranged for the most part by their director Brance Williams, was as inspirational and contemporary as any around. These young Blacks had a message to convey, and their spirit pierced the barriers between blacks and whites as well as between performers and audience. Their power and dynamism was overwhelming for those that attended. For the vast majority of you not in attendance, I'd like to say that I'm sorry you missed one of the most moving cultural and educational experiences to reach this campus.

Patty Rafferty '75

Dear Editor,

Let it be noted that those members of the college community who did not attend the soul-ful hour presented by the Black Chorale of Brown University here last night (11 Feb) missed an evening filled with music, beautiful music which was its own excuse for being. Whether the song was an old spiritual or contemporary black music, it was significant and delightful from beginning to end.

It is truly a shame that more people, especially more white people, could not attend and partake of this rich experience. For a long time this community has yearned for worthwhile artistic and cultural events to come to Providence College, and now that we are beginning to get these events, where are the people who have so earnestly sought them? Poetry reading, theatre, music, and ballet, are presented for the pleasure and enrichment of all. Is not the lack of interest which has been demonstrated indicative of an attitude of nonchalance, of apathy? In future, I suggest to all members of the community that if we want these events to continue in our midst, we show greater interest in their presence.

Sincerely yours,
Paul Gunther



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