

SCRIP

reviewed by Greg Kuzma

It's no difficult job recommending a campus literary magazine. We all agree we want them to continue, to sell, to get better, or to be there if they're not. Most everyone complains when the magazine doesn't come out, and administrations like to list them in their catalogues. It's a pleasant and safe way to show that there are many voices (when really there are only a few) and that the students, for all their nose grinding, for all their mechanical response to mechanical instruction, really want more.

Actually the average campus literary magazine is the work of one or two or three persons. And many of them contain the work of only one or two or three persons. Yet this is inevitable and often fair. Most independent "little" magazines across the country exist only for their contributors and would-be contributors.

Even with the complex system of checks and balances through which an editor then selects his contents (OK, I'll pick out five of yours if you pick out five of mine) a lot of junk gets in. And sometimes the editor is helpless against it; he only gets what he gets, sometimes his own work is better than what he gets.

But what results is that campus literary magazines are choked with weak or pretentious or sentimental poems (all by very nice people) or poems in new forms (but really like Cummings, like Williams, like the Beats), or very shocking dirty poems (yet not so shocking anymore, and often written by very nice people too). Sometimes the stories are more bearable because there are fewer stories since poems are easier and cheaper to print. Sometimes they are even stories. But really who writes fiction anymore.

Usually they don't even try to be stories. After studying Faulkner or Fitzgerald or Hemingway all month, and enjoying them, the student sits down and writes like a monkey. Or has a monkey as his central character, which doesn't come out until the last sentence when he swings off into the forest, upsetting all the subtle significances. This, after pages of jabber.

Photographs, if there are any, are usually of old old wrinkled people, or people with warts, or people walking around in the night. Sometimes there is a beautiful girl without her clothes. If there are drawings or paintings they are reduced in size or two tone only so that one really can't feel them. Whenever there is an attempt at integrating text and graphics one comes away puzzled: haven't they got it wrong? Doesn't this take place in a different century? and so on.

The problem with most campus literary magazines is that they are too indulgent. The editors indulge the contributors, the contributors the editors, the editors each other, and the whole magazine laid at the feet of the man with the money or snuck out the back door and banned. Which is probably worse because a lot of people get excited for the wrong reasons and the thing becomes an "issue" and hardly anybody reads the magazine finally anyway, but instead sit around the Union arguing about free speech and "what is obscenity."

As a campus literary magazine, SCRIP, which goes on sale this week, is sometimes like my generalization. But I recommend it be bought and read because of course I am one who wants campus literary magazines to continue and because I think SCRIP is interesting. Who knows how SCRIP got made; anyway, it is finally only the work that matters.

And for all the expected stuff, the pretentious, the sentimental, the merely confusing, the naive, the forgivable, the noisy, there are some things that reach above the average.

Although the first story seems to want to ignore its meanings, it is well written. The first poem, simply "Poem," suffers from excessive alliteration and too much other merely mechanical arrangement. It is either too long or in chains, but it isn't spoiled by noise or sentiment or pretense, and could improve with work.

Carla Gibson's scary erotic poem is both scary and erotic after the first few throwaway lines. "Fishin'," though thin, is fun. And "The Fireflies", the most ambitious piece in the magazine, is a fairly good treatment of the familiar subject of contemporary alienation. Although most of the photographs seem posed, there's a good one of Yogi Berra as a baby and a last page Life Magazine type shot from under a park bench.

Don Mahoney's "One Night Games" is very strong in parts, and along with his Chinese poems he has some of the best poems in the issue. His haiku about "A pumpkin" is very pretty. So often beginning poets seek out the deceptively easy brief Chinese forms not realizing how little room they're getting to work in. But most of the short poems are modest and good.

Patrick H. Fulmer has some good lines in "Quite Unlike the Rain" ("Perhaps I am one given to speculation and typical moods"), but the poem as a whole is obscure to me.

On the other side Don Mahoney owes apologies to Theodore Roethke for the famous and beautiful line he's lifted intact from "The Waking."

"Sun Dried" might have been better as a haiku, maybe. And I object to Carla Gibson's caption for the picture of the policeman. It's too easy, and hints at snobbishness.

Stan Schulz's sestina isn't a great sestina, but a sestina is a very difficult form to make a poem in. Of all the poems this one at least sets up a formal limitation to try to work within and against. So this one holds down the page better than most of the others.

Steve Huntley's poem using Hitler is very interesting; it studies both event and language as language.

There are other things here worth noting, and, of course, a good deal more to be said about the merits of the individual pieces. And I apologize for those good things I've overlooked in my haste. For the student of writing even the less good things are useful.

Unfortunately for the contributors, publication in Scrip may not teach them much. Perhaps the hardest thing to do is to learn from publication.

For the writer, print finalizes, and often the story or poem printed is forever unchangeable; bad if it's bad, promising as it may be. We should be grateful for Scrip, however, for collecting these things for us and for giving us the chance to read and reread them and talk about them.

Although writing is an obscure and private gesture done on one's own time, its presentation is what justifies it and illuminates it. Scrip will be out again and will get better as it is gone over and as it acquires a readership and as its contributors, wherever and wherever they are, listen in and risk exposing their best work there.

Is the real Angela Davis a New Left hoax?

by Frank Mankiewicz and Tom Braden

Los Angeles — What may have been conceived as the most elaborate political put-on since Hearst invented the Spanish-American War is unfolding here as a major test of Gov. Ronald Reagan's theory that constant — and violent — confrontation with students is the best policy.

At issue is the status of Angela Davis, an attractive, 25-year-old, black Ph.D. who was appointed earlier this year as an assistant professor of philosophy at UCLA and who has now been fired by the Board of Regents, at the insistence of the governor, because it appears she is a member — of all things — the Communist Party.

Miss Davis' membership in the party was leaked this spring in a letter to the college newspaper by an alleged FBI informant. She readily admitted membership in something called the Che-Lumumba Chapter of the Communist Party, and her firing came soon after. The issue has mobilized opinion among the faculty, administration and student body throughout the statewide campus of the University of California, almost all of it against the governor. But it has also mobilized most of the nonstudent, nonacademic public opinion in the state, mostly on Reagan's side.

What is curious in the whole episode, according to some faculty members who know Miss Davis and — more important — know something about

the American Radical movement, is why no effort has been made to discover if Miss Davis is telling the truth when she says she is a Communist.

These people are saying, in effect, that the regents, the university and, above all, Gov. Reagan are quite likely being victimized by a giant — perhaps even lighthearted — hoax, promoted by the New Left, designed to provoke just the confrontation which both Reagan and the militants want.

If there is one thing young radicals in our society today share, whether they are nonviolent, biracial pacifists or violent Maoist separatist militants, it is contempt for the Communist Party. The party itself is bourgeois, bureaucratic, in the view of youth timid and in the view of intellectuals turgid and irrelevant. The New Left ridicules the Old Left.

No longer, as through much of the Thirties and Forties, is Communist Party membership in any way heroic or even chic in left and intellectual circles. Indeed, it is regularly derided as irrelevant to "the struggle." If it were not for the enrolled members of the FBI and subscribers to Communist publications among public and private institutions, it could hardly survive.

Consequently, it is highly unlikely that Miss Davis, admittedly an activist, admittedly a militant radical, a student of Herbert Marcuse and of considerable intellectual attainment, would join the par-

ty. Some movement with a date in the name, perhaps — SDS or one of its splinters, perhaps — but the Communist Party? David Eisenhower is as likely a member.

But these intellectual musings are surely not for Ronald Reagan. Elected as a foe of "The University," he has fulfilled his campaign promises and thrived, though the student body at UC A, when polled this week, favored by more than 80% the proposition that Reagan had lowered the quality of the state's education.

Reagan's most likely foe, former Assembly Speaker Jesse Unruh, has been hammering on this issue, mostly without visible success. Unruh is telling whoever cares to listen that it is the governor, not the students, who has provoked the confrontations — as with the Peoples' Park in Berkeley — which have led to violence and a paralysis of education.

Thus, the case of Miss Davis looks more and more like a radical-left fraud. After all, she is almost the only accused Communist in recent memory who has broken the story first and then not denied it. The suspicion is strong that, by providing a real live Communist on the faculty, Reagan could be provoked into another confrontation which might accomplish the goals of both the governor and the New Left. So far, it's worked.

Nebraskan editorial page

Ya gotta have a gimmick . . . Kelley Baker

Last Summer is a film story of the easy seduction of youth by adults . . . a seduction by lack of caring.

Sandy, Peter, Dan and Rhoda — teenage victims of broken homes and inattention — are spending the summer with their parent(s) on Fire Island.

The tone for Sandy's relationship with Dan and Peter is set by her attitude toward a seagull that the three of them have saved.

She fashions a leather harness for the gull and tells it, "I'm boss, bird. I'm absolute master of your world and what I say goes." When the bird bites her for pestering it, she crushes its head with a rock.

In an embarrassingly funny scene with beer as truth serum and false voices for added courage, the trio vows always to be always with one another and finds some of the affection that their parents have failed to give them.

Enter Rhoda, a square chick with braces who denounces their bird training as "torture" and claims that they've made the gull a schizo. Rhoda has a de facto acceptance in their company as receptacle for all the abuse and frustration they feel for their parents and the world. She gains greater acceptance into the group only by telling "something horrible about herself" — an initiation rite that proves to be deeply revealing.

Rhoda draws out a sensitive side in Peter that is glaringly contrasted with the callousness of Sandy and Dan. Sandy and Rhoda conduct a low key battle for control of Peter who is an individual when alone with Rhoda but falls too easily into the cruelty of the group.

The frustration and resentment that the three feel for Rhoda erupts in the final scene and places Peter in an extremely difficult position of deciding for Rhoda and the individual or of going along with the group. It is a terrifying, ugly experience which shatters Peter and leads all of them from the last summer of their innocence.

Last Summer, directed by Frank Perry (David and Lisa, The Swimmer), is a powerful, excellent film which shows us the thin line that separates us from violence.



MISSLER'S MOTHER

Merits of ROTC justify its existence on U.S. campuses

This article is reprinted from the "Apprise and Dissent" column in the Lincoln Evening Journal, Sept. 2, 1969.

by Walter H. Bruning
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The American people have recently heard a great deal from a small group of vocal critics concerning the presence of military science programs on the campuses, but very little from the rank and file middle-ground majority. I believe this unfortunate.

The Morrill Act of 1862 offered grants of land to states or territories if they would establish collegiate schools which would provide, among other things, training in agriculture, military tactics, mechanical arts, science, and classical studies. The state of Nebraska accepted the provisions of this act and The University of Nebraska was created. This University still functions under these general provisions.

Therefore, there is at the outset a distinction between the concept of a private university, and the courses of study they offer, and the land-grant institution.

In my opinion, R.O.T.C. is a valid option for the student who chooses it as a supplementary area of study from the wide range of programs offered by the public university.

Arguments rage about the offering of academic credit for such courses, for it is alleged that R.O.T.C. is merely a rote activity allowing no flexibility to the military instructor or intellectual challenge to the student. R.O.T.C. opponents further argue that it conflicts with the ideals of the university community and that military instructors are not academically fit to teach in the environment of higher education.

Many such instructors — not all by any means — have only a B.S. degree; the charge is made that their presence on the campus is by dictate of the Defense Department, with the university having no control over the appointment or dismissal of the man.

In fact, the public university fosters a multitude of valuable programs that, at least in part, rely on more or less rote learning exercises of a practical skill. Academic credit is given for such activities, because they are judged to be useful and desirable to the overall degree programs of many students.

Some of these areas, such as physical education, actually constitute a major in which a degree can be earned. Other major areas of university study, such as those in agriculture and home

economics, include significant components of applied (or practical) learning experiences.

Public universities have had to adjust to larger numbers of students presenting themselves for enrollment each year. This has forced a very large proportion of the undergraduate instruction program into the hands of men and women who possess little more than a B.A. or B.S. degree, i.e., the teaching assistants.

Therefore, when arguments are made concerning the rote nature of R.O.T.C., the supposed lack of intellectual stimulation for the student, and the lack of academic degrees as qualifications of the military instructor, such arguments might also be applied against a large portion of the university's academic activities. R.O.T.C., only one of a number of "applied" land grant programs, hardly deserves to be singled out and cut with one edge of what is in reality, a two-edged academic scalpel.

The appointment and dismissal of military instructors is controlled in the final analysis by the university. The contracts between the various branches of the armed services and universities always carry the provision that administrative veto for cause is all that is necessary to terminate the appointment of an officer in an R.O.T.C. unit.

Thus, universities control the type of officer assigned to teaching duty as closely as they control the type of teaching assistant in academic programs, and in a sense, more closely than they control the appointment and dismissal of more senior academic staff, who may have achieved tenure.

The major objection of student demonstrators to R.O.T.C. seems to be moral. They argue that war is immoral and that the presence of R.O.T.C. on campus is a visible and constant reminder of the threat of the establishment to the purity of

the university and a symptom of decay in our society.

Their position may have some merit, but I believe it is incredibly naive. Questions of morality aside, the history of nation-states illustrates that all of them rely on a military deterrent as an instrument of defense and foreign policy. (Some, of course, use the military as an instrument of offense and aggressive domination.)

In our real world, in which we must live, the self interests of the United States are important. The mess in Vietnam may not be in the best interests of the United States. Nevertheless, we are there because of decisions made by elected representatives of the people; our military power has been created as an instrument of foreign policy.

The moral questions behind this national political activity will not be solved by forcing R.O.T.C. off campus. One reason why this nation has never turned into a military dictatorship, ruled by a junta of colonels or whatever, is that the concept of the citizen soldier, the Cincinnatus tradition, pervades our political system. The liberalizing influence of the civilian campus does affect the student-cadet and materially strengthens this idea.

I believe it would be tragic if the training of officers were relegated to military institutes totally divorced from the universities. The far-reaching consequences of such an action would be detrimental to our political system. (At this time over half the officers entering military service today are produced by R.O.T.C. programs.)

It is naive to think that if this source of trained leadership is denied by removing R.O.T.C. from the campus that it will cripple the military-industrial complex. The men will be trained, away from the civilian arena, away from its more or less compassionate, liberalizing atmosphere.

Therefore, unless the public majority decides that the character of the land-grant university should be changed, R.O.T.C. seems to be a highly important — purely voluntary — option that ought to be available for those students who wish it. As long as the compulsory phase of military service exists, the student ought to have as many options open to him as possible for discharging this obligation.

Much of what is stressed in the R.O.T.C. training programs is concerned with developing leadership, small group communication, administration, and management, etc. Also, an increasing number of credits are being taught by academic personnel in related areas; military history taught by professional historians is an example.

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