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Editorial 13: Fat Moments, Fast Hands and The Big Picture



until most recently. Sometimes it takes a stranger to point out the things that people close to you cannot say, or is it perhaps that you listen better to the stranger than the friend? I am not sure.

Either way, the stranger for me was Melvin Mencher, a professor emeritus at Columbia who was at UPEI to work with Wendy Shilton in the English Faculty. Mencher taught the morning class that I have with Shilton and afterwards she asked if I would like to spend some time with Prof. Mencher discussing the paper, its faults, and the things that could be done better. Like

the schmuck that I am sometimes, I hesitated for a moment before agreeing. I thought, you know, what's this old hack going to tell me that I don't already know. The paper, in my eyes, was better than it's ever been and I saw very little room for improvement, institutionally speaking. During the class he taught he had lightly chastised me for wearing a hat (never mind wearing it backwards) which further led me to believe he was a chump, so I showed up in my dress wear, tie and all, content with the little joke I was playing on him (Do you know how it feels when you are *really, really* wrong? Well, I bet most of you do).

Three hours later, I was sitting in the faculty lounge with Mencher. An interesting cat to

say the least. On the way down the hall from Shilton's office, Mencher was carrying a tray to return to the 1862 lounge. On the tray were a dirty dish or two, and some crumpled napkins. When I took the tray from him the napkin flew off headed for the ground, and instantly the man's hand snared it out of the air. I know it doesn't sound like much, but man it was sharp. It reminded me of the time I was on the way to Greenwich in my pal's jeep. He was wearing a baseball hat and telling me why he could have been in the NBA if it hadn't have been for the cigarettes and the booze, when his hat was blown off from the air rifling through the jeep. Well my pal, like Vince fucking Carter, grabbed the hat just as it was to head into highway death. Like I say, hard to understand but very impressive to see. Same thing with Mencher. Fast hands man, real fast hands.

He is an amazing looking guy too. Diminutive with great waves of gray hair ordered, one would think, exactly how he wanted, with never a

hair out of place. And he has the most brilliant eyes mine have ever beheld. We sat in the faculty lounge, uninterrupted (but for the Prof. who whistled in and tried to get some attention for himself, and the three girls playing the grand piano) for what seemed like a long time.

He was extremely complimentary on the Cadre's local news and national news coverage and gave me several technical tips that if I did know, I had forgotten, and he told me a few stories about his life. But the real shithammer he dropped on me was when he told me that the two logo cover issue should have said, "WHAT DO YOU THINK?" on the cover. "Engage the audience" he told me. Man, some things just hit you; you know what I mean right? Like sometimes some vagrant will ask for change in a way that makes me feel like he is my brother, or uncle, or dead friend or something and I want to give him change and help him.

Well Mencher's eyes

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What do you want to know?

THE CADRE POLL: Cadre will, in the next three weeks be attempting to conduct a general poll of both students and faculty. I would like to encourage everyone, students and faculty to answer the following two questions, and send them to the paper's email address (newspaper@upei.ca) or if you wish to do so in confidence you can send them directly to my email (kbruyneel@upei.ca), where the answers will be taken out, and the message destroyed, in discreet fashion. The question are as follows:

- 1) What one question would you like to ask the entire faculty?
- 2) What one question would you like to ask the entire student body?