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Media ✓

Letters

Not a science course, eh?

ecwf ✓

By various readers

Re: Maureen Robinson's editorial "Still not a science course" in the Sept. 28 edition of the Fulcrum.

Love Curt van de Ligt's cartoon. I agree with the executive editor that "the Faculty of Science went above and beyond their normal mandate" in this dossier. The faculty and the upper administration are to be commended for their valiant attempts at preserving "academic integrity" in the face of student demands. There is one particularly glaring error in Maureen Robinson's piece, however, that I would like to correct.

Robinson claims that I have "piss[ed] off half the admin". To the best of my knowledge and based on much concrete evidence, I have pissed off *all* of the upper administration: every chairperson in science, each of the four science deans that we have had in the last few months, the dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, President Patry, and all of the vice-presidents—especially VP Academic Major.

Maybe Maureen Robinson would care to name one unelected executive of University of Ottawa Inc. (legally a corporation) that the students and I have not pissed off?

Denis Rancourt

Professor of Activism Course (SCI 1101)

It was a sad day for journalism when the executive editor of Ottawa U's student rag penned her ill-informed diatribe against one of the few professors out there who actually gives a damn about pertinent issues facing the future of humankind.

Robinson's wrong on so many fronts, it's hard to know where to begin. She suggests proponents of the activism class have embraced "insanity and warmongering". And, that there are "rules we must all play by". Are you sure this is a student newspaper I'm reading? She has nothing to say about Stephen Harper or Stockwell Day, who are the real threats to sanity and peace.

Then, she goes on to talk about how Rancourt's actions were not in the "spirit of activism". Robinson clearly has no idea what activism is.

And, she claims, Rancourt generated his own "contrived 'press releases' using fictitious

interviews” (how else do you write a press release?). If she keeps this up, Robinson is on her way to becoming a successful corporate journalist, serving anyone but the public-at-large. She’ll make a good government mouthpiece.

For everyone not convinced by her arguments, I suggest you read last year’s assigned text for the activism class, *Understanding Power: The Indispensable Chomsky*. Robinson clearly hasn’t read it yet, but she certainly would make a good example to be cited by Mr. Chomsky if he ever updates his classic *Manufacturing Consent: A Propaganda Model*.

Students at U of O would be better served if their student newspaper had the guts to go after the people that are really fucking up the planet. I can assure you, professor Rancourt isn’t one of them. But, he is an easy target, and journalists are never afraid of the easy targets.

It’s the hard targets, like Day and Harper, they’re afraid of. Until we get more responsible journalists writing editorials that serve the public interest, warmongers and madmen like Day and Harper will continue to get elected. Why don’t you use your editorial space to speak about that secret meeting in Banff that Students With A Collective Conscience were protesting about? Or, how the Conservatives just axed a \$10.8 million Aboriginal tobacco control programme?

Nice picture of the Young Conservatives Club on page 9, by the way.

Maureen, I’ll watch for your byline appearing soon in *The National Post*.

Trevor Haché

Community member who attends SCII101
