

It went on like that through all 80 pages, liberally sprinkled with notations for footnotes that screamed "Ibid. pg. 1, 284" and "Finkelstein et al." at the bottom of each page, sometimes in such profusion that the footnotes shoved the text off the page altogether. But no matter how much I read, it all said the same thing...people think.

I suddenly realized that I was on to something — something big. That switch was no architectural afterthought — it was built right into the room's circuitry, and I was willing to bet it wasn't the only one in the building. I smelled a conspiracy, a gigantic one, and as I raced down the hallway, I was determined to find out how many pro-

fessors were involved in this heinous crime that condemned students to pay exorbitant book prices, study long hours, and pull shoulders out of sockets as they struggled with huge, useless volumes of prattle.

I skidded to a halt in front of my sociology professor's office, jammed the pass key into the lock, rushed inside, found the hidden toggle switch, flipped it, and pulled another tiny volume from behind the hinged diploma. The title of this one was "Translation: Pseudo-Interactionality for Disincorporated Gestaltism" and I pulled the appropriate text — deadlifting this time — out of my pack and opened it at random; to Chapter 17, as it turned out.

"Various socializing exigencies," the text read, "can level demoralizing remonstrances at non-ego-insulated personalities, exacerbating existing guilt-self-recriminations, and fostering a normless climate that gives rise to anomie, alienation, non-realization of idealized communal id-satiators, and dissipation of image-construction mechanisms on a dramatically descending continuum. Under the vicissitudes of modified pre-Veblenism..." and on and on, I remembered it faintly from a bleary-eyed all-nighter I had pulled at midterm time. I flipped through the little pamphlet to the "Chapter 17" page and read: "Society can screw you over."

I spent the rest of that night clomping around all nine floors of the building, flipping switches and reading pamphlets, and by the time a rosy glow began to spread behind the art museum I was thoroughly disgusted. We had all been duped, I realized, all 16,500 of us, by this cruel plot.

Some of the "translations" — ironically, the ones for the largest texts — scarcely filled two tiny pages, and in one political science professor's office I discovered a pamphlet for the text "Bourgeois Ipso-Factoism and God" that simply stated "This book doesn't say anything."

As I sat in the last office of the building, thumbing through a matchbook-sized "translation" of a graduate philosophy text titled "Metaphorically Masochistic Metaphysics," I tried to decide what my next move should be. I would release the information, of course, but the question was — to whom? The *Emerald*? Too small. The *Register-Guard*? Still too small, this was big news. Finally, I decided to give Daniel Schorr a call — the nation had to know about it.

I had just finished the translation of Chapter 33, which read "people exist," when I heard a key rattle in the office door. The pro-

fessor! Panicked, I flew across the room and threw the tiny leaflet back into the vault, but it was too late. As the door opened the withered old man, with a battered pipe clutched in his false teeth, saw me shoving the diploma back into place.

"Oh my God!" he cried, clutching his heart. "You there! What are you doing! Stop, I say, stop!"

But I didn't stop, I leaped over him as he collapsed in the doorway, gasping, and I charged top-speed down the hall.

"Stop him!" croaked the old professor. "He knows! Lord help us, he knows!"

Cries of alarm began ringing through the hall along with the desperate, clumping sound of shuffling sexagenarians in vain pursuit, but I didn't look back. Charging full-tilt up to the glass doors I nearly ripped them from their hinges as I raced out into the crisp morning air. But a chillingly calm voice followed me through those doors, and I glanced around to see my psychology professor pointing menacingly through the glass.

"Don't worry about it," he was saying to his colleagues. "I know who he is."

Impossibly, I increased my speed after that, zooming through campus and down two blocks to my little studio apartment. I tore open the door and dived for the phone, but it rang before I could reach it.

"Uh, hello?" I panted.

"Well, well, well, and how's our little janitor today?" said an icy, ominous voice. "Been doing a little extra-duty cleaning, I hear."

"Who is this?"

"Never mind about that," said the voice. "The important question is, what do you plan to do now? Believe me, it would be best for you, me, and this little piece of paper I have here in front of me if you'd just keep it as our little secret."

"Like hell I will!" I bellowed. "Lis-

ten, what I saw tonight was the lowest, most despicable, depraved...uh...what piece of paper?"

"Oh, it's a cute little thing," said the voice. "It's a beautiful blonde color with bright, perky blue writing at the top that says 'Financial Aid Grant.'"

"No!" I cried. "You fiend, you sick, twisted fiend! If you've done anything to hurt that..."

"Now, now, your little grant is just fine."

"I don't believe you! Let me hear it!"

There was a sound of rustling paper in the earpiece.

"Okay, okay," I said, trying to steady myself. I took a deep, shuddering breath and let it out slowly. "What do you want me to do?"

"Nothing much, really," the voice said casually. Then, intently, "Just forget what you saw last night."

"But I can't... you shouldn't... they wouldn't..."

"Or maybe you'd like us to mail your grant back to you" the voice whispered venomously. "one piece at a time!" This was followed by an ominous, mirthless laugh that rose to a piercing cackle. I slammed the receiver into the cradle and sat down heavily, in a quandary.

And I still don't know what to do. Like an American Solzhenitzen, I've teetered on the brink of publishing what I know dozens of times, only to find my conviction weakening as a vision of myself being forced to drop out and plant trees in Veneta wells up into my conscious mind. So for the time being, I've decided to sit tight, and follow the advice of a "translation" of an ROTC textbook entitled "Prerequisites for Advancement in the Military Milieu." This pamphlet wasn't divided into chapters, since apparently one short phrase served to sum up the entire volume.

"Don't make waves."

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Biology prof receives grant renewal

Ira Herskowitz, assistant professor of biology and research of the University Institute of Molecular Biology has received a \$51,979 grant to continue his research on how genes control an organism's growth. The U.S. Public Health Service grant is a three year renewal of his former grant. Herskowitz, a molecular geneticist, feels taxpayers should understand what is being done with their money and why. He says different cells in the body do different things, even though they have the same genetic information. If the key to cell function and growth could be understood, he says it could ultimately be applied to abnormal growth, as is found in tumors and cancer.

The bacterial virus Lambda is used in their studies. "The thing we're interested in is how the bacteria will affect viral growth," explains Herskowitz. When the virus infects the bacteria, it injects its genes (DNA) into the cell. Then, says Herskowitz, separate events may occur. Either the virus replicates itself until the cell bursts, thus liberating the virus, or the viral genes lie in a silent form as part of the bacterial chromosome. "In particular we are studying how functions specified by the virus interact with bacterial functions in deciding the growth choice," says Herskowitz. For example, they are studying and seeking to isolate mutant bacteria in which the decision between the two different growth programs is affected.

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