

Opinion

Thursday, July 21, 1994

FAIR AND SQUARE



TREVOR LAUTENS

No work for this male

NEVER MIND the theories. The reality is that Louis Marinoff can't get work in his field in this country because he's a male. So next Monday the Montreal-born University of B.C. philosophy professor is outa here and off to a job with the famed City College of New York. When is this cold-blooded sexual retribution stuff going to end?

Interesting speculation. Marinoff has produced a novel on this very subject. Written under his pseudonym Lou Tafler and self-published in May by Backlash Books — he offered the script to four or five mainstream publishers and got "the most flattering rejection slips I've ever received" — it's called *Fair New World*. And, in answer to the above question, it's set in 2084.

Keen readers, especially those who like to drop in on the track and bet on the Four Horsepersons of the Apocalypse, will note its breeding: Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* out of George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. These two warnings of future dystopias were youthful favorites of Marinoff, who is 42.

Why the "fair" in Marinoff's title? The novel is set in three lands. Feminania is — well, the name says it all. So does the name of the second, Bruteland, a vicious macho tyranny that follows a kind of Gospel. According to the Louts.

The third is Melior — as in amelioration, defined as "to make or become better" — led by the Philosopher-King, Solomon. You may well suspect that Feminania and Bruteland inevitably wage war, and that Melior judiciously intervenes. You're right. But even Melior is no paradise. Marinoff/Tafler is saying: this idealistic but imperfect state is the best you can reasonably hope for. Thus the "fair."

Fair is hardly the way the man behind this novel has been treated. He's among the refugees from "politically correct" institutionalized discrimination. Which, as I have patiently tried to explain, is far worse than so-called cultural discrimination. It's legal. It's compulsory.

Marinoff got his doctorate at University College, London, three years ago. Coincidentally, that year the Canadian Philosophical Association — the philosophers' trade union, so to speak — shaped a motion requiring that 40 per cent of all jobs under its purview be held by women by 2010.

Scholars ripen and eventually topple off the vine slowly. So to meet that goal, universities are hiring few men.

The scandal is not that Marinoff — a sessional lecturer in the philosophy of science and applied ethics at UBC — hasn't been hired. The scandal is that he has not been shortlisted by some 180 institutions where he's applied for permanent work. He's a man. He's not in the running.

Marinoff claims that the situation is so absurd that Canada has to scramble to find enough women philosophy professors and is obliged to import them. Female graduate students abroad have a better shot at an appointment in Canada than Canadian males.

Now, Lautens speaking here: this is undiluted Marxist-Stalinism. It's the academic equivalent of the command economy of the old Soviet Union. There shall be 500,000 pairs of shoes in this style manufactured this year. Never mind if there was no market for them. There wasn't. There shall be 40 per cent of women philosophy professors produced to teach in Canadian universities. Same dogma.

The Soviet Union produced inferior shoes — and almost everything else — under this ideology. That's exactly what reverse discrimination is producing in what Barbara Amiel recently called "the feminist reign of terror." Louis Marinoff says: "Intellectual bones are being broken." □