

High School Papers Join Underground

Cathy West

1967

"This is a lot of shit," was the reaction of one Cass Technical High School student to a recent Underground addition to the growing number of publications at Detroit's largest inner-city school.

South Hampton Illustrated Times, better known to the student body as *SHIT*, arrived on the scene without the thunder and lightning that usually accompanies the appearance of an unsponsored (or rather, uncensored) school publication. Officials were concerned, but didn't know who to blame, and the students were more than slightly tongue-in-cheek in their acceptance.

SHIT (soon to become YELLOW due to a change in policy) was originally planned as a challenge to school authorities and a test of the populace of Cass Tech. The editor, Larry Carsman, contends that "under the present censorship framework it is impossible to have a publication of literary value." Staff members were in touch with the American Civil Liberties Union regarding the legality of the paper, and decided to go ahead.

"There's something lacking in school publications now, and we'd like to prove that something can be done of literary value," states Bob Serling, contributing editor. "SHIT was basically just humorous profanity."

Students, particularly the staff, were critical of SHIT. Carsman admits that its purpose was rather to shock than to present creative works unhampered by censorship. "With YELLOW we decided to stop trying to pull punches and just create a worthwhile, revolutionary endeavor. In the end, we'd like it to be a sophisticated periodical put out by Cass students."

SHIT was conceived from the head of Carsman and his managing editor, Beth Fischhoff. With the decision to change the policy came the new name and a number of new contributors: Serling, the Artist of Words, John Minecola (also feature editor of the school's official paper) and a real staff member, Marty Berg. They plan to sell the paper openly, and even make it available to the faculty.

YELLOW is planning on going on to bigger and better things. Featured in the next issue is an interview with John Sinclair by Carsman and Serling, a story on the 'social education' of high school students, and one dealing with obscenity in the Michigan education system. Carsman and Serling are toying with the idea of an interview with Lt. Warner Stringfellow of the Detroit Narcotics Bureau for the following issue.

Grosse Pointe and Mumford High are also joining the Underground. Grosse has the "World of KULCHER," which has been attempting to organize a 'kulcheral workshop' in the area. Mumford is getting ready for the ELE-VATOR. Editors Isadore Strom and Gary Klein plan an issue coming out by the end of April.

Although YELLOW will be aimed at Cass students; high school students who wish to submit work for consideration (or anyone planning their own paper who wants to find out what Carsman and staff have learned so far) can do so by writing to Larry Carsman, 1368 Nicolet, Detroit 48202. Copies of YELLOW can be had at the Artists' Workshop on John Lodge or the Fifth Estate Bookstore on Plum Street, or by writing to Carsman and sending 20 cents.

Plans are being made to organize a day-long seminar for Interested students some time this spring. The Fifth Estate will be on hand to offer any support or information.



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Fifth Estate #27, April 1-15, 1967

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