

Back to school 'daze'

My professor wrote in a red-pencilled notation at the bottom of an essay I had written, "We just need to guide you to write as an academic."

Heavens, you and I both know she would need a seeing eye dog. Maybe two.

As helpful as she intended to be, I knew she was whistling "Dixie".

She's in for a long haul. Uphill. Several of my grade teachers gave up. I watched the pallor of old age replace the blush of youthful beauty in their budding teaching careers.

It was sad. Their sterling efforts were repelled. I destroyed their attempts to improve me faster than a can of Raid.

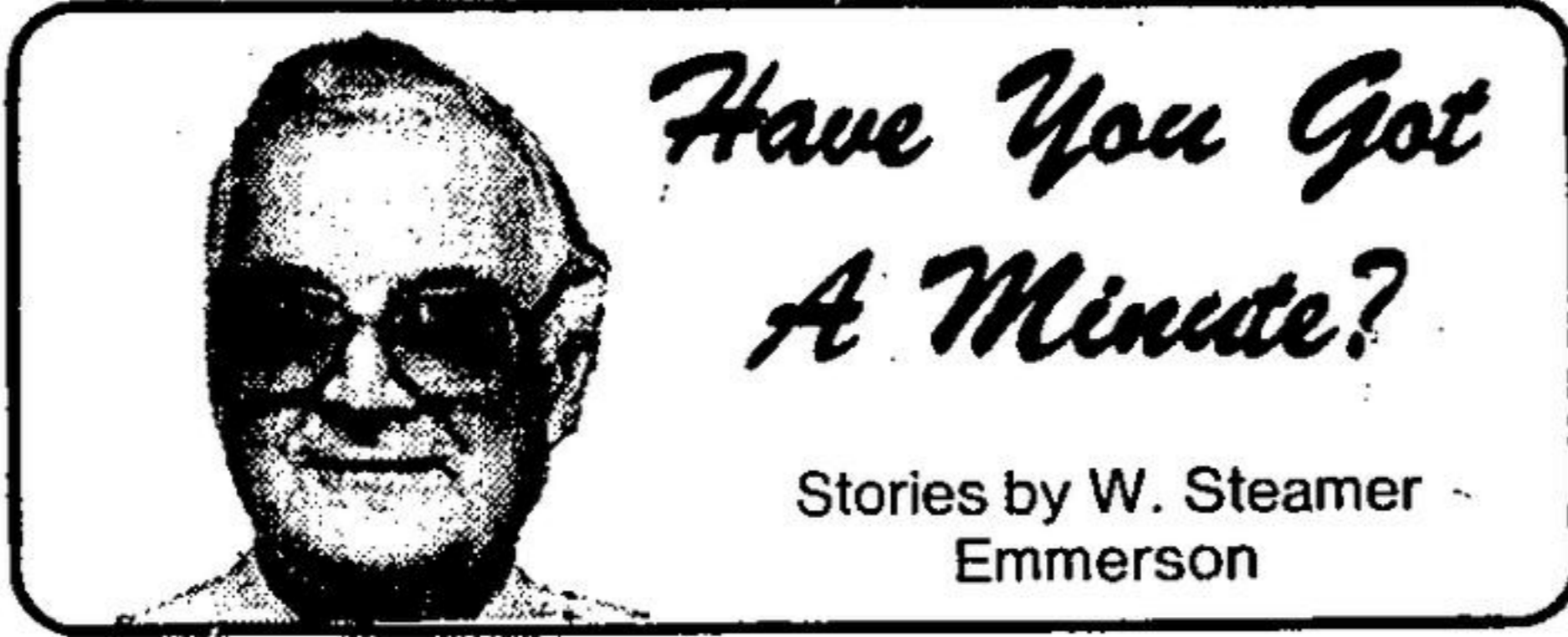
My prof, is going to be awake nights with frustration and despair trying to succeed where others failed. She might even resort to Vallium. Maybe booze. I hope not. I'm a bit worried about her.

Have You Got A Minute?, has been missing the last few weeks. Why? I didn't have a minute to spare. I was writing quizzes, an essay and a final examination.

A friend of mine encouraged me to enroll in Sociology 100, at Sir Wilfrid Laurier University. Sociology 100 is the lowest rung on the ladder of higher learning.

When someone who knows I am taking the course asks how I'm doing it gives me the opportunity to use the old "well I started at the bottom and you'll be pleased to know I stayed there. I'm in the awkward squad of academia. To the young and bright it's a beginning. At my age it's a challenge."

Would you believe they would accept me? I was shocked. My study books, VCR, tapes, teleconference dates, along with study instructor arrived. Goodness gracious they must have made a mistake, I thought to myself, as I poured over the course material.



Have You Got A Minute?

Stories by W. Steamer Emmerson

After each chapter quizzes were to be answered and mailed in. The idea was to read and study the chapter, then view the corresponding tape, answer the quizzes then wait in dread for it to be returned with your marks.

Get this. Quiz 1. Question 1.: In a brief paragraph, define and give an example of each of the following; social facts, social action, conflict perspective and symbolic interaction.

Oh God! I knew right away I was in over my head. What on earth were they talking about? And another thing, I'm not brief.

Here's my answers. Social facts: Durkheim's term to indicate things that are external to, and constraining upon the individual. Status, would be an example of a social fact.

Social action: Occurs between two individuals where each person takes into account the others actions. An example would be anti-war demonstrators marching upon Ottawa.

You get the idea. Makes you want to cry, doesn't it?

However Quiz 2, Question 3, gave me the opening I was looking for.

The question read "What lessons do girls and boys learn from their childhood play and games?" At last they asked me something I could really write about. James Joyce, author of

Lady Chatterly's Lover couldn't have answered any better than yours truly.

My pen flowed. My answer sizzled.

Just for the heck of it I threw in the old minstrel show joke about two young boys talking about sex. The younger boy when asked his age by his older buddy didn't seem to know whether he was six or seven.

The older boy asked if he knew the difference between girls and boys. The younger guy said "No." The older, wiser, youngster said, "Then you is six."

It always drew a laugh. I thought the prof might have a sense of humor.

Her notation beside my answer read, "You're kidding me."

I'm struggling with words like, anomie, ethnocentrism, ethnomethodology. I can't pronounce them, spell them or use them, but if she does get me writing like an academic it will be comforting to know they will just roll out when needed.

To be perfectly honest I'm expecting a notation in shaky handwriting on my exam paper that she is abandoning her efforts to guide me writing as an academic."

The Herald has asked me back and they don't seem to mind I'm no academic.



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