

College says good-bye to 73

Peter Naus, Judy Van Evra, John Theis, and Mary Malone take early retirement

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Over the next few months, St. Jerome's will be saying good-bye to four faculty members who have decided to accept the Special Early Retirement Package offered at the University of Waterloo as part of a strategy to address a government-imposed budgetary shortfall in 1996-97 of \$18 million at UW and some \$300,000 at St. Jerome's College.

Of the four, Peter Naus, who arrived at the College in 1973, has been at St. Jerome's the longest. A social psychologist by training, his areas of specialty are human sexuality and aging, death, and dying. Naus served for six years as Academic Dean and was instrumental in establishing the Sexuality, Marriage and the Family (SMF) program.

During his 23 years at the College, Naus has noticed a gradual change taking place. "Though it's not totally fair to say that universities have become institutions of professional skills training," says Naus, "the focus within universities, as I see it, has shifted more and more to trying to enhance students' chances of getting a job. Despite the university's best intentions, I think we are moving further and further away from what a university is supposed to be. John Ralston Saul put it very simply: universities ought to be places where students are taught how to think. I am afraid that they are being taught more and more what to think."

Naus also notes that though some things have changed over the years, some things have stayed the same. "One thing that has changed very little is the structure of the curriculum, the particular requirements that are in place in order to be given a degree," observes Naus. "I find that very strange. I had thought that with growing budget pressures, there would be a radical overhaul of the curriculum, and I have seen very little evidence of that. Most of it has been tinkering, really. I am still wondering whether the current crunch is going to lead to radical restructuring."

Asked what's next for him, Naus replies that he's looking forward to having time to pursue some intellectual interests. "I have found myself getting more and more interested in broader social and economic issues in recent years," he says. "I don't have the background I would need to hold an informed opinion, and I would like to have that."

Naus also hopes to continue the research he and John Theis have been engaged in in recent years, on the relation between a father's affirmation and his son's psychological well-being. "But there will be some practical limitations. By that I mean we will have to finance it ourselves, and there are aspects of the research that could be pretty expensive, so I don't know where that will go."

He may also explore private practice. "Theis has asked me to join him for certain cases where my expertise can be relevant, and I'm quite intrigued by that, though I don't know what

form it will take." But he has no intention of starting a second career. "The clearest thing that I have in mind is that I'm not going to do much for a while."

Judy Van Evra, on the other hand, plans to be very busy. "In some ways, I'll be doing the same things," she says, "but in totally different contexts."

During her 21 years at the College, in addition to teaching courses in child development, educational psychology, childhood behavioral and emotional disorders, children and the media, learning disabilities, and child psychopathology, Van Evra has published two books: *Psychological Disorders of Children and Adolescents* and *Television and Child Development*. She has also served locally on the Child and Family Services board and the advisory board for the Learning Disabilities Association, worked as a consultant for the Waterloo Separate School Board, and maintained a small private practice. As well, she is currently Chair of the Complaints and Disciplinary committees of the College of Psychologists of Ontario in Toronto.

When she leaves, Van Evra plans to expand her private practice and increase her involvement with the College of Psychologists. "I find that work really interesting," she says. Another thing she plans to do is write. "I've got lots of projects that I've started," she says. "At the moment, my daughter and I — she's a writer and editor — are working on a book on media literacy for children. I think I'll find enough to keep busy."

John Theis isn't really planning to retire, either. "I'm simply changing direction in my career," he says. Since he came to the College in 1976, Theis has taught introductory psychology as well as a number of therapy courses. Over the years, he has maintained a small but active private therapy practice, as well as serving as a consultant for the Royal Ottawa Psychiatric Hospital.

"I'm in the business now of looking to set up an office," says Theis. "I'm quite excited about it. Peter and I are hoping to set up a place where clinical work is done on a broad range of issues. We'd like to have a lawyer work in the facility, and a physician. We'll all occupy the one facility, so that we can work together and support each other."

But Theis hopes to continue teaching at the College on a part-time basis. "I would miss teaching," he says. "I find that clinically, the students keep me honest. When you teach therapy skills to students, they say, 'How come? Where did you get that? How did you know that? How did you do that?' So I hope to maintain that contact."

In recent years, Theis has seen a change in the students at the College. "The energy and enthusiasm they've always had is still there," he says, "but there's a seriousness about them,