

THE FACULTY PEN



THE ENGINEERING PROFESSION?

Some occupational groups seem to be especially sensitive about what has come to be called their public image. Accountants, business managers and engineers (examples which I have noted particularly) like to think of themselves as "professional" people, and tend to express a kind of puzzled indignation at society's persistent failure to fully accord them this status. At this particular point in time there are at least two good and, I think, compelling reasons for us to examine this situation as it applies specifically to engineers. In the first place, society is beginning to cast engineers in the role of an elite corps (read J.K. Galbraith's *NEW INDUSTRIAL STATE*, for example) which poses a serious question about the character and attitude of those who assume that role. Second, this institution is groping toward a new concept of engineering education, and the essential light to the path is a clear understanding of the nature of professionalism.

In the years I have spent among engineers, I have heard repeatedly about the public's lack of proper recognition, or the "professions" failure to project its true nature, or suggestions to polish up the image. Of course, in this day of sophisticated advertising and slick public relations promotions, "image" is a big deal, but I still like to think that if we will only concern ourselves with the substance of a thing, its image will take care of itself. Specifically, I am convinced that if engineering enjoys a less than professional status it is because engineers tend to sell themselves short. I perceive that they generally lack a grand view of their calling and its cultural significance. In short, they fail to view THEMSELVES professionally.

What, then, IS the professional point of view? Unfortunately, the first thing we tend to notice about a professional person is that he has a specialized knowledge or skill, and this tempts us into the error of trying to define professionalism in terms of the DEGREE of knowledge or skill required. The fact that there are obviously many skilled occupations which are not professions has led us to develop a specific distinction in our language between a trade and a profession and between technical training and professional education. The distinctions are significant, but the line is hard to draw. If we discriminate according to degree of skill, it must follow that there are degrees of professionalism and that some professions are more professional than others. Indeed, it may seem that this is the case, for aren't people more inclined to recognize medicine or the law as professions than they are to accede this status for engineers? But then how many would argue that greater skill or knowledge is required of an attorney or physician than of an engineer? Very few.

Review.....

JONI MITCHELL..... A REAL PERSON

by Dave Hobill

Joni Mitchell's concert last Friday night in Harrington Auditorium proved to be a real pleasure to the dedicated fans who turned out to attend the next to the last concert in Miss Mitchell's American tour of public appearances.

The concert began late, about twenty minutes late. Well, her car had a flat tire on the way here from Boston. But in spite of all the delays, the audience patiently waited in the Harrington lobby while Miss Mitchell became acquainted with the acoustics and lights of the auditorium. And, after the "great race for front row seats" they waited equally as patiently for her to come on stage.

She finally appeared dressed in a long red gown and with her long blonde hair glistening in the light that carressed the features of her face, she opened with "Chelsea Morning" to the delight of the audience. During this first set we heard some of her more popular songs such as "Night in the City" and "Cactus Tree" in which she displayed the remarkable talents of her voice.

Miss Mitchell, as always, was politely nervous before the audience except for one instance preceding the intermission in which she nicely asked one certain boisterous Arab to be quiet during the remainder of the concert. As cameras clicked and photographers changed positions, Joni became a little more nervous. Before the concert began it was asked that flashbulbs not be used since in previous concerts Miss Mitchell became so self-conscious that she even forgot some of her own lyrics.

In ending the first set with "Both Sides Now," she did make a few

minor mistakes while playing the guitar, but smiled very sweetly at the audience and everyone quickly forgave her.

Returning in a green gown which had no real significance, (as to the season or "red for stopping, green for going" or "red for anger green for jealousy"....) except that Miss Mitchell later said "I just like the colors red and green", she performed with a little more confidence and much more personality.

"Two weekends ago I was in Hawaii. It was a bummer because I didn't get to stay long enough... In the morning I looked out my hotel window and saw big Sugar Oaf all green and lush and white birds flying around and this was paradise but in the middle was a big parking lot." So she wrote a little song called "Big Yellow Taxi" which turned out to be a real hit with the audience. ("They paved paradise and put in a parking lot.")

We also heard a few other of Joni Mitchell's well known songs such as "Marcy" and the "Circle Game." The ghostly garden grew quite well in the coldness of "Nathan La Franer."

Miss Mitchell performed "Rainy Night House" and many of her more recent compositions with the piano. One of the new ones she did was "Woodstock" in which the accompaniment contained a faintly neo-classical style. "I don't think there ever will be another Woodstock. I missed it...and then felt sorry for myself.. This song is written for all of you." ("I'm going down to Yasgur's Farm. Can I walk beside you?")

Returning on stage for an encore Miss Mitchell was requested to sing "the Urge for Going" which, though it didn't sound particularly bittersweet, (as it does when performed by Tom Rush) was very attractively put together.

No one seemed to mind that the concert started late, or that Miss Mitchell's lovely voice at times became strained, or her playing was not completely perfect. No one that is, except Miss Mitchell. But Friday night any one not in love with Joni Mitchell, was after the concert. They loved her lyrics her music, her voice, but most of all they loved Joni Mitchell a real person who even brought her knitting to the concert with her.

Before she returned to Boston so that she could leave for her concert in Buffalo the next night, we had an opportunity to speak with Miss Mitchell. Presently she is working on a new album and also a book of poetry. She intends to stay in Europe after her January concert in London for much of the next year. With us she reminisced with friends about festivals in the past and when asked what she thought of Spiro Agnew she thought for a while, made a statement (which can not be repeated in print since she could not hold a formal interview with the press) and then decided if was about time to leave.

Letter AEP

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their charity budget and would not have funds available, the use of the money for a good worthy cause