

Professor Profile: Terry Pratt-

Committed to teaching, Committed to learning

By SHANNON YOUNKER

ONCE HAD A TEACHER WHO said the greatest compliment he could give a young person in his class was to call her a student. If the highest compliment one can give an instructor is "teacher", then Terry Pratt is indeed a teacher. Dr. Pratt has been a part of UPEI's English department since 1972, and has helped the University through many of its growing pains during the past twenty years. When Pratt signed on to UPEI, the university community had many of the problems and benefits of working in a family. It was easy to know every faculty member, and you knew who to pick for your touch football team. As the School of Business became independent and the Atlantic Veterinary College and the School of Nursing came on line, UPEI may have lost some of its homey feeling, but we became more professional.

Terry Pratt has played no small part in UPEI's growth. He was a member of the committee that chose C. W. J. Eliot as president - a decision that has done much for UPEI. UPEI's policy of requiring two English courses for graduation is also Dr. Pratt's brainchild. While he believes that the university often sells Island students short by making too many introductory courses required, there has been a need for a remedial English course (the much maligned English 101) since it was instituted. Also a source of pride for Prof. Pratt is the fact he is the founding chair of the Teaching Centre. Professor Pratt told me that the focus of this university has shifted more towards the quality of teaching in the past few years. As a student, I find this very encouraging.

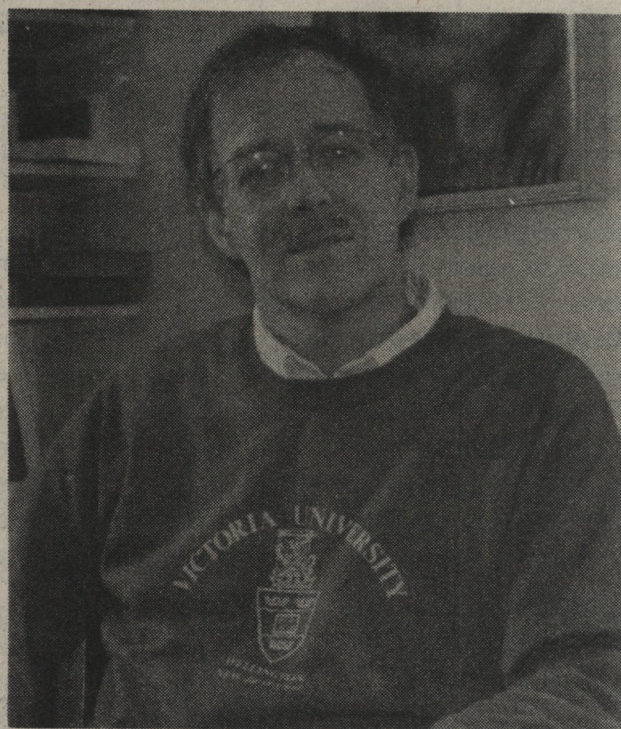
When I mentioned the recent cuts Dalhousie University was forced to make to its theatre and fine arts

departments, Dr. Pratt said the idea was "criminal". When I asked if the current economic climate might push UPEI into making the same sort of cuts, Dr. Pratt said "Yes". The effect on theatre won't be the same here because the budget for theatre at UPEI is practically nothing now. There is no "Theatre Department" as there is (or was) at some other schools.

Some may think that UPEI is lacking, but UPEI has the beauty of a small institution. One of the advantages Dr. Pratt likes about UPEI is the relative freedom to teach different subjects. Professor Pratt's major academic interest when he started teaching was 18th century literature-- now he specializes in linguistics.

In 1978 two enterprising students came to Dr. Pratt looking for a summer job. Ten summers and a lot of work later, the Dictionary of Island English by T.K. Pratt was published. A second volume, dealing with sayings and proverbs endemic to PEI is in the works. Dr. Pratt goes on sabbatical in 1994 - 1995 with the hopes of bringing this book to publication. Professor Pratt's involvement with this project has made him an expert on lexicography and he now is a consultant for Gage, Oxford University Press and other dictionary publishing companies. Professor Pratt speculated his future might contain a consulting firm of his own where people wanting to write specialist dictionaries could hire the services of an expert lexicographer or two.

Throughout my interview with Terry Pratt two things were evident: a love of learning and a love of teaching. Professor Pratt puts forth a feeling that students are important, and it will be a great loss to UPEI if Professor Terry Pratt ever decides to move on.



HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO EXCHANGE THESE SUB-ZERO TEMPERATURES FOR WARMER ONES?

It's as easy as picking up an exchange application at Student Services, completing, and submitting it by Feb. 15.

You can study internationally for the same cost as studying locally.

JUST THINK, THIS TIME NEXT YEAR, YOU COULD BE IN AUSTRALIA.

**Contact Joe MacDonald
Student Services 566-0423**



Give us your deepest thoughts!

E-Mail until your heart is content. Our mailing address is:

xpress @ stu1.upei