USC from Cambridge

Technically, it's fresh English

Editor's note: USC is an infor-
gation center for The Tech.

"Well, I guess it's a job," sighed Professor B.E.O. Wall, as he waited in the large MIT lecture hall for the students to file in. Wulf thought further: "How did a mild-mannered English teacher from Slippery Rock College wind up teaching five hundred semi-hilarious, hostile MIT freshmen?"

The students started filing into the room, and the Professor snapped to attention. His first impression of their charges was mixed. "That student in the front row with the glasses and the tieless case," Professor Wulf remonstrated. "I'll bet he has already programmed a computer to write his critical essays for him."

"And that young man with the Greek letters on his shirt and the sneakers. He looks like he just stepped out of the gymnasium. He's probably reciting profane-ly. How disgusting."

It was already time to begin the class, and Professor Wulf began his lecture on English literature. The talk went fine, until the professor ventured his first query to the students. "And what is the significance of Shakespeare's phrase, 'Something rotten in the state of Denmark'?"

"They were all on a bad trip, man," yelled the head in the back.

"No, no, it was the adverse reaction of the sulfides and hydroxides in the ambient atmosphere," explained the professor.

"They just lost the Super Bowl, no wonder," offered the jock.

Professor Wulf knew it was going to be a long, long semester.

As the term progressed, the professor began to fit into the MIT way of life. He learned to make assignments due the day of a test, and when the eleventh week of the term arrived, he doubted the work load. Rather than the take-home final essay he had planned for the end of the term, Wulf scheduled a three-hour analytical exam. Finally the last day of classes rolled around, and Professor Wulf finished his closing lecture. The students listened with rapt attention as Wulf disclosed the inner meanings of modern literature.

"It is to be noted that James Joyce is one of the more important twentieth-century authors, as has been measured by an order of magnitude analysis. Theoretically, his work is one of the more universally known," Professor Wulf ratted off. "Few people today realize that Joyce's stream-of-consciousness technique he utilized is simpler in intent than obvious."

Just then a short, gray-haired man in a tweed suit sat down the 3-hour aisle.

"Stop, stop, Wulf, you traitor," Wulf warned the class. "You're beyond the classic; you made a sham of arts and letters."

Professor Wulf couldn't believe it. It was his old mentor from Slippery Rock, Dr. Wittenmeier. And he was right, too, the professor noticed then he had tabled as an English instructor, and so I respectfully resign."

"Are you kidding, Professor Wulf," said his superior, "You can't leave. You're the best thing that's ever happened to Humanities at MIT. Why, we had half of the Freshman Class clambering for more English subjects in general and your classes in particular."

"But my professional ethics..."

protested Professor Wulf.

"Forget those," urged the Dean, "We'll give you tenure and double your salary if you stay."

"Oh, well, it is a cold world out there for an assistant PhD," administered the professor, "so I guess I'll stay on."

The moral of the story is:

"When under the domes..."