



Unusual Literature Course Rocks Small Vermont Campus

by Ethan Moore, Jasper Mirror Staff Writer

January 9, 1994

The Jasper College Faculty Board has approved a controversial night class on a vote of 5 to 4.

LIT 424: Unraveling a Literary Mystery will be taught by famed professor and literary scholar Dr. Richard Aldiss. Aldiss contacted the Jasper administration late last year and was adamant that this campus was where he would teach if he did return to the classroom. He will teach via satellite from the Rock Mountain Correctional Facility, where he is serving consecutive life sentences for the brutal 1982 murders of two female Dumant University graduate students. He will be prohibited from speaking about his crimes and from using his victims' names. The class will be open to nine undergraduate students, each of whom will be specially chosen from the literature honors program.

There are those who adamantly oppose the course and its professor. Dr. Daniel Goodhurn, a Virgil scholar at Dumant, claims that Jasper College is making a horrible mistake by bringing Aldiss back into the classroom.

“Is Richard Aldiss a genius?” Goodhurn asked. “Of course. But what that man did to two innocent women at this institution goes beyond evil. I ask you: What will the students at Jasper learn from this monster? Richard is a twisted, deceitful individual. I assure you that teaching literature will not be his intention in this class. His true mission will be revealed very late in the semester—and by then it may be too late.”

Those in favor of the night class, however, are just as unwavering.

Dr. Stanley M. Fisk, professor emeritus at Jasper College, says that Richard Aldiss will “inject life into a program of study that has become very stale. The man and his work, especially his research on the reclusive novelist Paul Fallows, is truly groundbreaking. Our students here at Jasper will be reenergized by the great professor. In my mind it is as simple as that. Aldiss will revolutionize how they think about books.”

The class will begin on the first evening of the winter term. The nine students have been chosen and will be allowed to turn down the invitation if they so desire.

