

A FRESHMAN VISIT AT STANFORD

Monday, November 24, 1969, was a special day for our freshman seminar (FS27A, "Anais Nin--Integrated Circuits and the Poetics of Science"). During the previous two thirds of a Stanford Quarter we had studied "A Spy in the House of Love," "The Novel of the Future," and begun looking at the "Diary." Too, we had looked into the Snow-Leavis controversy concerning differences between the artistic and scientific cultures, learned of K. Gödel's ideas on the inability to mathematically prove certain results, and investigated the laboratory techniques for integrated circuits.

Anais Nin arrived at 10:00 A.M. in San Jose (flight PSA 261) sparkling in a magenta outfit enclosing an integrated circuit on her heart. "What will the day bring?"--all students were anxious. After a lunch with our English assistant, forgetting integrated circuits, we turned to the laboratory where she radiated with fascination at the processing of micro-circuits--the clean room and the white laboratory coat necessarily worn, the alignments, diffusion chambers and colorful patterns seen under the microscope. Then it was time for Isabel Alegria's chosen interview in preparation for the 4:15 seminar at which she was to act as lead questioner.

Freshman seminars are limited to eight students at Stanford, and on that Monday the eight were quieter than normal. Miss Nin's outlook on writing, the philosophy behind "A Spy in the House of Love," the need for the "Diary," the idea that her ideas form a general theme as expressed in H. Hesse's "Steppenwolf," and similar somewhat expected topics were covered. But then the discussion turned to the use of drugs by the artist and young adults, and became, as a consequence, more lively. On remembrance, Miss Nin's general viewpoint was that drugs accomplished nothing that human

feelings and intensity of living life directly could not do better. Of course she was pressed for reasons, as is the custom of youth though tempered perhaps by the presence of their professor. The result was a respect by these eight freshmen for Miss Nin's sincerity and teaching abilities.

Before flight time, 21:00 hours at San Francisco (flight PSA 820 to Los Angeles), we had a deliciously relaxing dinner at the airport. And we reminisced that the day was full and we reviewed that the path of creation in art and science is often the same: one has a dream and works hard to record it. And that scholars in literature might profit some more from studies of the present than an over-emphasis on the past, and that more human warmth might bring science closer to the artist and the human present in all mankind.

At the following meeting of FS27A we made plans for the next Quarter's FS27B, this to include a study of "Steppenwolf," holography and its uses in art, and the most creative and penetrating work of our recent guest and theme artist, "House of Incest." In the end the students claimed that they learned and their consequent discussions showed that November 24, 1969, was the high-point in the course.

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2/6/71