



# Read, mark and inwardly digest

For many years, *The Good Food Guide* has provided a diner's browsing delight for anyone who truly enjoys eating. Reading the entries can give almost as much pleasure as tasting the meals, and some people are so absorbed by the text that they never get as far as the table, they just stick with the book.

But the power of the discerning consumer is exercised in relation to the brain as well as the palate, and the attention of the ever more powerful consumer is increasingly diversified to take in the pleasures of the mind. So it is no surprise that the *Popular Educational Digest And Good Opportunities Guide to University Education* (PEDAGOGUE) now gives the discriminating student the opportunity to both nibble at the contributions of other educational diners, and to provide their own reviews of academic menus. The guide puts, to excellent purpose, the responses of those who have actually sought intellectual nourishment from the higher education system. Anyone who has used the services of universities is invited to write their report, and their names may, if they wish, be appended to them in the body of the text.

Looking at the current issue it is easy to understand why not all respondents have taken up this generous offer to have their authorship publicly recognised. A brief selection may give the flavour.

*The presentation at 'The Epicurean Economist' was a delight. Using freshly gathered local data, which was combined in surprisingly novel ways, and with the merest hint of nouvelle cuisine sociologique, the menu of 'Third Dimensional Factors in the New Global Political Economy' was exquisite from start to finish. We would definitely come to these lectures again, and count them as the high spot in our visit to LSE. We particularly recommend the 'nuggets of developmental possibilities for third world agriculturalists' as a fitting end to the feast.*

*The printed menu promised 'tangy textual analysis in a succulent surround of creamy critique' but when the seminar started it was clear that what we were getting had been stored on the hard disk for rather a long time, and had been given just a quick twirl in the intellectual microwave. The result was tough, tasteless, and tendentious. The service was slap-dash, and even when delivering what should have been, anywhere else, the high points of the meal, the lecturer had his back to his customers. When we queried how fresh some of the ingredients were, the response was evasive. It was actually rather a relief when the professor explained that the rest of his lectures were off the menu this term, as he was away to a conference in Acapulco. We didn't leave a tip.*

*It's not often that you have to eat your words, or regurgitate the ones which you had expected to*

*be appropriate. We arrived in seminar room XR404 in the middle of a downpour at the end of a grey and gloomy day. We were very tired after a long trek from the third floor of the library, and hadn't had anything really nutritious since a John Humphrys traditional English breakfast minister roast. We hadn't chosen 'The Naked Nietzschean' for our supper time stop over, but it seemed the only place which still had any tables left. The decor was uninspiring, the furniture was old and tired looking, and there wasn't a visual aid screen in sight. Then the patron arrived. It looked as though it was going to get worse. He didn't have a tie or a tan, and didn't look like any of those expensively dressed, coiffured, and re-dentured lecturers we'd seen on the television. But the moment he rolled up his sleeves and said, 'And now for starters, I propose a bit of Hegel without any old chestnuts', we realised this was something special. It's a rare delight to come across a scholastic chef who knows his ingredients, who enjoys talking about how he has cooked them, and who is as interested in hearing what you think of the result as he is in hearing himself. We shall definitely come again, and bring our friends.*

The guide will shortly be out in paperback, and a new edition will be ready for Christmas. ■

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