

I consider Roger Abert to be the finest young man I have met in the past ten years. He has personal and intellectual qualities which would make for success in any field he chose to enter. His undergraduate record does not do him anything like justice, for he was spreading his energies over a wide area; he was working as a reporter for the local news paper and was also deeply involved in the student news paper. In fact, he became editor of the student paper as a senior. His becoming editor is suggestive of his entire career in that the faculty board had some doubt about him because he was interested in other things than journalism. I was consulted because I had known him since his first coming to the university and was able to see the sources of their hesitation. Needless to say he was a brilliant success as an editor and received national recognition. When he came to apply to the English Department for admission as a graduate student, I was again consulted because of doubts arising as a result of his interest in things other than English. He was admitted provisionally for the summer with the understanding that he make an A in the two courses he took. He did that. I think it is also well to point out that he was offered jobs on more than one substantial newspaper with prospects for a brilliant career. His flair as a political reporter is indeed outstanding. However, he decided for graduate work and has applied himself to that wholeheartedly. I could well wish that more of my colleagues were men of his alert mind. I'd say that, whatever his record, any profession should make concessions in order to attract him. Perhaps I should add that he was in my classes at all levels of undergraduate study, literature and writing classes. Further, he visited me in London on his way home from his year in South Africa and was a splendid companion in galleries, on the Heath, in the pub. On this side of his character I am supported by my wife and teen age daughters (who tend to be very critical of university students in general). Stuffy professors are sometimes put off by his intense enthusiasm, but even they admit that his work is of the first quality. Perhaps you are smiling to yourself and saying, "This must be some kind of perogon." I reply, "Exectly." April 15, 1966

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