

# Brain-washing produces gold stars

I wish to present my personal view as a student on the relationship between teachers and students in the classroom. Faculty must remember that by the time a student reaches university he has gone through twelve years of social conditioning in school. Perhaps brain-washing is a better term because many students don't realize what grade school has done to their minds. Some student

are also convinced that the lessons they learned have some personal value. Reading and writing do have some value but what good is it to know what a gerund is? Or who Bishop Strachon was? Or what the five mountain ranges of Australia are?

My personal memory of school includes staying up half the night before an exam, cramming in such useless facts. I'm not saying I didn't learn anything, because I did. I learned that people who stand in straight lines get the gold and silver stars; I learned to laugh when the teacher made a joke; I learned to pack away stuff I didn't give a damn about; I learned to say and write what the teacher wanted to hear; I learned to deny my feelings; I learned to play dumb and follow orders. I learned to boot-lick, and if I did it well I got those gold stars and high marks. Somehow, it made the game seem worthwhile and I didn't realize what was really happening until my high school years. I left behind in high school some good friends who wouldn't play the game and flunked out or quit. Is it any wonder, then, that there is the feeling of anti-intellectualism on campus?

Until you allow a student's heart and mind to flourish freely in the classrooms of grade schools, you will have college students more interested in the thrills of parties and getting drunk and stoned than in the heartfelt enjoyment of intellectual discovery. Indeed, I imagine the majority of the students don't believe there is such a thing and probably think I'm off my rocker. But I bet they remember the fun they had in learning to drive a car or learning about kissing and sex or learning to play monopoly. It seems that in

terest is the best educator. "History is so engrossing. Literature is so beautiful. And school is likely to turn them dull or even ugly. Can you imagine what would happen if they graded you on sex? The race would die out."

To anyone who doesn't believe they're brain-washed and to anyone who is very concerned about it, I heartily recommend a very entertaining book "The Student as Nigger" by James Farber (available at the bookstore and library). In fact I really wish that the Student Union would give out a copy to incoming freshman instead of the silly things they do give, though I don't suppose there is much chance of that.

Stan Dalton was right on target when he said, "Our society at present is absolutely incapable of choosing an intellectual alternative to what now prevails."

Most of the people presently in power who could do something about society and the educational system prefer instead to ignore the problem or retain or innovate standardizing procedures for better "efficiency". Certainly it is more efficient to turn out assembly-line B.A. and B.Ed. students than individual creative men and women but it benefits neither the individual nor society as a whole.

Some of the suggestions of our own university president, R.J. Baker, concerning improvements in learning (Nov. 18 Cadre) would serve only to worsen the sterile situation many students and faculty feel exists today. The statements concerning faculty evaluation by peers and superiors, and the use of standardized national and international tests would be repressive acts which would freeze changes and freeze revolutionary ideas to conform to the status quo. This, in essence, is against the very ideals of democracy. Anyway, the men presently in power certain

ly aren't going to criticize a system that put them there.

Next in the line of people who could do something about the educational system is Joe Average Citizen. In general, he is hooked into the work system trying to get to the top. He conforms to the status quo and anyway, he has very little power individually. Persons or groups earnestly desiring change must be sensitive to his feelings or the subject and try to get his support. Although an administrator may ignore college radicals as being young and unlearned, he certainly can't ignore their parents.

And so it comes down to the college students and faculty to provide the incentive for change and to play the role of critic in society. I feel that this role along with the job training role must exist on campus. Perhaps a course could be offered educating the students and faculty in the means of communicating their ideas to the public (Saul Alinsky, "Rules for Radicals") and serving as a nucleus through which many disciplines on campus could present their reforms and research findings.

The revolution must come, not through direct confrontation with those in power, but through educating the people who put them there and providing a fertile ground for the many social ills of society to be examined and for feasible alternatives to be presented. If the general public knew of the great work done by A.S. Neil at his school in Summerhill England, then the educational system certainly wouldn't be the mess that it is now. And then, Messieurs Dalton and O'Brien, we would be able to talk and argue and learn because we want to.

In closing, I again urge faculty and administration to consider establishing such a course. We gotta start somewhere.

Arthur Reddin

## FACT OR FICTION?

1

*You should avoid exercise during your period.*

Fiction! The simple rules of good health are always important, especially during your period. Exercise, a proper diet and a good night's sleep go a long way toward relieving menstrual cramps or preventing them altogether. And remember, you're not "sick." So there's no reason not to follow your normal routine.

2

*There's no odor when you use Tampax tampons.*

Fact. With Tampax tampons, odor can't form. Odor is noticeable only when the fluid is exposed to air. With Tampax tampons, fluid is absorbed before it comes in contact with air; therefore, odor cannot form.

3

*You should not bathe during your period.*

Fiction! Contrary to superstition, water can't hurt you. Daily baths or showers are a must throughout your period. Shampoo your hair, too. And don't deny yourself the chance to go swimming. Tampax tampons are worn internally, so you can swim anytime.

4

*Single girls can use Tampax tampons.*

Fact. Any girl of menstrual age who can insert them easily and without discomfort, can use Tampax tampons with complete confidence. Follow the easy directions in every package.

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