

# EDITORIAL

# History Can Teach

## Hearing Examined

Last week, the C.C. Reader had a rare opportunity to attend a campus disciplinary hearing because it was open to the public at the request of the accused student.

The University has established certain informal guidelines for these hearings. In most cases, they seem adequate. But, the seriousness and emotional impact of the charges in this case required a more controlled kind of proceeding.

The attitude of the audience was nothing short of a sham. People walked in and out during the proceedings and made audible, if not necessarily vocal, comments.

A simple establishment at the outset of some ground rules for the spectators would have prevented many of the problems which contributed to the circus-like atmosphere.

Another point that needs mentioning is the unfair legal representation at the hearing. According to the Policies and Rules Manual, students are permitted to have an advisor of his or her choice, who must be a member of the University community.

John Lane, the accused student, was represented by John Jones, an assistant professor in business law who is also an attorney. Deborah Peabody, the student who brought charges against Lane, was assisted by Jerry South, dean of student affairs. So, while both students had University representation, one had the added advantage of experienced legal counsel.

We believe the University should reexamine this portion of the Policies Manual and come up with a way of preventing such unequal representation.

Finally, the question of double jeopardy needs to be brought out. While the accused student's guilt or innocence is being determined by this campus hearing board, it is also proceeding in criminal court off campus. We have been informed that technically this is not double jeopardy. Well, it may not be because the hearing is legally not considered a court of law. But, we believe a person is innocent until proven guilty, and the place to prove innocence or guilt in an alleged criminal case is a court of law--not a campus hearing board.

One alternative, in a case like this, would be some kind of probationary measure. This would protect the rights of all concerned, both the defendant and the University community.

### It's Only Policy

On March 2nd, The Reader received a letter to the editor signed "A Concerned Active Student."

Our editorial policy prohibits us from publishing anonymous letters.

We will publish this letter signed as it is, if the writer will contact The Reader editor and identify himself/herself. This information will be kept confidential.

The editors and staff of The C.C. Reader welcome letters for publication. Letters must be typed, double-spaced, and must contain the writer's signature and telephone number. Anonymous letters will not be accepted. However, if the writer requests, a pseudonym will be used in publication. The editors reserve the right to edit letters for style, grammar, and good taste.

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Historians must often watch with bemused chagrin as historical patterns repeat themselves.

We watch as Vandals and Visigoths in varying incarnations march on civilizations; we watch endlessly repeated wars undertaken in the names of God and Truth (whether it be the Hebrews at Jerico, the Crusades, the wars of the Reformation, or Civil War in Lebanon); we watch century after century of haves attacking have nots, and the continued inability of personkind to come up with an acceptable system for distributing wealth. We watch tyrants attempting to conquer the world, nearly succeeding, always failing.

And we watch generation after generation, each not learning.

Our national history has been little different. Waves of racism, anti-intellectualism, political corruption, and presidential imperialism swell repeatedly.

True, they have always faded under demands for reform, but the reform movements themselves continually recede and fail as the same ground is trod and re-trod.

Enter the New York Times with something of an explanation. It takes the form of a test/survey of college freshmen, and their knowledge of American history.

The Times writes that students averaged 50% on a test written to examine knowledge held crucial to a full understanding of the American past.

A partial version of the examination, administered to a group of selected "leaders," turned up the more impressive score of 81% (students scored 56% on that part of the test).



Mark Dorfman

More impressive, perhaps, but equally depressing.

Current wisdom holds history to be "irrelevant." The past is dead; long live the future. A knowledge of history is not held to be a marketable skill in this current rage of anti-intellectualism. And if you can't sell it, why bother with it?

Required courses in history have gone the way of required courses in most other disciplines, discarded in the demand for relevance and marketability.

And so while most students recognize phrases

### Faculty Forum

from the Declaration of Independence and a map of the Louisiana Purchase, the roots of American religious toleration and the history of attitudes towards slavery remain deep secrets.

And while most freshmen understand that "freedom of enterprise" is not guaranteed by the Constitution, they remain unaware of the legitimate powers actually granted (or specifically de-

nied) each branch of government by that document.

Even recent history such as our involvement in Korea has become part of the dead past, and our involvement in Vietnam is already fading from the memories of this new generation of students.

Western civilization has long acknowledged the relationship between past and present.

Our language is rife with trite tributes to history: "There's nothing new under the sun"; "Past is prologue"; "History repeats itself"; "If we do not study the past, we shall be condemned to repeat it."

The problem with all of these cliches is that being simply stated, they are ignored with equal simplicity.

Neither our high schools nor our colleges give adequate attention to history.

We do not study our past and we are condemned to repeat it.

The New York Times survey has brought the matter to national attention. Public outcry and demands for change can be expected. Statesmen and educators will give voice to traditional statements of grave concern.

Maybe the President will form a commission to study the matter, perhaps Congress will launch an investigation.

Faculties will meet to consider alternative methods of instruction and boards of education will issue new guidelines.

We know to expect such results from the Times' test/survey because that is what happened in 1943--when the Times undertook a similar program, which produced similar results.

La plus ca change, la plus c'est la meme chose. The cure seems inevitably to fall victim to the disease.

## Letters To The Editor

### 'It's A Woman's Issue'

Recent actions by male and female administrators here are an example of an institution showing even-handed concern for the rights of all their students: male and female.

Unfortunately some male members of the university and outside communities are trying to use this very fairness as an excuse to further polarize this campus on a racial basis, to pit students against administration and to justify personal vendettas.

These events arise out of a complaint of sexual assault. This complaint has become the focus of attacks against the woman, the campus security officer, office of student affairs and administration. Why? Because the male dominated institution is supposed to protect the male but not the female! It is supposed to put pressures on the female to withdraw her complaint,

not help her to pursue her rights.

Why should the poor man be put through all the hassle of magistrate's court? After all, he really did not do anything serious!

A concerned effort has been made to bring "political" pressure to bear upon the University to drop the case. Finally, on the day the campus Hearing Board was to hear the case, a staff member of the Pennsylvania Human Rights Commission initiated an action naming its members as some kind of defendants.

Since that commission never filed an action before challenging the Hearing Board, it appears that some misguided male member of the staff is attempting to assert a new meaning for "human rights." He picked the wrong case.

Is it a "human right" of a man to attack a woman? Because the man happens to be black--not the woman's

fault--should he be let off? Or are people so intent to "get" Officer Paul that they do not care about the woman's rights?

The rights of a woman to control her body are human rights and legal rights. So let us keep our priorities straight.

We should all back up this courageous woman and an administration that has stood up to unfounded pressures.

A faculty "defense" advisor to the accused male attempted to discredit the morality of the woman in the public hearing! That was a cheap shot and highly offensive.

Let us stop those who are attempting to exploit this issue and divide us from each other. This is a woman's issue, not a racial issue.

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