

EDITORIAL

Readers Urges More Involvement

In this, our last editorial of the year, we want to address ourselves to the class of 1976-77:

For most of you, next year will be your last year of college. That year will be the one you'll remember as either a meaningful or meaningless experience. It's your choice.

Our advice to you: get involved. It's that simple, but it can make all the difference. There are some 35 student organizations on this campus. Be active in just one. It's the only way you can make these 215 acres of higher education mean something for you personally.

There are also numerous faculty and staff committees here that need student representation. Get yourself on one, and fight for what you believe in.

This school is you, every one of you. If next year is a good one for you, it's because you made it good. If it's a bad one, your noninvolvement made it that way and to quote one of our more quotable professors here, "That's your problem."

A college education can be more than attending classes and grades. But the "more" is up to you. Don't leave here with just reams of notes you'll never look at again. Get involved.

Letters To The Editor

It's Not Radical To Use Our Constitution

After about three weeks of quiet investigating and one week of screaming as loud as I consider civil, I feel that I have gained a reasonable command of knowledge of security on this campus.

Since too many people were so busy chewing on Chief Paul to hear my civil screaming I'll have one more go at it before I shut up and worry about myself for 3 1/2 months.

Okay, Chief Paul has a public relations problem. Some of it (but damn little) stems from where he has spent a substantial portion of his life. Counter-intelligence has little relation to higher education, but most of the problem is on our side. Automatically distrusting a man because of his uniform is just as asinine as judging by skin color. Meet him sometime.

The Office of Student Affairs presently performs the function of prosecutor, town manager, part-time judge, and police commissioner. Jerry South is a good and decent man as well as a superior administrator, but the "Federalist Papers" say this should never happen. I've been told that there will be changes. This agnostic fervently prays that they will be substantive.

We are lucky enough to be very close to the State Capitol. If we had the collective balls to march en masse down there next year and scream blue bloody murder for a Marajuana Decriminalization Act we could save our younger brothers and sisters from a world of hurt that we have lived through.

Now that I have by horrible accident become a Dauphin County resident I intend to work and vote

against the insensitive clods presently serving as magistrate and District Attorney. I hope my fellow county residents will do the same.

For those of you who want an island from law enforcement, I gleefully look forward toward the moment when you need a cop. I hope he isn't there.

To summerize- Our justice system should have all the checks and balances built into it that the state and Federal justice system has.

Some state laws must be changed. We can help change them.

Our police cannot exercise discretion after they receive an outside complaint. There is a 1st class misdemeanor called malfeasance and nonfeasance.

Is Ignorance The Excuse?

Your Editorial column of May 13, 1976, was misleading and deceptive.

You made reference to 'unequal legal representation' between John Lane and Deborah Peabody. The point is that John Lane was at a disadvantage. Ms. Peabody was not a party to the hearing on May 3, 1976. The charges were made against Mr. Lane by the University. Ms. Peabody was only a witness on behalf of the University. As such, she is subject to be cross examined. I cross examined her just like I cross examined each witness for the University.

Your Editorial, like some of the other articles which appeared in the May 13, 1976, edition, has reached a conclusion without benefit of proper knowledge about the facts and background of

The Vagabond Is Jobless But Free

By Leonard E. Brewster

Assit. Prof., Humanities and Philosophy

Nothing is more common these days than pompous and naive--that is to say, professorial -- exhortations about the humanities.

The concern is employment. Students do not take humanities courses for they are less likely to get jobs if they do. We who teach such courses must reverse the trend for fear of losing our jobs.

One of the most common arguments directed to this purpose is the "Its-All-a-Mistake" argument. Insurance companies, its adherents maintain, have a secret passion--secret even to themselves I think--for actuaries who can scan a line of Wordsworth; and the Civil Service Examiners will pass only those who know the Aristotelian predicaments.

Thus students just don't understand how quickly they will be snapped up if they will only major in English literature or ancient philosophy. Unfortunately there is little sign that employers understand this either.

But there is always "The Better Person Argument" in which it is conceded that humanities courses do nothing to get you a job, but in which it is also maintained that you will be a better person for having taken them. But this proposition evaporates as soon as it is discovered that no one--least of all a humanist--knows what it is to be a good person much less a better one.

I adhere to a third position which I choose to call "The Vagabond Argument." Very briefly, it holds that the purpose of humanities courses is to render the students who take them unemployable, that is to say--useless.

This is accomplished by treating as exemplary unemployable, useless people. Furthermore, what is attended to in such figures is exactly what made them unemployable and useless. We study in Socrates, for

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instance, his habit of hanging about the market place asking impertinent questions of those who might have helped him get ahead. Naturally, anyone who treats someone like Socrates as worthy of imitation, can hardly expect to impress the recruiter from Pringle's Potato Chips.

But the advantages of being even more intimately linked through employment with a fundamentally corrupt society such as our own are easily exaggerated.

As we continue to subvert foreign governments, plot the assassination of their leaders and gorge ourselves in the presence of their starvation (or in the



Dr. Leonard Brewster

ultimate refinement of decadence, adopt expensive diets), we might reflect on the impracticality of doing anything on the assumption that such a society will last out the decade.

However, even if we were not surrounded by such reeking decay, we might still ask whether we as human beings are meant to be mere instruments to someone else's purpose, in other words, employed and useful. This is the question that the life and activities of Socrates suggests, and the answer seems obvious: human beings are supposed to have their own purposes.

The reason for studying literature, philosophy, music, and the other utterly useless, but peculiarly human disciplines is to show what having one's own purpose or, what comes to the same thing, being free as a human being is all about.

In each of these subjects man appears, not as a victim of an alien world, but as the maker of his own world. And to overcome and even bend to your own purpose that which would enslave you is to be free.

The purpose of the humanities is thus to nurture and promote unemployability, which is just another word for freedom. If we as teachers of the humanities fail to do this, we shall become, by a just irony, the same type of dreary functionary we thereby produce.

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