

Critiques cont.

DR. AURAND

Academically, this has been a fair year. Grades seem a little higher. The new library has been opened. I have tried a few experiments which I felt were successful. While it has been a year marked with some achievement, it has also been a year of frustration.

The students are partly responsible for my frustrations. It is frustrating to attend a class which most students cut because they did not feel like walking in the rain. The frustration is compounded when one hears some of the same students complain about a prof's 'irresponsibility' when he is late for an office hour.

It is frustrating to conduct a class in which the majority of the students did not read the assignment. The frustration is compounded when one hears some of the same students complain that an instructor was not well prepared. It is frustrating when one conducts a discussion in which only a few participate. The frustration is compounded when one hears some of the 'silent majority' complain over the lack of student participation in a course. It is frustrating to hear students that the amount of work they did should entitle them to a higher grade. The frustration is compounded when some of those same students dismiss the amount of work a prof does in preparing for class as irrelevant and demand that he 'is boring' be the only criterion of his effectiveness.

It is frustrating to hear students voice concern over ecology and then see beer cans scattered about the parking lots and soccer field. It is frustrating to hear students condemn bigotry and then refuse to consider an idea on the basis of its 'stupidity' or its 'absurdity.' It is frustrating to see the student body divided into dormies and townies.

It would be grossly unfair of me to simply chastise the 'nasty little students' without part of the responsibility--and blame--for their attitudes and behavior upon the faculty. The faculty should provide not only classroom instruction but should also serve as examples to the students. Yet too often, I fear, many faculty members, myself included, forget that a valuable part of our instruction consists of what we do outside the classroom and, at times, the examples leave something to be desired.

The faculty, myself included, complain about student apathy and absenteeism. Yet, I have heard also students and some faculty members condemn faculty apathy. Faculty members, including myself, cancel classes and office hours. Most, if not all, of these cancellations are justified. But do the students know of these justifications?

The faculty, myself included, complain that students talk nonsense, have closed minds, and are incapable of original thought. Yet many faculty members, myself included, spend a great deal of our time discussing campus politics which, at best, suffers from parochialism. Among ourselves, but students sometimes overhear, we treat distasteful ideals with ridicule. Faculty concern for scholarly authority

can easily be interpreted by some students as barriers to original thought.

The faculty, including myself, complain that students are self-indulgent. Yet it is no uncommon to hear faculty members express concern over raises, salaries, promotions, and student loads. Some faculty members complain of the lack of a phone and one wants his office panelled!

The faculty, myself included, complain that the students are divided. Yet I have heard charges that the faculty is divided into cliques. I also have been told that the faculty is divided into two conflicting groups--the young and the old. I was placed in the 'old' group while a member of the 'young' groups is old enough to be my father.

It has been, as I said, a good year, but it has also been a year of frustration. It is easy to blame the 'other side,' the faculty, the students and the students the faculty (I did not even mention the administration) for those frustrations. But I would think that as we prepare for the next, and better, year, it would be best if each group and within it each member would pause to reflect upon its and his or her shortcoming.

Dr. Harold Aurand

DR. COVERT

For the Biology club at Highacres, this has been a good year. Whether I can make the same general statement about Highacres is doubtful. In many minds, apathy is a synonym for Highacres, and there is evidence to support this view: Comeriety (roughly 12 students participated!); Spring Weekend (cancelled because of rain and lack of interest); Free University (what happened?) etc. Unfortunately, there are some people here who are apathetic about our state of apathy.

However, looking back over the 1972-73 school year, there have been some encouraging happenings. The Biology Club exhibited interest and activity which were previously lacking. I understand that the same is true of the Business Club, the Dramatic Reading Festival, and several other affairs. The student participation in and direction of the March of Dimes Walkathon was overwhelming--to say nothing of the interest taken in fighting fires. This is evidence for what I hope is a trend to be continued next year. Next year we will see students step forward to accept the responsibilities of leadership which are being vacated by the students who are moving on to Happy Valley or elsewhere. But more than that, I hope to see more faculty and student involvement. Each term, Highacres offers new courses, which hopefully will deepen and broaden our academic interests. We must also expand our extracurricular offerings, for these are an essential part of the college experience for both the faculty and students.

Instead of being a non-experience, life at Highacres can be a real experience, one to which we can all contribute.

Instead of its being a place where faculty comes to 'teach,' it can be a place of total involvement.

MR. ERWIN

Another term is coming to an end and students will be asked to complete more course evaluation surveys. There are various types of surveys which have been distributed on this campus, the most common one being the 'Student Instructional Report.' Some surveys are better than others, but none can be called perfect. I have often questioned the validity of these surveys and would like to share some of my questions and thoughts with you.

Do students answer the questions conscientiously? After talking to some students, I found out that it is a chore for some. The surveys are a waste of time; therefore fill in the blank and let's get on with the day's work. One student wondered if the instructors even looked at them. Students seemed to question whether the surveys accomplished anything at all.

Do the surveys cover all aspects of the course? Certain surveys may be set up in such a manner that some courses can be evaluated well. However, not every course is the same. Different disciplines may require different methods of instruction. There does not seem to be one all-embracing survey.

Can students see the true value of a course without looking at it in greater retrospect? The value of some courses is not always clear until a student has the opportunity to apply what he has learned. Some departments have taken this into consideration and send surveys to students who have already graduated. Often, one can be too close to an object to evaluate it fairly.

Do these surveys represent the true picture of the instructor of the course? Can the instructor use them as a firm basis for change or correction in his teaching methods? The answer is obviously negative. However, I feel that there is a positive side to the course evaluation surveys. They can be regarded as one form of feed-back. Students are our best source of feed-back. Of course a good instructor should

Instead of its being a place to sleep through lectures, play through labs, and cram through exams, it can be a place for students' recreation and belonging.

All of this takes willingness to work and get involved. My hope for next year is to see more of a feeling of belonging, and a sense of pride in Highacres.

Dr. Jerry Covert

constantly re-examine his methods of instructions just as a good student should re-examine his methods of study. The faculty needs your help just as you need ours in improving the quality of instruction. Course evaluation surveys should not be considered the last word. They are only a beginning which may lead to a better education for

If you are asked to fill out a course evaluation this term, try not to take it too lightly. This is a chance to put your thoughts on paper. If you should have any qualms about writing out additional comments or suggestions (most questions require that you blacken or circle the appropriate response) use your other hand.

Stuart J. Erwin

MR. PRICE

We find ourselves today in June of 1973 removed by 350 years from those tragedies. And yet I would submit that the temptations we face are basically the same: to give up hope; to poison our minds with doubt and fear. We are witness to an international situation in Cambodia where continued bombing seems totally alien to national priorities and personal morality. We are witness to a national situation in the Watergate scandal where corruption at the highest levels of government calls into question basic beliefs in freedom and privacy. Finally, in our own community we see the failure of certain student-oriented activities--the spring carnival and the flea market of last fall, and the temporary (and only temporary, thank goodness) suspension of the Highacres Collegian.

The temptation is clear. One might easily say, 'What the hell is the use of trying to do anything.' But it is exactly this kind of contemptuous withdrawal from commitment which one must guard against. My own

sense of engagement this year has been reinforced by the continuing efforts of two local educators who are retiring this year after more than twenty-five years, respectively, in trying to achieve excellence for two area educational institutions: Mr. Broad of M.M.I. and Mr. Kostos of the Hazleton Campus of Penn State. Perhaps it is only by giving ourselves to a cause that we truly find ourselves. A line from Wordsworth seems appropriate to both men: '... that best portion of a good

I start with two propositions from Renaissance tragedies. The first is from Christopher Marlowe's play 'DOCTOR FAUSTUS' in which a philosopher sells his soul to the devil in return for extensive powers. At the end of the play the devil calls Faustus, the philosopher, to his grave. At that point, the philosopher commits the ultimate Christian sin. He despairs of salvation. The second tragedy is perhaps better known. It is Shakespeare's 'HAMLET.' The instructions of Hamlet's father, a murdered king--now ghost, to face his son the prince are clear: '... Taint not thy mind, ...'

man's life, / His little, nameless, unremembered acts / Of kindness and of love.'

Alan Price

JAMES THURBER

Let us ponder this basic fact about the human: Ahead of every man, not behind him, is a woman.

Fools rush in where angels fear to tread, and the angels are all in heaven, but few of the fools are dead.

Get it right or let it alone. The conclusion you jump to may be your own.

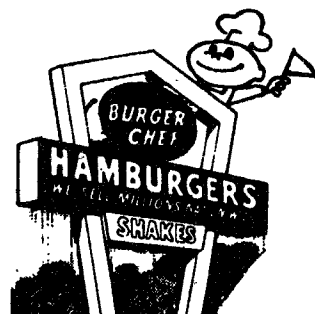
All men should strive to learn before they die what they are running from, and to, and why.

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