



# Save Leroy

The Daily Collegian's weatherman, Leroy Spayd, is skating on thin ice.

Last night he predicted that not only would this foul weather continue, but a Canadian air mass would slip south of the border to cool daytime highs to the single digits. And because our weatherman is never wrong, we're afraid he must be terminated as the bearer of bad tidings.

Perhaps he doesn't realize that a Happy Valley winter leaves the residents somewhat less than happy. With cabin fever comes increases in vandalism, alcoholism, communism, nepotism and hedonism.

And unless you're the hardy Jean Claude Killy type — always ready for a brisk schuss down the slopes — tramping through the arctic atmosphere can get more than a little bit tedious.

It's time someone took some definitive action. Perhaps the University Board of Trustees could construct a huge, heated, dome to cover the campus — God knows there are enough engineers and hot air on the board to make such a project feasible. Or the Collegian itself,

recently the object of some thermo-chemical reactions, could be used to heat up the campus in a literal, rather than an editorial sense.

And if we run out of newsprint, there are always the flyers, posters and leaflets from the upcoming Undergraduate Student Government elections just waiting in some warehouse somewhere.

After the promises are burned, we can start on textbooks. For surely the calories of warmth to be gained will have more utility than the cash to be obtained from selling them at the local bookstores.

More conventional fuels, such as oil, might be burned in mass quantities to raise the temperature. Perhaps our good friends in Mexico would sell us some crude if we give them back Texas and soften our immigration laws. Or Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini could find it in his heart to forgive us for the Shah and give us some oil. Carter could even cut the CIA's budget as a goodwill gesture.

The situation is critical, and unless someone starts doing something about the weather instead of talking, Leroy's life is forfeit.



## Letters to the Editor

### Taking care of business

This letter is in response to the article "Legislatures want to change state stores," published in the Feb. 13 issue. It is truly refreshing to see that the bureaucracy is stepping out of the dark ages on at least one major issue. The best thing the state could do is to turn over liquor sales to private firms and get out of the wholesale business at the same time.

Doing away with the state-held monopoly and putting liquor sales on the free market would introduce competition to the industry. Competition in our society provides one of the greatest incentives for efficiency. As the efficiency of the competing firms increased, the price of liquor to the consumer would decrease.

The proposals have a good chance for passing the General Assembly because they include one necessary element. The proposals leave provisions to satisfy the egos of power-minded bureaucrats who would otherwise be out of a job by assigning the state the role jobs of industry regulation and tax collection.

The only group not to benefit from the proposals would be those employees of the state stores. Certainly some of them

would land jobs with the new firms, but no private company could possibly afford as many idle clerks as the state presently supports. Those unfortunate employees who could not find a job in the private liquor stores will be cast out of the fantasy world of civil service and into the real world of work, something most of them know little about.

Shelley L. Folsom  
3rd-division of undergraduate studies  
Feb. 15

### Just what I needed

Dear Mr. Carville,

Concerning your Feb. 13 column ("Yes, more self help — for undergrads") — excellent! It was just what I needed right now.

Joanne Blacoe  
8th-education  
Feb. 13

### ABC

Over the past four or five terms it has come to my attention that the University's current grading system is unrepresentative of the students' actual grade point averages. If a student makes a 'B' by one point he is given a 3.0 where a 2.5 or a 2.6 would be a better indication of his grade. Likewise, if another student missed an 'A' by one point, he is given a 3.0 also, where a better indication of his grade would be a 3.4 or a 3.5. With the current grading system both students would get a grade of 3.0. For one student it's a gift, while for the other it's a penalty.

With such ambiguity in our current grading system, it's no wonder that a person's cumulative grade point average isn't as highly regarded as it should be. I believe that if grades were awarded on a scale of B-, B, B+, A-, etc., it would be a better expression of how a student was really doing. This way students would have to earn their grades and a greater emphasis could be placed on a student's grade point average. Also, this system would make students study harder because they couldn't be content with just barely making a grade anymore.

I realize that this system would hurt the students who just barely make a grade, but more importantly it would be an aid to those students who are being penalized by an inaccurate grading system. What's more important, a few students' feelings or fairness in grading policies?

Jeff Mattien  
8th-management  
Feb. 11

## the Collegian

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### The Colleen Gallagher story

## The final confessions of a paranoid journalist

I've always been rather paranoid.

When I was little I believed my family could read my thoughts but just weren't listening so I wouldn't stop thinking. I used to kick and scream at bedtime because I thought that when I went to sleep all kinds of fun and intrigue would begin. My first romantic fantasy was that the paper boy would save me from my mother, who was a witch in disguise.

But now that I'm graduating, I realize such thinking is childish and narcissistic. Still, I think in these last four years some people have been out to get me.

Like, I've never really forgiven Froth magazine for trying to ruin my reputation as a cracker-jack reporter by

parodying me as "Colleen Gullible" in The Daily Collusion. And I was truly hurt when I met a new University administrator for the first time and he remarked with a straight face, "Oh, you're Miss Gallagher? Nice to meet you — I think."

### Colleen Gallagher

I really was starting to get unsociably nervous when I was writing about the infamous Oct. 5 gun incident. One time after a rather harrowing telephone interview with an official involved, the editor had to untie the knot I had twisted my limbs into and slap me a few times to

convince me the campus police didn't have a contract out on me.

But I've gotten over all that now. What the hell? I'm graduating and I feel magnanimous and untouchable. In fact, I feel so relieved that I'd like to unburden my heart of a few mistakes and misgivings so I'll be able to leave with my head held high and my personal dignity intact. In short, I wish to confess.

I was the one who fired the gun in Grange Building on Oct. 5 and not that poor officer who, by the way, I hear has been exiled to Alaska.

And, yes, I look out the racist want ads. Honest, I just wanted to get back at some of my uppity colleagues who never seem to get into all the trouble I do.

I put up all the Josh signs in Willard. I habitually screw up Collegian notes of minority and leftist organizations. Sometimes I even throw them out.

I started the Pinchot Hall elevator fire and broke the Lion's ear.

Every now and then I dress up as Mrs. Oswald and have one of my friends chauffeur me around to the hairdressers, just so I can report about administrative waste.

Yes, I'm paranoid. But unlike The Daily Collegian, certain black and gay leaders, and the boys in Old Main, I can take it.

Colleen Gallagher is a 12th-term journalism major and is faculty-administration beat coordinator of The Daily Collegian.

## Exams, grades, averages — who really needs them?

The end is near. Shouts will echo off the walls of the dorms containing a message that can only be translated into frustration. Libraries will be filled to capacity as students prepare themselves for the final task. It all seems so serious and that's appropriate, because that's just the way it is taken.

Ten weeks of studying, attending lectures and reading will culminate in finals period. One can easily see the failure of our educational system by observing this ritual that takes place at the end of every term.

Finals may take the form of tests, projects or papers. Regardless of the process, the objective is the same. The objective is to evaluate the student's progress in mastering the course content. One cannot find fault with this description unless one takes a closer look at the system.

This ritual will be characterized by long hours of continuous study. Facts will collide with each other as your mind begins to process all of the information. The terminology for this procedure is known as the consuming-producing approach to education.

Each student tries to consume as many facts as he possibly can. The challenge of education is to arrange this information so that at the crucial time these facts can be produced in an

examination. The consuming-producing technique has short term benefits and long range consequences.

Short term benefits can be found in an artificial symbol, known as a grade. Students should be informed of the long range consequences by including the warning on each examination, that "test taking may be hazardous to your mind."

### Mark Jackson

Research has indicated that factual material is quickly learned and quickly forgotten once the student leaves the confines of the school walls. This testing procedure tends to turn students away from the learning process. The emphasis on the retention of factual material also serves to take the place of the acquisition of educational skills, such as thinking, reasoning and decision making.

If this procedure is so useless then why do students take it so seriously? The answer can be found in a divine inscription passed down from generation to generation. It is the inscription of a grade.

Our educators evaluate our performance through the use of a grade. In most cases, this grade reflects how well the student has conformed to the system and not how well he has profited from the learning experience. Conformity means that the student has consented to let the educator lead him down the road to education. During this journey, the student is told what he has to learn and how much time he has to learn it. If the student chooses not to follow these directions he will lose his way, and then will have to find a new path.

Grades are multiplied, divided, added and subtracted until finally, you end up with a cumulative average. It is this grade point average that helps to open the door of employment. Our educators have told us that, "to get a good job you need a good education." Good education can be defined as good grades. Only when we conform will we be able to obtain the key of good grades.

To obtain good grades the student will engage in a strategic planning session at the end of this term. Each one of us will have to decide how to allocate our time so that we can arrive at the best possible grade point average. This indicates that students learn, not for the sake of learning, but merely for the purpose of receiving a certain

grade. Once a satisfactory grade is ensured, the learning process ceases.

At the end of this term our professors will sit down and determine our grades. Many of our educators will evaluate us by placing our scores on a graph. This system is called the bell shaped curve. According to the principle of this graph, a certain percentage of students will get 'A's', 'B's' and so on down the line. The absurdity of this system is that our teachers will fail a certain number of us because we have not been able to compete with our classmates. It is very clearly, "the survival of the fittest."

Our educators have attempted to give grades some meaning by providing us with a definition for each symbol. The logic of the language of grades is open to question when you realize that an 89 is defined as good and a 90 as excellent.

In further assessing the value of grades the following needs to be understood: Grades play a role but are not the sole determining force in your future. Employers, and graduate schools alike both look at a number of factors when considering an applicant. A number of studies have alluded to the fact that "there is evidence that educational achievement has no consistent relationship to later job performance and productivity."

In the next week each of us will begin preparing for finals.

The only way to remain sane during this period is to realize that this is simply a venture of absurdity. Grades are merely a pat on the back. A pat on the back that we have learned to rely on all our lives. Only when we begin to reward ourselves from within will the system prove valuable to us.

This does not mean that the fault of our educational system can be found in ourselves. The failure of the system is deeply imbedded in our institutions of learning. It will take time to reform the present system and until that time we must be able to adjust to the weaknesses of this institution.

Whenever I begin to lose my sanity during finals I recall a scene from the movie "Paper Chase." In this instance the cinema does provide us with a true picture of reality. The picture ends with a law student, whose struggle has been depicted throughout the film, tending his grades into an airplane and setting this aircraft on a course for the ocean. An apparent irrational act becomes perfectly logical when we understand that the value of learning cannot be found in grades and exams.

Mark Jackson is an 11th-term secondary education major.