

today's letters include one on the use of the word "negro", one on sub's music listening room, one on announcements lousing up exams, and one on responsible engineers. another letter we received was too long for a regular letter, so it was converted into a viewpoint, on the value of course evaluation. all letters are welcome, but don't make them too long. short, to-the-point letters are more likely to be run and read than the more verbose ones.

letters

wrong word

The notice in short shorts that "Jubilaires needs negroes to sing, dance, and act in Finian's Rainbow" is a provoking statement to which any right-thinking, self-respecting person of African origin or descent will react. Being of African descent, I am cut to the quick and hereby dissent.

It seems as if the editor of short shorts is not aware of a movement among Afro-Americans to emancipate themselves from the doldrums of stereotype images. Consequently, let me take this opportunity to enlighten the editor.

To use the term "negro" to classify a black person, whether he is from African, the West Indies, Brazil, Canada or the United States, is wrong. Each individual has national characteristics.

One does not call a man from Japan a Mongolo or a man from Sweden a Caucasio. The former is called a Japanese; the latter a Swede.

For this same reason, a black man from the United States should be called an American or one from Brazil a Brazilian. If it is necessary that he be identified by a special ethnic trait, then Afro-American, Afro-Brazilian should be used.

This achievement of national self-identity is one of the principle motives of the "black revolution" being staged in America. An advertisement phrased like "Jubilaires need entertainers to sing, dance, and act in Finian's Rainbow; must be of African origin or descent" would have allayed sensitive feelings.

Finally, to the Leftovers columnist: Because the word "Negro" carries despicable connotations attached to it, nationalists like Ron Karenga of the Black Nationalist's Movement based in Los Angeles, will even state that a change to Conrad's "The Negro of the Narcissus" and "The Negro in the Woodpile" is not enough. He and other nationalists will declare that "The Afro of the Narcissus" and "The Afro in the Woodpile" will be more in alignment with the thinking of modern Afro-Americans.

Roland Joseph
ed 4

too much yak-yak

The following is not meant as a malediction, nor is it a benediction.

On Thursday, Jan. 18, at 1:30 p.m., I, along with many others, wrote the Economics 310 examination in the education gymnasium. Our examination unlike most others was a one hour examination, so set by our lecturer, the Rev. Dr. Pendergast. I believe there is near unanimity, if not total, among his students, as to his abilities and in particular his exhilarative mode of presentation.

Dr. Pendergast is, however, an economist. His examination consisted of four essay type questions, of which two were to be answered. Economizing, the one hour time limit would be exactly enough to produce a decent effort on each question.

I found the time limit to be stringent, not because of the total exam-time essence, but because of the fact that during the one hour

time space of our examination there were at least five announcements made over the loud-speaker system. There was the usual rigmarole ("a succession of confused or foolish statements"—Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 2nd Ed. 1953, Thomas Allen Ltd., Toronto) at the beginning of the examination.

Then someone, or someone's "appointee", decided to give his class an extra ten minutes to do their exam writing. Then, lo and behold, if it didn't become contagious. Another ten minute extension to some lucky group. Then a "fifteen-minuter." "Would those students writing 'so and so' please note that their time limit will be extended to 2:45, I repeat . . ." And so on; and quite well distributed throughout the hour.

The modern loud-speaker system is so designed so as to allow a large number of people the pleasure and convenience of hearing some little voice which otherwise would not be heard. When an announcement is made it is only natural to stop writing and listen to find out whether the announcement

applies to you. You find out that it doesn't, so you return to your chore of thinking, organizing and writing while the blaring continues.

May I make a few suggestions: (1) that if announcements are necessary, they should be made before writing begins to the degree that the prevailing dexterity and imaginative powers of those above us allow, and that this session should not be included in the exam-writing time.

(2) or that the present system should be extended into an ambient one. There exists that "separate the men from the boys" dictum at this time which naturally applies certain pressures to the examination-conscious student. Let's use the "loudspeaker system." Examinations will be presented as usual, but interjected will be a series of announcements the exact times of which no student will know. High officials of the university will be in charge of making announcements of all kinds each not lasting more than 30 seconds. A student's ability to think and write between announcements, and make additional

pertinent comments about the announcements would constitute a fail or pass.

The above suggestions may of course require a few revisions, as may my literary style. Also, the whole scheme and theme of my concernment would not apply if a student found he had enough time for the examination (either because of the professors' miscalculation or his own) or if he is afflicted by a physical defect such as deafness. These are a few.

The Alberta government, or to be more exact, as a result of provincial cabinet formulation, the budget of the U of A has been cut this year and it seems likely that the same operation will occur in the next few years. This is very sad in this day and age when the "in" or "groovy" operation seems to be involving heart transplants. Has the university been over-spending in the past, and committing the ultimate crime of not allotting its resources to their fullest benefit, including human resources?

Time, and my distaste of letter writing has not allowed me to comment on the "on-off-fan system" that could be used in the main gym of the phys ed building.

Hugh J. Maccagno
sci 3

an engineer replies

I was somewhat dismayed to read your editorial of Jan. 4, 1968, "the way it really was." Your statement "Funny thing that dropouts from playschool should make it all the way to this great institution" inferred that engineers are stupid.

Firstly, may I remind you that engineering is one of the toughest faculties at this university and it requires a good deal of hard work along with some intelligence to pass this four year course.

I transferred from science to engineering after two years at university and have found considerably more spirit in the engineering faculty and also, people of approxi-

mately the same intelligence. I do not regret the switch in any way.

Secondly, you have mentioned many times in The Gateway the great amount of apathy on this campus. Yet when some group on the campus, such as the engineers, lead some pranks or original stunts, all we get are loud "boos". Thus you classify us as "dropouts from playschool".

If engineers lack leadership qualities, why has the ESS been approached by the students' union to help with such functions as the Christmas Foofra for Santas Anonymous. I suggest that it is because certain groups on campus recognize the fact that the engineering faculty has for many years been a leader in a somewhat losing cause to overcome student apathy. And, remarks such as yours can only serve to deter the engineers from helping with campus activities and create more hostility. Remember, if you treat us like human beings, we will treat you and the rest of the campus like humans. Miss Minich, do you not feel apologies are in order?

George R. Cushon
eng 4

flutter in the woofer

Today I think I will complain to you about the music listening room.

I won't complain about what is being played since it is the student's privilege to play what he wants, but I think it would be nice if the system was fixed so that one could listen to music.

I know that I speak for many irritated students when I say that I am tired of listening to the stereo flutter insanely from one ear to the other like some kind of insidious butterfly.

Considering how small the minority is that does like listening to music this way, I think that something should finally be done about this student facility.

Gene Juss
sci 1

Viewpoint

What is the point of course evaluation?

Following are some comments on course evaluation and the drop-outs who are too soft and immature to meet the challenges of a university education.

Is course evaluation going to make life easier for the student? Is that the purpose of course evaluation? As long as a department can make a "bad" course a compulsory prerequisite for a whole host of "good" courses it will improve nothing! What makes a course "good" or "bad"? Isn't it the professor's teaching? To give an example I will name a few professors from my own experience which I always shall remember with gratitude and respect. Dr. Stelck (Geology); Dr. Kuspira (Genetics); Dr. Brown (Chemistry); Dr. Mackie (Zoology); Dr. Small (Physics); Dr. Hickman (Physiology); Dr. Stewart (Botany); Provost Ryan (English). These men whether in elementary or advanced courses always displayed ability and responsibility.

Thus course evaluation is essentially a teacher evaluation because the subject matter of most courses, especially in science and engineering, changes as little as the knowledge and skill an electrician or carpenter has to acquire during his apprenticeship. What, then, are the criteria of a "bad" professor and can the students do anything about it?

Practical experience, some years of work in industry or other applied fields teach a man usually to be down-to-earth, efficient and responsible. Take the young theologian who never leaves the school atmosphere and who at the most has platonic friendships with the opposite sex. Compare his daily work and his sermons with those of a man who has been in the war, worked formerly as a salesman, has three kids and sometimes quarrels with a dynamic wife. There are many professors who never leave the academic dream world, because that is what university becomes when one loses touch with reality and feels the world owes one a living. But most of the students are not

going to stay in university, they will enter professions—productive jobs which make it possible to finance such an institution like the university in the first place. These students, and that includes myself, don't want vague sermons by immature professors but some down-to-earth training and practical advice by mature men who know that probably the most important part of life is work—i.e.—responsible action.

A few weeks ago there was an article in The Gateway shooting arrows at drop-outs, at students who apparently do not have what it takes to meet the challenges of university education. True, there always will be bad students just as there always will be bad teachers. But is it not the responsibility of the adult generation to prepare the next generation to stand on its own feet to eventually take over all the vital functions that keep this society going? Every adult is a teacher by example. Is a large number of drop-outs not evidence enough that parents and high schools have failed in their responsibility to prepare teenagers for life? There are many who have been fortunate in having a good teacher or they were able to make it despite all the odds they had against them. Now they enter university as adults and they should be treated as adults. They have a right to be taught by good professors. Many of them are paying for it by hard summer work. What can students do about a bad professor who spreads his own immaturity, confusion and frustration around and instills fear and inferiority complexes where a good professor builds up competence and confidence? Is the course evaluation going to make any difference?

If on construction a fore-man is no good it soon will result in bad work and accidents and then he is fired. To tell whether a Ph.D. is any good is neither that obvious nor that simple. Ph.D.'s don't need to have teaching certificates and high school results show in some instances that it is questionable whether they are worth having.

But there is an old saying: "What you cannot teach, you have not learned." Thus the conscience of the professor involved is the only criterion which keeps him on the job. If professional ethics and a strong sense of responsibility are less important to a man than the status of position and the considerable pay-check he gets, all the students can do is to complain to the department concerned. Even a complaint to the faculty is useless for it is powerless in many instances. If a department decides to burn all the students lab-books with the silly excuse to prevent cheating next year the faculty cannot stop them. That this violation of student property actually happened many students can testify. The bitter irony of it all is that students obviously are not treated as adults and the Ph.D.'s responsible for this were not acting like adults either.

If course evaluation is to be of any use at all it must be a critical teacher evaluation. Professors frequently complain about the lack of feedback and I propose that they should all get the full dose in the form of constructive criticism. Everybody can improve since everybody makes mistakes, even Ph.D.'s. Clearly the criticism of a first year female fine arts student will be far less objective than that of veteran like myself because after four hard years one begins to see that many changes would be nice but are impractical if not impossible. The main function of the course evaluation is to act as a conscience for the various departments concerned. I hope to speak for the majority of senior students when I say that we do not want tremendous changes because as a poet put it: "The good my friend, and this is true, is mostly the bad which we do not do." This means in plain English: behave like a mature responsible man and treat others as such with respect and good will, then the rest will fall into place!

Gerhard Bihl
grad studies