

THIS S FORUM I V PAGE



Oh Liz, honey, the council could use your dictionary

Dear Liz Law:

I wish very much to thank you for not calling me a deliberate liar. At the same time I must concede, due to the phraseology of your statement, concerning your resignation, that technically, I did speak out of turn. However, I am humbled and impressed indeed, that so learned a person, and a person occupying such a high position as academic vice-president, took notice of a simple illiterate commerce student such as I. Again thank you for those precious moments that you must have sacrificed to reply to my first letter.

So far as council's priorities are concerned, which you so elaborately illustrated in your letter, they're nothing but a bunch of empty words. Yes empty, like so much vacuum, this because council does not adhere to them. Some people have said that council lacks the

backbone to stand up to their convictions; I disagree. I believe that most of the council members are not able to locate the dictionary that you use to define "education." Perhaps you should make it available to them (if the waiting list is not too long I would also wish to obtain said dictionary). Furthermore Liz, sometimes all the education in the world is unable to change people's basic beliefs and/or ideologies; I wish it would.

Sorry again Liz; I did not mean to jeopardize your high position, much less your political career. What caused me to write the first letter? It was merely the triumph and exhilaration of an illiterate, who was able to witness intellectually motivated, emotional and vocal diarrhea.

George P. Kuschminder
commerce 1

Exactly what is tested?

By Winston Gereluk

In a column last September, I accused those who administered tests in this university of neglecting to inform the students of the reasons behind their practice. (I remember suggesting that they probably had no rationale.) As was expected, no adequate explanation has been offered thus far.

This is scandalous. For once more the time has come when the libraries are filled with students feverishly preparing for tests—which they have no reason to write.

Because I am slightly embarrassed for their sakes, I will volunteer to act as spokesman for the test-administrators and supply what seems to be a really good reason for testing at the university level.

I start with a bit of common knowledge; that university education is not valuable for its own sake, but is only a stepping-stone to something else—usually a good job.

So, added to its educative and training function, and probably overshadowing these two, is the sifting function that the university is expected to fulfill for the concerns that will be hiring students.

Tests neither educate nor train the student. Therefore, their only use-value is towards this sifting function.

Sifting in educational institutions consists of 'qualified' people throwing up sets of more or less arbitrary obstacles in front of the mass of students, and then putting a mark on those who make it through.

Thus, students who pass grade nine departmentals gain the right to try the high school matriculation obstacle. If they get past that, they earn the right to try the university. This is where you are now; striving to pass university to gain the right to try Westinghouse, Dow,

a public school, or graduate studies.

University tests (and Student Counselling?) are merely methods of insuring that the large corporations, the public schools, and the graduate schools get the proper type of product—or rather that certain 'repugnant' types don't make it.

But—many would say—my chemistry and biology tests don't test my character. They only test content and technique. That is true, but what they also test is your willingness to subject yourself for long hours to something that means absolutely nothing to you, for that is precisely the quality that most employers want.

If you are the type that succumbs to the desire to be creative, and neglect to study pre-digested 'knowledge' you probably won't pass your test. Likewise, if you spend your time worrying about air pollution, American domination, or My Lai when you should be concerned with Economics 396, your test marks will suffer.

So, study hard fellow students! EPSB, Dow Chemical, and IBM want people who have passed tests. For that shows them that you might not worry about the moral implications of being a jailkeeper when they place you in charge of a classroom. It will indicate to them that you won't waste time fretting about land pollution when you should be concentrating on building obsolescence into cars. It will help to assure them that you won't let sympathy for the Vietnamese children interfere with your commitment to producing a newer and better napalm.

In short, it will help to establish you as the type of person eagerly sought by employers, and that is why you are at university in the first place.

Empirical knowledge is lacking in Yonge's generalized attack on drugs

"One magistrate, observing the statistics on prosecutions, suggested that the Immorality Act, first adopted in 1927, was not fulfilling its purpose. 'Contraventions of the Act have become a tidal wave,' he said.

A pro government critic of the act, L. C. Swanepole, a senior lecturer in psychology and criminology at the University of South Africa, suggested that those involved in interracial sexual relationships should be dealt with like alcoholics, in clinics, because they were obviously victims of psychological disturbance."

Ban on Interracial Sexual Relations Is Under Attack in South Africa, New York Times, May 11, 1968.

"In brief, our recommendations to deal with the problem of the non-medical use of drugs are . . . that the penalties under the law be drastically changed to render them more appropriate and remedial . . . that an entirely new correctional system be set up to deal with offenders under these laws—work colonies as rehabilitation and remotivation centres."

Statement by Dr. Keith Yonge, The Gateway, Nov. 21, 1969.

ISSUE IS SCIENTIFIC

I fully agree with Dr. Yonge that the marijuana issue should not be sensationalized (The Gateway, Dec. 2). However, I contend that the issue is of a scientific, not emotional nature. Certainly, among medical professionals, marijuana should be considered within a rational scientific framework; that the statement of position (The Gateway, Nov. 21) was intended for distribution only among professional associates is more reason to expect judgment within scientific restriction, not gratuitous moralizing.

Scientific inquiry is not concerned with a "contest between the generations"; it answers question of fact: what are the psychological, social, and physiological effects of marijuana, LSD, etc. Hopefully, Dr. Yonge is also interested in the answers science can provide. If so, it would seem obligatory that appropriate research be recommended. Nowhere in the Nov. 21 statement is such a recommendation to be found.

NO EMPIRICAL SUPPORT

Perhaps Dr. Yonge's refusal to cite evidence on marijuana effects from the scientific literature stems from the absence of empirical support for his theories. A literature search of psychopharmacological research is not difficult; any stu-

dent with an elementary knowledge of statistics can acquaint himself with the entire corpus in an hour. Barring knowledge of, as yet, unpublished research, it would seem Dr. Yonge has at his disposal no scientific evidence of physiological effects beyond that contained in the two published formal psychopharmacological studies involving marijuana and human subjects. These appear in Science Vol. 162, pp. 1234-1242, Dec. 13, 1968, and Vol. 164, pp. 851-854, May 16, 1969. (There is some research involving THC—a principal pharmacologically active constituent of marijuana; H. Isbell, Psychopharmacologia: 11, 184, 1967. For a review of psychiatric "studies" on psychological and social aspects see L. Grinspoon, Scientific American V. 221, 6, Dec. 1969).

ANY DRUG POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS

I will not take the issue with Dr. Yonge's theories; there is simply no scientific evidence one way or the other for them. It is, of course, entirely reasonable and prudent to consider any drug as potentially dangerous and to treat it accordingly until proved otherwise. I concur with Dr. Yonge that "we can predict that attempts to stem the epidemic of non-medical use of drugs simply by prohibiting supplies of the drugs and by the use of the present penalties . . . as deterrents will not be effective and may even provide further social deterioration." An alternative to Dr. Yonge's para-legal solu-

tion which he has perhaps not considered lies in science. For example, within a week of the publication of the first evidence of possible chromosomal damage from LSD, the illicit market for this drug in San Francisco dropped drastically (personal observation). If future scientific evidence indicates dangers of the magnitude predicted by Dr. Yonge, I feel certain that the youthful public will respond accordingly; if the evidence is to the contrary, I would hope for appropriate legislative change.

RESEARCH NEEDED

A strong stand on insistence of adequate scientific research in this area is, I think, the only ethical possibility for those who pretend to believe in the veridicality of empiricism uncontaminated with emotional values. That science has been institutionalized by our Western society (including its youth) as a guiding force both in technology and human values should be added motivation for its applications if one hopes to effectively rectify the existing drug situation.

I can only trust that the CPA will respect their responsibility toward the very philosophy that has provided the knowledge of their discipline—that a recommendation for immediate implementation of research in the area of psychotropic drugs be adopted.

Charles Richmond
GS 2

Invitation to a cold-mountain! Explanation of confusion at last?

Recently there have been several articles in the Gateway regarding Cold Mountain Institute. In both Ron Dutton's and Leona Gom's articles the question is raised regarding Cold Mountain's finances.

I have been to the one-evening Introduction to Encounter (\$3, student) and the Ed Maupin weekend session on Body Awareness and the Sense of Being (\$50), and my wife and I went to a five day Residential Workshop (\$150 each).

The one-evening Introduction to Encounter was worth the \$3. It lasted four hours and three leaders or trainers were present.

Some people may have been disappointed by the Ed Maupin session because of the small emphasis on encounter experiences, but this session was advertised as having an emphasis on the self,

not on encounters. As for this session costing \$50, it should be pointed out that Ed Maupin was brought up from Big Sur, California and this cost money. Was this session worth \$50? That's an individual assessment—for me it was worth it.

The five day Residential Workshop which my wife and I attended was held at the Silver Summit Ski Lodge, just north of Edson. The \$150 included room and board as well as the intensive group encounter sessions. If we went there just for a holiday, it would have cost us \$10 or \$12 per person a day for room alone. So the Cold Mountain price was very reasonable. We plan to go again.

Brian McDonald
grad studies

Books by department heads should not be required: A captive market of students is being exploited

I am challenging a practice that exists in this university on the grounds that it is ethically irregular. The head of a department has the freedom to prescribe the list of required books which the student must obtain. Such a freedom entails a responsibility. Is this responsibility being properly discharged?

In one case, in an Educational Foundations course, one of the two prescribed texts is written by the head of the department. The educational value, even the literary quality of this book, I do not presume to question. I will merely mention that my copy is in mint

condition, that is to say, unused. The practice of using one's power of office to gain a captive market for one's own product is frowned upon in other professions. Imagine a doctor prescribing a medicine which he also manufactures! Educators repeatedly proclaim themselves to be the guardians and transmitters of society's moral and cultural values. Either they are not practicing what they preach, or our moral values have sunk even lower than the most bitter cynics had supposed.

I suggest that a book written by a department head be disallowed, in his own department, as a re-

quired text. It could be recommended reading, for which the university libraries could purchase a few copies. This course of action may result in the loss of one or two good textbooks; it would certainly eliminate a lot of garbage. If the book is of recognizable worth, other professors will be glad to use it. Being less biased, they will be able to judge the book on its own merit. God knows, an author is no more able to be objective about his brainchild than a mother can be objective about her offspring.

Name withheld upon request