

Graduate manual flawed

Solve the following problem in logic and then we'll have a little discussion about scholarship.

The headmaster of a girls' school is selecting a committee of students to attend a national conference. The students eligible to attend are Joy, Debbie, Edie, Linda, Millie, Pam and Judy. The committee must be selected given the following considerations:

If Judy is selected, Edie must be selected.

If both Edie and Debbie are selected, then Joy cannot be selected.

If both Debbie and Joy are selected, the Millie cannot be selected.

If Joy is selected, then either Linda or Pam must be selected, but Linda and Pam cannot both be selected.

Either Linda or Millie must be selected, but Linda and Millie cannot both be selected.

If Pam and three other students are selected, which of the following groups can accompany Pam?

(A) Joy, Debbie and Millie

(B) Joy, Edie and Millie

(C) Joy, Debbie and Judy

(D) Joy, Linda and Judy

(E) Edie, Linda and Judy

If you answer is (B), you are cor-

rect according to the GRE General Test preparatory manual published by the Research & Education Association (Piscataway, New Jersey). However, you would only be half right, because, as it happens, (E) is also correct. The explanation for the answer (B) in the manual states that (E) cannot be right because Linda and Pam cannot be selected together — but that is only true when Joy has been selected.

This is one of several errors I found in this manual which bills itself as "The best test preparation for the GRE General Test." As I expressed it in a letter to the publishers, the discovery of errors made me wonder about the accuracy of the rest of the manual. The masthead of this manual boasts ten consultants, seven of whom hold Ph.D.s. I have yet to receive a reply from any of them.

Getting into graduate school is very much a function of a good score on the GRE (Graduate Record Examination). It is a gruelling exam that tests one's mathematical, logical and verbal skills, within oppressive time constraints. The test manual is an important tool for honing one's knowledge and abilities in

these areas and for familiarizing oneself with the form and content of the test. It is crucial that the manuals reflect the actual exam.

Once you find errors that can be qualified, you start to wonder about interpretive areas, like relationships between words. Which word is most opposite in meaning to malefaction: (A) affinity, (B) subsidy, (C) profligation, (D) idiosyncrasy, or (E) cognate? "Certainly a subsidy (aid) would be the opposite of malefaction (an evil deed)," says the manual. Would its authors hold then Syria or Iran's subsidization of terrorists is an example of beneficence? In my view, subsidy is a neutral word, where evil obviously not. Evil is harmful, injurious, destructive. Affinity is the force holding atoms — and people — together. My choice was (A) and it's still (A).

Once I began to question several of the answers, I began to wonder if the GRE people had a different way of looking at language than I did, a way that I would have to figure out if I wanted to do well on the exam. Paranoia set in.

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Ask Joe & Jo

Here we are again! (Jo's feeling much better & Joe has yet to succumb to any illness this year.) As promised, we're talking about the anti-freedom movement on campus.

Now, if you're wondering just exactly what we're talking about, we'll explain. If you haven't noticed yet, there is a petition circulating throughout the University to make the Killam Library a "scent-free" zone.

Another issue that has recently popped up in the rumour mills of DSU (Dalhousie Student Union) council is that a few students have been lobbying to make the whole of the Student Union Building non-smoking.

These are only two of the issues that fall under the greater heading of "loss of freedom," but they are primary and symptomatic of a greater movement that should be addressed.

Let's look at the idea of a "scent-free" Killam.

First off, what exactly does "scent-free" mean? Does this mean no deodorant or just no perfume. Please, people smell — sometimes pheromones just aren't pretty. We both wear deodorant because unscented antiperspirant contains aluminum. And talc is out because who really wants to smell like a baby's ass!

Also, does this mean no hair spray, no gel? Can't you just picture it: an entire University community hiding their bad hair by donning Dal baseball hats. This would hardly be a fashion statement.

Now, we're not saying that you should be trailing pools of "Lady Musk" by jovan, but individuality and personal freedom require us to make personal statements that may include scented hair spray.

Ah, the smoking issue... This is something that may strike some readers as funny, but even though there is only a limited amount of smoking spaces on the University campus, the anti-freedom league has taken it upon themselves to make it impossible to smoke on campus. We bet that the SUB would be pretty empty if it were completely non-smoking. That means a lot of lost business for the DSU and higher union fees.

Besides, the only places to smoke in the SUB are: a portion of the cafeteria, the Grawwood, and the landings of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors. The hallways are smoke-free, as are the meeting rooms and most offices.

Get a grip people. We all have to use this building and it should be a fair and equitable share. Smokers and non-smokers, the scented and the smelly all have to pay the same tuition.

Give us freedom or give us death.

And remember, if you have a question, nothing's too rude, crude or stupid. Just Ask Joe & Jo.

faith Hope

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