

The students' manual of cheating — why and how



The philosophy of cheating

The art of cheating is one of the most ancient of all crafts and as such one that has been revised and perfected over the years. At this time it is one of the finer sciences with which people are concerned.

In view of this the GAZETTE feels it is our duty to produce a guide to cheating: to give an insight into the philosophy behind this practice and to present some of the more common techniques. We feel that cheating is at least as integral a part of university life as classes, registration and social life. A manual of cheating deserves a place on everyone's library shelf, along side the university calendar and other handbooks.

Though cheating has been in practice for as long as the competitive examination system, little thought has been given to the philosophy behind it. There are some who hold that it is merely an outgrowth of human nature, like war, poverty and racism, but here we must disagree. If we examine the practice of cheating in our educational systems, it can only be concluded that with out the authoritarian competitive school system there would be no reason for it.

In this system, which has grown out of the leader/disciple type of relationship found in ancient Europe, the emphasis is on reaching a standard set by others and for which you may have no desire. It is decreed by custom and the whims of others that the student be required to absorb certain kinds of knowledge; thus the compulsory English, history and science courses. This phenomenon is far from peculiar to elementary or high schools. It is common to almost every educational system and institution.

The casualty rate from this schizophrenic learning process is understandably very high. As one begins to learn on an individual basis, it is difficult to reconcile your capabilities to such a self-defeating life.

There is much in the modern schools that can only frustrate: the classroom atmosphere, authoritarian teachers, petty rules and regulations. But the most blatant and obscene symbol of educational degeneracy is the exam (or test) and evolving from that, the grading system.

A large number of those close to the educational apparatus agree that these things are inherently bad and should be radically changed. Yet these same people will turn about and set severe and irrelevant examinations. It would seem that no one is willing to come right out and refuse to be a party to such inquisitions.

Examinations are intended to be the measurement of individual intelligence and the

certification of the ability to learn what others want absorbed. (In reality it serves mainly to preserve the status quo by instilling particularly favorable values and norms.) This, in conjunction with everyone's desire to be accepted by their peers, fosters competition which appears to be essential for survival in the system. Cheating is the inevitable consequence.

A competitive structure such as this one leaves the student with no choice but to cram, worry, have minor nervous breakdowns and finally, after all alternatives are found useless — to cheat. If you attempt to be honest and critical in the process of study and examinations, you find that it is your loss. Your work is marked by someone who cannot know what you are attempting to achieve. The marker certainly is unable to overcome his own intellectual prejudice and evaluate the work objectively.

Thus, one must strive first of all to imitate the teacher's views. A subordinate goal is the attempt to pursue the course of study which will do the most good for the individual. One must cheat because it is virtually impossible to do both of these, and because the falsehood that educational institutions are THE place to learn still persists.

The person who cheats is not the depraved monster that some would have you believe. They may not be seditious, nor are they usually in the habit of lurking around corners or in washrooms. Remember those people who seemed to breeze through school with minimum effort? Many of them do so by cheating. To them the science of cheating is the only answer to the present educational system.

For those who believe that exams are no indication of learning ability and/or intelligence, cheating is a very practical endeavour. It provides an escape route and makes an extremely tedious situation somewhat more bearable.

There are many facets to the art of cheating. It begins with the first words of worship to a professor who could only be labelled as senile and ends with a good mark for an irrelevant exam, with almost no effort involved. At some point in the midst of this development, the student learns the various techniques necessary to the professional cheat.

One learns to present a stoic countenance at all times with no trace of nervousness. One learns to act the role of worried student striving to recall pertinent data. And most important, one acquires confidence that this method is the best one to keep you secure in the school of your parents' choice. This sense of prowess is built up over a period of time and solidifies with practice and success.

Cheating can serve functions other than keeping you alive and well in the classroom. It sharpens the mind and opens new avenues of intellectual stimulation. One becomes adept at second-guessing and at unearthing new and varied methods to bewilder examinations invigilators. Such attributes could be of great service when it comes time to go out into the world of work.

One of the most shameful aspects of cheating is that it remains underdeveloped. Fearing the damnation of the officials, most individuals refuse to share their knowledge of this art with the masses. If students realized the inherent advantages in acquiring this skill it is conceivable that Cheating Clubs would be formed on campuses all over the continent. There is no law prohibiting this and the expert would have the opportunity to assist novices in the perfection of their style. Lectures could be given, treatises could be written and perhaps it could become part of the curriculum. After all, the transferral of advanced knowledge is the purpose of education.

The possibility of a majority of students openly avowing that they cheat is an awe-inspiring. Such actions could dissolve the competitive ideal and relegate it to the archives where it belongs. If everyone could achieve first grade marks through cheating there would be little excuse for

examinations or a grading scale.

Everyone would be acknowledging the fact that attempting to follow a serious course of study in this system is foolhardy. They would be making no attempt to cooperate with this organism. It could result in the establishment of an alternate system — a structure where emphasis would be on the pursuit of knowledge for the benefit of the individual and not an outmoded society.

This article is not meant to corrupt. There are a multitude who have achieved a more advanced standing in the art of cheating than we could ever hope to attain. Yet the GAZETTE hopes the following "Manual of Cheating" will give those who are just beginning to consider the possibilities an incentive and a direction to pursue. Perhaps they will take our ideas, develop them, test them and through doing so conquer their personal neuroses regarding exams.

It is the easiest and best way to deliver the facts that teachers want to read and hear; so do it.

Some methods of trickery

There are many different forms of cheating but any measure of success requires the cheater to know exactly which type of offence is being committed.

One 'offence' is "cozenage" — the art of persuading or flattering to attain something. Another is to "defraud" or lie to another to obtain information. (i.e. you give me this answer and I will give you the next one, except I renege on my end of the deal.) This can be dangerous because (a) you could report me, or (b) I will have little chance of getting information at a later date. This definition can be twisted around and be called a bribe.

"Swindling" is large-scale cheating by misrepresentation or mean abuse of confidence. Then there is "overreach", which implies getting the better of dealing or bargaining.

It is always good practice to know which category you fall into. You are then in a position to intelligently challenge any charge of deceit that might be laid against you if you are caught.

One other thing — the road to becoming a successful cheat is strewn with potholes. To put it more simply, a little work is involved.

Most techniques need practice in exam conditions (eg. term quizzes). However, the most common method only requires discretion. This is the art of peering over an unsuspecting neighbour's shoulder during an exam. The effectiveness of this method is questionable especially in essay exams, as the chances of being caught are increased.

If you believe in the individual approach, there are several ways to trick your professor, and cut down the odds of being caught.

Hiding little pieces of paper with the answers on them is fairly easy, providing due caution is exercised. If you have a big watch face (as shown in the photo), the only remaining problem is to wait for the "man-at-the-front" to turn around.

You can also wear a long-sleeve shirt or blouse (a bulky sweater is even better). Underneath you tuck away a long, narrow piece of paper with the necessary answers or outlines, prepared beforehand of course.

This method provides good results because when one answer has been completed, you can simply fold it under and not worry about loose ends hanging out.

If you are worried about style (and this can be important), then the bathroom affair might not be for you. There are practical disadvantages too since the invigilator often keeps close watch on lavatory escapades.

At any rate, this process can employ one or two people and the appropriate adjustments can be made easily. Use of this method simply entails

wrapping the answers in a roll of toilet paper in the closest bathroom before the exam. At the appropriate time (when you need the answer) you ask to go. But don't waste too much time, and if you want to bring the paper back with you, hide it well.

This is an alternative if you like going for walks during exams; otherwise it is a waste of time. Going there just to temporarily memorize or pick up the notes is something that could be accomplished beforehand.

There are many places to stash your cribsheet, but it is up to the individual to find the most suitable and comfortable place.

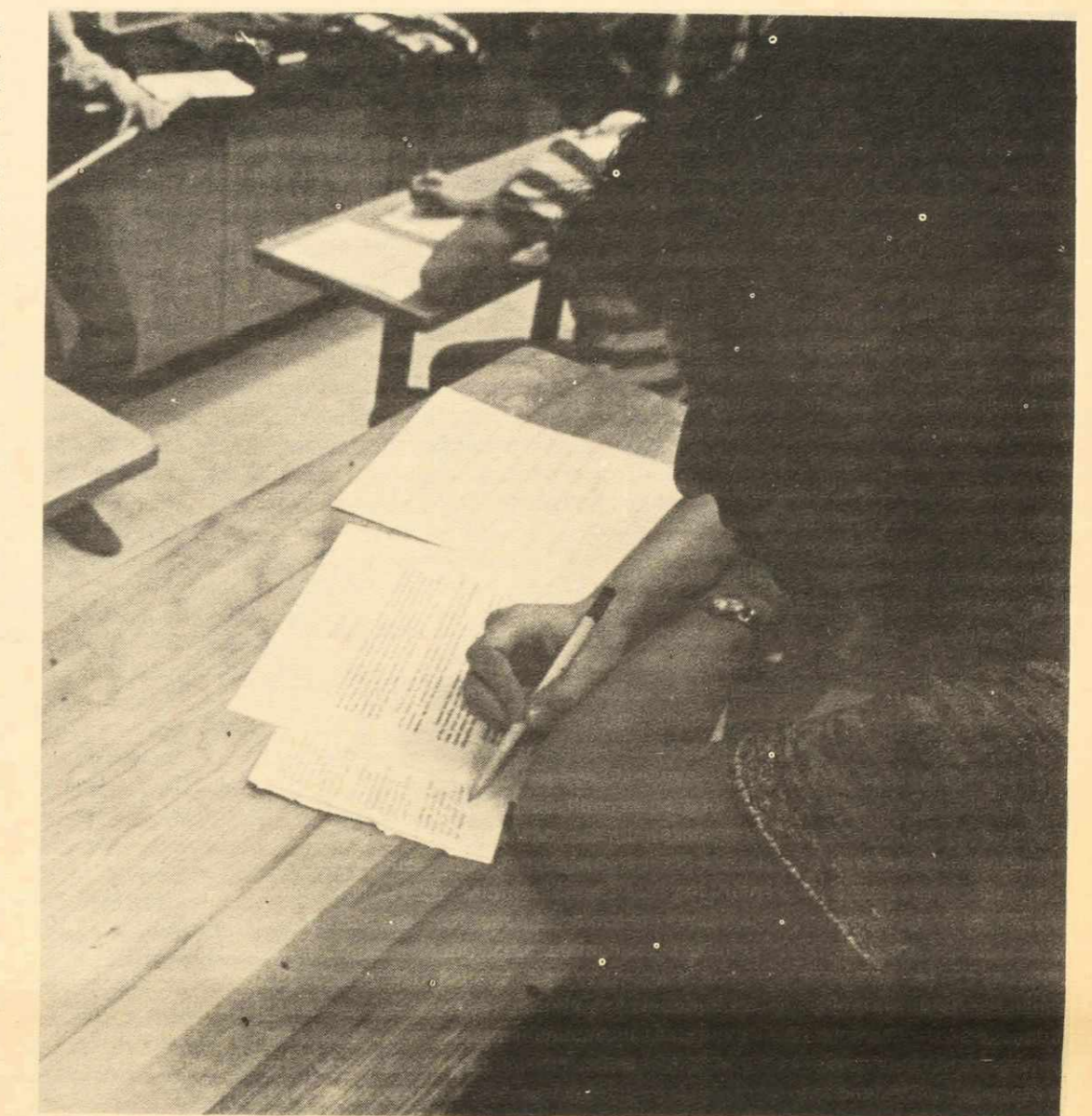
Cheating, as we have tried to point out, is an art, and as such, people have different preferences as to how it can be carried out most successfully. This includes the collective approach.

Two people, side-by-side or one in front of the other, begin to curse and pound the desk. Both continue to write, then crumple up their paper in disgust. After several minutes, there are many balls of paper sitting on each desk. The invigilator no longer has any interest as he/she dislikes seeing students getting so upset over an exam.

In one ball of paper, each has written the answer to a different question which the other does not know. When the good person turns his/her back, you exchange wads as shown in the photo. (If after several years of this you become bored, add a little challenge and try throwing the balls across the room.)

If you are not that co-ordinated, try the sneak approach. Commonly called the old-paper-in-the-shoe trick, this method calls for the assistance of a friend. It is also best if an arrangement has been worked beforehand concerning which half of the course each will study.

This requires two sets of tricks but neither is difficult. First, the person in need of the answer, (hereinafter the answerer), taps on the desk with a pen (softly), or on the floor with a shoe. The number of taps represents the number of the question.



Secondly, the answerer stretches the leg out under the chair of the person in front of him/her.

Then the answerer deposits (unobtrusively) a folded or crumpled piece of paper into the shoe; the leg protects and the answerer lifts the paper out of the shoe.

Many variations of this tapping trick can be developed. But again, exercise caution.

A successful cheater relies on creativity, and these basic tricks can be expanded to suit your personal situation and style, which is very important both for your own ego and for your well-being. If you practice several times before your exams, or perhaps during term quizzes, you can perfect a personal technique.

Perfection means good co-ordination and this too comes with practice. We only hope to have come soon enough to be of assistance for your next set of exams. And though we do not pretend to have all the answers (a friend might), we hope there is a satisfactory number of alternatives to be tested and implemented with great success in your exams to come.

Cheating reigns supreme

The foregoing has attempted to present an insight into the philosophy of cheating and also the methods of its practice.

Yet do not assume that cheating is the final answer to the problems presented by our present educational structure. Although this practice has certain distinct advantages (passing and staying in the comfortable solitude of high schools and universities), there are some drawbacks.

The professional cheat is a self-assured man about town, but the road leading to this is a long and hard one. The art of cheating is merely a tactic devised to enable individuals to cope with the present educational system consisting of nothing but grades and examinations. The road is long and laden with corpses of those who were not up to the deceit, the self-centeredness and the continual abstraction from the proper methods of learning.

It is a temporary measure, intended only to support the agents of change while they are solidifying their objections to the present system.

What is the ultimate goal? For every student and teacher to realize that the present examination/grading structure can only corrupt the true learning process, and refuse to participate in such acts of self-destruction. In short, to culminate in a complete boycott of examinations by both teacher and student.

True learning is fading — cheating reigns supreme. While we may indulge in this practice we cannot ignore the fact that the time-honored art of learning has suffered at the hands of the powers-that-be in the educational system. If we allow this to continue, then learning as such will disappear from the face of the earth and cheating will be the sole survivor.

To become proficient in the art of cheating is a worthy aim, but only if one does not lose sight of the reasons behind its necessity, and only if we participate with a view toward change.

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