

EDITORIAL OPINION

Life of Professor Draws New Wounds

The often-probed life of the college instructor has once again drawn new wounds. This week, two isolated events, not directly concerned with the University of Nebraska campus, caused people to sit down and once again re-evaluate the entire educational system.

The first incident, concerning an assistant instructor of English at Ohio State University, was brought to the attention of Nebraska citizens Saturday, when the State Normal Board voided the contract of Henry St. Onge, who was to have taught English next fall at Wayne State Teachers College.

St. Onge's "crime" revolved around the fact that he had opened his back yard to a controversial speaker. The speaker, William Mandel, was a witness at the San Francisco hearings of the House Un-American Activities Committee a year ago.

The entire case, confusing enough in itself, is further clouded with improper communication between the Columbus campus and Wayne State. People concerned with the issue are confused. In Ohio, the people are wondering why the Nebraska State Normal Board voided St. Onge's contract. In Nebraska people are wondering about the circumstances that led up to contract cancellation.

The Daily Nebraskan contacted several Ohio State University officials, the news director of the Ohio State radio station and the editor of the Wayne State Teachers College newspaper, the Wayne Stater, in an effort to clear up the St. Onge case. These accounts are found on the front page.

Below this editorial is an editorial which appeared yesterday in the Ohio State Lantern. It shows, among other things, their feelings on the Board's ruling.

The other professor-probing incident deals with the installation of private eyes in class rooms as a method of checking against "controversial" professors. The administration at the University of Nebraska is to be congratulated for its immediate stand against this spying system.

As pointed out in a news article from the Insider's Newsletter, the agency "invariably" turns up troublemakers in the Philosophy, Psychology, English, Literature, Biology, History, Government, Journalism, Speech, Drama and Religion Departments.

By making this broad generalization, this private investigating agency has helped to label every member of the above departments as "troublemakers." Thus, another black mark has been added to the long list of a faculty member.

The University administration's strong stand against this investigative aid must be taken to heart and the statement by Dean Breckenridge should be read and consumed by every student, parent, government official and educator. If this spy system is adopted universally, the entire American educational system will be harnessed with a dictatorial muzzle.

The obligations of the teachers are to let his students know what he knows and what he thinks. This is the creed the educator should follow, or should be allowed to follow.

The results of a uniform educational system would be disastrous.

It would be impossible for us to imagine three or four professors in the same field, who would be able to know and interpret the exact amount of information.

Although the two incidents arose in two different geographical areas, the two ironically met in this area. The later, the case of the private eyes, will never arise on the Nebraska campus, according to University officials. The other case was hurled back to Ohio by the State Normal Board when they voided St. Onge's Wayne State contract.

Here's where we stand today.

Guilt by Association

(Editor's note: The following is a reprint of an editorial which appeared in the Tuesday edition of the Ohio State Lantern, Ohio State University's school newspaper.)

It is natural and in the interest of self-education for an instructor to want to hear controversial ideas and to want his students to have the same opportunities.

The fact that he has invited a controversial person to speak on campus is, therefore, a flimsy excuse for not allowing him to teach.

The Nebraska State Normal Board Saturday cancelled the contract of Ohio State English instructor Henry St. Onge to teach at Wayne State Teachers College. The instructor had invited William Mandel, outspoken critic of the House Un-American Committee to speak on campus April 13.

St. Onge commented, "I want to know why?" So do we.

The cancellation of the teaching appointment is a glaring example of assigning guilt by association. If this practice were followed consistently, no instructor on a university campus could invite a controversial speaker without endangering his chances for advancement or transfer to a better teaching position at another school.

The students, of course, would be "protected" from subversive ideologies—and from education at the same time.

The cancellation of St. Onge's contract appears to be an act of conciliation under pressure. We are told that the president of Wayne State received numerous letters from the Columbus area about the Mandel affair and was pressured by Nebraska state legislators.

We wish there had been less concern for the welfare of Wayne State Teachers College and more concern for the welfare of its students.

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Reviewers Laud R. L. Hough's Book Portraying Thought of Howells

By Margy Martin The following are extracts from reviews of "The Quiet Rebel: William Dean Howells as Social Commentator" by Robert L. Hough, published by the University Press.

... in this slender volume we have a well-focused monograph on Howells as social commentator. Chapters five and six are the heart of the book and represent the best available summary of Howells' mature social criticism and his perennial reforming zeal — his interest, in his old age, in prison reform, woman suffrage, makes abundantly clear. Howells was the supporter of liberal causes to the day he died . . . This book has the real virtue of summarizing a large and important topic well, sticking to the announced subject, and arguing its thesis closely. James Woodress, The South Atlantic Quarterly

Hough makes his greatest contribution by documenting the fact that the fourth period of Howells' social awareness, 1900-1920, was marked by biting criticism of the values of the American economy . . . Hough has set as his tasks the chronicling of Howells' attitudes on social problems throughout his long lifetime; this he has done well. He has neither tried to go below the surface in relating these attitudes to Howells' art, nor in relating Howells to his historical context. It is hoped that Hough or someone else soon will struggle with these problems of major significance. — David W. Noble, The American Historical Review.

A more specialized study . . . in which Robert L. Hough traces the development

Weber Will Pick Chemical Award

Dr. James H. Weber of the University is a member of the Committee of Award which will select the 1961 winner of the Kirkpatrick Award for Chemical Engineering Achievement.

The award is presented every other year by Chemical Engineering and McGraw-Hill publication, to the chemical processing company making the most meritorious contribution to the advance of the industry and the profession. The award recognizes the contribution of group effort rather than individual achievement.

Electrical Engineers Initiate 12 Students

Eta Kappa Nu, electrical engineering honorary, recently initiated 12 University students from the College of Engineering and Architecture.

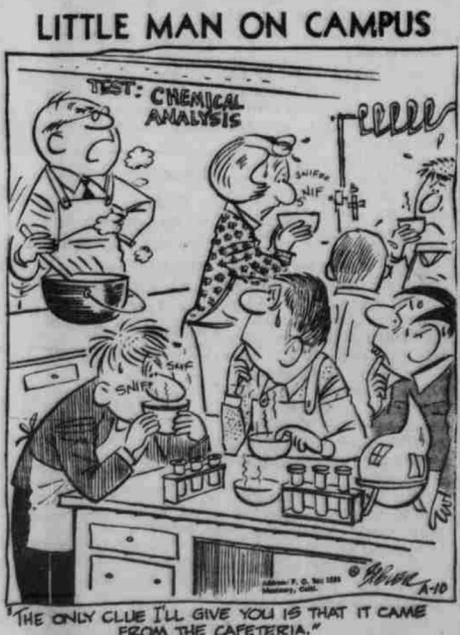
The new initiates are: Stanley Drasky, David Sorenson, David Bliss, David Skoumal, Tad Hammond, Francis Green, Don Schueler, Chuck Wahl, Dennis Folkerts, Jim Osborne, Ed Collett and Charles Doty.

of Howells' social thought with scholarly thoroughness, demonstrating, among other things, that Howells continued to be an active commentator on social problems long after he had ceased to emphasize social reform in his novels. — Modern Fiction Studies.

This brief book . . . is a concise, carefully documented analysis of Howells' social and economic ideas as expressed in his novels of the 1880's and 1890's and in his magazine essays published from 1900 to 1920. Contrary to those critics who believe that Howells' interest in reform waned after 1896, Professor Hough finds in the magazine writing enough evidence of a continuing concern with social and economic injustices to justify his contention that "in truth, this was Howells' social period." . . . It is, of course, probably true that any social critic makes a kind of contribution by at least identifying, and thereby perhaps perpetuating, reform ideas and liberal attitudes. But it may also be true that Howells' kind of genteel, "gadfly" approach to social and economic problems was in part responsible for the sorry record of liberalism in this country from 1870 until 1932 — or until today if one is appraising the impact of Howells' brand of "secular socialism." This is only to say, however, that the social historian will find Mr. Hough's book more useful liberalism than as a reinterpretation of Howells' importance as a social critic and reformer. — Paul J. Carter, The Mississippi Valley Historical Review.

With his imaginative literature the work has almost nothing to do; this at once impoverishes it, and at the same time enables it to make its contribution to the growing body of knowledge about Howells; for it carries its detailed examination into the period after 1896 when Howells divorced his interest in social change from his art, and confined it to a large number of magazines and newspaper articles which Mr. Hough categorizes for the first time . . . Mr. Hough . . . limits himself to a clear exposition of the non-literary opinions of an important writer. — Everett Carter, The New Mexico Quarterly.

The Quiet Rebel increases what we know about the later Howells' effect outside of literature. A sober, sympathetic study . . . it is most original when it surveys Howells' magazine articles after 1900 — typical prices which no one much cares to read today, but which must be weighted in any whole view of the novelist. — James B. Stronks, Ohio Historical Quarterly.



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Satyr

On Spring Day it was my pleasant experience to sit in the presence on a goodly number of spooking Mortar Boards. The topic of conversation turned to Rho Delta and the shocking activities and more shocking revelation of membership of that group. So I decided to ask my only friend what the deal was with this group. After a careful study of the facts and premises that were revealed by this conversation, it is my contention that they should not be plagued and persecuted by sorority sisters, Mortar Boards and Dean Snyder.

In the first place, Red Dot was founded at Tuskegee University by Elizabeth Stanton, Claire Booth, and Mrs. Albert Switzer. The historical founding took place on the fourth floor of the library in 1897, May Day. The group was founded to honor girls who exhibited outstanding traits of motherhood and scholarship. As a matter of fact, Rho Delta stands for the Reading Diana — embodying both scholarship and chastity.

From Tuskegee, the group spread quickly and secretly to all points of the globe. In the spring of 1904, Nebraska was introduced to Rho Delta by Amelia Hotair who was forced down by bad weather and a crack in the handle of her broom. The practices and initiatory rites of the group were picked up almost immediately by the student nurses at Lincoln General and from thence it came to the University. It would be unfair for an

unmember such as myself, being only the Sweetheart, to reveal any of the secrets; but I will say that they still practice meeting at the fourth floor of the library on May Day. They are still devoted to Diana, in a matter of speaking, and read on occasion.

Thus the group goes on, honoring young girls with membership and University expulsion. It seems high time that the Mortar Boards recognized the efforts of the group and did something to show their worth to the rest of the campus.

The group is primarily a service organization like the Peace Corps and practices affability and dissension in their separate houses. They send roses to honor honored people, they send cards to frighten hopefuls, they put marks on mirrors and desks to let girls know they are being considered or are being considered naughty, and a number of other worthwhile undertakings too numerous to mention.

It is a shame that they are forced to secrecy by standards boards and puritanical administrative officials. If they were allowed to come out in the open, they would no doubt be a greater service to the University community and the fraternity system.

In these days of dogged McCarthyism, groups who try to operate in comparative secrecy, are persecuted by conservatives and uninformed, prejudiced aspiring spinsters. Why do we allow such people to stifle the freedom of groups like Rho Delta? Do your part — take a Red Dot home to meet your mother.

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