

More Latitude

Creation of a Housing Appeals Committee with an equal number of faculty and student members may seem at first glance to be a fair and equitable means of determining which students should be exempted from the housing regulations set up by the Board of Regents.

But placing the operation of the committee under more careful scrutiny, one finds that the Appeals Committee does leave something to be desired.

The committee is apparently a hurried outgrowth of one of the guidelines tacked on to the approval of the Ad Hoc Housing Committee's recommendations for a new housing policy.

The guideline provides that: "A committee composed of three students designated by the President of the ASUN and approved by the Student Senate, and five faculty-staff members, appointed by the Chancellors, be formed. The Committee will recommend housing policy, changes and exceptions to housing policy to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. The Committee shall regularly consult with students and staff who live and work with students in the various types of housing."

While student members Phil Bowen, John Hall and Susie Jenkins confirm that a great majority of the applications were approved, and Vice Chancellor Ross says that he has followed the committee's recommendations, this still does not present a totally accurate picture.

As was pointed out in this same column Wednesday, relatively few students were aware that prior housing commitments would be grounds for an application for exemption. This, in itself, cut

down on the number of applications.

It also seems that the student members of the Appeals Committee were not allowed a voice in setting up the guidelines or standards for exemption.

Instead the Board of Regents handed the committee a list of guidelines that would be sufficient cause for exemption from the new housing policy. Basically these four guidelines included financial difficulties, health problems, relatives living in Lincoln and prior housing commitments.

An application that cited the inability to study in the dormitory atmosphere as a reason for seeking exemption apparently did not have sufficient cause . . . it did not fit into the four guidelines.

We believe that, if students are actually intended to have some voice in the committee, the committee should be given more latitude in observing the guidelines.

Further, we believe that both the faculty and student members of the committee should have been at least offered the opportunity to propose a set of their guidelines to the Vice Chancellor's office.

If the more permanent version of the Housing Appeals Committee, the Special Housing Committee, is to have any voice in recommending housing policy, changes and exceptions to housing policy, a different approach from the one followed in setting up the exemption guidelines will have to be followed.

If a different approach is not followed, University students can be assured they will have only a de facto voice in housing recommendations.

Academic Living

The University of Nebraska has a new form of academic living, being tried experimentally on several other University campuses, so close that we are certain they don't even see it.

Offices for the Departments of Sociology and Philosophy have been moved into Seaton Hall, the north section of Seleck Quadrangle.

The University says that this is only temporary and is caused by overcrowded, noisy conditions.

After construction of the new high-rise classroom and office building between Bessey Hall and Burnett Hall, they say the offices will be moved out of their temporary quarters in Seaton Hall.

But what the University is doing because of a lack of office space, other universities are doing as a form of what we would term academic learning.

The living-learning programs are described by the Office of Institutional Research of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges:

"Learning is by no means confined to the classroom, and programs combining the academic with the domestic side of campus life are growing rapidly.

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

The University of Florida, for example, will use a grant from the U.S. Office of Education to inaugurate a new "living-learning" dormitory program built around a freshman course in comprehensive logic.

"During the year-long program, 120 student enrolled in three sections of the course will not be only classmates but also neighbors in small units within two of the University's coeducational dormitories.

"Instructors in the logic course will act as academic counselors for the students in their sections, and a residence hall counselor will participate in the program as a teacher-counselor.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

"The University of Michigan will begin an experimental program this fall, which will enable 50 future teachers from all academic fields to live and study together.

"A specially planned program of field trips, guest lectures, informal after-dinner discussions, and similar activities with faculty and visiting experts will be offered to the pilot group.

"At least one class each term, in which all the students will be enrolled, will meet in the residence hall.

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

"The University of Iowa has planned a 'community of scholars,' consisting of 120 freshmen men majoring in engineering and pre-medical fields.

"They will live in the same building and attend classes in several required basic courses together. A number of faculty members and some classroom assistants will have conference offices in the dormitory.

"Graduate students in various fields will live with the men to assist with personal and academic problems.

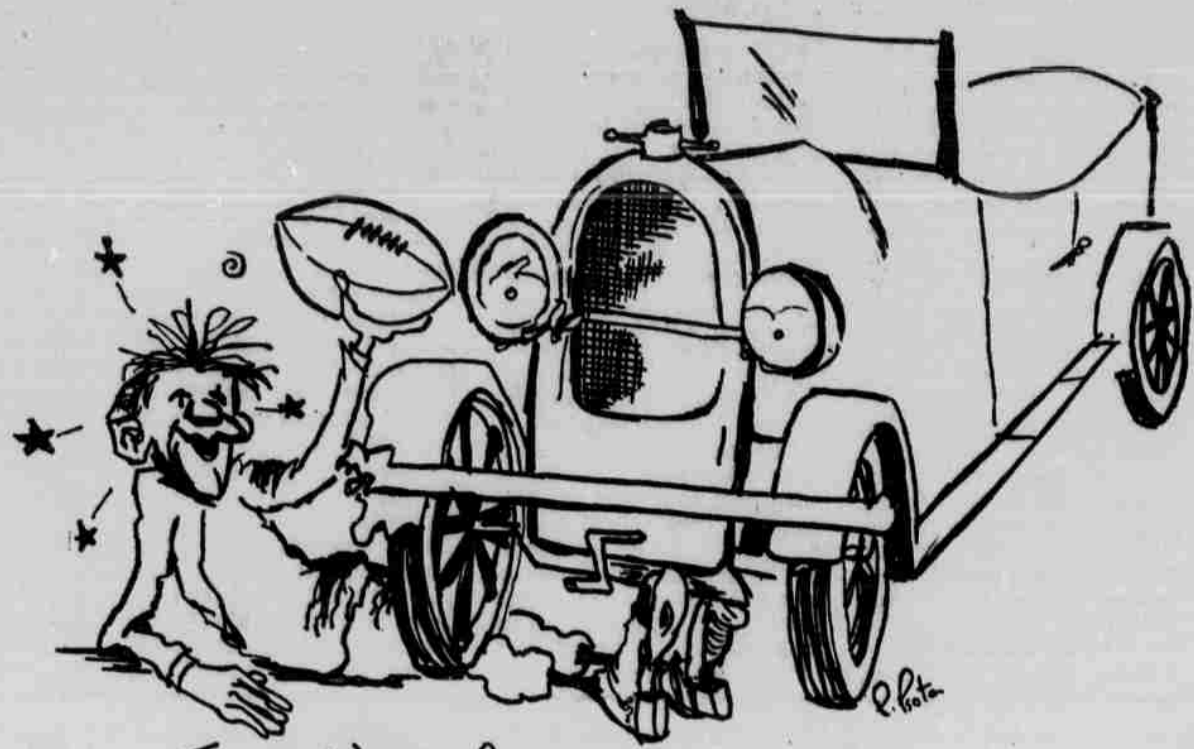
"If the program succeeds, it is expected to be enlarged to include other groups of students."

While the Nebraskan is unaware of the University attempting to institute such a program on this campus, it would certainly not harm looking into the implementation of such a program.

Perhaps a few of the sociology or philosophy offices could be situated in Seaton Hall even after this new structure is completed.

We are sure that a number of problems would have to be resolved in putting such a program into operation.

But surely when the opportunity affords itself (accidentally though it may be), the University should at least give it a try.



THE NEW CHALLENGE IN INTRAMURAL FOOTBALL.

Student Intellectual Forgotten

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Many University students have said that the University setting offers little intellectual challenge and few opportunities for real thinking. The following is an article titled "The Plight of the Undergraduate Intellectual" by Henry Winthrop, chairman of the Department of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences at the University of South Florida.)

What kind of life does the undergraduate intellectual lead in our state colleges and universities which are not of prime caliber?

In our small private colleges which have betrayed the purpose of a liberal education and in elite institutions with high standards, such as Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Berkeley, Stanford, etc., the undergraduate intellectual need not be a lonely figure. He can find a substantial number of students, like himself, intelligent, sensitive and alive to the social issues of our time, with whom he can discuss large and significant ideas. He can enjoy the benefits of an exchange of ideas in which intellectual rigor, linguistic responsibility and humility before facts are all understood and appreciated.

STATE UNIVERSITY

In the mediocre state or municipal university, particularly in the intellectual boondocks, he suffers a quite different fate.

Here he is more alone, less tolerated, little appreciated and rarely understood. Even the most able students around him are victims of what might be called "middlebrow echolalia," that is, the type of meaningless and aimless conversation which now passes for discussion among those who seek to avoid taxing themselves intellectually and for whom conversation is essentially a minuet without direction and purpose.

FACULTY AT FAULT

This is the type of conversation also enjoyed by the middlebrow faculty member. It is initiated by the better student in mediocre institutions and rewarded in one academic form or other by his academic mentors. As a result the tendency of the serious, undergraduate intellectual to pursue a more purposeful type of conversation with his classmates is frustrated at every turn.

The undergraduate intellectual is a victim of what might be called the disappearing art of being serious and this disappearing seriousness is best expressed in what may be called "middlebrow conversation." Just what is middlebrow conversation?

For the middlebrow the sharpening of the intelligence as a worthwhile activity is unwanted and deprecated. As a result middlebrows are expected to relate to each other in terms of what Riesman calls their orientatedness, which demands that we massage one another's egos, avoid treading spiritually or intellectually on each other's toes and do and say only those things which will create an atmosphere of the familiar.

Conversation is reduced to the exchange of the trite phrases and stereotypes of thought, in order to achieve warmth, security and friendship only, while carefully avoiding conversational gambits which would tax the other fellow intellectually and thereby render him uncomfortable. At the same time role-playing must be present to a maximum.

At the cocktail party or the social visit we are all expected to behave as though we have the manners of a philosopher and thinker—but not the matter. To be poised, to possess charm (if a male) or sex appeal (if a female), to smile and grin perpetually and meaninglessly, to drip verbal idiocies in syrupy accents and inflections which suggest non-existent sensibilities and resources—in short to cultivate Henzi's 57 varieties of animal magnetism—this seems to be the order of the day.

"HIGH SCHOOL THINKING" The earmark of culture and intelligence is to drop a generality, a name of a bloodless banality, and preferably all three. An idea must be discussed at the level of the high-school book review and the most complicated problems are to be solved by mentioning without understanding and without revealing information some doctrinaire credo or by discussing these problems in emotionally charged language rather than through extended and exhaustive analysis. Conversation is not only confused and ambiguous but to be acceptable it must zig-zag from point to point.

At mediocre institutions, then, the undergraduate intellectual finds himself surrounded either by good students who are middlebrow in both their values and conversational orientation or by academic lowbrows of the Juke-box, Babbitt set.

HAMBURGERS AND GIRL FRIENDS Members of this latter crowd are those students whose cultural interests are bounded by a hamburger in one hand and a girl friend in the other.

The hormones of these hamburger-consuming idiots seem to be popping all the time. They are the kind of students who think that the quintessence of social sophistication consists in soaking up Batman's profound methods of dealing with some of the major social problems of our time.

Our academic, student lowbrows make a "go-go" routine out of the educational process. They think that a university education should never really take seriously the ideals of our Western cultural heritage.

"LEARNING AND LIFE SEPARATED" They hold on to the unexpressed conviction that one should never get involved with issues and that learning and life should be kept apart. To many of these the index of a well-educated student is the accuracy and completeness of his notebooks.

Between middlebrows on the right and lowbrows on the left the undergraduate

intellectual finds that he must pilot himself between the Scylla of superficiality and the Charybdis of insensitivity. This is not much of a choice.

THE INTELLECTUAL

These students of whom I speak are more interested in ideas and their social expression than the average undergraduate. They are more socially critical of the behavior of political leaders than the average person-student or otherwise. They do not take official explanations or various events and issues at their face value.

Their range of interests—intellectual and otherwise—far exceeds that of the typical undergraduate. They are more sensitive to just relations between individuals and groups. They are less prone to suggestibility, than the average undergraduate and less likely to be impressed by valid lines or argument.

They try to make up their own minds on controversial issues and frame their own judgments on persons. They tend to express their own interests rather than to adopt those most popular and prevalent with undergraduates.

LONELY STUDENTS

These lonely students value candor, authenticity and concern rather than role-playing and the histrionic capacity to go through the motions of being interested in others.

These same undergraduate intellectuals eventually find they must turn away from those types of faculty members whom they once thought of as culture-heroes and as guides, only to find on more extended acquaintanceship that they are hollow men.

Our socially aware undergraduate intellectuals are most fed up with the young, intriguing, adolescent and spiritually empty faculty member who thinks that anyone over 35 is too addequate to be taken seriously.

These same students are also disappointed in the older, academic "fence-sitters"—those professors who play it safe by not taking a stand on anything.

ALIENATION

Most of the undergraduate middlebrows are too politically and socially alienated to help to dissipate the loneliness felt by the undergraduate intellectual.

Most of the undergraduate lowbrows consist essentially of two blocks of students. The first of these is made up of mediocrities interested only in Mickey Mouse student affairs, clubs, fraternities and sororities, sports, dances, jobs, homecoming weeks, and proms.

Members of the second bloc are interested in nothing not even their studies. They are the zombies of the new social order—the political reasons why America may fail to achieve The Great Society. To paraphrase Thoreau, they are the individuals who lead lives of quiet expiration.

In our mediocre institutions of "higher education" there are so few undergraduate intellectuals that they cannot form a small but independent bloc for mutual

exchange of ideas and commiseration.

MENSA-STYLE GROUP

They ought, however, to form an academic organization which would be the equivalent of Mensa and do on the basis of the principle of voluntary association. The membership of any such group should consist of undergraduate intellectuals from several campuses not too far from each other, who can meet quarterly or more often, if they so desire, and who can engage in correspondence and planned programs off campus, which deal with issues which matter very much to them.

In effect they would be forming a sort of Lonely Minds Club or a Lonely Spirits Club in contrast to a Lonely Hearts Club. Such an organization would guarantee them cultural independence.

What America is now ready for, it seems to me, is a new populism with intellectual content and social, functional value—a populism with roots among our educated rather than a populism of grassroots vintage.

An organization of the sort I have suggested could play a definite role in helping to create this type of populism.

Don Sutton

Pun-Dents

It has come to my attention, said the mad monster of Adman, that there is much to be done here and many to do it.

Explanatory note: Adman is a subversive organization designed to do good, good being something beneficial to the general welfare of mankind.

So the mad monster, being a do-gooder and general organizer, decided to start another institution for the benefit of man. It was set up along the lines of all good organizations, with representatives elected by the student body, which in turn elects representatives to the High Council, which in turn elects delegates to the council of the Oh Most High, which has a Supreme Governing Body called Council of the Almost High.

It was a well organized group, but the communications seemed to break down somehow. The mad monster never understood why.

The first project of the group, the mad monster decided, would be to sell tickets to the annual soccer games. For these tickets the purchaser would have to sign his name in blood and pay 200 kimos.

Also, to insure that only the purchaser would receive his ticket, a photostat of his birth certificate would have to be presented at the ticket office which was 20 miles from everyone's place of residence.

The mad monster also decided to hire people to stand in 20 block long lines, to insure that everyone would think that the games would be a Big Deal and ticket sales would thus be greater.

All this preparation would have worked had the local magazine not predicted that the team would lose all its games.

The mad monster still sold tickets, but they were not the big success he had predicted them to be, and in order for the organization not to fall into bankruptcy, they raised the dues and required all the members to live in Claustrophobia, a new prefab complex.

This was not working either, and at last report the members were considering selling cookies to finance a tour to the capitol of the Mad World-Flakington.

-R. R.

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