

editorial/opinion

Psych 170 fulfills game requirements

Prof. Donald Jensen's Psychology 170 this fall is in its seventh year at UNL, getting bigger and better all the time. College Game fans, rejoice.

We veteran players who took the class when it was still Psych 70 (yes, it was that long ago) remember it fondly. It was a great proving ground for our game skills.

The course has been reduced from four credit hours to three, and some material covered in Psych

70 now is included instead in Psych 171. Other structural changes have been made, but the spirit of the course remains essentially the same:

- To give students a working knowledge of basic psychological terms and principles;
- To reduce the so-called "peaks of anxiety" supposedly produced by midterm and final examinations; and
- To instruct a large number of students each semester.

For the unenlightened, the Psych 170 system involves computer testing over a variety of class presentations, including lectures, films and tapes.

Both tests and presentations, in alternate weeks, run almost continuously; the student arranges them around his or her schedule.

In addition, the tests may be taken a number of times; only the highest grade is counted. Students learn their test scores almost immediately, and so know their weaknesses in that week's material.

Introductory material to the class stresses the need for much studying and regular attendance. Without these, the student is told, it is impossible to pass the course.

Students with quick, short-term memories, however, soon learn otherwise. By studying sample test forms they discover it is possible to pass the course—and do it well—simply by memorizing the samples, their own dry-run tests and those of others.

This kind of memorization is not geared to real learning, but it serves well enough to fulfill what social scientists would call the "hidden agendas" of Psych 170:

- To increase the credit hour production of the Psychology Dept.;
- To provide psych graduate students the raw material from which theses and computer programs and bell curves are molded; and
- To festoon the walls of Donald Jensen's office with Outstanding Teacher of the Year awards. (Jensen, by the way, rarely if ever is seen by Psych 170 students. Those of us who work in the Nebraska Union sometimes see him lunching in the Colonial Room.)

What do students get out of Psych 170? If they have a gift for taking information into the mind, putting it on paper and then forgetting it, they receive the right to take other Psychology Dept. courses (some of which are quite good) and they move ahead one square in the College Game.

If they lack this talent, yet are willing to study and go to class, they may pass the course but they won't pass Go.

And students in both groups will learn to spell "scitzyphr—" er, that is, "schitsophren—" (Ahem.)

Students in both groups will learn that "MMPI" stands for "Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory."

Rebecca Brite

innocent bystander

Candidate seeking X-rated equal time

By Arthur Hoppe

The Ford family's "refreshing candor" about its sex life drove the Democrats into deep gloom. There was no question the voting public couldn't wait to scan the front pages each day to see what Jerry, Betty, Susan, Jack and Liberty, the golden retriever, had, or had not, been up to.

In a futile attempt to capture equal space, Sen. Scoop Jackson issued 42 position papers, Sen. Humphrey delivered an eight-hour major address on a girl he had kissed in a rumble seat at the 1923 Kenosha Pumpkin Fair, and only Sen. Kennedy maintained silence on the subject, insisting he was not an active candidate.

It was that well-known dark horse, Hector (Hec) Goodbody, the folksy, Harvard-educated rabbit farmer, who correctly assessed the political winds. He promptly divorced his wife of 35 years, Norma Jean, married Linda Lovelace and purchased 30-second spots extolling his qualifications for president which television stations refused to show before 10 p.m.

His campaign literature, mailed in plain wrappers, featured a charming family photograph of his whip-carrying daughter, Hotbreath, his manly son, Jocko, his new wife and himself having fun at one of his No-Host Cocktail Party and Virgin Sacrifice Fund Raisers.

He was easily distinguishable from the others by the fact he was wearing socks.

"I've always had this thing about socks," he said with refreshing candor. "They really turn me on."

His most brilliant speech, entitled "Berlin and Other Erogenous Zones," was delivered to an American Legion Stag Smoker in Cleveland, Ohio. In it, he came out vigorously in favor of foreign affairs, "particularly in Paris," and recounted his experiences with 23 different women (illustrated by color slides) the previous Tuesday night.

Meanwhile, the other members of the closely knit family worked hard for his election. Hotbreath, in an exclusive interview with The Ladies Home Companion, told of her dreams and ambitions, saying it was her "insatiable desire to do something for others" that had led her to become a happy hooker.

At the same time, Jocko was telling Sports Today that his father's campaign was "a real shot in the arm" for the Winnetka Closet of the Gay Liberation Front, of which he was sergeant-at-arms.

The Fords were relegated to the back pages. Goodbody appeared a shoo-in. Across the land, registrars placed signs on the voting booths reading, "No one under 21 admitted without parental guidance."

But the mood of the voting public is mercurial at best. And when the ballots were counted the surprise winner was a write-in candidate, E.G. Brown, Jr., a lifelong Trappist monk.

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RALPH by Kuttelander



Vine Street Irregulars Forgotten grad students seek increased visibility



By Michael Hilligoss

"Yossarian," I said, "did you know people have actually been asking me if you exist, if you're real?"

"Not surprising," he said, raising his glass in salutation to Casey's Tuesday night crowd.

"You know," he continued, "what's much more interesting is that the existence of the VSI itself is often questioned. It seems that the faculty and administration generally regard it as incredible that even a small group of graduate students from different departments could find anything in common."

"And the VSI is small, he added. "Do you realize that if the VSI had 100 members (which it doesn't) that would only be about three per cent of the graduate student body!"

"But the part about having members from almost every department," I pursued. "Isn't that a bit much to ask people to believe?"

"Is that really so unusual?" he asked. "Every discipline is represented in the faculty senate and graduate students have at least as many common concerns as the faculty."

"Nevertheless, Yossarian, you must admit that graduate students don't have much visibility as a group," I countered.

"Our numbers seem to be repressed somewhere in the administration's subconscious," he surmised. "In fact," he said, "there were more than 3,000 grad students registered at UNL last semester. That's one grad student for every five undergraduates."

"But if there are that many graduate students on campus," I said, "surely the special needs of a group that size would come to the attention of the administration."

"Quite the contrary, Hilligoss," he chastised, "things run much more smoothly if one pretends grad students

as a group don't exist. Consider all the changes that might be called for if anyone took real notice of our collective existence."

"Think of it," he encouraged. "There would be proposals for an off-campus graduate student lounge, apartment-style housing, unionization of teaching assistants, published evaluations of the graduate faculty, and so on."

"What kind of administrator would want to deal with proposals like that? It's much better for administrators to just forget about graduate students as a category."

"For example," he said, "even though grad students do most of the research on this campus (theses, dissertations, and seminar papers), the library doesn't even know what proportion of the total book circulation is due to grad student use of library materials."

"Or take the comptroller's office. They can't tell you how much grad students kick in to the student activities fund when they pay their fees each term."

"Yes," he lamented, "here we are doing much of the active research, a lot of teaching and most of the serious studying, but we're less visible than the incoming freshmen. We're just lumped in with the undergraduates even though the grad student has a BA degree (often an MA), is frequently married and probably is a veteran of the armed forces."

"Is there an answer to the administration's myopia?" I asked.

"For a start, stand up and be counted," Yossarian suggested. "Don't be apologetic about being a graduate student. Remind the administrator (when you have occasion to talk to one) that there is a difference between the needs of undergraduate and graduate students. Do it frequently and someone in the administration might just take notice."