

Campus Comments

Testing system weak

By SANDY RUSSO
Campus Editor

Testing has got to be changed. Any system that can perpetuate a series of memorization and "out-guessing the prof" has got to have something wrong.

Most students during "quiz weeks" walk around with eyes glazed, hands trembling, looking more like hyperactive tarantulas than students. Quiz weeks are those times in the semester when students swear profs unite with the single goal of so exhausting the students with endless quizzes that they'll all go home leaving the campus to researchers.

For some unknown reason, students tend to leave all studying to the time. At that point studying becomes little more than memorization of those things that a student guesses from his notes are important.

Unfortunately for some, memorization is a short proposition and when it comes time to take a GRE (Graduate Records Exam) the scores look like IQs.

If there were some other way to motivate students to learn it would make a lot more sense to use it. Somewhere in the depths of every student's sub-consciousness there lurks the phrase "learning can be fun."

Taking tests is anything but fun. The student is pitted against the prof, his fellow students and his own abilities of scaring himself to death.

Time pressure, pencils breaking and pens running out of ink plague every student.

The answer then lies in a way to make the student satisfied and the college satisfied because testing is the only way to determine a grade.

Hail almighty grade, a label tried and true for the ivory tower of graduate school and the dollar factory of big business.

Learning should therefore be motivated by something more than a grade. Learning should be motivated by sheer desire to know something about what a student is getting himself into for life.

Testing defeats education to a great extent because people don't learn to pass tests, they just plain memorize facts to barf-up at the appropriate time and place.

Maybe there's some truth in the adage, "Experience is the best teacher."

Perhaps instead of testing all the time, each graduating senior must spend one semester out in the "real world" proving that he indeed learned his stuff, before earning the diploma.

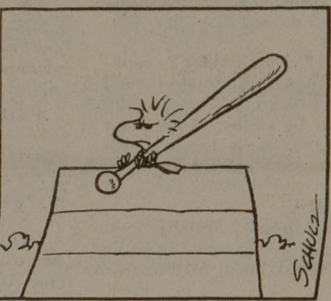
That's called on the job testing. Then the student can really prove

that he has integrated those things he has learned into a meaningful education.

If he didn't, he can come back to school, re-learn his education, and instead of being released from his first job, he'll be able to re-test until he gets it right.

Another alternative is weekly tests like in elementary school. Remember how well those spelling words got learned because they were tested every week?

If weekly testing caught on here, trying to memorize such a volume of material would be unneeded, a student would have more test grades to work with and since the students would be more motivated (more tests more motivation) a greater amount of knowledge would be retained.



'Second coming' vigil continues

Associated Press

GRANNIS, Ark. — Officials say they have exhausted all legal avenues to force 25 persons to abandon a 50-day-old vigil for the second coming of Christ and the end of the world.

Juvenile Court Judge J. B. Stevenson said Tuesday that health officials have completed an inspection of the small brick house where the vigil is headquartered and found no violations of law.

"The prosecuting attorney says there's nothing left for us to do," Stevenson said. "We're just going to sit tight and see what happens, and hope this doesn't get any more out of hand."

The vigil began in late September when one member of the group reportedly had a revelation from God

that Jesus would come to them, that the world would be destroyed, and that they would be saved if they stayed together in isolation.

Members of the vigil quit their jobs, took their children out of school and moved in together in the house on the outskirts of this town of 177.

"The dry weather is what is saving them," Stevenson said. "If we get a little rain, that overworked septic tank is going to back up on them. Then we can step in and do something."

Stevenson said the county nurse examined the inside of the house and "found everything to be up to standard."

The judge said he was particularly concerned about four children under the age of 18 who are in the

house. He said one of the children is an infant, one is 2, and the other two are ages 16-18.

"I specifically told the nurse to check each of the children, and she said they were OK — not even a cold among them," Stevenson said.

In late October, Stevenson ordered the sheriff to remove six other children from the house against the wishes of their parents.

He said the court could take custody of the children because of a state law that requires children under age 16 to attend school until they have completed the eighth grade.

Stevenson said the six children are doing well in school and have adjusted well to their foster parents.

"We don't know what else to do," Stevenson said. "I'm told that the

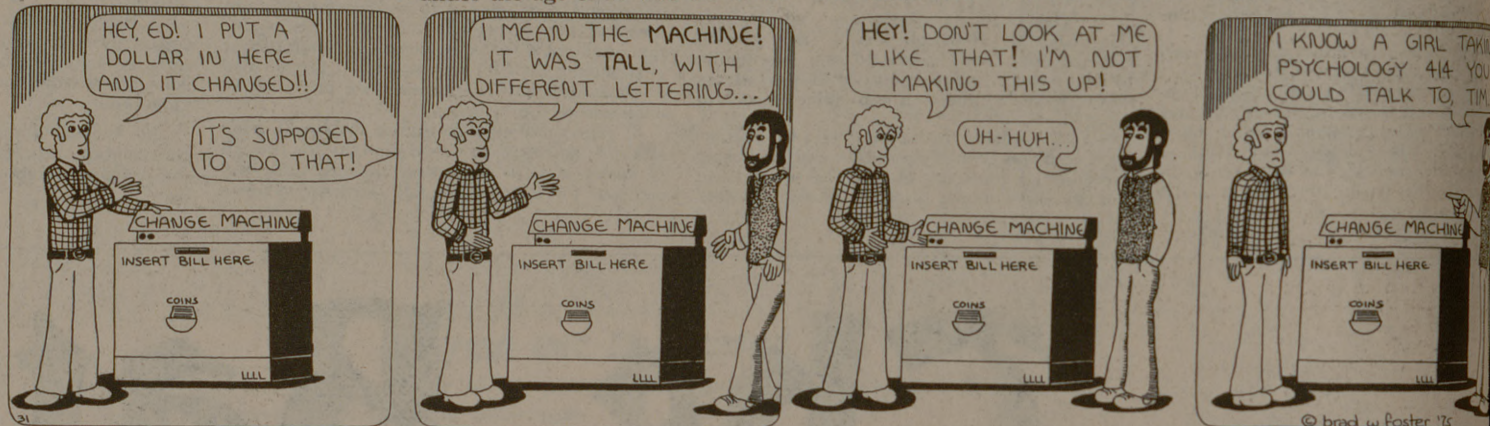
people stand together in a holding hands and praying for hours at a time. I'm all for that but that sounds like an end test to me."

Since the legal efforts to end the vigil have failed so far, Stevenson said he has tried to reason with vigil members on religious grounds.

"I passed along messages to them to read the 24th chapter of Matthew," the judge said. "Matthew 24 warns of false prophets and Jesus 'is coming at an hour you not expect.'"

Stevenson said he has received mail from as far away as Brazil because of his involvement in the vigil.

"The letters say I'm interfering with their religious freedom," Stevenson said. "All I'm trying to do is protect those kids."



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