

Cramming or osmosis? Or is it all pointless?

During the next week, students sprawled out studying — or maybe sprawled out

asleep — will be a familiar sight at Sterling C. Evans Library. The library

will be open 24 hours to accommodate late-night studying.

Many schools give honors to speakers

United Press International

Tens of thousands of college degrees are displayed across the nation on the walls of people who never earned them during a four-year course of study.

The degrees are honorary. Several thousand are being bestowed this spring.

A UPI survey of colleges indicates many schools bid for big name speakers with such degrees and honorariums. Others frown on the practice.

Recipients range from presidents and premiers to cookbook writers.

Consider Charles A. Lindbergh, who flunked out of the University of Wisconsin in 1921. Seven years later his old school gave him an honorary doctor of laws degree in recognition of his 1927 first solo trans-Atlantic flight.

Last year, Harvard honored Mother Teresa of India and playwright Tennessee Williams. The year before, Notre Dame singled out President Reagan and Premier Pierre Trudeau of Canada.

A sampling of honorary degrees from major schools the past few years turns up such names as Boston Pops conductor Arthur Fiedler, President Lyndon B. Johnson, artist Georgia O'Keefe and CBS newsman Mike Wallace.

President Reagan's first trip outside the White House after John Hinckley tried to assassinate him was to receive a degree and speak at Notre Dame. His visit prompted nostalgic references to his role as the "Gipper," the late Notre Dame football star George Gipp, in the film that Pat O'Brien (also receiving a degree that day) played legendary coach Knute Rockne.

Presidents Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford and Dwight D. Eisenhower all received degrees from Notre Dame while in office. President John F. Ken-

edy received the Laetare Medal, the university's highest honor for a Roman Catholic.

Notre Dame's president of 31 years, Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, has worked for these presidents on national boards. He knows them — and they know that "Notre Dame is a highly visible platform for Catholics in this country," said Richard Conklin, Notre Dame spokesman.

Columbia University doesn't use degrees to obtain speakers. Its commencement speaker always is the university president. But like Harvard, it wants degree recipients there for the show. It doesn't announce their names until graduation day. No show, no degree.

Degrees often go with the honorarium and travel expenses given the principal commencement speaker. Competition for speakers can be fierce. It also can be embarrassing when students don't like the choice.

Smith College invited U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick to speak and receive an honorary degree at its May 22 ceremonies this year. Students organized CROAK — Committee Responsible for Organizing Against Kirkpatrick. They planned a silent protest. Kirkpatrick withdrew.

She still will receive her degree, the trustees decided.

Colleges and universities, asked for their criteria for such degrees, speak of distinguished careers, outstanding achievement, service to humanity and connection with the school or state.

They don't like to speak of money.

Someone who has contributed money to the school may be honored, but "it is long after the event" and money is not the deciding factor, said Carleton Whitehead of Reed College in

Portland, Ore.

Reed typifies schools that prefer to honor people with a tie to the institution. Among its recipients has been cookbook writer James Beard, who attended Reed.

"I don't want to say people who received honorary degrees have not been generous to the college, but the purpose is to recognize something they have done in society," a Dartmouth spokesman said.

The late vice president Nelson Rockefeller, an alumnus, later picked up an honorary degree from Dartmouth.

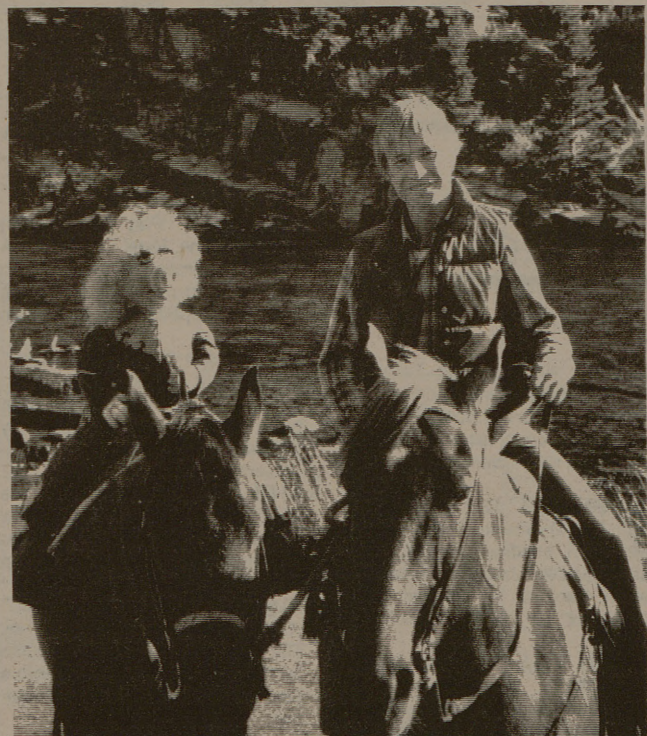
"We don't base honorary degrees on how much someone contributes. We're not playing that game," said Dr. Fred Brown, executive vice-president of Buena Vista College, Storm Lake, Iowa.

In 1980 Buena Vista did give a degree to a donor-graduate — unnamed because of a contract between the school and the person. If the degree was exceptional, so was the gift: \$18 million.

The University of Rhode Island insists on ties to the state for degree recipients, except for the commencement speaker. Then it wants someone nationally known and will pay a modest honorarium of \$500.

Neighboring Providence College won't do that. "That puts us under the gun a little bit," Ann Manchester said. She frowned at schools that she said go through a lecture service for speakers who demand a \$10,000 fee. "I think that defeats the whole purpose."

President Norman Hackerman of Rice University said his school won't give honorary degrees because "we just don't want to lower the requirements for a degree."



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