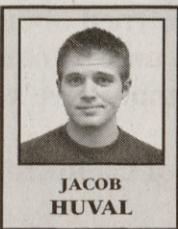


# The Final Hurra

As the semester comes to a close, professors write their treacherous ex

Former President Franklin Delano Roosevelt once said, "We have nothing to fear but fear itself." Roosevelt obviously never had a chemistry final immediately following an economics final.



JACOB HUVAL

Finals, the swollen cold sore on the mouth of college education, are rapidly approaching. Normally brazen and bold college students cower in fear of impending finals, seek shelter from its onslaughts in coffee houses and study groups, bow their heads and bore into their books in frantic efforts to appease the academic beast.

There is no shame in this. Everyone is afraid of something; students fear confounding finals, proctologists fear prunes, even Franklin Roosevelt was afraid that his thoroughbred mare, Eleanor, would become amorous.

Finals, although terrifying to participate in, are fascinating to watch. Finals signify a time in which even the least motivated student will make every effort to learn as much as possible as quickly as possible.

A phenomenon known as "cramming" occurs when a student tries to fit in as much information as he can in a short amount of time, on his arm. This is why many students prefer finals in the cooler winter months than in the summer — longer sleeves mean better education. Of course, cramming is not the only way for students to get the express lane version of a 12-item education.

Everyone knows that educational films often convey information more efficiently than books do, especially when dealing with difficult subjects. What many do not know, however, is that even commercial movies have a wealth of information to share with viewers. *Braveheart* is a film concerned with the development and application of public speaking. *Forrest Gump* is a movie valuable to agricultural communication.

Even a rumpus adventure like *Deliverance* can teach audiences a thing or two about kayaking and spelunking.

One must be cautious not to learn too much too quickly, however. Doing so often has adverse results; students get facts mixed up between subjects, misquote sources of information and generally make a mess of a simple subject.

Other than qualifying one to write a humor column, there is no gain in such mishaps. There is no greater embarrassment than to write an essay about the Franco-Fusion War and citing the cause of the battle to be that John Wilkes' booth was too dry to sustain farmers in Oklahoma because  $X = 2$  and  $Z = \text{French for "the."}$

Serving only to add a pint of frustration to the already simmering pot of confusion stew are redefined days, the tools of the Devil. At last comfortable with their schedules, students are poorly prepared for such sweeping changes.

Many are the poor souls who hurry their paper to class only to arrive in a lecture hall occupied by nothing more than a lumbering yet oddly articulate janitor and the dust on the chairs. (If in Blocker Building, substitute "dust" for "banana peels/shoe laces/dinner plates/empty bottles of tequila.")

The closer finals become, the worse confusion is around college campuses. The second week of December is a yearly small-scale simulation of the Y2K experience. Disorder and hav-



JEFF SMITH

oc drive students to rely on the most basic of instincts just to survive the initial shock; meanwhile, small, wandering tribes scour the wastes for Cliff's Notes.

But to outlive these times of chaos and utter despair, one needs more than instinct and effort. In order to assure success in finals, one must make their own effort another's; specifically, the professor's. If, while cramming with a ball-point pen, one finds that he or she cannot realistically pass the upcoming exam, simply pay the course's instructor a cordial visit while on the way to the bank to deposit a briefcase full of 50 dollar bills. If that does not work, maybe it's time the teach got to know Vinnie and Knuckles Muldoon.

And yet sometimes even these unconventional means of influence are insufficient for a satisfactory grade. When all else fails, students usually revert to the same force that got them into the University in the first place — pure chance.

Certainly the common good-luck charms such as a rabbit's foot or a four-leaf clover are well-known devices for inconsequential concerns like gambling, three-point shots, and paying the electric bill. But for matters as important as finals, they are useless; the genuine article is needed.

Why settle for only one rabbit foot or four-leaf clover when one can have the whole thing? To increase one's chances for a success-

ful and painless exam, one should bring a whole rabbit and a wheelbarrow of grass to class. And if the instructor protests too much, one can either file a complaint that the learning environment is being discouraged or simply allow the instructor to get "reacquainted with Knuckles and Vinnie."

If one is not comfortable with utilizing a mob for good results on finals, or if the weather turns sour and one simply can't rely on frosted lucky charms, there is an avenue from despair: the statue of Sul Ross, rugged frontiersman and proponent of American land expansion in the late-17th century, is the local version of a mythical magical pseudo-Santa.

At the end of every semester, students tie to the image of Sul Ross to carry on the "Calif" tradition by making money offerings of Ross' patent pigeon-poo boots. And like Sul Ross, if students have been good all semester (and being happy hour), Sul Ross will fly his wagon campus from his workshop in Memphis to stow good grades upon all the boys and girls. On Blackfoot! On Iroquois! On Aztec and On Seminole! On Tomahawk! On Pocahontas and Mohicans!

Jacob Huval is a sophomore English major.

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## Jacob Huval's Test-Taking Strategies

- If you do not know the answer to a question, jog your memory by writing a dirty word on the answer sheet.
- Make all scantron marks like silicon implants: firmly and roundly.
- Answering multiple choice questions is like fighting while drunk: the middle one is always right.
- Remember, successful test-taking is a matter of having the right perspective. So sit next to a smart kid who does not cover his paper.
- Learning the answers during the test is like studying.
- Really, what are the odds that a history professor cares about the contributions of lemmings to preindustrial society?
- The middle of an essay question is actually the professor asking you to tell him how you really feel about his class.
- Borrow an idea from Disney and hide a dirty picture in any question asking you "diagram."
- When taking an oral exam, remember that Tourette's is a severe clinical disorder, and happens to be very difficult to diagnose and disprove.

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### CONGRATULATIONS Gabriel Gonzalez

Gabriel Gonzalez is a graduating student in Agricultural Business. Gabriel has chosen a career at Archer Daniels Midland Company in commodity trading.

ADM is one of the largest grain and food processing companies in the world. It is based in Decatur, Illinois and is continually expanding throughout the United States as well as China, Mexico, Europe and South America.

Gabriel found out about ADM's career opportunities from career services and scheduled a priority interview with ADM. Gabriel completed a two-stage interview process and was offered an internship in Kansas City, Missouri as a commodities trader. Upon completion of his summer internship, Gabriel was offered a full-time position as a commodities trader. In January, he will begin a 4-6 month hands-on training program that will expose him to all aspects of ADM and commodities trading.

ADM is looking forward to having Gabriel join our team.

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