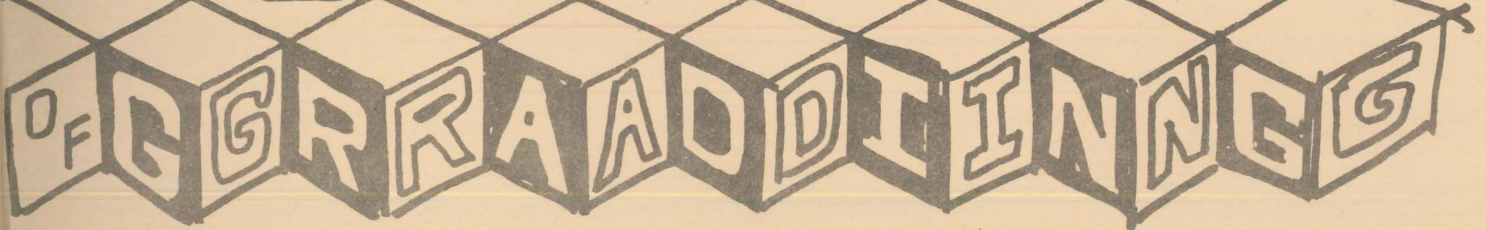
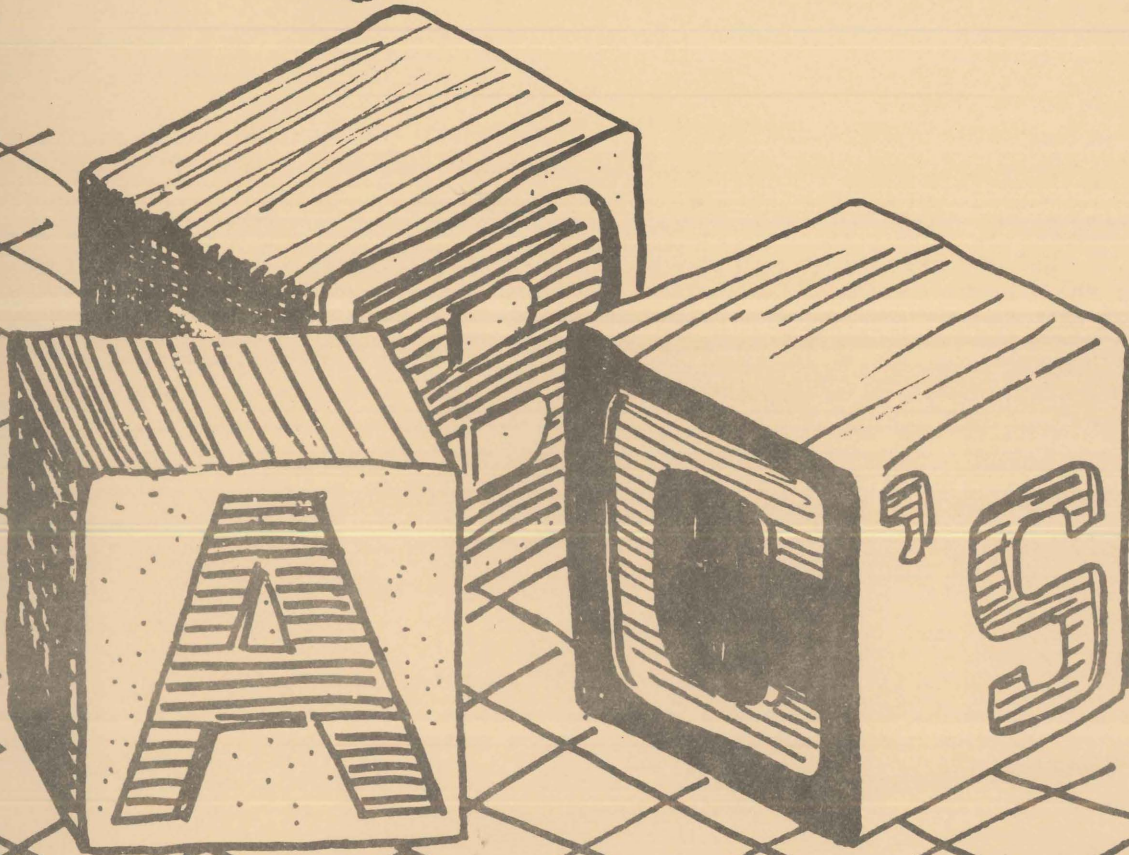
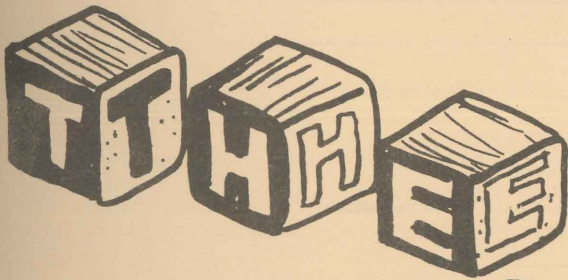


THE GADEFLY

VOL. II, ISSUE 16 THE ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE INDEPENDENT STUDENT WEEKLY FEB. 2, 1981



Laura Trent '82

PART I

This week, as she does every January and May, the Registrar receives a series of letter grades from tutors. The grades she receives not only condense a student's work into one of five letters of the alphabet, but they also raise the perennial questions of what motivates students here to work and how far this college should go to accommodate the outside world.

St John's students, of course, are "encouraged" not to see their grades, but to work instead to "develop their powers of understanding" (St John's catalogue, 1979-81). Can such a noble aim survive, even here? And are there any possible alternatives to our grading system? This report will examine these questions.

- - -

"St John's College tries to minimize the pernicious effect that the publication of grades can have on a community of learning," this year's Student Manual says. "The college indeed requires each tutor to award letter grades to his students at the end of each semester...and it authorizes him to decide what elements he will take into consideration and in what proportion.... But the college does this almost entirely because other colleges, graduate and professional schools, grantors of scholarships, and employers insist on seeing the grade records of our students and graduates...."

This is the official college policy toward grades. It has been in effect since the New Program began. The "yes-we-record-grades-but-it's-considered-bad form-to-ask" policy reached its height under the deanship of Jacob Klein. "He made the students feel quite wicked for looking at their grades," recalls Mr Winfree Smith.

The "excellence and uniqueness" of the college, Dean Sparrow wrote students in March 1979, "combine to generate serious consequences for you when you must present to the often indifferent or misunderstanding agents of other institutions an account of how you have spent your time here.... It goes without saying that to have to speak to the outside world in these quantitative terms about something as delicate and deep as your experience at St John's is distasteful to us. It is, no doubt, even more distasteful to you who have been four years or more with this Program...."

How grade point averages at other schools compare with St. John's:

College	Median GPA		
	1970	1971	1972
Georgetown	2.98	3.03	3.10
Carleton	2.67	2.68	2.81
Franklin & Marshall	2.88	3.16	3.07
Goucher	2.85	2.92	2.98
Williams	2.87	2.86	2.96
St. John's	2.8-3.0/2.8-3.0/3.1-3.2		

To paraphrase: grades are a necessary evil. ("It's a little bit like dealing with the fall of man," the Dean quipped recently.)

How well, then, does this system balance these two considerations: a serious quest for learning which suffers when overshadowed by grade motivation and an apparent necessity for grades in dealing with graduate schools?

ACCURACY

The first and most pressing question concerning the effectiveness of the St John's grading system is this: is it accurate enough to convey to prospective employers and educators what a student has accomplished here?

What graduate school admissions committees and employers see is a transcript breaking down courses into hour credits and subject areas (first semester freshman language tutorial, for instance, becomes two hours of Greek grammar plus one hour of English composition; see accompanying reproduction.) On the reverse side, all seminar readings are listed, and a table gives hour equivalents for the readings (freshmen are credited with two hours of literature, for instance, and with 3.5 hours of philosophy.)

What goes on the transcript is a letter grade: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D or F. From these, a numerical value is taken (4.3 for A+, 4.0 for A, and so forth, down to 1.0 for D), and a grade-point average is then computed based on number of hours and the grades' numerical value.

But the question remains: just what does an A or B mean here? How does a tutor decide what grade to give a student?

The Student Manual defers totally to the judgment of the tutors, saying that if "you think you have been judged unfairly by your tutor, you may speak to him about your concern. Should the result of such a conversation prove unsatisfactory, you should speak to the Dean."

What the tutors have to say is mixed. Some say a grade is for them merely a subjective judgment. Some say they have developed a loose set of criteria for grading purposes. And others stoutly defend their judgments -- based, they say, on extensive views of the student in and out of class -- as perhaps the most objective on any campus.

"Almost everyone on the St. John's faculty doesn't like giving grades," Mr. Smith commented noting that seminar work was the most difficult to evaluate. "It's regrettable that grades have to be given."

"There's no instrument for determining grades," Dean Sparrow remarked. "But I wouldn't use the word 'subjective' here. One tries to be as truthful about these judgments as possible.... They're really not subjective because I would be willing to discuss these grades with a student (and rationalize my reasons for giving them)."

"'Grade' and what it has come to mean in academia are somehow at odds with a place like St. John's, because the criteria used to establish grades in other institutions are different and I think more superficial than the ones we use here," Tutor Tom May said. Because tutors here take a wide range of things into consideration -- discussion and demonstrations in class, assignments turned in, discussions outside of class -- Mr. May thinks a St. John's grade is conceivably more objective than a grade for a student at other schools, where grades are based on such instruments as multiple-choice tests.

"That's the paradox of the situation," May said. "The more I've thought about it, I don't think the grade here is any more or less objective (than anywhere else)."

DOES ST. JOHN'S GRADE TOO HARSHLY?

In 1974, the faculty decided to take a look at overall grade point averages at other schools to see how St. John's compared (see chart). The results showed that St. John's "was not grading harder than the other institutions listed during the years 1970-1972 and may, indeed, have been grading too easily,"

according to Curtis Wilson, who requested the study.

No other studies have been undertaken since then.

"We have no basis for judgment in this case," Dean Sparrow noted. Although he declined to speculate on whether the system itself was too harsh, the Dean did say that because of the broad-based curriculum at St. John's, a student might have to study something here that he wouldn't have chosen elsewhere and as a result, might get a lower grade.

DO STUDENTS REJECT GRADE MOTIVATION?

The answer to this question is, partly. Last year, about 45% of the underclassmen asked to see their grades, according to Registrar Nancy Winter (compared with 29% of the seniors).

But the registrar adds: "That could have been a fluke. That's the only time those figures have been kept."

"I do know that there are students who do not look at their grades and we send their transcripts off to other institutions. I would like to think that the spirit of what the catalog says is an important one," she said.

Mr. May thinks that despite the community's best efforts at downplaying the grade motivation, students nevertheless see grades as a big concern. "Unless I misunderstand, most of the concern from students comes from the fact that most people who come here are highly motivated and want to do something significant when they get out," thus requiring the maintenance of an acceptable GPA for future study and work.

"Students here may have a tendency to be all the more preoccupied with grades

PERCENTAGE OF ST. JOHN'S GPA'S

(1972)

<u>GPA</u>	<u>Percentage of class holding that GPA</u>
2.0-2.3	11.4%
2.3-2.5	8.6%
2.5-2.8	11.4%
2.8-3.0	8.6%
3.0-3.3	20.0%
3.3-3.5	20.0%
3.5-3.8	8.6%
3.8-4.0	5.7%



ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
Annapolis, Maryland 21404
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

OFFICIAL
TRANSCRIPT

Name: _____ Sex _____
Soc. Sec. No. _____ Date of Birth _____
Date of Matriculation _____ Class of _____

FIGURES IN PARENTHESES ARE SEMESTER HOURS

STUDENT COPY

FRESHMAN YEAR		JUNIOR YEAR	
Sem 1, 19__	Sem 2, 19__	Sem 1, 19__	Sem 2, 19__
(4)	(4)	(2)	(4)
(4)	(4)	(2)	(4)
(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)
(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)
(1)	(1)	(5)	(5)
()	()	()	()
Total Semester Hours		Total Semester Hours	
SOPHOMORE YEAR		SENIOR YEAR	
Sem 1, 19__	Sem 2, 19__	Sem 1, 19__	Sem 2, 19__
(4)	(4)	(2)	(3)
(4)	(4)	(2)	(3)
(4)	(4)	(4)	(3)
(4)	(4)	(4)	(3)
(1)	(1)	(4)	(3)
()	()	()	()
Total Semester Hours		Total Semester Hours	

BASIS OF ADMISSION

HONORS AND AWARDS Effective with Class of 1977, honors are not awarded to any graduates in connection with the B.A. degree.

DEGREE GRANTED

GRADING SCALE

Date

A Excellent D Passing

WITHDREW

B Good F Failure
C Satisfactory Incomplete

READMITTED

Signature _____

(Registrar)

Date

OTHER COLLEGES ATTENDED

because they are discouraged to see them and because the 'objective' props the teachers use to grade at other schools aren't there."

Tutor John Sarkissian thinks changes in the world have brought about similar changes in student motivation. "There used to be a time when students actually didn't look at their grades, but it's a more anxious world we're living in now," he said.

With these items brought into consideration, what does this mean for the future? "If a substantial number of students looked at their grades, it would be of concern to me," Dean Sparrow said. "I think that if all the students looked... we'd have to make it more difficult for them to look at them."

There are other questions: How important do graduate schools think grades are? Would alternative grading systems be practical? In Part II of this series (next issue) we'll take a look at these problems, as well as highlight comments from several graduate school deans of admissions.

-- Allen Speight and Robert Christian, '84



A father's pride I used to know,
A mother's love was mine;
For swinish husks I let them go,
And bedded with the swine.
Since then I've come on evil days
And most of life is hell;
But even swine have winsome ways
When once you know them well.

Robert Service

Have you hugged your pig today?

Michael Coss '81

Lecture Review

PRAYER'S PLACE IN PHILOSOPHY

Neoplatonism is one of the great currents of murky thought within the Western philosophical tradition. It is as murky to me as it probably is to you, so that when I use such words as "The One," or "procession" I have an imperfect idea of what they mean. Those of you who don't know or don't care about Neoplatonism would be better off turning the page now; my account of the lecture lacks even entertainment value.

Plotinus, the first Neoplatonist, had no place for prayer in his philosophy, but those who came after him did. Mr. Venable explained why Proclus, the leading Neoplatonist of his own time, made prayer a part of philosophy. The treatise on prayer embedded in Proclus's huge commentary on Plato's *Timaeus* was Mr. Venable's main text.

Plotinus says that all things are related by being produced by causes that are themselves the products of higher causes. The highest cause is The One. (This is the famous theory of procession.) At the start of his treatise, Proclus asserts that The One is not only linked to all things indirectly through a chain of causes, but also directly by being itself the cause of each thing's unity. Thus, all things have two perfections. The first is a perfection in being part of the grand scheme of the world, because all things proceed from The One (in both Plotinus's and Proclus's senses). The second perfection is that all things can return to The One. Human beings return through contemplation, which reverses the process of procession.

The gods share in The One. Proclus uses metaphysical and religious language interchangeably, implying that philosophy and prayer are inseparable. He thinks that one becomes a philosopher not primarily to be able to define terms well, but to become pure in thought and in all aspects of life, including the spiritual. The prime

task of philosophy is to explain what the divine life is and to encourage men to imitate it. Philosophy is an effort of the whole soul, not just the intellect, to live the divine life.

For Proclus the existence of the gods explains why things are different from each other. The One itself can't produce a diversity of things. But the gods, who are many and various, can. In one of Plato's dialogues Socrates recounts a myth that our individual characteristics result from our souls having abided with one of the gods before they joined our bodies in this life and picked up his (or her) traits. Proclus says that we return to The One through the god whose traits we share.

The imitation of the gods is a recurrent Platonic theme; union with them is not. Proclus differs from Plato in holding that we can reach oneness with the gods and from Plotinus in asserting that the soul must be moved outside itself by another to reach oneness. The intellect always separates itself from the object of its thought in order to examine the object, so thought can't unify the soul to prepare it to receive The One. That is why Proclus says that knowledge is only the first stage of prayer. As the soul passes through the other stages-- purification, contact with the gods, immediate neighborhood with them, and finally union with them-- it becomes unified and receives The One through the gods.

Only the philosopher can pray; for only he can even attain the first stage of prayer, Proclus says, and he ought to pray, because philosophy finds its fulfillment through prayer. This idea was absorbed into the Christian tradition and continues to have great influence through such thinkers as St. Thomas Aquinas.

On The Program

This series is begun in the spirit of radical inquiry, and in hopes of practical review. I see no other purpose for radical inquiry other than as preparation for action, whether individual or social. The program has lost touch with its roots, with its history. A return to look and perhaps drink from those first springs will help us to understand better what we do.

This series will reprint the thoughts of those who cared enough for the program to found it, guide it and, ultimately, question it. The articles in this series all talk about, in one form or another, the means and ends of the program. Don't make the mistake that the ends and means are the same as when the program was first founded and that there has been no dispute about what the ends and means of the program should be. In these articles you will read several people holding the same ends but disagreeing about the means; you will see people agreeing on the means but opposed on the ends; you may often have a great deal of trouble distinguishing the differences between the various articles. BEWARE. These articles were not written for the mass media. They deal with a perennial problem: What is Liberal Education? If you know why you are here, these articles may shake you up. If you do not know why you are here, these articles may help you know why.

Radical inquiry is not easy. Accepting the results of such an inquiry is even more difficult. You may want to keep these articles to compare and contrast them with each other.

The first article in this series consist of excerpts from the first New Program catalogue written largely by Scott Buchanan, the founder and first Dean of the New Program.

Rick Campbell

FIRST ST. JOHN'S CATALOGUE

[T]he founding fathers of St. John's and of our Republic were aware that the liberties they had won with blood could be lost through folly and inertia. To prevent that folly they determined that our youth should possess a

liberal education and in the preamble of the College Charter they declared:

Whereas, Institutions for the liberal education of youth in the principles of virtue, knowledge and useful literature are of the highest benefit to society, in order to train up and perpetuate a succession of able and honest men for discharging the various offices and duties of life, both civil and religious, with usefulness and reputation, and such institutions of learning have accordingly been promoted and encouraged by the wisest and best regulated States:

Be it enacted, etc.

The founders of St. John's College and of similar colleges of liberal arts knew that, although habeas corpus can protect a free man's body from tyranny, only a liberal education can protect his mind. They even knew that, once the mind falls under the subtle tyranny of ignorance, grosser tyrannies soon flourish. They were therefore aware that "the wisest and best regulated States" strike at the roots of tyranny by establishing and maintaining liberal education.

The student who proposes to attend a liberal college, whether St. John's or some other, will do well to consider first the aims of liberal education.

We Americans, in our eagerness to open and exploit a continent, have emphasized the practical, the utilitarian, the economic. We have practised brilliantly the useful arts. But, in doing so, we have re-discovered what our ancestors knew: that back of the practical lies theory, that true utility depends on distinguishing means from ends, that economic goods are the means to life but not its sufficient end. In pursuing the useful arts, we have been led back to the liberal arts: the arts of apprehending, understanding, and knowing. It was to teach these higher, and exclusively human, arts that our ancestors founded and endowed the "college of liberal arts." For they knew that it is only by practising the liberal arts, by understanding and knowing, that the human animal becomes a free man. It is only by discipline in these arts that spiritual, moral, and civil liberties can be achieved and preserved. No wonder the founders of St. John's College considered such arts "of the highest benefit to society"--more truly "useful" than a tradeschool, useful as they knew tradeschools to be. But our ancestors knew like-

wise that, although the useful arts of making a living ultimately depend on the liberal arts of apprehending and understanding, the liberal arts are not best studied as a mere balance-wheel for the useful arts. Ultimately, the ends of liberal education are the intellectual virtues. The human animal does not desire knowledge merely in order to eat. He desires knowledge because he is human. The relation between the useful arts and the liberal arts, between "practical education" and what men have for centuries called a "liberal education," may be briefly stated if we remind ourselves that we eat to live but that we do not live to eat. To live, we must eat: we must therefore learn and practise the useful arts. To live as free men in a free society, we must also think, imagine, speculate, understand: we must therefore learn and practise the liberal arts if we would live in this human fashion, not merely as animals or slaves, Liberal education has therefore a high "utility," and colleges of liberal arts are "of the highest benefit to society."

The liberal arts are the arts of thinking, and we human animals think through symbols. The liberal arts are therefore the arts of handling symbols. Since the symbols through which we think are of two general sorts, words and numbers, it is not hard to see why for many centuries the liberal arts have been practised primarily on languages and mathematics. But the words we learned from our parents' lips, the language we think and speak in, the ideas which lie behind that language, all these represent a complex which we call tradition. If we understand that tradition, if we constantly expand and criticize it, we utilize the full heritage of civilized human animals. If we try to escape from tradition, to live without that heritage, we are doomed to live blind and uncivilized lives. If in

our confusion we then try to concoct a synthetic tradition--and this has happened in our own days in many places--we become monstrous; and for the proper authority of tradition we substitute tyranny.

All men, including college freshmen, have traditions and live by them: local traditions, family traditions, even personal day-to-day traditions; professional traditions, scientific and literary traditions, political traditions like monarchy and democracy. But all these traditions are parts of the great liberal tradition of Europe and America, which

for a period of two thousand years has kept watch over and guided all other Occidental traditions. The liberal college is concerned with transmitting this rich heritage and with continually restating it in fresh and contemporary terms. The tools which it requires, in order to do this well, are the liberal arts. The most tangible and available embodiments of the tradition itself are the classics.

The liberal arts are chiefly concerned with the nature of the symbols, written, spoken and constructed, in terms of which we rational animals find our way around in the material and cultural world in which we live. Symbols have practical aspects, as in rhetoric and industry, which must be understood and distinguished from their theoretical uses and significances in science and literature. Again there are concrete data and artificial products that must be distinguished from the abstract principles and ideas which govern them. There are many connections that these aspects have with one another, and it is the business of the liberal artist to see these apart and put them together. Success in this constitutes intellectual and moral health. Failure is stupidity, intellectual and moral decay, and slavery, to escape which the founding fathers set up institutions of liberal education. It is reassuring to know that they had more than pious hopes in their minds when they made charters for St. John's College and its sister institutions.

Despite daily assertions to the contrary, there is no educational device for assuring worldly success to the student. To cultivate the rational human powers of the individual so that armed with the intellectual and moral virtues he may hope to meet and withstand the vicissitudes of outrageous fortune--that is education.

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RHAPSODE IN THE GREAT HALL.

Mr Frank Fowle is a professional rhapsode, which means that he recites Homer before audiences and gets paid for it. Would there were more such. If rhapsodes were as common as, say, actors trained in Shakespeare or musicians who play Bach, we would soon develop high standards for the art. In order to attract audiences, of course, the rhapsodes would have to settle, as Mr Fowle has, for performance in translation; but then, the English language boasts an exceptional number of fine translations of Homer. And once audiences got used to the pleasure of hearing a single voice move through a great range of characters and situations over the course of an evening, it might not be long before other heroic tales got told as well. Who knows, poets might even compose for such events.

Certainly the pleasure Mr Fowle gave his audience last Tuesday was evident. He has a powerful voice that resonated beautifully in the acoustics of the Great Hall, and he added to that an athletic presence that fully filled the performing space and often included elements of heroic mime. There was no faltering in his forward momentum, and one had a sense of someone giving everything that was in him. Moreover, he showed an admirable concern for taking his audience with him, and instead of merely plunging into his chosen episode -- the death of Hector in Book XXII of the Iliad -- he skilfully and dramatically recapitulated the entire story leading up to in the first few minutes of his recitation. Clearly here was a man who could walk into an auditorium of high school students who had never even heard of the Iliad and have the same galvanizing effect.

Two faults, however, prevented Mr Fowle from making me feel in the presence of anything like the high art form that Homeric recitation must have been. The first is that he lacked any acting technique and never realized meaningfully distinct voices for each of the characters -- Achilles, Hector, Priam, Hecuba, Andromache, Zeus, Athena, Apollo. As a result the voice that at first seemed so powerful soon came to seem strident, and there was no clear line tracing the great curves of passion in the book. The second, and perhaps graver, fault is that he chose a prose translation (Butler's) and therefore eliminated the crucial element of verse rhythm from his performance. Such rhythm is of the essence of Homeric poetry, for the unflinching hexameters of the original are there not only to enhance the emotions of the characters but also to govern them and transform them into higher order. This is not to say that we are never properly moved by skilful performances of stories or plays in prose, but simply that the particular world of Homer is predicated on the notion that the heroic passions should never be unattended by a heroic measure, a notion to which the great English verse translations have paid handsome tribute. By stripping the story of such measure Mr Fowle left us only with the raw emotions of the characters, unredeemed by the higher calm of the poet. The effect of allowing oneself to be moved by these emotions for forty-five minutes or so was something like sea-sickness: the ocean was grand but sooner or later one needed to fix one's eyes on some kind of horizon.

We need more rhapsodes.

William Mullen

FROM THE SENIOR CLASS ESSAY POOL COMMITTEE

There are less than two weeks to place your bets in the Senior Essay Pool, and your chances of winning get better every day. The whole thing is very simple.

We have a board which lists the seniors in the left-hand column. On the top is a row of 6 categories with numbers in them. These numbers are for the length of the essay in pages. On the rest of the board are little slips of paper with numbers on them, e.g. 1-2, 1-3, etc. The first number is the total amount of dollars bet on that senior, and the second is the amount bet in that category. Whoever bets the right category on any one senior will take what has been bet on that senior overall.

For example, say you look at James Preston and see that someone has bet that he will turn in an essay between 25 & 30 pages. Now if you happen to know that James has never in his life written anything over 12 pages, you might want to put your dollar on him in the 1-19 category, and win the dollar from the bozo who put down the other bet.

How do we seniors make money off this? It's even more simple. We just take 15% from everything. Of course the aim of this project is not to make money, but to have fun. Whatever we make will go towards the Senior Prank, which will be the greatest in recorded history. So talk to your favorite senior, find out about their essay, and play in the Senior Essay Pool.

Bets will be taken from 11:45 - 1:15 in the Coffee Shop and during dinner in the Dining Hall.

The Senior Class Essay Pool Committee is a non-profit organization.

Delegate Council

DC MEETING WITH THE DEANS

Present: Sparrow, Auerbach, Miller, Warner, Ellingston, Milner, Connors

1. The problem with next year's calendar, mentioned in the minutes above, has been solved and the revised version will be forthcoming.
2. The pool table is still in the planning stages. Mr Warner protested the proposed prohibition of drinking and/or smoking in the same room as the table. Mr Milner said that if we just wanted a table to beat up and throw away we didn't really need to go through buying one. Somebody said something about naturally associating playing pool with the aforementioned vices, but this was not a very compelling argument. Then it was suggested that the pool table be put in Mellon basement, rather than Pinkney, seeing as how the latter building is endowed with mystic powers for creating a disruptive atmosphere occasionally. This sounded good. In any event, we, the Deans and the DC, need to know more about student interest in the table and on what conditions it would be acceptable.
3. Mr Ellingston asked Mr Milner to buy a crew shell--challenge the boys next door and what not--but he seemed to think that it might be too expensive. Promised to look into it.
4. Still no word on the skating deal. Mr Sparrow has offered them an exchange for priveleges of using our running track. Some deal.
5. When told about the betting pool on Senior Essays, Dean Sparrow felt it better to say that he hadn't heard anything about it. Johnny wants you guys to know about it though and lay your bucks on the table.

Polity Secretary,
The Invisible Man '83

DC Meeting for January 27, 1981

Present: Auerbach, Miller, Berry, Casasco, Ellingston, Melli, Smith, Schiavo, Warner, Connors, Dempster, Mulholland.

1. Mr Schiavo, speaking for the absent SOB (your job is to guess which one), said that the polity stereo is in need of a new needle and could we please spare the money? We assured the invisible SOB that we would if and when the bill is ever presented to us.
2. Chief Sherlock wasn't in, so there's no news on the fire house trip.
3. The Prez introduced the idea of having a lottery once a week to give a Febbie a twenty minute call home with the polity picking up the tab. This would only cost \$3.50 and it sounded good, once the bouncers made it clear that the calls could only be in the continental US. This idea was passed unanimously, so we'll have our first drawing next Tuesday.
4. Then it was junk mail time (junk speech time being over, I guess). The academic calendar for next year was examined and disapproved of, so it is being sent back to the Dean. Then Mr Ellingston, who suffered under the false premise that the secretary was "a little geek with glasses," assumed charge of a massive pile of juck mail concerning a ski week in Vermont. It's a real good deal, it seems to me, so talk to him about it. Then there was an offer from some crazy man to talk here for whatever we would give him. This pile was shoved towards the absent Polity Fool, when
5. Mr Warner announced that E Pinkney will only allow parties in their common rooms if they are open to residents of that particular dorm. Well
6. Mr Schiavo proposed a massive pot-luck dinner made by off-campus people for on-campus people to be held some time after ALL papers are in. Interested? Talk to him about it.
7. Not to be surpassed in this hour of selflessness, Mr Auerbach donated his collection of Chesterfield Coupons to the polity. Now, if everyone else does the same, maybe we could get a croque set or a box of toothpicks.

Polity Woof-Woof
Richard M'r '83



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A CHARACTER SKETCH


The character of Charles W. Smith, of 87 7 Cherry Pit Lane, Cherry Pit, New Jersey, 07870, is very interesting. Those of us who consider ourselves his friends and acquaintances have often speculated as to why it should be so. His brother Chester, who has known Charles throughout his life, attributes his personality to the tutelage of Myrna their common mother, whose patience, devotion, loving-kindness, strength in adversity, unfeigned piety, forthrightness, seriousness, and unbending insistence upon hygiene and the internalization of ethical norms not only set her children on the right path, fortifying them against the uncertainties of modern life and ensuring their success and happiness in the world, but also made herself appear, in Chester's words, "a saint" - in contrast to her husband, Jack, who drank and was unfaithful. But this explanation lacks cogency, in that Chester, coming from the same family, is not interesting at all. Another theory, propounded by Lipschitz the dentist, would locate the source of Charles's character in idiosyncracies of bodily form - in configurations of bone, thicknesses of muscle, his heart rate and metabolism, the size of his brain and other members; also in his intake of food and drink, the viscosity of his excrement, the salt content of his perspiration, in reactions to sunshine and moonshine, heat and cold, pollens, and so on. Most significant, says Dr Lipschitz, are such physiognomical factors as the slope of the forehead, the spacing of the teeth, the respective prominence of the several sense-organs, and the overall balance of the skull: for "a man's inner thought," he says, bears to his body the same relation that a river has to its banks: the latter determines the course of the former, while the former shapes the latter, concurrently." Whatever one makes of this assertion (of its wisdom we have no doubt), nevertheless, none of us has been able to detect anything the least bit interesting or unusual about Mr Smith's body: we asked his wife about it, and she said the same. And yet he has a very interesting character. It is puzzling - "an enigma, wrapped in a mystery," as our minister describes it - compelling us, at length, to acknowledge with humble submission the limited province of our understanding.

Peter Gilbert, '81
Polity Fool

Letters

DEAR GADFLY,

In the previous issue you omitted the single most important step of my argument. Leibniz's definition of "possible" is that which is itself not impossible and the contradictory of which is not impossible. Repeat: and the contradictory of which is not impossible. ("Anderson is right" is possible if "Anderson is right" is not itself impossible and if the contradictory, "Anderson is wrong," is not impossible. Thus "Anderson is possibly right" means Anderson is possibly wrong.) This is the only definition which does not beg the question. This alone secures the "out of nothing" character of the proof. By this definition, the statement "God is possible" becomes exactly what Leibniz means by it and what I call a "so what" statement. One isn't really saying anything by "maybe God exists, maybe not; i.e. he is possible." This is the force and eloquence of the proof. The necessary existence of God is derived from "nothing," from his possible necessary existence. The other understanding of "possible," as that which is simply not impossible, will include the necessary, because that which is necessary is, among other things, not impossible. But this understanding would beg the question. We want to prove, not assume the necessary existence of God.



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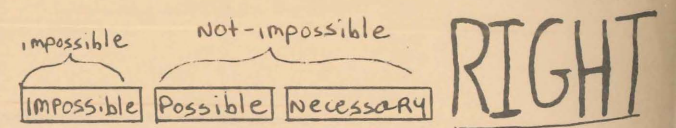
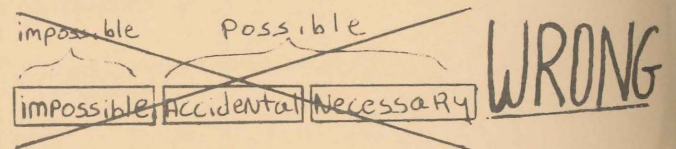
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By using this definition of "possible" one attributes possible non-existence to that whose essence involves (or, if you like, is) existence*, which is like attributing "blue" to the White House.

*Let us be clear and distinct:

"'God exists' is possible" means that the statement, "God exists," is not itself impossible and the contradictory of this, "God does not exist," is also not impossible; and this latter proposition means that it is either "possible" or "necessary" (see diagram) that God does not exist. The latter is precluded by the not-impossibility that God does exist, but since it remains that it is possible that God does not exist, and since it is his essence to exist, he is either contradictory and hence impossible, or the proof is contradictory and hence impossible.

Anderson Weekes '82

Announcements

THEATER- Upcoming Attractions

FROM THE NAVAL ACADEMY

Dear Fellow Students,

You are most cordially invited to attend this year's Naval Academy Glee Club musical "Fiddler on the Roof" by Joseph Stein, Sheldon Harnick, and Jerry Bock. This well-known Broadway hit depicts the struggle of Jewish life in the small village of Anatevka in Czarist Russia. You will not only see fine acting, but also hear some favorite songs such as "Tradition", "If I Were a Rich Man" and "Sunrise, Sunset" to name but a few.

So come on out and see "Fiddler on the Roof" in Mahan Hall, USNA. Dates are: Friday and Saturday, February 13 & 14, 20 & 21 and 27 & 28. Curtain time is 8:00 PM, and refreshments will be served during intermission. Tickets are only \$4 for adults and \$3 for students and children. To reserve tickets call 267-3464. See you there.

Jeff Bright
Midshipman USN
Publicity Mogul

FROM THE KWP

"The Bald Soprano" by Eugene Ionesco (directed by William Hill) will be presented February 21 and 22 at 7:00 pm (before the film THE DAY OF THE JACKAL) in the Francis Scott Key Auditorium.

ARMS AND THE MAN by George Bernard Shaw (directed by Nathan Rosen) will be presented April 25 at 8:15 pm and April 26 at 2:00 pm in the Francis Scott Key Auditorium.

Everyone is invited to attend. Bring your friends. Admission is \$1.50 for each.

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

FROM THE PLACEMENT OFFICE

SENIORS: Please sign up if you plan to be interviewed by Mr Sanderson of Eastman Kodak. He will be in the Placement Office on Thursday, February 5 from 9 until 3. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the front hall of McDowell. Bring your resume if you have one.

The Placement Office is missing a number of publications. We would appreciate having them back so that other students can use them.

Marianne Braun
Placement Director

GRADUATION PRIZES

Before spring vacation, the list of prizes to be awarded at graduation will be announced. This year there is a new prize, and it is important that it be announced early:

To the student who carries out the best laboratory project, a prize of \$75.

If you are interested in planning such a project, it is necessary that you find a faculty member as an advisor. Please list your project and advisor with Mrs McGuire in the Dean's Office.

Samuel S. Kutler
Chairman
Prize Committee

ASTROLOGY

The Annapolis Astrological Association will begin its Spring session of Astrology and Hand-Reading lessons on Saturday, February 7th at 10:00 am and 2:00 pm, respectively, at 315 Cedar Lane, Annapolis. For more information please call V. Young, 263-8477.

FROM THE HEALTH CENTER

The next Blood Drive will be on Thursday Feb 15 from 10 - 4 in FSK Lobby. Appointments can be made by calling ext 53 or dropping a note in campus mail giving me your preferred time and name. The actual donating time takes only 5-10 minutes, but the total time is about an hour. They check your blood pressure, weight, and ask questions about previous illnesses and after you donate they provide donuts and a beverage.

COUNSELING SERVICE: Dr Amitin and Ms Robertson are available for counseling. They may be reached at their office numbers.

Ms Robertson 263-0330
Dr. Amitin 269-0670

It's best to call about 5 minutes to the hour, otherwise the phone is answered by a machine, which you can leave a message with.

LONG WEEKEND: There are no classes after Thursday's seminar until Monday's seminar. This is a good time to do some sightseeing and to get away from your demanding environment. There will be a nurse on call but the Health Center will be closed over long weekend. Please call the switchboard to locate a nurse.

Marilyn Mylander

DEAR MR/MS 218 68 9707

Would the Junior with this social security number please come see me in the Business office (afternoons, 1-5)

Emi S. Geiger

LECTURES AND CONFERENCES

CARROLL LECTURE SERIES AT GEORGETOWN

This year's series features Nobel Prize winner, Sir John Eccles. The title of the series is THE NATURE OF BRAIN AND THE PROBLEM OF MIND.

- Feb 6: Fundamentals of Communication within the Brain: Excitation.
- Feb 13: Fundamentals of Communication within the Brain: Inhibition.
- Feb 18: The Complexity of the Central Nervous System.
- Feb 20: The Evolution of the Brain, Epochal and Personal.
- Feb 27: The Human Brain and the Mind/Body Problem.
- Mar 4: Perception, Illusion and the Problem of Knowledge.
- Mar 5: Neural Plasticity: Cognition and Memory.
- Mar 11: Animal Consciousness and Human Self-Consciousness.

Lectures begin at 8:00 pm and are followed by a short period for questions and discussion. All lectures are given in Gaston Hall.

MARKETING IN THE '80's

The American Marketing Association, Baltimore chapter, will hold its February meeting and luncheon at Loyola College (4501 North Charles street), Jenkins Hall, third floor, on Wednesday, February 18 at 12 noon. The cost is \$6 for members and guests; \$4 for students.

Fred Weber, national president of the association and manager of economic development and research, Portland General Electric Co., will give the keynote address. A roundtable discussion and luncheon will follow. Members of the Baltimore/Washington business community will participate in the roundtable discussions.

To make reservations, call Susan Thomas, Loyola College, at 323-1010, ext 228.

THE GREENWAVES

The latest exploits of the Greenwaves in volleyball have provided an opportunity for the latest in our series of Great Authors to be presented to you, our loving public. The particular author of this work has not been positively identified, but the nobility of both his subject and his style assuredly place him among the great tragedians. We ask you to please excuse the roughness of the translation.

Thank you,
Tom Sullivan, editor
Great Sports Writings of
the Western World Series

A GREENWAVE TRAGEDY

Dramatis Personae: The Greenwaves
The Hustlers
Mr Jacobsen
Mr White
A Messenger

Chorus: The Sisters of Suffering
(women supporters of the Waves)
The Hustlerettes (a hired chorus
of cheerleaders from Eastport)

SCENE I - Off court, in the gym, before the volleyball game.

Antistrophe: We come from Eastport, as all
People come from exotic lands
To sing the praises of the
Hustlers. Well known are they
Among all peoples as the finest
Of all intramural teams, loved
For their prowess and ὕβρις
Above all others by the god.
Whoever challenges them risks
The powerful retribution of he
Who watches over all.

Strophe: Kindly and pious are we, coming
To watch our heroes match strength
In glorious contest with those
Said to be strong. Circumspectly
We stand to watch those who have
Suffered so much and yet not rage
Against the god.

Mr Jacobsen: O it seems to me on the one hand
I see the Hustler B team and I
Perceive on the other hand the
Greenwave B team on the court.
Let us begin.

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Mr White It seems so thusly to me to be (a) Volleyball (game).

(The game begins.)

Antistrophe: Quickly, painfully, the men in Red make their presence felt. Already I see the god speeding Across the land, across the Sparkling waters of College Creek, fiercly restraining the Desires of the Greenwaves, Teaching blessed temperance.

(The Hustlers win; the second B game begins.)

Antistrophe: Almost I see the Waves beaten. Great is the god!

Wave B Team: Last night we heard the rhapsode Sing of one who, seeing his bitter Fate, sprang against his foe so it Would not be his hard end but the Glory he won that generations to Come would remember. Although we Do not share that man's fault, yet We hold his hope. So shall we try, and put our trust in the god.

(The Greenwaves strike back and win.)

Strophe: Perhaps the god wills our victory.

(The Greenwaves win again, taking the B team series.)

Strophe: Almost I can taste the beer that Follows victory.

(The Greenwaves take the first A team game.)

Antistrophe: Most terrible of the beasts is man, Yet the most terrible man is the Greenwave. This man stalks through The worst of calamities, through Winter's storm walks to the gym to Try his skills.

With subtle snares he tries to Capture the victory and thus harness the pride of others.

Language and thought race like the Wind, coming to his aid. He has Refuge in euphemism against the Terrible defeats he faces, only Conquered by death.

Clever beyond all dreams the craft He has, able to take hard loss and Turn it into free publicity.

(The Hustlers win the second A team game.

The third A team game begins. If the Greenwaves win this game, or any one of the two games left, they will win their first match. The third game

is locked at 14-14 when a Hustler serve skews off its path and lands near the out line. The referees must pass judgement.)

Mr Jacobsen: I cannot judge in this case. I Did not see where the ball fell. What did it seem thus to you?

Mr White: Perhaps the serve should be given (aside) To the Waves, yet I should not Offend the god if he wills not Their victory. Let the god show His hand: second thoughts are Best. (Out loud.) Play it over!

(The Greenwaves regain the serve and serve into the net.)

Strophe: I am stabbed!

(The Greenwaves repeat the above sequence.)

Strophe: I am stabbed again!

(The Hustlers win the third A team game, tying the match at three games each.)

Antistrophe: The god shows his power!

(The Hustlers win the last game and win the match.)

Strophe: O how hard is the fate of the Waves, deprived of the sweet beer Accompanying victory! We call On the god to show that he harbors no ill will to the good men On the team. Let no group enjoy Tonight the fine solace in ale Which has been denied the Greenwaves.

Antistrophe: This is the lesson all must learn From this story, especially those Of you who arrived too late to Understand the plot, so that even Those who receive no catharsis Will leave with a platitude for Your troubles. The god's ways are Unknowable, and happy is he who Can laugh even after feeling the God's punishment. Aside from this We know nothing. We must depart, And pick up our checks.

SCENE II - Later that night. A messenger speaks.

Messenger: The beer for tonight's party in East Pinkney was spoiled by some Divine spell. Let all who hear Remember that the god heeds worthy Supplicants. Please leave the Theater quietly, and pick up any Litter.

WILLY THE WIZARD & DEREK MOUSE



A MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR THROUGH YOUR SELF - CONSCIOUS

To my knowledge, this questionnaire is informally named after Marcel Proust. It's whatever you always wanted to know about yourself and others-- but were afraid to ask. Would you like to know who Marcel Proust loved the most? His mother! Can you admit that unless you can write it down when no one is looking?

What is for you the greatest misfortune? Where would you like to live? What is for you perfect earthly bliss? Which mistake would you excuse the most readily?

Your favorite heroes in novels? Your favorite figures in history? Your favorite painter? Your favorite composer? Which qualities do you esteem the most in a man? Which qualities do you esteem the most in a woman?

Your favorite virtue? Your favorite occupation? Who or what would you want to be? Your main character trait? What do you esteem the most in your friends? Your biggest flaw?

Your dream of happiness? What would be the greatest misfortune for you? What do you want to be? Your favorite colour? Your favorite flower? Your favorite author? Your favorite lyric author? Your heroes in reality? Your heroines in history? You favorite names? What digusts you the most? Which historical figures do you loathe the most? Which military achievement do you admire the most? Which reform do you admire the most? Which natural talent would you like to have? How do you want to die? Your present state of mind? Your motto?

May I remind the student body that the answering of this questionnaire is a requirement toward the acquisition of the B.A. at St. John's College.

Hans-Peter Söder '82


*Questionnaire translated from "Die Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung."

inbi

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Sports

MEN'S by Bryce Jacobsen

RACQUETBALL: Our annual tournaments start next week. This is your last chance this year to earn individual points in an individual tournament. Sign up by this Thursday, in the basement of McDowell Hall.

BADMINTON: Mr. Maddocks and Miss Coffee each pulled off the proverbial hat trick, winning all three tournaments that they entered...which means, of course, that they paired up to take the Mixed Doubles title.

Mr. Maddocks and Mr. Newlin regained the Mens Doubles title that they won two years ago. Miss Coffee and Miss Alers took the Womens Doubles. Mr. Maddocks once again defeated Mr. Newlin in Mens Singles, and Miss Coffee defeated her doubles partner, Miss Alers, in Womens Singles.

Not in 25 years has any man won the singles title three times, as Mr. Maddocks has done in the past three years. That's quite an accomplishment.

VOLLEYBALL

Jan. 28...Hustlers d. Greenwaves(15-10, 10-15, 9-15, 12-15, 15-9, 18-16, 15-8). In the sixth game, the Waves had several match points. But each time, catastrophe struck...a serve wouldn't go over the net, an easy ball was mishandled, a ball that was presumed out fell in, etc.

Clearly the Fates had it in for the Waves in this game. And They were't very kind, either, letting them get so close to a victory, before snatching it away. Some people were murmuring phrases like "death wish" and "choke city", but that wasn't fair, really. We know what caused it all.

Jan. 29...Druids d. Guardians(15-9, 15-6, 15-10, 8-15, 15-8). This was the last chance for the Guardians to turn things around for themselves in volleyball, but they were not up to the task. The Druid A-team of Braun, Dwyer, Edozien, Hoff, Neumann and Preston had too much fire power.

The Druid-Spartan game coming up this Wednesday will determine the title. Last time the Spartans won a close one.

BASKETBALL...Jan. 31

Druids-69, Greenwaves-63. Still reeling from the effects of that Fated volleyball game, once again the Waves danced through

their Strophe...Anti-Strophe...Cata-Strophe routine.

Their A's put it to the Druids in the first period, winning 21-17. And their B's hung in there, only losing by one point. So the winless Waves started the last third with a three point lead! Heaven forbid! And It did.

Coming down the home stretch, Something caused the Druids to make twelve foul shots (out of fourteen!). Thus the Waves were Doomed. Quite Heroic in defeat was Mr. Ficco, with 26 points in all.

Hustlers-47, Spartans-43. Another almost upset! The Spartans led through most of this low-scoring game, but couldn't manage one more point in the final minutes. So the Hustlers eventually tied it up, and we went into overtime.

Then Mr. Hartzell and Mr. Spector, the games high scorers, each made a field goal, but the Hustlers also made four free throws.

The Most Memorable Moment of the game came when Mr. Edelman stepped up to the foul line, gently flexing and rippling his many muscles, exuding confidence, and with remarkable fluidity and grace, pulled off TWO PERFECT SWISHES!!! The Spartan bench went bonkers.

LEAGUE STANDINGS:

<u>Basketball</u>	W	L	TP	<u>Volleyball</u>	W	L	TP
Druids	5	0	15	Druids	6	1	19
Hustlers	4	1	13	Spartans	5	1	16
Guardians	2	2	8	Guardians	3	3	12
Spartans	1	4	7	Hustlers	2	5	11
Greenwaves	0	5	5	Greenwaves	0	6	6

THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE:

Volleyball...Wed. 4:00 Spartans-Druids

(No game on Thursday...BLOOD DAY)

Basketball(No games...LONG WEEKEND)

COLLEGE POETRY REVIEW

The NATIONAL POETRY PRESS

announces

The closing date for the submission of manuscripts by College Students is

February 15th

ANY STUDENT attending either junior or senior college is eligible to submit his verse. There is no limitation as to form or theme. Shorter works are preferred because of space limitations.

Each poem must be TYPED or PRINTED on a separate sheet, and must bear the NAME and HOME ADDRESS of the student, and the COLLEGE ADDRESS as well.

MANUSCRIPTS should be sent to the OFFICE OF THE PRESS.

NATIONAL POETRY PRESS

Box 218

Agoura, Ca. 91301

THIS IS NOT A JOKE.

This is an actual report to investors from a reputable firm. Rather than go off on tirades about the capitalist system, I submit this to the judgement of the community.

The organization that wrote this report apparently has extensive dealings with gold mine operators in South Africa.

Ethics be damned!

Andy White, '82

Dear Shareholder:

January 27, 1981

The recent decline in gold bullion price and the resulting decline in gold mining shares is enough to prompt many investors to forget the original reason for investing in gold mining shares. The current decline is principally related to a "rumored conversation," which I doubt ever took place, between Paul Volcker, Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, and President Reagan to the effect that Reagan anticipated gold going to \$250 an ounce and Paul Volcker expressing pleasure with the thought of it. My purpose is to perhaps point up the fundamentals of the merits of investments in gold mining shares in our times.

1. The Monetary Control Act of 1980 guarantees hyperinflation.
2. The Russian and Polish confrontation is just waiting to happen.
3. The Arabs are meeting now in pursuit of declaring a holy war against Israel and against communism in Afghanistan.
4. Data from Swiss customs indicates heavy buying of gold by central banks and Middle Eastern countries in 1980.

The above is merely an indication of fundamentals of the merits of gold mining shares on the long term basis.

Two other rumors floating about are equally false, in our judgement. One rumor is that Iran will sell its gold to finance its war with Iraq. Historically, at least, countries don't sell gold. They use it as collateral for long term loans and most any bank in Europe would loan money to Iran with gold as a collateral. Secondly, there have been rumors that Russia has been selling gold. Russia must sell to pay for their imports. Historically, Russians have been smart capitalists and they don't sell in weak markets.

These are disquieting times for the gold share investor. I sincerely believe that it is time to be adding to our positions, confident in gold mining shares being a rewarding investment in the long term.

THE GADFLY

St. John's College
Annapolis, MD 21404

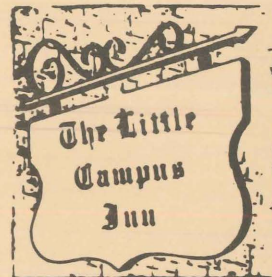
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DEADLINE: 6 pm Friday
Letter limit: 500 words

THE GADFLY STAFF

Charlotte Barham	Duke Hughes
Rick Campbell - Editor	Peggy Kemp
Jonathan Edelman	Kurt Schuler
Emi S. Geiger	Allen Speight
Hazen Hammel	Donna Wilson
Ann Haskins	Aoi Yamamura

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