

Old Chapel Notes



Registration for the Fall Term 1971-72 will be held on May 7, 1971 in McCullough Gym. Class of 1972 will register from 8am to 11am, Class of 1973 from 11am to 2pm, and Class of 1974 from 2pm to 5pm. Graduate and Special students may register anytime during the day. Students may pick up their registration material from May 3 to May 6 in the Registrar's Office in Voter Hall.

The Deacon Boardman Peace Prize, income from \$2,189.33, is awarded to a member of the junior class submitting the most creditable literary essay of at least 2000 words in favor of peace and in opposition to war as a method for settling international differences. The prize is in memory of Samuel Ward Boardman, Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature, 1956-61.

Persons wishing to compete for this prize should submit their entries to the office of the Dean of the College by May 1, 1971.

Freidin on Curriculum..

Continued from page 1

English and American Literature. (I write here from the bias that the specific content of any curriculum or individual course is educationally valuable mostly as a vehicle for helping students acquire general ideas, principles and attitudes of learning. Therefore, if two courses or majors teach the same general ideas, principles, and attitudes, they are redundant. Both are not educationally useful.)

Finally, the requirement that no student take more than fourteen courses in one department is outwardly intended to prevent students from excessively concentrating in one area. This requirement simply does not work, unless one believes that the Spanish language, for example, constitutes a separate area from the French language, or that the study of English literature differs significantly from the study of Russian or American literature. Indeed, one probable unintended characteristic of our curriculum

is its disproportionately large emphasis on language and literature—twenty-eight percent of the full-time faculty (exclusive of physical education) teaches either language

But if the curriculum at Middlebury has no clear educational purpose, it is nevertheless not ineffectual. Our curriculum does take the students somewhere, almost regardless of their will. Its destination derives principally from the facts that the curriculum is verbal, instrumental, and cognitive.

Students are expected to learn by listening to, reading, and writing words. Though words are invaluable convenient means for dealing with and acquiring an understanding of abstractions, they are not the only way, nor in some cases the most promising way. Just as students are expected to learn by words, so they are evaluated by the words they write. The curriculum thus acts as a sieve, separating the verbally skilled (who graduate) from the verbally unskilled (who do not), and as a vehicle for developing students' verbal facility.

The curriculum is instrumental in the sense that like the culture which has bred it is little concerned with ultimate values, with the purpose or meaning of life. It rarely deals directly with what Kenneth Keniston calls the "whys, whats and wherefores of human existence." Like technology, the curriculum is, however, very concerned with the means of life, if not with its meaning. In this spirit, the curriculum—at its best—tries to teach and raise questions about methodology, procedure, and technique (important values to a

technological society, which depends upon specialized competences). But this concern with how-to-do-it precludes or denigrates concern with what to do, where to go, why to do it. All of which is not surprising, for merely intellectual reflections of the concerns of the larger society which believes—probably wrongly—its own survival and progress depend on the dismissal of big questions and the development of highly skilled expertise. Indeed, it seems to me that by its concern for the instrumental, rather than final, values the academic world fortifies the status quo far more than it does by its immediate service to powerful interests. One of the greatest failures of the curriculum is its abdication of the study and clarification of questions about social and human purpose.

From the instrumental concerns of the curriculum naturally flow its cognitive biases. Questions of "How to do it?" may be answered by dreams, visions, or communication with divine spirits. In our technological society, however, most persons distrust intuition or revelation; if they are encouraged at all, it is to encourage hypotheses we may validate analytically. In our colleges, as in our society at large, the only respectable means for acquiring accurate, objective, and in our society at large, the only respectable means for acquiring knowledge, for learning how to do something are cognitive. Our curriculum is in consonance with this point of view and accordingly stresses human capacities for cognition—that is for acquiring accurate, objective, and consensually verifiable knowledge—at the expense of human capacities for feelings, impulses, drives, and idealisms. Out of this cognitive bias grow our preoccupations with measurement, comparison, empiricism, and impartiality, all of which are acquired with little countervailing support for our affective capacities. (The last two paragraphs are partly based on ideas and terms set forth in Kenneth Keniston's book *The Uncommitted*; see especially Chapters 9 and 11.)

In addition to the verbal, instrumental, and cognitive sanctions of the curriculum, it has an additional consequence which stems from the manner it is presented, rather than the substance with which it deals. The curriculum is presented. It inheres in what a variety

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Second Annual Green-Up Day

Vermont's second annual Green-Up Day is scheduled for May 1. Town Manager Dave Crawford, Green-Up county chairman, says Green-Up Day will be pretty much the same as last year, except that all cans will be separated from other trash to be recycled. Teams of at least two people will cover assigned areas, one with a green bag to pick up cans and the other with a beige bag for all other trash. Vermont Beverage Service trucks will take the cans to the Albany recycling plant. Everything else will be disposed of at sanitary landfills.

The Environmental Quality organization will be coordinating campus participation. They are again offering a keg of beer as a prize to the dorm or fraternity with the highest percentage of participation in Green-Up Day activities. Anyone interested in volunteering their efforts should sign up at the Proctor Information Desk. All volunteers will then receive further information in the mail. On Saturday, May 1, they will report to the high school to be assigned clean-up areas. For further information, contact Frank Pallone at 388-7505.

Summer Jobs To Be Scarce

Summer jobs at the college are much harder to get this year than ever before, according to Ralph Eaton, Assistant Personnel Manager. Mr. Eaton explained that he can see no addition to the ground or paint crews at this point as in past years, and added he has received no requests from department heads for help. However, Mr. Eaton said a greater number of people, including Middlebury students, are looking for campus jobs this year than ever before.

Mr. Eaton said the lack of jobs was not due to any particular austerity move since, as he explained, the college is always on something of an austerity budget. He stated many of the job applicants were simply people who were tired of the city who were coming north in search of the rural, fresh-air environment Middlebury represents.

The best chance for employment as always, said Mr. Eaton, is with the dining and food service.

TO: ALL FRESHMEN, SOPHOMORES & JUNIORS:

I would like very much to accommodate your concerns and interests in a WINTER TERM COURSE next year. If one or several of you have any ideas for a course I might be competent to teach, would you talk to me about how we might develop it for next winter.

JOHN S. FREIDIN
Director of T.E.
Instructor in History
120 Munroe Hall 388-7024

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tell students. Conversely, students have little effect upon it; they do not significantly alter what they are told. I am not here concerned with the fact that students have little influence over the content of their courses; if the students planned or requested their courses, and they continued to be taught as they presently are, the curriculum would not in this respect be appreciably different.

Because the curriculum is presented — regardless of who the presenting authorities are — it has the effect of making students most comfortable with presentations; it fosters passivity. Not only do students learn to keep quiet, take notes, and repeat what they are told, but more important they learn attitudes of acquiescence, credulity, and docility. The sanctions of our methods of presenting the curriculum are heavily weighted against students' taking the initiative for seeking knowledge, raising questions, or advocating their own positions. For many teachers this is as it should be, for they think college students cannot ask fruitful questions, cannot intelligently choose what is most worth knowing, and will not sustain their searches for understanding. These arguments fail to take account of the importance for learning of inquisitive attitudes. While the Middlebury graduate may theoretically be more capable of selecting wisely what is worth studying or of framing an effective question than is the Middlebury Freshman, the graduate so often lacks the will to do either that the advantages of his capabilities are moot.

What then is wrong with the curriculum at Middlebury is wrong with American colleges: they lack purpose. As a result, students grow up to be alumni. Though this article is not concerned with posing an alternative to our curriculum or even to suggesting directions in which it ought to move, it seems to me that Middlebury and probably all the sister colleges ought to put aside their instrumental values when they consider curricular reforms and instead ask why, whether, and wherefore. We might also put some of our zeal for cognition into gathering and analyzing evidence about our students and the effects the College has upon them. We might unleash our capacities for revelation and dreams in order to pose some goals for our activities. And we might then harness our talent

with words to write a curriculum that is purposeful, and still controversial.

The effect of the Trustees governing in an area where they have no ability has been a profoundly conservative one, both within the social structure of society, and within the College. In the larger society, one need only look at the history of the elite institutions of higher education which have traditionally reserved their diplomas for the sons of the old elite, turning out new leaders who look and act like the old leaders. In society, education has been a very conservative force.

Within the institution itself, the effect has been unhealthy as well. The conservation of Middlebury and its education style is largely considered sufficient as an institutional goal. If the endowment seems to be growing modestly and we've gathered a few top academic names, put up a few new buildings, then we've performed our educational role. Since Middlebury is not expected to turn a profit, simple fiscal and academic preservation is considered an adequate goal. What becomes lost in all of this is the actual educational purpose, education process and educational effect.

Perhaps the Trustees' greatest effect, finally is in the goal of the institution, a goal that seems to pervade the institution in its unstated way. What I am saying, something that certainly has been said before, is that a lot of people are here for the wrong reasons, most particularly the faculty. "Education" has become whatever we are doing, and because applications have been going up, and Middlebury has been climbing on the academic social-scale, no one need worry. Education is like cultivating crops. We till in a sort of academic bliss, basking in our own wisdom, cozy and content. The College's educational goals are satisfied by our mere existence.

Group to Re-name Niggerhead Mt.

A group of students, staff, and faculty of Goddard College have organized a committee to change the name of Niggerhead Mountain.

The students, black, non-white, and white, object to the name of a Mountain in Marshfield, Vermont, which they feel is blatantly racist, and should be changed.

Quality Environment: Legislative Setback

The Environmental Quality lobby suffered a major setback when the Vermont Legislature acted upon its proposed legislation. An abortion bill never got off the ground, while a ban on the use of non-returnable bottles was amended and put off. Only the snowmobile proposal passed.

Despite these discouragements, EQ has planned a full schedule of activity for the remaining weeks of school. The college's ecology group is celebrating Arbor Day (April 30) by planting trees around campus. Rows of fir trees will be planted along the walk from Pearsons to the SDU's, and two large King Crimson maples in front of the new dorms.

A field trip to inspect the experiment in billboard and sign restriction in Windham County

Room Draw Ecumenicism Marks New Millennium

After the confusion of the past few years concerning room draw, the deans have finally arrived at the solution to the room draw problem. In the past the methods have been varied and imaginative. Some of the more popular and successful systems have been:

1. Drawing in alphabetical order without regard to sex.
2. Drawing by sex without regard to alphabetical order.
3. Drawing by class (this method was discontinued years ago as being too equitable.)

Two new exciting proposals were considered for this year. The first entailed lining up the entire student body on the green in town and racing up the hill at the start of a gun to the desired room. But after considering the difficulties of conducting time trials for establishing handicaps the deans turned to the next proposal.

This second system simply involved adding the height (in inches) and the weight of each

is planned for Monday, April 26. The law was originally passed for the entire state but later challenged by the federal government. The effects of the year old policy, crucial to its statewide adoption, will be examined on a tour with county officials. Interested persons should contact John Center, box C778.

The most important upcoming event is a combined meet-



ing of area environmental organizations, which will include EQ, ZPG, Action for a Better Community, the High school's Students Concerned for the Environment, the Garden Club, the Addison Audubon Society, and the Ripton Environmental Center. The main purpose of the meeting will be to discuss proposals for a consolidated environmental organization to serve the entire Middlebury community.

Town Manager Dave Crawford will discuss Green-Up Day; and local ordinances to ban pesticides, phosphate detergents, and non-returnable bottles will be proposed. The meeting will feature a movie on the population crisis, "The Time of Man," and is set for Wednesday, April 28, at 7:30 pm in the basement of the Congregational Church.

Douglas Elected

Continued from page 1

isement of the 26,000 18-20 year olds in Vermont and the need of the YR's to bring these new voters into the Republican Party before the elections in 1972.

Recently, the YR's in Vermont has been very ineffective and almost non-existent. Part of this has been due to the lack of leadership offered by 1969-71 Chairman Bud Palmer, a dull, lack-luster man which, in his 15-minute speech last Saturday revealed that he knows little about politics and organization.

Nevertheless, Young Republicanism has not been dead over the last two years. Particularly promising for the YR's has been the work of four Midd students, Jim Douglas, Bill Wood, Bill Porter and Noel Ferris. These four made a visit to Washington last fall and also campaigned for Republican candidates in Burlington last October. This action, as well as Wood's and Douglas' candidacies, has created some interest, admittedly small, in the YR's on campus.

It is hoped by the newly elected officers that such party interest will be translated into action during the next year and a half before and during the 1972 elections. However, it seems that much of the work will have to be done by a small number of the YR's, as several of the students present at the convention seemed to have little interest in promoting the ideals of the Republican Party.

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