

Let's Take a Look

By

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(Special to The Highland Park Press)

Better Teachers and Fewer Examinations

The time has come once again for the writer to do a "think piece."

With final examinations facing thousands of high school and college students across the nation, I thought the controversial subject, "Do final exams prove anything?" would fit neatly into this space.

So, here goes.

Bob is a conscientious student. He honestly believes he can get an education at college. So, he never misses a class; always takes careful notes; studies long hours in the library; cuts his social life to a minimum; attends only big dances and the best baseball games.

Then there's Hal.

Hal cuts classes as often as he can. He thinks most professors are stupid, so he doesn't bother to bring his notebook to class when he occasionally hears a lecture. He never does any outside reading; he doesn't know who authored his textbook, and he doesn't care.

And Hal goes to all dances, baseball games, beer halls.

Now, being a good American, and believing hard work gets you ahead, who do you think receives the best marks on final exams, and, therefore, the best final grades?

WHO? . . .

Bob?

Or Hal?

Why Hal, of course!

You see, folks, atomic age professors don't grade on conscientiousness or attentiveness in class; or outside reading; or extra work.

Nope, these illogical folks grade solely on the mark made on the final.

They don't care what you get out of the course; or, for that matter, if you learned anything.

DON'T GRADE ALL PAPERS . . .

Instead, all they're interested in is that final paper, usually packed with relatively unimportant questions. And, they never see the papers, because they have professional graders.

So, Bob takes a final. He gets a B, more usually a C; but he also gets a lot out of the course because he has studied.

How about Hal?

He crammed the night before exams, probably studied Bob's notes, then went and cracked the test wide open, coming out with an A and little, if any, knowledge.

But . . . he got a good grade on the final. That's all that's important — at least to most professors in colleges across the nation.

Sad commentary on our educational system?

Yes!

But true. Tragically true in many cases where students have studied for weeks, only to be dropped from college because finals were failed.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION? . . .

What can be done to right this wrong?

First, we've got to determine what's the purpose of a college education.

I believe a college education is a broadening process; a step closer to maturity; an inspiration to learn more, to build, to create, to improve; a cultural appetizer, making a person hungry for more knowledge, urging him to realize how much there is to learn and how little he actually knows.

In my opinion, there are three ways to get an education: Hard work. A great deal of study. And perfect classroom attendance.

INCOMPETENT PROFESSORS

Now, on the other hand, courses in college must be worthy of a student's time.

Despite present propaganda over higher salaries for underpaid teachers (and, as you know, I'm for wage raises in most cases), many professors are overpaid, particularly those progressive boys who delight in debunking, who continually criticize, who invariably dig holes but plant no seeds.

They should be put in institutions and required to chew five pieces of bubble gum every hour on the hour!

(Can you think of a more severe penalty?)

We must have able teachers, trained specialists who know their subjects and who have a sincere and positive desire to put what they've learned into the receptive minds (and they are, usually) of the nation's youth.

YES TO LIFE . . .

Teachers should go into their work with a Yes-to-Life attitude and carry this positive approach to students. They should give lectures that are entertaining and educational. And this can be done. I know. Many of my professors (Dr. Lew Saret, in particular) taught that way.

(And, incidentally, there would be a greater willingness to learn, I think, if teachers took more public speaking courses, learning how to put across ideas and subjects in an attention-getting manner.)

WILLINGNESS TO LEARN . . .

Next, competent teachers (and we must demand them!) should grade students on their willingness to learn; their daily work; their questions in class, their term papers — for grasp of subject, clear and effective writing, and completeness.

Finally, I believe final exams should be abolished for all time in colleges. Everyone — students and faculty alike — would be happier if this were done.

Final exams are stupid. They're a waste of time. And they don't by any means prove what a student has learned.

ENCOURAGE BEST TO TEACH . . .

Do away with examinations and you'll have more hard working Bobs (the kind of men we need) and less lazy Hals, the wise guys who enjoy tearing down America's foundations built by conscientious men eager to make our country better.

Halt finals. Encourage top men and women to teach. Demand a positive approach to education. Urge students to attend classes — and they will if the professor is an able person, an effective speaker with a great deal of knowledge. And, finally, show students how to live a solid, creative life.

Do all this — and it can be done! — and you'll have well trained citizens graduating into a challenging world demanding rolled-up sleeves, honesty and an unshakable belief in the importance of doing a job well.

Editor's note: We learned that at a recent meeting of top Midwest industrial leaders who attend



SPEAKERS AT GRADUATION EXERCISES—As representatives of the Senior class, William Hesler, Rae Collard, and Gail Whitehead will present "a study of people" at the graduation exercises on Thursday, June 12. —Photos by Severi



SOLOIST IN SPRING CONCERT — Howard Caro, who appeared as the band soloist for the Spring concert, won a first division rating in the district, and then the state music contest. Howard is a senior. —Photo by Severi

Local Young People Graduates of Illinois U

Among local young folks receiving degrees at University of Illinois on June 8 are the following:

- Kathryn Einbecker, B.S. Management; Arline Fairbanks, Bachelor of Music; Lawrence H. Lanzl, M.S., Physics; Clara Olson, A.B., Liberal Arts and Sciences; Suzanne G. Paul, B.S., Liberal Arts and Sciences; Frank L. Peterson Jr., B.S., Electrical Engineering; Alfred J. Handberg of Highland Park and Robert B. Hoffman, Deerfield.

ed a meeting of the National Association of Manufacturers in Chicago. Whit was one of a group of young business men, introduced by Phil S. Hanna, of the Chicago Daily News, as examples of veterans coming back, starting and making a success of business. The feature was called "The Land of Opportunity," and was offered to illustrate the fact that freedom of enterprise is still active and that the American way of life is best. It must have been pretty much much of a thrill, Whitt.

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COMMUNICATION

5/24/47
Editor, Highland Park Press,
Highland Park, Ill.

We hear much about cutting personal income taxes and reducing the national debt. I would do it this way:

1. Replace the present bank-credit system with a single unit dollar money system. After which, require banks to borrow its money lending needs from the U. S. Treasury and from the bank's own depositors at the wholesale interest rate of say, 2% on security the government and depositors will accept. Banks, in turn, to lend dollar money to borrowers at retail interest rates of say, 4% on security the banks will accept. This would put banks squarely under the "profit system" to earn profits in like fashion as do all other segments of our society, and we could have a 100% sound and understandable money system.

Such a setup would enable Washington to operate largely on interest money collected from banks—and personal income taxes could be abolished.

2. Retire the national debt with a tax on the machine system. In the February 3rd issue of Life magazine we are given a strong hint that automatic industry is just around the corner. The writer saw the machine age from a distance and years ago coined this crude epigram: "The machine to make tillers of toilers."

Some politicians recently talked 62,500,000 jobs by 1950. It may happen, but the safer course is to start gearing our economy to a high machine production industry, low prices and back to the soil for millions of workers who will not be needed by an automatically operated industry of tomorrow.

W. R. HOWARD,
4401 Vinson St., Ft. Worth, Tex.


Highwood Voters Will Hold Important Mass Meeting Tuesday

A mass meeting of Highwood voters will be held on Tuesday, June 10, at 8 pm in the USO building, 428 Railway avenue. The important subject of the meeting will be the bond issue, which is to be voted upon Tuesday, June 17.

There has been some misunderstanding concerning the issue, and the object of this meeting is to explain why the bond issue will not increase your taxes.

Present to speak on this subject, and to explain the matter fully, will be the following leaders in civic affairs: Wayne A. Thomas, superintendent of Dist. 111; Atty. Jack Bairdow, Rev. James D. Gleason of St. James church; Rev. Herbert W. Linden of Zion Lutheran church and Walter Smith, deputy clerk in charge of tax extension.

It is extremely important that all Highwood voters attend this meeting and understand this matter fully.


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