

I suspect, in fact, that some of the less appealing characteristics ascribed to the stereotypical Yuppie are the result of a failure of this integration. Here is an individual curiously isolated from family, community, institutions, and his or her own past. Spontaneously generated, self-propelling, responsive primarily to the external stimuli of the marketplace or the media, this creature appears both bright and vacuous.

The roots, in part, may be found in an education that, at best, did not value extra-curricular activities highly enough to see them other than as the first in an endless series of performances separating the successful from the not so.

For, in truth, extra-curricular activities can be a bad form of education. Micro-Lombardis of high school football have perverted the learning of discipline, cooperation and effort into a tool of self-aggrandizement. Arts programs have modelled themselves on Hollywood or Broadway. And there are campus politicians, such as the new rightists at Dartmouth, who have mainly learned the worst that politics have to offer.

Of course, such problems are not addressed by "no pass, no play." But they reflect, in their own way, the fact that extra-curricular activities have been assigned to the slums of education instead of given the place they deserve as part of the basic curriculum. They are a part, an important part, of education. Students learn a lot, for good or evil, by participating in them — or by being denied participation.

If school activities were not so arbitrarily divided, if the relationship between what goes on in and out of the classroom was considered and respected, we might not find so many dichotomies. Academics might be enticed to face the issue, for example, of why schools teach the evils of totalitarianism in history classes and venerate it on the football field. Or why students in English class are made to read poets and novelists who lived and died in penury while encouraging 1980s show business values on the school stage.

Of course, "no pass, no play" is not new. I encountered it myself in college two weeks after I had been elected station manager of the campus radio station. I was informed that since I had also been selected for probation I was barred from any extra-curricular activities. Although I had to give up my administrative position, the invisible nature of radio permitted me, as with a good many of my similarly distressed colleagues, to continue full tilt on the air — under a pseudonym. I spent just as much time at the station, but I got my grades up as well. The main lesson I learned

from no "pass, no play" was how to buck the system.

It was not a bad lesson, but it certainly was not the one that the academic community had intended, just as I suspect that the lessons learned from the current crop of "no pass, no play" laws will not be the ones intended.

Among the lessons that will be learned will be how society discriminates against those who not fit its mold — either because of ethnic background, economics, physical or mental idiosyncracies, or inclination. And since extra-curricular activities are too often used as early imprimatours of success, the very student who is failing in the classroom will be forced to fail a second time — outside the classroom as well.

If one, on the other hand, views these activities as part of the core of education, then barring participation becomes as stupid and futile an act as banning students from English because they are flunking math.

Further, one begins to see the connections between these activities and the conventional academic subjects, connections that can be exploited to make both more valuable.

Perhaps the most striking characteristic of extra-curricular activities is that they provide a rare course in applied knowledge. The student in the classroom is, in one sense, dealing at the most primitive level of knowledge, because the value of what one has learned is tested primarily against only one criterion: the judgement of the teacher. Despite the enormous utility of this, it is hardly a typical example of how knowledge is used in adult life. To take a simple case: consider a problem that you as a parent perceive at a school. Now think, truthfully, how you would describe and argue your feelings about that problem with the principal, a teacher, your child, another student, your spouse, a friend who has a student at that school, a friend who has a student at another school, a friend without children. The same knowledge you possess, the same feelings, must be translated in a variety of different ways to have either meaning or effect. It is in extra-curricular activities more than in the classroom that this sophisticated use of knowledge occurs.

Also in the classroom, knowledge is organized according to a curriculum and in this sense the term *extra-curricular* is quite right. For in the out-of-class activities, knowledge is acquired or transmitted much as in adult life — in a random, unorganized fashion that provides both excitement and frustration to that life. Learning to deal with this disorderly flow is an important part of becoming an educated adult.

Further, extra-curricular activities provide training in what some psychologists have come to call social intelligence, which can include

not only understanding the information that words give us, but the enormous variety of non-verbal data available to us ranging from interpreting the mood of a group to comprehending the meaning of a turn of the lip. To train students to only understand words and printed symbols is to cheat their education.

For the parent, there is a special virtue of extra-curricular activities: they permit the parent to enter the school life of the student in a manner no academic course offers. The parent relies on report cards, an occasional term paper and teacher conferences for some feeling of the what happens in the classroom. If my experience is at all typical, further investigation into the academic environment tends to produce curt, glib or over-generalized responses. But with extra-curricular activities, the interest of the parent is actively sought, whole dinner-table discussions can actually occur, and feelings can be truly expressed. Thus the extra-curricular activity becomes a rare experience that both parent and student can share, especially at a time when words on other subjects may be so hard to come by. To a school administration this virtue may not seem a high priority; to parents, and even students, it can be priceless.

Further, I think many parents presume a broader and less rigid limit to education than some educators do — certainly more so than do many school boards and system administrators. Parents often define education in a non-curricular way — blending academic, social and cultural goals and values. It may sound vague to a professional but it is really only an amateur's holistic vision. And it is a form of fraud for professional educators to suggest that these goals can be met without the aid of extra-curricular activities.

My own experience of late has been with the activities of drama and sports. I have found in them advantages that are either absent or weak in my childrens' classroom learning or which have supplemented or strengthened what has occurred in the classroom; advantages that have led me to regard these activities not just as a source of sharing or pride, but as evidence that my sons' schools are doing what they claim. As in the classroom, not always has the the lesson been learned, or learned well, but at least it has been taught.

In sports my sons have learned to work in a group, to cooperate, and to understand and value their peers for a variety of reasons. In some cases this appreciation may come from their peers' skill, in other cases their determination, helpfulness, or supportiveness. They have learned that in real life the penalty for failure of effort may not merely be a bad

grade and annoyed parents and teachers, but the disappointment of a whole group whose respect and friendship you seek.

While learning to try harder, they have simultaneously learned how to fail. I watch my sons' teams go down to defeat and think back to Little League years when a bad loss could cast a pall on the house for a whole day. No longer. They have also learned that success may not be an individual triumph at all, but a joint mystery, as with a soccer team that won its league championship not because it was blessed with stars but because this highly individualistic group of players developed a remarkable ability to make each other do better than they normally would and to become one for a common goal. It was more than a championship; it was a priceless lesson in the power of a community to raise itself up collectively.

Sports also teach the importance of concentration; they require the absorption and use of a wealth of small data under extreme stress and time limits. They teach respect and understanding of the human body. And at a critical time of learning about one's self, they can provide a confidence that may not be so easy to come by in other arenas.

Drama, like sports, requires a concentration equal to anything in the classroom. Like sports, functioning within a group is critical. Like sports, the lessons learned are not only applicable to traditional academic courses, but to becoming an educated adult.

One of these lessons is the ability to memorize. It is remarkable that, given the repeated need to memorize in school, so little time is spent developing the skill. One of the few places in school where one can learn how to memorize is during the production of a play.

Further, good drama teachers introduce their students to the more sophisticated forms of character analysis that one would find in professional theatre schools. One of my sons was given an exercise that involved figuring out what the characters were really thinking while they were saying their written lines. This sort of study not only produces better actors and actresses but better English students. Once you have seriously acted a part in a play, whole new understandings await in your reading of other literature.

Drama also requires a level of perfection that can only come after one understands the importance of failing, over and over again, until you get it right. Even the brightest student, used to skimming material and spewing out the correct answer, can be brought to earth by this requirement. A good drama

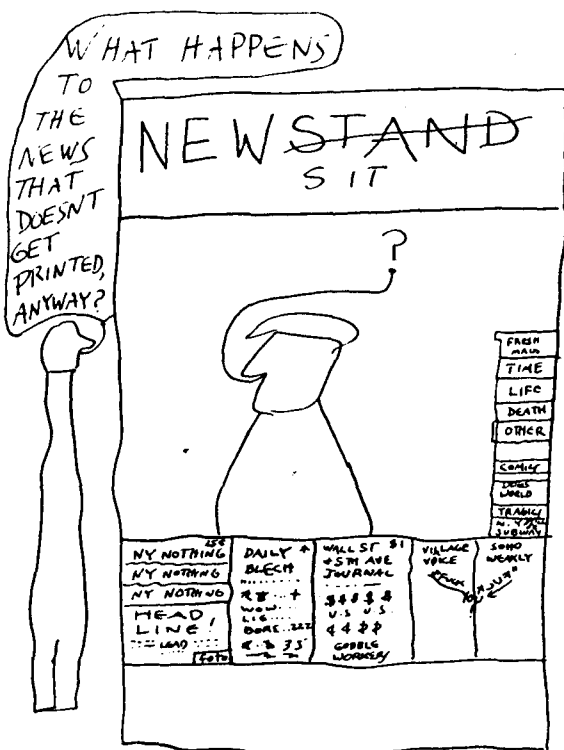
teacher will make even the best try to be better.

Finally, drama encourages the development of self-confidence at an especially timely moment. For both psychological and practical reasons, being able to "perform" may be one of the most useful things one learns in school.

Of course extra-curricular activities can be abused by both students and school. But often this is because of a tendency to use them as a form of star-shopping, a tendency that "no pass, no play" only accentuates. If one is conscious of the danger, however, it is not hard to avoid. At my high school, there was not one spring play but a whole series of them. Every senior who wanted a significant part in a play got one, indeed was urged to take one. Every year, there would be surprises, as someone not considered a "drama type" turned

in an especially good performance. I think many of us who were not "drama types" are glad today that someone pushed us into trying it at least once.

As I await another high school graduation, I think back of the teachers who were the real influences of the last twelve years. And the names that come to mind include, far out of proportion, coaches and drama and music teachers. I can't conceive of those 12 years without them, nor without them would I have considered that my son had received a decent education. That school boards around the country think otherwise, discourages and angers me. They are not raising educational standards, but lowering them by removing a part of what should be the basic curriculum of any student whatever their grade in math or English.



Some thoughts on journalism collated by Tuli in his new collection of cartoons, 'In the Media's Feces,' available, we think, for \$1 from Vanity Press, 160 6th Ave, NYC NY 10013:

A journalist is a man who has missed his calling.  
*Bismarck*

A newspaper consists of just the same number of words, whether there be any news in it or not.  
*Henry Fielding*

Assistant Editor: a mouse learning to be a rat.

Editor: a person employed on a newspaper, whose business it is to separate the wheat from the chaff, and to see to it that the chaff is printed.

*Elbert Hubbard*

In America you can say anything you want—as long as it doesn't have any effect.

*Paul Goodman*

Journalism: a profession whose business is to explain to others what it really does not understand.

*Lord Northcliffe*

Journalism consists in buying white paper at two cents a pound and selling it at ten cents a pound.

*Charles A. Dana*

News: same thing happening every day—only to different people.

Newspapers are unable, seemingly, to discriminate between a bicycle accident and the collapse of civilization.

*G.B. Shaw*

Remember this: Many a good story has been ruined by over-verification.

*James Gordon Bennett*

You cannot hope to bribe or twist  
Thank God! the British journalist.  
But seeing what the man will do  
Unbribed, there's no occasion to.

*Humbert Wolfe*

You know this and I know it, and what folly is this to be toasting an "independent press." We are the tools and vassals of rich men behind the scenes. We are the jumping-jacks; they pull the strings and we dance. Our talents, our possibilities and our lives are the property of other men. We are intellectual prostitutes.

*John Swinton*

## Campuses lean on big Star Wars bucks

Universities, enjoying a new infusion of research money for Star Wars research, now rely on the Pentagon at a level not seen since the height of the Vietnam War, a private study reports.

The Department of Defense, once again the sugar daddy of university graduate programs, increased funding for academic research to \$930 million in 1985, compared to \$495 million in 1980, an 89 percent increase, the Council on Economic Priorities reports.

The council traces much of the money to the Strategic Defense Initiative, the so-called Star Wars program.

"We're concerned about SDI research, that it's accelerating a growing dependency on the Pentagon," says Leslie Gottlieb, spokeswoman for the council.

"Half of the federal dollars for math and computer sciences now comes from the Department of Defense," she says, "as well as 82 percent of astronautical funds and 56 percent of electrical engineering's."

The Council on Economic Priorities monitors national security, the environment and corporate social behavior.

Receiving the bulk of the Pentagon's favors in 1985 were Massachusetts Institute of Technology (including its off-campus facility, Lincoln Labs) with \$59,686,000. The University of Texas-Austin received \$5,672,000; Georgia Tech Research Co. (Georgia Institute of Technology's off-campus lab), \$5,586,000; Johns Hopkins University, \$2,894,000; and Stanford Research Labs, \$2,655,000.

"Here at MIT, plans are already underway toward transferring more research people to SDI programs," says MIT physicist Vera Kistiakowsky. "And at the same time, non-military sources are decreasing."

If MIT puts all its eggs in the Pentagon basket, Kistiakowsky fears subsequent cut-backs in SDI funding would leave the school overstocked with Star Wars specialists who have no conventional programs to research.

"It will be like the early seventies, when we

had record unemployment among scientists," she says, "I'm not, nor is anyone, saying 'stop all research.' But this massive funding is too much in too-narrow areas. It's distorting the national research balance."

On the other hand, "SDI funds may be our safest bet," Georgia Tech research Bob Cassanova says. "It's my understanding that SDI will be exempt this year [from budget cuts]."

Star Wars funding is protected from the first round of the automatic federal budget-balancing cuts mandated by the Gramm-Rudman law. But programs may be vulnerable to the across-the-board cuts in 1987.

Most SDI research at Georgia Tech has been "incrementally funded," Cassanova notes, meaning the Department of Defense can increase, decrease or shift research funds according to its changing needs, thus avoiding long-term commitments to the school.

Despite such uncertainty, Dr. William Rhodes, an electrical engineer at Georgia Tech, says his department already has increased recruiting for SDI-related research. Rhodes conducts research in optical computing for SDI.

"I'm sure [federal budget] cuts could affect us," he says. "We could be overextended fairly easily."

Rhodes estimates SDI funding now accounts for five percent of Georgia Tech's electrical engineering budget. - CPS



British bobbies have launched a cleanup campaign against kids seeking thrills in laundromats. The latest fad for youngsters is to climb into a dryer and see how long they can spin. Police warn the craze is a "potential killer." They've started laundromat patrols to scrub the fad before someone is hurt.

The State Department has sent a message to the American wives of Libyans, telling them they must apply to the government for an exemption from presidential orders if they plan to stay in Libya with their families and engage in any form of commerce. Commerce, according to the State Department telex, includes "buying groceries." Because of worsening relations between the US and Libya, President Reagan ordered all US citizens and residents to leave that nation.