People Say No to Nukes

by NATE WILLIAMS

More and more, Americans are facing the conflict of corporate interest vs. the peoples' interest. Businessmen, farmers, craftsmen and the general public are beginning to feel the threatening conflict between nature and corporate economics. Our country requires vast quantities of energy, much of which is wasted, to maintain the high standards of living that we are accustomed to. Concern for future energy supplies is growing in light of dwindling fossil fuel reserves. We can choose to divide between developing our solar, wind, hydroelectric or nuclear energy technologies. It is the latter direction, the most controversial, that the federal government has chosen to pursue. People are questioning this decision and the complexity of the battle is illustrated by the continued effort to stop the construction of a nuclear power plant in Seabrook, New Hampshire.

The Public Service Company (PSC) of New Hampshire, was given the permit to begin construction of a twin reactor power plant in 1976. The permit was granted after six years of citizen "intervention." In March, 1975, the people of Seabrook voted 788-632 against construction of the plant. On August 1, the first occupation of a nuke (nuclear power plant) site took place. Eighteen people were arrested for "criminal trespassing." One hundred eighty people marched on the site again on August 22, and were also arrested. After the Seabrook town vote in March 1976, a group of citizens formed the Clamshell Alliance, with a vow to cancel the Seabrook nuke, the first step in stopping nuclear power in New England. The plant will have two 1,150 megawatt reactors. About one-third of the heat created will be used in power production. The remaining heat will be waste heat. Inflation has driven 1960 cost estimates up from $973 million to $2.6 billion. Seabrook is two miles from the Atlantic Ocean which it will be drawing its cooling water from, (and replacing its heated water to). It is 12 miles south of Portsmouth and 40 miles north of Boston. The construction site is above an old Indian burial ground and greatly threatens the ecology of nearby estuaries and coastline.

People claim there is need for the Seabrook plant. The plant was planned during a time of increasing demands for electricity. Demand, however, has been decreasing since the 1974 "energy crisis." The Clamshell coalition argues that it is more sensible to implement conservation measures than it is to construct a dangerous nuke. PSC's generating capacity will be doubled by the Seabrook plant yet the company is already selling power out of state. The consumers' rates are necessarily going to have to go up. Nuclear power plants do not provide more jobs. Out of 2,500 temporary construction jobs, 125-150 specially trained personnel, must from out of state, run the plant once it is in operation. Studies show, that more jobs are produced by conservation measures than by energy intensive, automated nuclear technology.

Safety is the first question one asks about nuclear power. A plant the size of Seabrook produces in one year, more than 1,000 times the radioactivity of the Hiroshima type atom bomb. Most of that radiation is contained yet there is always a certain amount of leakage through cooling systems, exhaust stacks or general radiation. The allowable amounts of leakage have been lowered considerably in the past years as more is known about prolonged exposure to radioactivity. The storage and transportation of power plant waste pose the biggest safety problems at present. Volatile material that is radioactive for 250,000 years cannot simply be swept under the rug.

Accidents have occurred and should be expected to. There is bound to be human or equipment failure. The fact that the Seabrook plant is near the Boston-Ottawa fault increases chances for accidents. Seabrook is surrounded by densely populated areas. Anyone with ideas on how to evacuate the coast from Seabrook to Boston should contact the Clamshell Alliance immediately.

If the EPA approves the present cooling system, thermal pollution will be a grave danger to the fishing industries of Maine and New Hampshire. Fish and lobster larvae will be lost to the large cooling intake pipe. Some species of fish will be driven from the area by warmer waters while some species will be attracted by the heated discharge. These latter species will be killed by the thousands by cold shock when the plant is shut down for repairs. Nuclear plants provide the greatest profit for the electric industry. The industry's priorities are reflected by those of the Federal government. The Federal research fund for fossil fuel energy was $306.3 million as opposed to $17.2 million for Nuclear. Conservation is an impossible goal for our industries that depend on profits through growth and expansion.

The fight led by the Clamshell Alliance demands that some very serious questions be asked concerning the priorities and values of the 20th century. Perhaps it is not reasonable to spend so much money on power plants that are proving to be less efficient and safe than planned. People
Editorial

Two days prior to the student council elections, a galley appeared which briefly stated that The New Paper endorsed Bill Hendler for president of student council. No explanation accompanied that statement and therefore it goes without saying that a justification is called for.

Hendler’s unobtrusive entry into a contest a week had been dominated by the frivolous and nihilistic candidacy of Wynn Miller (“the Bow-Wow Businessman”), and the subtly aggressive and “issues” oriented rhetoric of David Smallman, provided for the context to Hendler’s candidacy as sorely lacking in those other candidates — a modest demeanor and an unrelenting sincerity concerning student government. His experience as a student representative and as student council vice-president serves as an invaluable asset in gauging student mores and in operating an organization such as student council.

In addition he has been in close contact with many members of the administration and the president. Should he be elected, the council will continue to utilize these administrative channels to express to them the major concerns of Bennington students. Mr. Miller has had little experience within this realm while Mr. Smallman, though he boasts an impressive list of names with whom he has been in contact, has been involved in this realm only over the past two years, undeniably, through his own belligerent attitude, sealed off many of the administrative channels which were once available to him and he would not have been able to affect the changes which were sorely lacking in his candidacy. It was therefore the opinion of myself and the majority of the staff members that Mr. Hendler had been the most viable candidate of the three and because of his ability to relate to both students and administration that he would have the best chance of administrating student government policy.

However, Mr. Hendler’s victory is the least of my concerns here — far from it. One must regard this election from many angles in order to comprehend fully its significance. Indeed, the election itself, the mere ritual casting of ballots, was just the beginning. More important is the sudden appearance of what seems to be a political consciousness on the part of the general student body. The students exhibited what might be considered an encouraging sign of life, as they awoke from their somnolent state to deliver their verdict. It is to their credit that they did not shrink in fear and revulsion from the recent profusion of galleys which plagued this particular political contest. In other years that certainly would have been the case, with most students mumbling under their breaths about the “disrefund” of politics and disdainfully turning their heads away, refusing all association with such a “distasteful” business. But this time the remaining majority of students chose to vote.

Could it be that the student body is not as fearful of politics as the Smallman camp would have one believe in their recent post-election galleys? Or is it that for the first time we are developing a cooperative consciousness, an ability to affect change through the power of collective opinion rather than the power of the individual? That is to say that the students now realize that they must be able to pinpoint the issues which are most important to them and be able to articulate them clearly to the student representatives and to the administration. The format of organization, be it political, social, or academic, would visibly alter the complexion of our social predicament as a whole. With the realization that cooperative efforts are the catalysts of change there arises an awareness of the individual as a political entity.

It is with this in mind that one may understand why Mr. Smallman failed to ascend to the presidency. This failure lies not in the fact that he failed to convince the student body of the existence of certain important issues but that he lacked the ability to make these issues personally significant means for change. His insistence on maintaining his individual efforts as personal battles without directly involving other members of the community contributed to the development of an image which reflected a myopic outlook rather than a true concern for social issues and social organization. His use of language in the two galleys which he distributed further contributed to this image. Phrases such as “I took on Alice Miller,” “I fought to get this place...,” “My job will be to transform Bennington College, to make student realities...” does not reveal social awareness — only the delusion that he sees himself as the savior of Bennington College. For Corky Merkle and John Sheldon to accuse Mr. Smallman of having a “political axe to grind” is hypocritical and inaccurate. Indeed, all of our campus politicians have a political axe to grind! if they consider themselves to be good politicians. It is when an individual discounts personal anger in the cloak of political intrigue then it would be accurate to say that he has a “personal axe to grind.”

I would like to emphasize that it is unfair to hold Mr. Smallman accountable for the actions of any person on this campus to exhibit such qualities. Indeed, anyone who comes to Bennington College is personally guilty of putting individual goals and priorities before social considerations. That is why I fought to get this place and why I now recognize ourselves as social beings who can affect change through the ballot box. Student council elections, galleys, and New Paper editorials will be little more than glorified personal evaluation.

Battle of The Galley

by AMY SPOUND

The Following is a Reply by David B. Smallman

If I am decidedly less aggressive in this rebuttal to the new newspapers editorial than was in my galley, it is only because arguing with the result of a lost election is like trying to wrestle with a corpse; you can always win the argument — but so what?

Still, I find it very difficult to accept Ms. Spound’s editorial seriously. To a disbelieving degree, her over-ambitious social analysis reminds me very much of a freshman literature paper, e.g. Byron was indulgent and Coleridge was a junkie but what? It further thinks that you all munch on pop corn at Murphy’s, think we get very little. There are no galleys which plagued this particular election. I further think that President Murphy’s Operating needs — $1,700,000

Endowment for scholarships — $1,000,000

Endowment for faculty salaries — $2.4 million

Unrestricted endowment — $600,000

These figures show the financial breakdown of the fund raising drive, but they indicate something far more subtle. Murphy knows that $500,000 isn’t enough for the debt redemption on the Arts Center. After all, he must know the old fund raising drive, the “Biscuit Ticket”), and the subtly

The arts center — $1,000,000

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by DOUGLAS BERGGREN

1. A situation one learns from is education.
1.01 Sex can be educational.
1.02 Poverty can be educational.
1.03 An impoverished sex life can also be educational.
1.04 Every college education can be educational.
1.1 Even learning a new language can be educational.
1.11 The style of a college education may be either conventional or unusual.
1.12 Imagination and imitation are possible in either style.
1.13 Conventional, tough-minded education may be innovative, and unconventional education not.
1.14 The distinction between innovation and imitation is irrelevant to the question of either aesthetic or educational worth.
1.2 In order to determine educational excellence, some normative definition of learning must be introduced.
1.21 This normative definition must not be arbitrary, but theoretically justifiable in terms of its ultimate consequences.
1.22 To learn anything is to go from anywhere to somewhere.
1.23 To go from somewhere to anywhere is educational.
1.24 Unconventional, soft-minded education is often not educational, since it tends to go nowhere, or to get nowhere.
2. Conventional, tough-minded education must go to somewhere, anywhere, especially to soft-minded people.
2.1 But tough-minded education is far more likely to get somewhere, and so improve one's love life.
2.2 Admittedly, even tough-minded education must start anywhere, if it wants to get somewhere. Romance is not educationally desirable.
2.21 If romance is not to be abortive, however, it must give birth to more definite understanding.
2.22 Having got somewhere, this should in turn lead to somewhere else. Fathers should also be citizens.
2.3 In this educational process should move towards a somewhere that is not anywhere or nowhere, but everywhere.
3. If a college education is to go from anywhere to somewhere, data and the ability to reason must be acquired.
3.0 Data provides the content, while reason provides the form of education.
3.1 Form and content challenge one another, but are fundamentally in-separable.
3.11 Contemporary students tend to lack both form and content.
3.12 Contemporary students tend, therefore, to miss the challenge of education.
3.2 In missing the challenge, obviously contemporary students often fail to see the challenge being in college.
3.21 The point of being in college is not to get a job.
3.22 The point of being in college is not to put off getting a job.
3.23 The point of being in college is not to put up with the behavior of any man.
3.24 The point of being in college is not to be a social drop out.
3.25 The point of being in college is to be educated.
3.26 To acquire facts and an ability to reason, all academic demands must be inherent in the college situation.
3.27 A perfect intellectual, an academic ought to be, is bound to democratize everyone.
3.28 Given, it is better to act for the sake of duty than to act simply in accordance with one's desires.
3.29 But it is also better to act in accordance with duty than in conflict with it.
3.32 Idealism without realism is self-destructive sentimentalism.
3.4 The demands inherent in the college situation are to be satisfied, an external must which is more than an irrelevant external must.
3.41 An infrequent external must is not sufficient.
3.42 Any college which only provides its professors with frequent musts, and not its students, is bound to democratize everyone.
3.43 Granted, it is better to act for the sake of duty than to act simply in accordance with one's desires.
3.44 But it is also better to act in accordance with duty than in conflict with it.
3.45 Idealism without realism is self-destructive sentimentalism.
3.5 The demands inherent in the college situation should be satisfied, these aspiring intellectuals who most intimately know what the educational challenge of form and content is all about.
3.50 This means that the process of education should be directed by professionals rather than amateurs.
3.51 This does not mean that human values should be neglected.
3.52 Quite the contrary, human values are too crucial to be left to untutored prejudice, or to amateurish dilettantes.
3.53 The point of being in college is not to put up with the behavior of any man.
3.54 The point of being in college is not to be a social drop out.
3.55 The point of being in college is to be educated.
3.56 To acquire facts and an ability to reason, all academic demands must be inherent in the college situation.
4. To acquire facts and an ability to reason, all academic demands must be inherent in the college situation.
4.01 For a perfect intellectual, an academic ought is bound to democratize everyone.
4.02 For an aspiring intellectual, an academic ought is not an external must.
4.03 For an anti-intellectual, an academic ought is not even an ought, but a problematic imperative for someone else.
4.04 For a perfect intellectual, an academic ought is a perfect intellectual.
4.1 No actual student or professor is a perfect intellectual.
4.2 The demands inherent in the college situation are to be satisfied, an external must which is more than an irrelevant external must.
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Bennington Opportunity Council: Community Involvement

by ELIZABETH GALE SHACKNOVE

The Bennington Opportunity Council is next door to The Oasis, up the stairs. It is unlike most other programs, the Bennington College Community would wonder in to browse; it does not sell anything and it is a deal that either of us would be in need of the services the agency offers. But, Director Shirley Hoisington McTtermann told me that occasionally, Bennington College students will come into BOC to purchase their food stamps.

BOC aids low income families and individuals who are in need. The state welfare agency is able to pay up to only 73 per cent of the determined subsistence standard of living in Vermont. By the end of the month, many times the cash has run out and there is no other place to which these people can turn. BOC steps in as a referral service for the disabled, the elderly, the unemployed, and connects these people with the appropriate agencies which help them. Where other programs are inadequate, BOC offers alternatives. For example, one BOC program, Part Time Job Clearinghouse, provides temporary employment. Another program, Community Resources, is available to utilize barren lots, to grow their own gardens, and to preserve what they have grown. Emergency loans for food and fuel are another of the services offered.

BOC runs approximately nine programs that try to meet the immediate needs of people and also they operate instructive programs providing long term benefits for Bennington County residents. Budget and Credit Counseling is an instructive program that assists individuals in learning how to prepare a budget within their income. In Bennington County, 30 per cent of the population is on welfare, and the area has the highest concentration of poverty programs in the town of Bennington 35 per cent are eligible. They therefore, are a real need for the services that BOC offers.

BOC has been in existence for eleven years as an offshoot of the Johnson Administration's "war on poverty" program. It was at that time a group of concerned citizens in Bennington and Rutland County gathered together, formed BOC, and elected a Board of Directors. An appeal for a grant was drawn up and the grant was received from the Community Services Administration in the federal government. Economic Opportunity in Bennington County was taken by the Bennington Opportunity Council, split into two groups, one in Rutland and one in Bennington. To better serve the needs of each particular community, they are still officially connected to each other for funding purposes, but their focuses differ.

BOC receives the same federal monies it originally received eleven years ago, but the direction of the funds have led the agency to seek aid from other sources. This year is the first time that certain areas of Bennington County have voted that funds from town appropriations and revenue shariings be spent on BOC programs. In the past, selectmen have not been willing to have the issue placed on ballots. Ms. McTernan believes that many people in Bennington County possess a
Admissions Hanging by the Grapevine

By ANNE SOORIKIAN

Anyone who considers Bennington or who is a member of the community inevitably comes in contact with the admissions office. Lately, the admissions department has been reorganizing the office and coordinating with the financial aid office. John Nissen has recently been hired to lead in this task. Previously, Mr. Nissen was a freelance financial aid consultant at Lawrence College. His job here will be to coordinate operations in the Admissions and Financial Aid offices. The goal in consolidating the two offices is to increase efficiency—efficiency that has been criticized a great deal.

Presently, the enrollment at Bennington for the spring term is 545 as opposed to the usual 580. There are 30 fewer people on campus this term; 17 transfer students, Bennington could be brought into the application pool. Mr. Fels attributes the decline in enrollment to the unusually large senior class that graduated last December. By the end of the spring term admissions will have to fill approximately 220 spaces rather than the normal 150. This unexpected drop in admissions stems from the lack of adequate long range planning. Of the total number of people who apply to Bennington, 50 percent are accepted.

By PETER POCHNA

In December, I attended the last faculty meeting of 1976. Chief among the interests being considered at the time was the possibility of reducing faculty salary levels which, in spite of modest dollar gains, are 40 percent below the purchasing power of a faculty member enjoyed five years ago. It is not surprising that a move towards restoring this power is under way and is receiving near unanimous support from the faculty.

What interested me was a minority voice. Pat Adams noted that the news from the admissions office had been uniformly bad and that a substantial increase in faculty pay might cause further shrinking in Bennington's application pool in that a tuition increase, stemming from faculty salary increase, might scare off even more potential applicants. After a moment or two, I endorsed Ms. Adams' sentiment by proposing that while the faculty restores its former income they should support a tuition freeze which would be in effect for five years (the estimated time required for faculty raises to become effective). There had been a secret ballot to elect the most naive person in the room, Ms. Adams and I would have split the vote rather evenly. Nonetheless, I feel it is a proposal that should be taken seriously.

The Pearson Alternative

Ina chat with Mr. Pearson some time ago, he noted that the college fuel bill for a typical year in the early 70s was $175,000. The income from one term's fees would be $1.5 million. That it would be very difficult to find 300 more students. However, one can point to Dartmouth College which received a grant of $300,000 just to try the idea out. In addition, the Pearson plan could wipe out a greater part of the running deficit of the college with a year round enrollment averaging only 80 percent of the current enrollment. Another objection comes from the fact that many teachers remain here because of NRT. But the Pearson Plan only lengthens the NRT period. (Recently a prominent Bennington administrator said of NRT, "I'm surprised the school has not been sued for false advertising.") The primary reason for writing this article is not so much to outline the contents of the Pearson Plan, but to reiterate the fact that it has never even been discussed. Perhaps the "get-down-to-business" attitude demonstrated in the recent student elections will alter that.

Continued on Page 5
Council
Continued from Page 3

"bootstrap" mentality and that previous to the Past town vote on the BOC issue, selectmen and a large proportion of the community felt that funds should be spent in other areas other than programs sponsored by BOC. Other funds are received from the New England Regional Commission and the State of Vermont. Donations of food and clothing are received from local churches and individuals from the community.

People discover BOC when they come to purchase food stamps or they hear in other areas other than programs sponsored by BOC and that they are treated Is is possible that these marauders may and I'm lonelyhearted, indeed. Two to

Dear Ms. Lonelyhearts,

I'm a vegetarian from Far Rockaways, N.Y. I recently transferred to Bennington, lured by the promise of an accommodating pastoral setting in which to pursue self-realization. And suddenly I'm bombarded by a raft of papers, spewing forth spiritually and morally offensive propaganda of the worst kind. I myself fact that this band has been infiltrated by state your business and sign off. Purchase food stamps or they hear

in other areas other than programs

WBTN, the local radio station. BOC wants the community to know that it exists and folk know the days of Off

Donations of food and clothing are lured by the promise of an accommodating keep the spirit of "planned suicide" (see Esquire, Sept. 1976) alive, while clas-destinately attempting to avenge the name of Alfred North Whitehead.

Now don't get itchy - it's a well-known fact that this band has been infiltrated by lit majors, and their influence is just about as faded as my jeans. To the average Bennington student, all their jeremiads are just so much jello. Unpack your bags.

Yours,
Ms. L

Dear Unnerved,

Not to worry. Allow me to explain. This "offensive propaganda" has been written by an insinuous little group who stalk the campus carrying the Portals and wearing leather jackets. They are actually the last vestige of a smug motorcycle gang that originated just outside Portland, Oregon.

A large cache of cocaine has been put in escrow by a recent president of the college - (who now operates out of a Lake Shore Drive apartment). In return for occasional bits, this band of desperados has sworn to keep the spirit of "planned suicide" (see Esquire, Sept. 1976) alive, while clas-destinately attempting to avenge the name of Alfred North Whitehead.

Dear Ms. Lonelyhearts

And I'm lonelyhearted, indeed. Two to one ratio and I can't score. Needless to say, I'm a guy. Not that I haven't scored before — believe me I have. But it seems to me and to a number of the other stallions on campus that the women seem a bit

I had hoped to pursue (as Ralph Waldo so cunningly put it) an original relation to nature, but I had no idea the place was overrun with upstarts a la Mark Rudd.

Is is possible that these marauders may lead a violent student revolt? Shall I get one P.S. Actually, I don't think anyone will take this seriously, but it is an interesting phenomenon.

--Al

P.S.

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Pearson Plan
Continued from Page 4

Appropriately, the college is to rent its facilities out to a group of cheerleaders this coming summer which is not the kind of incident that makes one proud of the college. If the college can not survive providing the service for which it was originally intended then this institution may become no more than a real estate enterprise which is kept warm by students. That is why it is very important for a discussion of Mr. Pearson's plan to take place.

Dear All,

Save your postscripts — I'm the one who does the editorializing around here. Just state your business and sign off.

Now then, let's look at your problem. You dearly have the worst syntax of anyone writing in this paper. "Why this is" — really.

But about your social life. Simple. Buy the girl of your dreams a four-door Seville. Positively guaranteed to start the conversational ball rolling. Incidentally, to borrow your lifting metaphor, you and the other stallions on campus might want to try less obvious stations from which to pick up a load. Hang by the washing machines one day. I'll be the girl wearing the green carnation.

--Ciao

Ms. L

The Newpaper, April 1977 — 3
Vermont Women Hold Regional Conference
ELIZABETH GALE SHACKNOVE
A few years ago there was an attempt to raise the consciousness level of the people in the Town of Bennington. A group of women tried to start a women's group to find out and deal with the needs, wants and problems of women in the community. There was not enough interest demonstrated for a group of this nature and their efforts were unsuccessful. But this year another attempt has been made and this time the efforts were met with success.

On February 26th of this year Vermont held a statewide Women's Town Meeting in Montpelier. There was a surprising turnout of 1,619 women. This was the first statewide meeting.

Now Bennington County is planning a regional meeting to be held towards the end of May in North Bennington. There will be guest speakers and seminars on Friday evening and all day Saturday. Perspective dates for these events are May 20th and 21st. The conference will make new resolutions and reaffirm the organization of a Woman's Health Care Center. Job training for women, the needs unique to elderly women, and other relevant issues.

If you are involved in women's issues you can contact the following individuals: Kathy Schmitt at 442-9674 or Doris Gable at 442-8514, or Cheryl Briggs at 442-9519. Kathy Schmitt

Curtis Photographs Coming to College
by LESLIE LYDECKER GEER
An exhibition of Edward S. Curtis photographs will begin on April 12th in the Usdan Gallery. The show, presented by the Art Division in collaboration with the Bennington American Indian Heritage Committee, will fascinate all art and anthropology students as well as anyone interested in American history and the American Indian.

Curtis understood the Indians he photographed. His 34 years of work with them gave him an acute sensitivity to the beauty of their traditions and their lifestyle. "His message is of peace and culture, it is a multitude of ways of being and living ..." Curtis captures the fading traditions of the American Indian with images sohumanly beautiful they reach across the barriers of time and culture to leave you spellbound.

Curtis began his work on the Northwest Coast in 1896 and completed it in 1930. He produced 20 volumes of written material and 20 folios of photogravures. He received support from figures such as Theodore Roosevelt, H.H. Harriman, and George Bird Grinnell. J.P. Morgan, his financier, challenged him to publish his work in a "set of books, the handsomest ever published." That he did, though it took him 19 years longer than he'd anticipated.

The original owner of the Curtis photos was Halsey C. McCulloch. The photogravures on exhibit are part of the set found in the McCulloch farmhouse in North Bennington. 200 of the photogravures will be displayed and the remaining part of the set will be available for view by those who are interested. A symposium of scholars and of American Indian Activists will be held in Bennington on May 7th and May 8th, sponsored by the Bennington American Indian Heritage Committee. Please contact Jane Hanks in N. Bennington for more information.

Art History Coming to Bennington?
by ERIN QUINN
Camille Paglia recently expressed concern over the lack of an art-history major at Bennington. She feels that art-history is crucial to a liberal arts education and that the college is only hurting itself by not offering more in this area. Many students have expressed their desire to study art-history to Ms. Paglia. The desire for the major has been brought to President Murphy's attention. The Art History course offered at Bennington is reserved for art majors and is impossible for freshman or sophomores to enter. Ms. Paglia would like to hire an art historian and have available art-history as a major. If you have an interest in art-history and would like to see it offered as a regular part of the curriculum, contact Camille Paglia.

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Dealing with Those Damned Intellectuals: Interview with Paul Sills

by JAN HADWEN

Paul Sills, a hulky figure disheveled gray hair and watery blue-red eyes, with small pieces of white paper in his hands, looms over the students who lounge in directors' chairs. He runs his hand over his forehead and takes two or three small directionless steps, shifts the pieces of paper to the other hand.

"All right! All right!" he wails and walks a small circle in the floor of VAAP A 207. Class begins with a game of freeze tag, red rover, Indian chief and numerous other childhood playground games.

"I just want you to play," Paul Sills tells us this and no more. In the very first class he made it clear that he would not talk with us about what we were doing or why we were doing it. "You damned intellectuals! You wouldn't understand if I told you, so I'm not going to explain!"

What kind of teacher is this, I thought. He won't answer our questions. He won't explain anything, Paul Sills insists we, in the Improvisational Theater class, just experience the games. "What you get is what you get out of it." Nothing more, nothing less. He doesn't think he can teach us anything. He is simply a presenter of games, games his mother, Viola Spolin developed and collected into a book.

His hope is that we can become aware of ourselves, particularly aware physically so that we, as actors, can "put our minds at rest." "It's only when the mind is at rest, when the intellect is outsmarted and ceases to be a barrier that prevents the students from acting, that improvisation as an art can happen. For this reason Sills is constantly emphasizing the importance of getting acting (in the class) out of the head and into the space. We do many exercises and games to promote this. To make the body more aware, we try to make the body feel time, not a place or a setting or an activity, just alone in time. And without telling or showing the time, somehow the body must physicalize a time, such as 7:30 A.M. A yawn, a stretch, a sleepy look, an awakening action, all of these are showing and telling. These are not right. What is it then? What is it that the body alone in time, at 7:30 A.M. feels? What does it look like? Ah, but no questions are allowed! We must experience it. Experience is the only way to learn, Sills feels. Learn by doing. Learn by feeling.

And Sills does not consider himself an organizer, a teacher, a director; he is a helper. He is here at Bennington as the Hadley Fellow, to help the students in his Improvisation Theater classes become aware, to help them outsmart their intellects, to help them become more intuitive, to help them get to know each other and to know themselves. "It could be Continued on Page 8
done playing volley ball or baseball Sills said, "this is not drama, this is not theater,'' Sills insists.
"It is parallel to it. There are no objects, no scripts."
"If anyone here is acting, you are in trouble," Sills yelled in class one day. Just talk, just be aware of yourself he recommends. And always during the class he spurs over and over again, we are not to do scenes, that is not a scene. Fit the objects into the space! Work with each other! Amidst the confusion that runs free and frustrated in the classroom, Sills beckons us to say 'curtain' - before and after some of the 'games.' Why is this, I ask myself, if this is not theater, if we are not acting? It is only one of the many contradictions of Sills as teacher-helper.

Paul Sills, who spouts words about awareness, intuition, etc. said to me when I asked him what he thought of Bennington students, that they are just an average group of American kids. "They're just college kids. They're all just 20 years old, all of them. They're just kids; What do they know?" And of course he asked it with the answer, "nothing" trailing on his breath. He actually told me that I didn't know enough even to conduct the interview. I admitted, "Okay, I know nothing about improvisation. Please, I said, 'please tell me something, explain it to me. Explain it to the people who read the paper.' But, no, he would not, could not. It was the same old frustrating problems; he wouldn't answer questions. I asked him if he ever taught before. "Yes, yes," he huffed. "Where?", I asked. "Oh lots of places. Yale," he answered. Here is this man, I thought, who vaguely talks of awareness and intuition and he is so totally unperceptive that he thinks we are just an average group of American kids. Even I know better than that. It is obvious to me after going to another college and two different high schools, after being in other places with other people my age, that Bennington College students, the average Bennington College student is not in the least average. The B.C. student is really quite different. And indeed, along those lines, they do know something, a far cry from the "nothing" that Paul Sills feels. Where do we go from here?, I ask. Where do we go when we have a frustrated unperceptive man, who thinks we know nothing, not even enough to ask questions, teaching us, as a guest professor at this college?

If our mentors don't take us seriously then we begin not to take our experience with them seriously. We are reaching for validity, meaningfulness in experiences and life. We know we are learning something here, we know that somehow the classes, the experiences here will take their toll on our lives, will change us in some way, in some way will make us think differently. But why must the learning come through negative insight and impressions? Why can't it be pleasant too?

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Student Work in Usdan Gallery

From March 22 to April 2 of this year, the walls of the Suzanne L. Usdan Gallery were hung with new works by Bennington students. This was the first time the Gallery was used for such a show. Fifty artists were represented by over 110 paintings, drawings, photographs, architectural models, graphics, ceramics, and sculptures. BRAVO for the show, and may it become a tradition!