

## GALLEY

I would like to raise briefly 2 issues of importance to the community at this time: (1) what one can expect from a college where the yearly cost is a minimal \$3,850; (2) the nature of the social contract between student and college.

(1) The quality of education at this college is fiercely dependent on the concept of individual instruction and attention. One's own commitment and the commitment of one's instructors determine both the substance and form of the educational experience here. The methodology of this experience includes seminars, small classes, group and individual tutorials, and interested and worthwhile counseling. This year, advanced courses in many fields, particularly in literature, number in the 20's and 30's. We are being cheated, specifically of time from our instructors and of classroom dialogue. There is no justification for increased fees when concomittantly class size is expanded (but numbers and varieties of courses are not), and when the faculty, because of the enlargement, is less accessible. This college seems determined to bury what is unique and important here, and to normalize into a dwarf-like reproduction of conventional colleges all over the country.

(2) A Galley appeared recently which presented an essay on communal responsibility. Irresponsibility begins, however, where one ceases to make distinctions. Assuming that Bennington's sign-out rules are intelligent and practicable does not mean that the premises of that essay are valid or palatable.

There is no social contract which is not in some sense a contract with oneself, since one is a part of the community, and there is no social contract which frees one from the responsibility of personal action, based on a personal decision, personally made. When one enters a college, one does not take a loyalty oath, one does not place hand on sword and declare knightly fidelity. One enters a community, one participates in it, and hopefully, one helps to shape it.

As a member of a community, certain concessions must be made to facilitate living, but then again, there are certain concessions which must not be made. For example, if this community were suddenly placed into Mississippi society of 10 years ago, the explicit social responsibility would be to oppose the legal racism of that society. Many of us have defied and will continue to defy in both spirit and action the execution of the Vietnam war. President Johnson, implicitly and explicitly, reminds us that our communal responsibility is to conform. However, we must make our own decisions about this war, and we must position ourselves in relation to it, even if, for now, we place ourselves criminally contra to the operative and sactioned society. Certainly, what applies on a national level must apply where we live, where we go to school, where we have the possibility of genuine dialogue with others.

To be bound, a priori to limits either predetermined or determined from above, is not to contribute to the welfare of one's community: it is to make it static, to withdraw from it, and ultimately to contribute to its decay.

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[ca. FALL 1966]