

GALLEY

The faculty, in voicing their opposition to the student proposal for men in rooms, states in the recent "Report of the Faculty on Student Government";

"...The fact that infractions of the rules are widely tolerated -- i.e., not objected to explicitly or referred to house chairmen or the Judicial Committee... may also imply, as we think it does, a demoralization of student government and a more pervasive and subtle devoralization of the college community at large."

The more specific nature of the expressed demoralization goes beyond the immediate issue of men in rooms. It is directly related to the general failure in the minds of students to associate intellectual and educational values with the social setting of which they are, in the highest instances, a reaction and an outgrowth, and to which they are a contribution. Students generally underrate the vital significance the community holds to their work. Therefore the value of any academic work loses dimension and strength. (By 'community', not only is the immediate college community meant but the surrounding Bennington community, and indeed, the larger world community.) The social setting is seen only in terms of the physical comfort which can or cannot be wrung from it. Academic work becomes little more than an obstacle to be hurdled in order to escape a rather bleak four-year internment.

When in the past students have voiced worries to faculty and administration regarding the educational standards at Bennington, (i.e., class sizes, faculty-student ratio, the role of counselling) they have too often been answered with percentages, monetary figures, and outright incredulity. Apparently the administration and some faculty have also lost sight of the goal of the total intellectual community where the academic cannot be seen as alien to the community without a resulting demoralization.

Let each student seriously examine his or her attitude towards the meaning and purpose of a Bennington education. (This of course assumes that in the minds of most there was a definite reason for choosing a Bennington education over others.) Let the administration and the faculty re-examine their reasons for wishing to participate in the Bennington College community. Finally, let all sides re-examine, and perhaps re-discover, the values and potentials inherent in Bennington College.

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