

PASTICHE

Opinion diverse on self-study

The results of the Pastiche questionnaire on the week of self-study are varied but general trends are visible. 145 people filled out the questionnaire, including 37 freshmen, five members of the administration and 18 members of the faculty. This is a fairly small sample of the community so cannot be considered entirely representative.

A great majority of the faculty, administration, and upperclassmen who answered the questionnaire had attended the week of self-study and had read the literature on it. A large majority of the freshmen had read the material also, but several of them expressed the feeling that the material was heavy and difficult to understand without further acquaintance with the issues involved.

On the subject of counselling, 60% of the upperclassmen were not in favor of maintaining sophomore and junior counselling as it now stands. Also half the faculty and administration were in favor of changing it. But 63% of the freshmen wanted it to remain as it is.

The upperclassmen were split fairly evenly concerning the abandonment of sophomore and junior counselling, as were the administration and faculty members. Freshmen, too, were pretty evenly divided. A majority of all students and the administration were in favor of reducing sophomore and junior counselling to a minimum, but only 44% of the faculty were in favor of the above.

Concerning curriculum, a majority of all constituencies were in favor of establishing an interdivisional teaching committee. 57% of the upperclassmen and 70% of the freshmen were in favor of putting grades on an optional basis as were 60% of the administration; 61% of the faculty, however, were opposed.

Several students and faculty members felt that grades should be abolished entirely. One expressed the opinion that grades should appear on the comments of all students.

There seemed to be a general consensus that a permanent community council be established (100% of the administration, 83% of the faculty, 57% of the upperclassmen, and 61% of the freshmen). Several students felt, though, that the present Community Council is not attending to the business for which it was established.

A large majority of all the constituencies agreed that house committees should be strengthened. Electing members of Judicial from among house chairmen was a far less popular proposal; in favor of this were 80% of the Administration, 33% of the upperclassmen, 27% of the faculty, and 29% of the freshmen.

There was a large opposition on the part of everyone filling out the questionnaire to establishing a committee composed of committee chairmen, the feeling being that there were enough committees already but that their functioning should be improved. In favor of this were 10% of the administration, 16% of the faculty, 27%

of the freshmen, and 29% of the upperclassmen.

The proposal of establishing the "primary authority" of a constituency also met with large opposition. In favor were 10% of the administration, 16% of the faculty, 29% of upperclassmen, and 21% of the freshmen. The student opinion on including two faculty members on Judicial on a rotating basis while limiting their terms was divided fairly evenly whereas the faculty and administration were strongly in favor. In favor of the proposal were 49% of upperclassmen, 46% of freshmen, 100% of the administration, and 77% of the faculty.

In reference to allowing the chairmen of Judicial, Leg, and Student EPC to treating their roles as one course, there was a varied opinion, the upperclassmen and administration being more in favor that the faculty or freshmen. 50% of the upperclassmen, and 60% of the administration supported it while only 16% of the faculty and 38% of the freshmen did so. There was a wide spread feeling that the fire marshall should not be included in this plan. Concerning the establishment of the Ombudsman position, the students and administration were more in favor than the faculty. 61% of upperclassmen and 70% of freshmen were in favor of this as were 80% of the administration, but only 44% of the faculty.

The students were evenly divided concerning the elimination of all distribution requirements and expectations, whereas the faculty and administration were generally opposed. (In favor: 49% upperclassmen, 51% freshmen, 10% administration, and 22% faculty.)

Concerning the elimination of the present system of junior and senior panels, the faculty and upperclassmen were more in favor of the proposal than the freshmen or the administration. (In favor: 67% of faculty, 69% upperclassmen, 29% freshmen, and 20% of the administration. Several upperclassmen felt strongly that panels should be completely abolished; that the panel was "a faceless being above, which evidently has the right to shape one's life" or "God behind a black curtain." But one faculty member pointed out that originally panels came about because

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Reagan sings

"All of the songs of black people in America - work songs, spirituals, blues, children's songs, Freedom songs - without the dollar sign in front of them are songs of protest".

These words prefaced a concert given by Bernice Reagan Tuesday night in the Carriage Barn. A singer of Afro-American songs, Miss Reagan traced the historical evolution of the black man's musical heritage. It is important to realize that the form of music has a direct correlation to history and environment. Many songs have the dates and names which are accurate. A song was sung about the Titanic, the largest ship ever built. That it sunk during its maiden voyage was read as a sign from God, a reaction to the discriminatory policies that prohibited black passengers.

"And you know what happens when they don't treat black people right..."

Freedom songs name REAL people and places. And it is this quality of the real and the "earthiness" of the sounds which recreate the 400 years of oppression. To hear black music is to feel the words, the mood, the suffering, and the people. To objectify participation into a passive avocation is to negate its significance

The moans and the textual notes of gravel, raspy, and fluttering sounds are vestiges of African music patterns. The "grace notes" or "singing between the cracks" are untranscribable aspects that are purely African. "The African scale had no correlation with the European scale".

Black music ranges from the leader-group response of spirituals, work songs and Freedom songs to the individual lamentations of a blues singer singing for and by himself. Bernice Reagan's repertoire sung a capella consisted of children's songs, blues, long songs, and freedom songs. The period between 1955-1965 was an era of great love, expressing a great belief in the country. Based on the assumption that "if America knows, then she'll straighten out", the music of the Freedom Riders (of which Miss Reagan was a part) reflected the mood of the time and the faith Black People had in their country and in their fellow

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Photo: Connie Talbot



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Editorial comment

Where is the middle ground, or is there ever any? We must always applaud those who stand out on a limb for what they believe in--be it ideological or practical; but what happens when the differences between two staunch individuals or groups cannot be reconciled? Life is rarely a matter of right versus wrong; more often it is right versus right, or half-right versus half-right. At that point, the astute observer learns that one right will never prove its worth until its opposing right acquiesces--which involves a bit of give-and-take.

This is all too apparent at Bennington. The academic freedom and professional responsibility of the faculty seems to be in direct conflict with student self-government and "making education relevant". And yet the goals of both constituencies are similar: an excellent and liberal education, where faculty members can learn from students, where students can learn from teachers, where education means something, very personal but very profound, for both. The student says: "I have an obligation to myself and to society; I must learn what is relevant to today's age; I can best learn by doing, which means governing myself and directing my own life with the access to and advice of those who know more than I." The faculty member says: "I have an obligation to myself and to society, which means that I must teach those subjects I know best to students, so that they will be well prepared to inherit and improve this society we live in."

It all looks like typical parent-child conflicts. Unfortunately, though the parent/faculty member versus child/student pressures are similar, practical concerns are also involved--and can't be shrugged off. The Bennington faculty has more academic freedom than just about any other faculty, and many teachers wouldn't come to Bennington if they didn't know it. (Academic freedom means that faculty members are free from controls by a college administration or Board of Trustees; i.e., what they say goes--which obviously involves students also.) Any conflicts involved by academic freedom are further compounded by the fact that the dismissal of a faculty member is a ticklish, often extremely painful, process. Problems brought on by inept teaching are for both faculty members who are concerned with Bennington's future and students who find that many courses are, for the most part, unrewarding.

Thus, if faculty members say that they have got to have the final say on all educational matters (and educational concerns often affect student social concerns and vice-versa,) if they say that they have both the right and the responsibility to have final say, what can students do other than to deplore the manifestations of that responsibility, or leave for someplace where it's probably worse?

But there's no question as to where the real power does, and possibly (probably?) must, lie. Yet such a notion is not easily digested by students; its ramifications and repercussions are all too apparent. Therefore, faculty members and the Administration would do well to consider seriously the issue of student self-government, in order to make their "professional responsibility" more responsible, and infinitely more rewarding, in the long run. (Administration members, we might add, play the same game as faculty, except that it's grounded on "property obligations" rather than academic freedom.)

Possibly we should give an example: autonomous student houses, or (God forgive us for being such fools) men-in-rooms. We grant that social problems do reflect themselves in the classroom, but the adverse effects of men-in-rooms have been slightly overworked by those who oppose the idea. Certainly the nature of the houses might rework themselves, but what's so awful about that? It has worked well in some houses, where many students have, as a result of house autonomy, put more effort into their studies.

We're not necessarily advocating house autonomy (and we certainly haven't given all the advantages of such a policy) but we suggest it as an idea that may well prove itself helpful to the entire community. Our primary concerns, however, are educational, and though students ought not to tangle with academic freedom and professional responsibility, there could be significantly more respect on the part of the faculty for students' ability to direct their own lives as adults (we refer to panels and secret grades).

Indifference on the part of students may be permanent, though reprehensible. Alienation is not. Whether there is paternalism towards students or not, whether there is secrecy that is valuable or not, whether academic freedom and property concerns are sacrosanct or not, there will have to be more give-and-take between students and faculty if anyone is to profit.



Pastiche

Bennington College
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Letters

Dear Editor:

I protest!

After a hard afternoon at the ceramics studio or the library, I should not have to beg for my supper. The situation in the dining room has reached the point of absurdity. At dinner, I should not be refused a second hamburger and have to act like a scavenger surveying the remains at other tables. And when they take away my cottage cheese, that's intolerable.

I submit that the students of Bennington College should have seconds on food plus some substitute other than cereal (either cottage cheese or peanut butter) at dinner.

To whom it may concern: Let us make our own choice whether we want to be starving artists or not.

-K.W.-

Dear Editors:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the students and faculty of Bennington College for their cooperation and assistance in easing our efforts during the investigation of the current streptococcal pharyngitis outbreak at the college. Dr. Hill and I were particularly pleased with the response, consideration and kindness shown by all while we were there.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours,

Glyn G. Caldwell, M.D.
Acting Chief
Virus Disease Section
National Communicable
Disease Center
Kansas City, Kansas

To the editor:

Up to now, Bennington College has managed to maintain a semblance of racial tolerance, even if it cannot claim to be a paragon of racial harmony. Recently, however, an incident has taken place which, if not justly dealt with, will deny the college the right to make such assertions.

At 10PM, Sunday October 13, a Black freshman and her family were returning to the campus after a six hour drive. Upon reaching the night watchman's booth, they were stopped by the guard who demanded to know where they were going. When the student replied that they were driving down to her house, he harshly indicated that they back up the car. The driver asked the watchman where he was supposed to go. The watchman heatedly insisted that they must use the guest parking lot without specifying its location, yelling that they "hurry and back the hell out of here". The driver remained in the parked car while the student and her other relatives got out. As a male member of the party was signing in, the student's aunt addressed the watchman saying: "You're very rude. You didn't have to talk to us like that. We're people too, you know".

The watchman turned on her and spat out, "How the hell do YOU PEOPLE expect me to talk to you?" He then pointed his finger in her face and expounded on his thirty years as a college employee which had so far not merited any complaints.

The incident was taken before Mr. Bloustein, who gave her his personal apology, but did not extend the same to her relatives. Meanwhile, the watchman had written a not to Judicial about "some trouble some people tried to give me when I stopped the car". He noted the number of occupants in the car and said that it contained two "boys". The "boys" included the driver, a man in his early forties, clearly visible, and a young man in his twenties.

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Judicial summoned the student to appear. The note read that it wished to clear up some trouble the night watchman had with "a group of you". The student explained why she thought a written apology was warranted. Judicial promised to take the matter back to the President.

The request for a written apology from the watchman was countered by a number of people who would excuse such behavior. The fact that he is rude to everyone was presented. Another excuse: he is old and ready to retire, and therefore, should be humored for the short time he is to remain. The final excuse: the man was probably upset because of the recent muggings. Granted, he should be upset, but there is no reason why he can't do his job, be upset as he wants to be, and still refrain from swearing at a lady.

The matter is again before Mr. Bloustein. All that is being requested is a simple apology. No one is questioning Mr. Bloustein's right to hire and defend racists - that is his business. But at least his employers should be restrained from venting their personal anger. We hope that the fact that Mr. Bloustein is related to one of the night-watchmen will still allow him to view this incident impartially. We also hope that when this is settled, Bennington can continue to view itself as a racially tolerant community.

- THE FACTION -

Election 68:

WALLACE: GLIMMER OF HOPE?

Of course, George Wallace is a racist. Of course, he is a fascist in his attitude towards dissent, and a fanatic in his attitude towards communism.

George Wallace is also the man who shook up the Establishment. They laughed when George Wallace sat down to play the piano. And they laughed when he took on the two-party system. On the eve of the election, hardly anyone was laughing anymore. Wallace is an anti-Establishment figure, and that's why he's worth thinking about.

One of the themes that Wallace played time and again was this: "We gonna make Them listen to us, now don't you worry about that." The success of Wallace's campaign proves that there exists a significant number of Americans who feel disenfranchised by our present political system, for whom there exists a contradiction between the "They" of government and the "Us" of the people.

Wallace people are not the only people who demand the control of their own lives. Today Blacks are demanding control of the ghettos, students are demanding control of the universities. Tomorrow, the working-class will demand real control of the factories and of the government.



The American working-class has good reason to be fed up with the Establishment. If the white worker is racist, it is because our capitalist system cannot function without exploiting some group, so that every step forward for the black worker threatens the white worker. If the worker wants a rapid military victory in Vietnam, it's because he is sick and tired of sending his sons off to die.

The ills of the American worker are real. Wallace peddles a pill called fascism. The worker must be convinced that Wallace and his cohorts are quack doctors, and

Graham concert: 'intelligible confusion'

Perhaps the most with which some can hope to come away from a first exposure to Graham works is a sort of intelligible confusion. Intelligible because the cohesion of the works makes their scope discoverable; confusion because that very scope frustrates exploration. I am only going to grapple with the two pieces on which I felt the beginnings of a grasp.

Seraphic Dialogue is, according to the program note, "a drama about Joan of Arc at the moment of her exaltation." I saw both Linda Hodes and Mary Hinkson in the role of Joan. I felt that although Hodes' projection of her role was the stronger, more honest and more credible, Mary Hinkson seemed more forceful in unifying the impact of the entire cast. This discrepancy is one which I have hinted at previously, and is the basis for the distinction between what I like to call subjective and objective dance, where in the first instance one remembers the dancer, and in the last, the dance.



that what American needs is radical, rational surgery.

- Sylvia Fishbach -



NIXON: HOW TO FIGHT HIM

"Should we make another attempt at radical organizing at Bennington after years of unquieting apathy - or at least militant disinterest?" Perhaps not, maybe there are no substantive issues that affect our idyllic campus. Or are the problems we attack so large, looming and vague that we must quietly whisper "revolution" and begin discussing self-defense?

Perhaps so - this is the year of the Rat. The disaffected cannot even realize the alchemic qualities surrounding Richard Nixon's name. The existing democratic hoax is not benevolent. The brethren of the "oppressed working class" cannot be organized under weary Trotsky banners. The voters were asked if they would rather live in Sodom or Gomorrah. And the great poor peoples' coalition is not imminent.

The Establishment's political motives cannot be disguised. Wallace bullies and snaps "You all know about law and order. Its spelled n-i-g-g-e-r-s." The facts nauseate and torment and in effect blind the movement. But perhaps while tricky-dicky is trying to "bring us together" from his right-of-middle perch, the left can try to coalesce itself, make constructive efforts and effective incipient protest.

Rioting, marching and demonstrating serve only as psychological appeasement for the participants. They are not instrumental in affecting change. The media left is the only influential one. Three years of anti-war protest were partly responsible for Johnson's withdrawal. But the publicity given to Chicago stressed the need for law and order. The election went rather smoothly despite organized attempts on November 5 in twenty major cities. A small group responded to "Vote with your feet", and the nation went to Nixon.

Phyllis Gutelius as the maid was completely convincing as she circled the stage in wide leaps, girdling her maidenhood with her hands. She was tremulous as she caught the words of St. Michael, uttered from the eloquent and frightening hand of Bertram Ross. She was poignant as she consecrated herself to her angels in a slowly arching backbend reaching into a slide along the floor. She symbolizes her consecration by producing a small scarf which she used at various moments to cover either head or shoulders, or to wave on like

Both Joans were brilliant vehicles for a choreography laced with subtleties as well as grandeur of design. The piece begins with Joan and St. Michael, flanked by Saints Catherine and Margaret, standing in a huge geometrical wire cage with a central triangle balanced on its apex (Noguchi).

Joan descends from the cage and, at the direction of St. Michael, views a procession of three brilliantly-robed figures representing herself as a maid, warrior, and martyr. Each vision comes to life upon being uncloaked in turn, while Joan is covered with the discarded cloak and stilled.

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reaction

The newspapers will report any radical activities as "a group of anti-war protestors." Obviously the war is a target but not the dart board of the system. (Ironically, the same mistake was made by the SDS galley crew in the anti-election announcement. At the bottom in large letters "Stop The War" read like hail marys murmured under faithful citizens' breath.) Other than the projected national image of Students For A Democratic Society as romantic fire-breathing, disorganized and split by Progressive Labor attacks, there is the viable productive function of education, contacting and radicalizing people. It is a forum of information and activity. The chapter at Bennington is a month old. Strep plague, papers and calendar doldrums delay progress. But the response has been good.

Early in October several students attended a Regional SDS Conference near Amherst. The meeting was vague but positive enough to sow the early seeds. The first organizational meeting on campus was attended by fifty people. Among the curiosity seekers were many earnest people who expressed bewilderment and a lack of focus for their political frustrations. Tom Bell, regional traveller, spoke tersely on problems that seemed irrelevant to Bennington. "Investigate your board of trustees, question the school's investment portfolio." The reaction was irritation; this didn't seem to be the way to focus our energies. Then his wife, Ann,



spoke on a more tender subject - women's liberation. What could be more appropriate to a group of women made politically impotent by their situation? A cadre set up several potential areas of activity: Woman's liberation, day-care centers, high-school organizing and draft counseling. Steve Block, Newark community organizer, spoke impromptu on Sunday night. He, as most white middle-class radicals, has left the black ghetto and moved to white working class communities. The proposition of converting open members of the Wallace crew, who are genuinely threatened by blacks in their schooling, housing and job situations is a tremendous, tedious job. -Annice Jacoby-

a battle banner, foreshadowing the emergence of Joan the Warrior.

The warrior was played by the remarkable Helen McGhee, whose ferocity was amplified by the image of her tiny body beside that of Bertram Ross. Far from the reverse, McGhee nearly dwarfed the towering Bertram Ross. This section of the piece is a duet, for which St. Michael draws a wire sword (which could easily be a crucifix) from the earthly portion of the set, downstage right. As McGhee lies rigidly parallel to the sword, Ross lifts it to his pelvis. In a swift succession of images, Joan the Warrior is pulled along and off of her knees with the sword, is crucified on it, carries it like a bow and arrow on the shoulders of St. Michael, and is enfolded in her cloak with it.

Next Noemi Lapzeson emerges from her cloak as the martyr, clothed in a black dress with a red stripe from neck to hem and crossed with a red band circling the hips. She sinks to the floor in anguished splits, turning along the floor to rise, much in the fashion of the maid, but sinking in agony repeatedly. Her cross, more squared-off in shape, becomes the stake from whence, out of the flames of Bertram Ross' fluttering hands, she is cloaked and led off with the procession of former lives.

REAGAN CONCERT CONTINUED

Americans. Their "great love" was returned by a reactionary state not seen "since Reconstruction".

The Black music of today is full of impatience, angeriness, and violence that is a part of that reaction. There are no more words of peace, hope, and heaven, for there are no more heavens to long for. It is full of a sense of self-awareness, independence, and pride.

She sang, "You ask my why I'm angry, but look at what you've done".

And listen to the words. Listen.

-Sharon Stockard-

Dig it!

The Association for Cultural Exchange is looking for fifty volunteers to go on an architectural dig this summer in England. The program consists of a three-week training period at Oxford and then a field period of actual "digging." Those interested should contact Prof. Ian A. Lawson, 539 West 112th St., New York, N.Y. 10025. The cost for the summer is \$725 (including air fare), though some scholarships may be available. Closing application date is at the beginning of February.

I felt that Miss Lapzeson applied a fine artistic restraint and perception to this potentially mellow-dramatic role, capturing the beautiful spirit of Saint Joan that gives the piece its raison d'etre.

The title of Errand into the Maze was suggested by the first line of Ben Belitt's poem, "Dance Piece." The program note ventures that it is a dance concerning "a journey into the maze of the heart's darkness in order to face and do battle with the Creature of Fear." The piece is also vaguely concerned with the myths of Theseus and Ariadne, and their dealings with the Minotaur.

The piece begins with Miss McGhee upstage right at the foot of a wildly curving rope, angling its path down left and turning towards a distorted V-shaped sculpture downstage right. She writhes and contracts in indecision, dropping her head to roll it around right, then left, threading her path like a tightrope dancer, weaving her feet on the torturous track.

The Minotaur (Clive Thompson) enters, waving a violently trembling leg. She draws up the thread behind her and winds it furiously around the doorway. At one point the minotaur (or Creature of Fear) weaves his feet around the rolling body of the woman following her path precisely as she had followed the map of thread. She springs onto his bent spread knees and forces him down in an excruciatingly slow backbend. I saw this conquest of the Creature of Fear in terms of a sexual conquest. In the final image she rises out of a low crouch in the doorway to the maze through a slow developpé, and steps out to stroke the air.
-Connie Allentuck-

JUSTUS TAYLOR
SANDALMAKER

Vermont Leathers
at the Pottery yard

MOD/MINI

MAXI/GROOVEY

NEW/OLD

SMOOTH/YOU

SELF-STUDY CONTINUED

There was general approval of Mr. Blake's proposal of limiting each division in the number of courses it may require of a major (67% of faculty, 80% of administration, 78% of upperclassmen and 70% of freshmen). On the question of requiring a student to take between 4 and 8 terms outside the division, the faculty and administration were more in favor than the students (60% of administration, 55% of faculty, 36% of upperclassmen, and 13% of freshmen).

The upperclassmen (80%) the faculty (61%), and the administration (100%) were more in favor of the E.C.C. being made available for program advising than the freshmen (29%). There was a generally favorable response to a freshman advisory committee: 100% of administration, 55% of faculty, 68% of upperclassmen, and 62% of freshmen were in favor of this. There was not, however, a favorable response to making a normal sophomore and junior course load one of three courses, except from the administration, 80% of whose members were in favor of this. Of the faculty 44% were in favor, of the upperclassmen 38%, and of the freshmen 46%. The administration (80%) and upperclassmen (76%) were more in favor of personal appearances in front of panels than were the freshmen (47%) or the faculty (38%).

There were, admittedly, many flaws in the questionnaire and quite a few people commented on this and on the way the questions were posed. One faculty member objected to the fact that there were "only two alternatives, stating each proposition out of context and without any basis for distinguishing the different grounds of opposition" and suggested that "a proper posing of the issues would have taken the form of asking respondents to rank various activities in order of importance and to say which of two conflicting alternatives they would prefer if they had to choose one." However, several people commented that they thought the idea was good since during self-study they were "never able to figure out how many students really supported specific issues and changes." Many freshmen felt they were not able to answer the questions because they were not very well acquainted with the problems involved. As a result, they were less willing to institute changes in existing structures. One freshman's reaction was: "this college is suffering from its overly intricate bureaucratic methods of dealing with some of its simpler problems (such as individual student complaints). As a result of the complex nature of the student governing bodies and their highly inefficient methods of presenting the issues confronting the community, many students (particularly freshmen) feel alienated from or indifferent to the functions of the government."

One student, very fed up, wanted to know, "Why can't we just have students who want to learn and teachers who dig to teach and everybody groovin' and good vibes instead of all this bad institution jazz cause its bringing me down and this flack interferes with the real thing of learning and life."

But, in closing, perhaps we should note another student's statement that, amid all the proposals for changing existing structure, "I am fast coming to the conclusion that we should leave well enough alone before we mess it up completely."

-- Karen Franck
Sally Pischl

Classified

The rates for classified ads in Pastiche have been changed. The new rate is five cents per word. Deadline for ads will be Tuesday evening.

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