

Exams. . .

by Norman Jarrard

Exams are safely into the past—"the hurly-burly's done, and the battle's lost and won," and it is time for summing up.

First point: All of us realize that we didn't keep up with our lessons as well as we should or as much as we could have.

There are plenty of gripes. We have all had to put up with those people who went around moaning about the low grades they were expecting to get. You know how it is. "Oh, I haven't studied at all and I'm sure to flunk," or "That was an unfair test and I think I'll go see Miss Hixson about it." But the bad thing about it is that they are the people who usually make the higher grades. We can have a little sympathy for the person who really does make a low grade but it is really too much for so many of the others to act the way they do. It is easy to see the real reason why there is so much moaning "at" the bar. The next time someone who makes pretty good grades comes around telling how dark everything looks just think this—or better, say it: That person is bragging. If that person didn't study and thought the test was terribly hard but still made a good grade, then he is saying all the other people who studied and didn't make a good grade are pretty stupid.

Now if there are people who want to rave against exams in general—as long as it doesn't have anything to do with any individual's showing on an exam—then I'll rave along with them. As I have said in this column before, giving the same exam to everyone; in other words, requiring everyone to learn the same thing, is the ruination of true scholarship. I hate to fling red herrings but it has an unpleasant communist tinge to it. I can hear Kremlin Joe now: "Teach everybody in North Carolina how to grow tobacco. It's a good thing for them." Exams such as we took make a person a prisoner to grades, so that no one can disregard grades to any great extent if he wants to stay in school. We have to study any particular subject in light of the kind of exam questions we can expect. If a history teacher asks very general questions we study from that viewpoint. If another history teacher asks dates of famous battles then we have to memorize those dates. If another history teacher asks true-false questions or asks us to complete sentences lifted from the textbook then that is still a different matter. I have some ideas on what should be done about it but there isn't much use in telling them. It would take a pretty good sized earthquake to get education out of its rut.

Anyway, it is a fact that such education discourages over ninety percent of the students from following any scholarly pursuits—and its no wonder!

Such study evermore is overshot:

While it doth study to have what it would,
It doth forget to do the thing it should;
And when it hath the thing it hunteth
most,

'Tis won as towns with fire; so won, so
lost.

—To quote a fellow named Shakespeare, who, as Margaret Raynal once said, "really has a way with words." Willie is pretty convincing when he talks against studying. In "Love's Labor Lost" the court takes an oath "not to see ladies, study, fast, not sleep" so that, as the king says,

Our court shall be a little academe,

Still and contemplative in living art.

But at the last minute some of the Lords want to back out. Berowne says that if he swore to such things he swore in jest, and wants to know after all, "What is the end of study?" the king's answer manages unintentionally to deflate the importance of learning: "Why, that to know which else we should not know." Later, the king cautions his Lords against the "vain delights" that turn intellects away from study, but Berowne has a ready answer:

Why, all delights are vain; but that most
vain

Which, with pain purchas'd doth inherit
pain:

As, painfully to pore upon a book,

To seek the light of truth; while truth
the while

Doth fately blind the eyesight of his look:

Light seeking light doth light of light
beguile:

So, ere you find where light in darkness
lies,

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Lee Majors In English;
Takes Calculus And Biology

by Lee Rosenbloom

I tripped lightly up the steps of Old Chapel singing gaily to myself "Who's afraid of the big bad faculty." It was January 30, 1950. With chin up and eyes sparkling I was ready to face the challenge of a new semester. To think what a gay light-hearted child I was only a few days ago.

I pushed open the door to Old Chapel only to stumble over a desk and Mr. Leach. "Fill out this yellow slip," he said, dusting himself off and unfastening the iron chain which was stretched across the doorway. I patiently sat down and wrote my parents name, my guardians name, where bills should be sent to, my mother's maiden name, my father's maiden name, where bills should be sent to, and to whom should my bills be sent. As advice to under-classmen I would like to say here that no matter whose name you write down your father will get the bills so don't bother with fictitious names, just scatter a few ditto's around.

Hopefully I picked up the yellow slip and marched over to where Miss Spangenburg was guarding the envelopes containing our grades. "May I see your receipt for tuition," she murmured sweetly, keeping one hand on the gun which protruded from her holster. "Well, you see, Daddy mailed the check and so—", I gasped weakly. "Sorry, dearie, but you can't see your grades without a receipt." Miss Spangenburg chanted, gaily chipping another notch in her six-shooter.

I stumbled wearily out the door and headed for the business office. As the line of girls who were waiting for receipts moved slowly forward, I noticed that all the freshmen were registering in the Dean's office. Tears streamed down their faces, and it was indeed a disheartening sight to behold. I stop-

ped to comfort my little sister who hadn't made Dean's List and was about to be burned at the stake by some twelve of her classmates. Realizing then that my troubles were nothing as compared to hers, I held my chin high and struggled onward.

When we passed Dr. Todd's office, I optimistically signed my name on the roll of parchment tacked on his door. As I stood up and brushed off my knees Dr. Todd kindly came to the door and patted me on the shoulders. "Just tackle this with a devil may care attitude," he said, as he put the chains on two seniors who had had the audacity to want to change their schedules.

Several hours later I staggered out of the business office. Dr. Gramley shook my hand and the entire class sang "Congratulations to you." With tears of gratefulness in my eyes, I headed back to Old Chapel.

I presented my receipt to Miss Spangenburg, and with tears of disappointment in her eyes, she handed me the long white envelope. I walked unflinchingly back stage, went into the dressing room, locked the door and sat down in the corner with my face to the wall. Then I took a small bottle of ammonia, a vial of arsenic, and my will from my pocket and placed them on the floor beside me. Next I pulled my coat over my head and, with the aid of my cigarette lighter, slit open the envelope. Dale will not let me print the rest in the *Salemite* for fear of offending your ears, dear reader, but needless to say without my youth and health I could never have stood the shock.

A few days later I unlocked the door to the dressing-room and staggered toward Dr. Todd's office. I arrived just in time, as he was

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Jarrard Reviews "Paisan";
Is Derogatory In Criticism

by Norman Jarrard

Don't go to see "Paisan" unless you have endurance, strength of heart, and everything else that implies stamina. Give the producers credit for trying something big—but they did not succeed.

The difficulties are obvious. To understand all of the speech one would have to be a talented linguist: Italian, German, Latin, and English were used. Of course, the producers translated the various languages, but that made it even worse than some of the silent movies. It amounted to reading the story word for word, so that more time was spent reading than watching what was going on on the screen. Severe eyestrain would have resulted, I am sure, if I had had to move my eyes up and down much longer in a vain attempt to read what the actors said and trying to see them say it at the same time. That was just a technical difficulty, though. One which we can all overcome by learning Italian, German, and Latin.

Major objection: There is no justification for picking up actors from street corners, selecting the ones who seem to have some talent, discarding them and using in a movie the ones who remain. What do you gain by having an actor stumble through his lines and use exaggerated gestures. Not realism! No one can say that the Americans in the first sketch were realistic—they were just silly. (It is another of those movies made up of a number of short sketches, related only in a general sort of way). It takes good actors to be realistic, not non-actors. "All the King's Men" achieves realism but does it with acknowledged actors. They used a very simple device: the actors had never seen a script before they went before the cameras. To be sure, "Paisan" had

plenty of "realism," but it was mostly realism of scenery and things that had very little to do with acting (for example, the scenery in the sketch about the Negro and the one about the Army nurse).

The photography was excellent. The settings were chosen with care. The last sketch, one concerning an O. S. S. man and Italian partisans was particularly interesting photographically. It was full of the "realism" that seems to be the vogue nowadays.

The sketches, in a way, were clever. They were ironic. They were tragic. But they were theatrical: they aroused the so-called "baser passions," or, in the case of the sketch about the chaplains and the monks, it was extremely distasteful in another way (which I'll leave to those who see it to feel for themselves).

It seems to me that acting should be the first consideration in judging the worth of a movie. We don't praise a movie when we say we like the background music. Music is available in much better ways. We don't praise a movie when we say we like the photography and setting. If we want to see those things a travelogue should be in order. We don't praise a movie when we say that the story is good. We can stay at home and read the book and get the sense much better. Those things, plus what is most important, good acting, make a great picture.

Good acting, which this picture does not have, is the one thing that can triumph over bad photography, bad setting, no music, and a bad story. Bad acting, which this picture shows, does triumph (for the most part), over the good photography, good setting, and good story.



by Sybel Haskins and Winkie Harris

Dearest Ma.

Oh, Ma I'm not coming home for spring vacation! It's awful but I don't know what to do. Listen to what happened.

There was a basketball game between the juniors and the sophomores two weeks ago, as you know I'm water girl for the junior team. It was in the middle of the last quarter and Clinky got hurt and had to leave the game. And then Ma—they said "Acti you'll just have to go in—there's nobody left to play center forward for us!" Well, Ma, you know I can't even play Archery properly, but I had to do it for the spirit of the class. I ran out there, caught the ball—the next thing I knew I opened my eyes and saw nothing but white walls. The nurse said I had a broken toe and couldn't be moved out of the infirmary for two weeks.

I was frantic, you know I just have three cuts left for this semester since I overcut to go to the beach in December. But there was nothing I could do. I had to stay away from class so the cuts had to be turned in. They wouldn't give me any reprieve. They said a broken toe was no excuse for not going to class.

But Ma, they said if I didn't take a single cut from now until graduation I could still get my diploma.

See you in June,
Love, Acti
1987

Mater,

How are things in Automatia? I really do miss the place more than I can say. The tour is splendigougeous. We are now spending a week in the ancient town of Winston-Salem, you know it's in the state of North Carolina.

Yesterday, the guide took us on a tour of the oldest part of town. Most fascinating, Mater. He showed us the ruins of an ancient college. I asked him what that meant, and he explained that back in those days, women went to a type of school where they supposedly received an education. We all thought that was very funny. Imagine not having television schools in the home!

Anyway, he said that this "college" would probably still be standing today, but something very strange happened in the year.—I think it was 1950. Some sort of rule was passed and the girls had to go to class no matter what was wrong with them. The guide gave very vivid descriptions. He told us how the poor girls went to their classes mangled from playing hockey games, crippled from taking part in an archery tournaments. Some even went with very high fever and talked deliriously of some strange thing called cuts. He said that soon operations began to be performed in the very halls so that girls would be sure and not miss any of their schooling. Sounds horrible, doesn't it? Gradually the girls began to die out and the halls re-echoed with the dragging footsteps of the remaining few. He showed us the building which began crumbling first because it was never used—something called the "infirmary." The remains of two skeletons lay around that building, the guide said that the two ladies who kept the place died from neglect.

It was rather sad but on the whole very interesting to see how people lived back in those days.

Next week we are visiting the site of another historically well-known "college"—Chapel Hill. Will tell you about it in my next letter.

Love and kisses,
Machinitus

Editor's Note: This issue was edited by Joan Carter Read. Next week the *Salemite* will be edited by Clara Belle Le Grand a candidate for editor-in-chief of next year's staff.

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