

Editorial:

Has education system failed?

What choices does a fifteen-year-old have in the educational system? Does he have a choice as to courses, teachers, or physical presence?

What does he do most of the day? He sits-and maybe listens. Try to walk in his shoes, not for a few minutes, but for six hours a day, 180 days a year.

What goes on in class? What questions are asked? Are they about the real world? Are they about the feelings, passions, interests, hopes, and fears of those who are present? NO. It is an educational world of its own. It's mostly about nothing.

Schools today do a superb job of developing the traditional academic skills; but they teach other things as well, and often more effectively, such as: the skills for beating the system, the dangers of independence in thought or action, the fact that non-academic talents are of little value, and that those who do not make it in the school's terms are society's natural losers.

Failure to complete high school is regarded as some sort of cosmic failure-a form of personal and social death. Dropout become synonymous with delinquent. Yet the evidence indicates that in some school systems the smart

ones drop out and the dumb ones continue.

There used to be a time when self-educated men were heroes to be admired. Now they are prejudged unfit, or in most cases, just don't appear in the social telescope at all.

At present, questions are being raised as to whether any institution that enjoys a virtual monopoly can remain sensitive and responsive to the changing needs of its highly varied clientele. Some of the educational system's more radical critics question the traditional concept of schooling itself in an age (such as this) when knowledge is accessible from so many sources.

It is evident that we as individuals and a nation are experiencing a visible lack of confidence in the educational system that we created.

Ten years ago, Americans thought they had solutions to everything-poverty, racism, injustices, and ignorance-by way of the educational system. Now the confidence is gone. What they believed about schools has been reduced to open conflict in the classroom and street.

Why have schools failed? Why boycotts, strikes, SDS, long hair, underground newspapers, and

expressions of independent student opinion, class bells, monitors, grades, credits, and requirements? Why do most students learn how to cheat long before they learn how to learn?

If we want to understand why the schools have "failed" we have to state the criteria of success. Schools achieved their reputation when they did not have to succeed, when there were educational alternatives-the farm, the shop, the apprenticeship-and when there were other routes to economic and social development.

Every poor little boy who became a doctor represented victory; but poor little boys who became ditch diggers disappeared from the record.

As soon as this society demanded success from everyone-once there were no alternatives-failure was inevitable, because demands were too great.

The impossible demand was enshrined in the mythology of the American dream itself; that the schools constitute the ultimate promise of equality and opportunity. Americans expected the schools to teach their children all that they, as parents, couldn't teach them at home, and then some.

Thus, the educational system

has become the central institution of the American dream. Education, it has been said, is the American religion. This is to say that if the schools fail, so does the promise of equality, order, discipline, democracy, the virtues of: thrift, cleanliness, hard work, the evils of alcohol, tobacco, and later sex and communism.

On the other hand, a system that requires all children to attend a particular school for a specified period-or sentences everyone to twelve years of schooling-can and must be judged by its failures.

Every program launched in the past decade has assumed a linear standard of success (bright, average, slow, or whatever). In other words, each took for granted that schooling was a competitive enterprise and that life was a jungle where only the fit survive.

Is it possible that it never occurred to anyone that as long as we operated by a linear standard, the system would, by definition have to fail at least some kids.

Every race has a looser. Failure is structured into the American system of public education. Losers are essential to the success of the winners.

After considering the proceeding, need we gawk at the

child who sits in the counseling center in utter bewilderment when asked why he is in school. NO. When this society has sufficiently closed all other doors except education to a respected success, then it must learn to cope with the misfit and misplaced souls that are forced to endure our educational system and forfeit their happiness at a lesser job due to finances and pride. In this present day society, the day is long gone when a man could hold his head up in front of family and friends without a college degree.

Do we have any choice, to even a meager success, but to be sentenced to 16 years of school?

Editorial policy

Opinions of the Carolina Journal are expressed on its editorial page. All editorials are the opinions of the Editorial Board. Letters and columns represent only the opinions of the individual contributors

In all fairness

Dear Editor,

In order to keep the record straight and to be fair to Susan Sutton, I feel compelled to refute a recent statement made by Paul Ferguson (see "On Campus," JOURNAL, Nov. 12) in which he accused Miss Sutton of wanting to amend the existing proxy rules to comply with her personal situation. He stated, "...but now a certain member of the Legislature has at this time used up all of her allotted proxies," and he continued to suggest that she now wants the rules changed.

After checking the official record of absences submitted by James Cuthbertson, Chairman of the Judicial Committee, David Thomas, Chairman of the Finance

Committee, Gary Springer, Secretary of the Rules Committee, Rick Norton, Chairman of the Student Legislature, and myself, Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, I noted that Miss Sutton has only one absence, and it was WITH proxy, from the Ways and Means Committee. She has no absences without proxy. She is not anywhere near running out of absences. Mr. Ferguson obviously made not only a hasty statement, but also an erroneous one. Such an incorrect assertion not only tends to question Miss Sutton's character; moreover, it questions the integrity of the entire Student Legislature.

Marlene Whitley

Dear Editor:

I have just finished reading Ron Foster's interview with our senior class president, Paul Ferguson. It was a well conducted interview, but I cannot say much for the replies. As a S.G.A. member and also as a member of the Rules committee, I can honestly say that Mr. Ferguson was more than treated fairly. I agree that too much has been made of this since the Rules Committee voted to allow Mr. Ferguson one more absence, and that this resentment between two S.G.A. members should cease to exist.

Also Mr. Ferguson's statement about Susan Sutton's being in trouble with the proxy bill is far from being correct. Susan Sutton has only one absence with proxy and none without, and was only trying to help people like Paul by changing this bill. As for the legislature having a successful year, it is up to the members, including Paul and Susan, to see that we do.

Thank you, Gary Springer

LETTERS

The Carolina Journal accepts all letters to the editor, provided they are typed and limited to a maximum of 300 words. All letters must be signed and the address and phone number of the writer must be included. The paper reserves the right to edit all letters for libelous statements and good taste. Address letters to Repercussions, The Carolina Journal, in care of University Center.

Dear Editor:

Well, after two years and a dozen or so Carolina JOURNALS, I find myself compelled to protest the one-sided views presented by our campus slam sheet. I have long since resigned myself to being propagnized by the staff of the JOURNAL in the ways of vice president Agnew terms "radical liberals" but gentlemen, you slumped to a new low in your October 29, 1970 issue with its libelous full page cover "cartoon". I wonder at the sanity of this state for funding such material

and shudder still further on thinking of the money extracted from my fees each year to finance such bigotry. It is a shame that the small minority of students allotted to the JOURNAL staff should control the views emanating from our campus. I will devote myself to preventing a recurrence of such incidents.

Signed,
Roy Maurice Moss Jr.

(Put your money where your mouth is!-the Editor)

Servicemen plead for letters

Dear Editor,

We are a group of young Navy men, presently deployed in the Western Pacific, aboard the 48,000 ton Attack Aircraft Carrier USS ORISKANY (CVA 34).

Our job is a trying one, being out to sea for long periods of time, working with the same MEN day in and day out in extremely confined spaces. O.K., now you've got the picture, which brings us to the cause for addressing this letter to you.

Our only contact with "The States" is through the mail. Now the mail is pretty sporadic at best. No matter how often relatives and close friends write, it hardly seems to suffice.

All we ask is a few minutes of your time (as often as possible) to write us. All letters will be answered promptly with enthusiasm.

So, why not help make a prolonged, arduous and dreary cruise a little bit shorter and one heck of a lot brighter? Why not write and make "Male Call" a unique experience?

We are open to discussion on anything ranging from legalized abortion and marijuana to Spiro Agnew watches and maxi dresses.

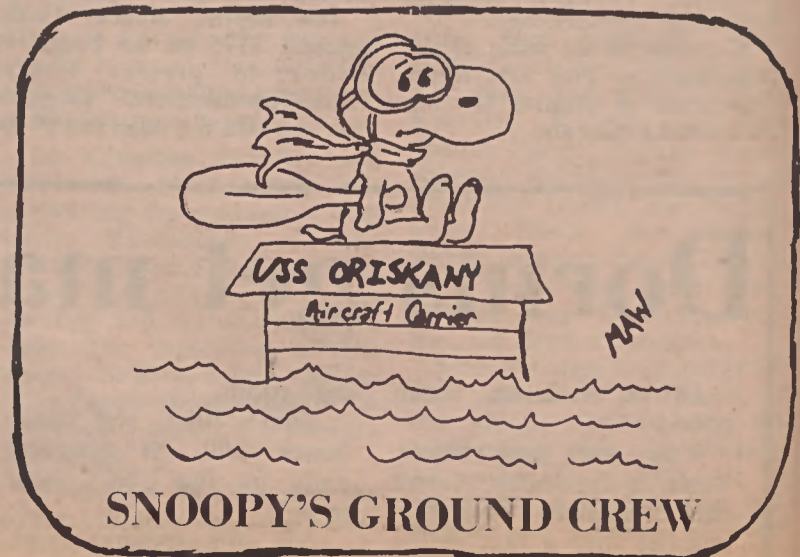
You will find enclosed a list of names, home states, and ages of several men in our division. All that remains is for you to add the following to complete the address:

"W" Division
USS ORISKANY (CVA 34)
FPO San Francisco, Cal. 96601

Thank you for reading this, we anxiously await any and all replies.

Signed,
SNOOPY'S GROUND CREW

NAME	RATE	SERVICE NO.	HOME STATE	AGE
Bill Alderman	GMT3	B20 87 11	Va.	22
John Barth	GMT3	B52 88 33	Wis.	21
Alex Brouwers	GMT3	B52 02 45	Ill./Mich.	21
Tom Campbell	YN3	B33 99 18	N. C./Ore.	21
Jim Fallon	GMT3	B73 59 83	La.	20
Mike Galvin	GMTSN	B57 28 07	Mich.	20
Bob Hosey	GMT2	694 78 85	Del.	27
Mike Jackson	GMT2	B63 81 44	Minn.	22
Jim Little	GMT1	370 93 89	Cal.	27
Don Parks	GMT2	B41 40 65	N. J.	22
Harvey Riggs	GMT2	B72 68 40	Tex.	21
William Schmidt ("Greek")	SK/GMT1	531 41 42	Nev.	29
Gary Sparrow	GMTSN	B87 48 65	Mont.	20



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