

Rap Around Rap Around Rap Around Rap Around Rap Around Rap

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Of Mice And McQuaid

Spike, Mumbin, Foosball, Pogo, Jasper — not names of McQuaid students but those of the residents of the school's mouse colony. The rodents are partners with the students in a two week experiment which is part of John Christiano's psych course. Aside from putting Pavlov's conditioning theory to test, (Pavlov conditioned a dog to connect a sound with receiving food — over at McQuaid the mice are trained to hit a bar for water), the students learn about personality traits, behaviorism, preception, human drives and motives and hypnosis. It's a year long elective course and

some 80 to 90 students are taking it.

"It's a different kind of science," explained Dave Biche about the course's popularity. Others talked with noted that the subject differed from the usual academics.

Psychology is a complicated field but to senior Steve Desino, the advantage of pursuing it is worthwhile. "We learn a lot about people and what goes through their minds," he said explaining, "so that we can better deal with them."

This brought up the question as to whether

there might be a tendency to always be analyzing people. "No," declared senior Phil DiPasquale. "Most people think this but you don't tend to do it." According to him, the course teaches a person to become more patient and the knowledge gained makes a person appreciate the motives, drives and feelings of others.

In discussing psychology's end product, mind manipulation, Phil noted that the technique's positive side is in the capability of helping those who are mentally ill — its negative aspect is that it can be used to control minds. He also pointed out the many different theories held by men in the profession such as the psychoanalysts who see man as controlled by his instincts; the behaviorists who see man as controlled by conditioning and the humanistic psychologists



Phil DiPasquale

who see man as free to choose his own actions.

All in all the McQuaid students find the Psychology course unique, enlightening and

fun. Especially when they wind up with a pet in the bargain. At the end of the two week segment they may take their mice home or leave them in the colony.



Dave Burke



Photos by Terrance J. Brennan

Mark Andrews and David Biche.

Speaking Out



By ANTHONY MONACO Aquinas

Art Garfunkel has a current hit song entitled "Wonderful World," in which he openly proclaims the ignorance of history, algebra, and geometry. It has often been said that the music of an era reflects the standards of the times. In this case at least, this notion stands.

As ready or hesitant as we are to admit it, our public school system is in a shambles. Many elementary and secondary schools are failing in their

most basic function; to educate. Both individual cases and national tests have proven that a large number of high school students graduate ill-prepared to face a modern society. Furthermore, national tests show that many students don't know their local congressmen (or what Congress is), or simple math, or even how to read well.

Despite the romantic, illusionary aura of Garfunkel's song, reality is a cold slap in the face. Education is crucial for the smooth function of society and for the democratic process. Our public school system denies too many a right which is almost as basic as liberty itself: knowledge.

The main educational problem lies in the area

which least needs another problem: the city. Suburban schools have their problems, but the city schools cry out for most attention. Private education has helped to alleviate the problems, but lets face it many do not want a private school and many can't afford one. These people should not be punished.

The weakness of the public school system is twofold: first, it is failing to teach the basics and secondly, there is a lack of discipline.

With the onslaught of liberal thought over the last few decades, the schools have turned to the new, modern methods of teaching. Sad to say, these methods have sent education one step backwards. The three R's, reading, riting, and

rithmetic, have been woefully ignored, being replaced by scientific and modern methods. Who are we trying to kid? Aristotle, Da Vinci, and Einstein didn't have filmstrips or tape recorders. Somehow they managed just fine. The public school system must learn its lesson; modern techniques are a good supplement to basic education, but they cannot replace it.

There is no learning without discipline. It's that simple. Unfortunately, discipline appears to be a rare commodity in public schools. In New York City school violence is frightening and the epidemic is spreading. Class skipping is chronic in some public schools. The lack of discipline is taking its toll. Good student and teacher relationships seem to be the goal of too many schools, with discipline taking a back seat.

Consequently, many students graduate with "good vibes" about their teachers, but without any concept of self-control, dignity, and most importantly, an education. This is not to say that there should not be teacher-student relationships. But school should not be a long term student-teacher picnic. Discipline must come first, and if that means the return of the rod, so be it.

The public school system does not have to produce Einsteins or Aristotles. But it certainly isn't too much to ask it to produce literate and disciplined Americans. Many of today's problems among them crime and prejudice, are directly related to a lack of education and discipline. It's time to stop beating around the bush and get to the heart of the matter. Today's students are tomorrow's leaders. Let's make them good ones.

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