

# FAUW Forum

NUMBER 121

MARCH/APRIL 2003

## THE FAUW NEEDS YOU!

### Committee members, advice sought

President Catherine Schryer writes (Page 16): "Due to the Memorandum of Agreement with the University, the FAUW is your sole representative on all issues related to faculty working conditions. Consequently, we represent your interests on issues related to salary, pensions and benefits, individual grievances and on a host of day to day decisions that affect faculty.... Presently, the FAUW needs more participation from its members. Some of our committees are not at full strength, and some of our committees need renewal."

On the subject of salaries, Metin Renkszibulut, the Chair of the FAUW Compensation Committee, examines the salary settlement for 2003-2004 and presents a table that compares UW salaries to those of several other Ontario universities (Page 4).



*Is this something?  
(Page 13)*

## IS THAT ANY WAY TO TREAT (DISTINGUISHED) PROFESSOR EMERITI?

Sandra Burt writes on the need for the FAUW and the University to work out guidelines for retiring and retired professors, in particular, full-time researchers who will be retiring prior to the end of their current granting period. She refers to a recent unfortunate incident at UW (Page 3).

## OUR CODDLED STUDENTS

Are universities bending over backwards excessively to accommodate students, thereby compromising the value of a postsecondary education? Profs. Harvey Mansfield (Harvard) and P.F. Kluge (Kenyon) think so. Their articles are reprinted from *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (Page 6).

## THOUGHTS ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

Ken McKay (Management Sciences) examines a book on teaching written by a former Ontario Deputy Education Minister and asks whether anything new has been learned since then (Page 11).

### Inside this issue:

Letters to the Editor	2
Researcher Rights, University Obligations and Retirement Issues	3
Salary Settlement 2003- 2004 Revised	4
Our Coddled Students: Harvard	6
Our Coddled Students: Kenyon	9
Thoughts on Learning	11
Editorial	13
President's Message	16

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In her President's Message (*Forum*, February 2003), FAUW President Catherine Schryer stated that a war with Iraq would be "irrational". In addition, she drew readers' attention to several postings on the FAUW web site ([www.uwfacass.uwaterloo.ca](http://www.uwfacass.uwaterloo.ca)) that protested the war, including memos from the CAUT and student unions.

Regrettably, only one side of the Iraq debate is presented in the above material.

I support the war in Iraq for several reasons, including:

- Saddam Hussein has shown that he will kill just as many people without a war as he would during a war. (And, he would probably kill many, many more people in upcoming years. Iraq blames the UN for an average of more than 10,000 deaths PER MONTH over the 12 years of sanctions imposed upon it.)
- Almost anything that follows the war will represent an improvement on the current status quo.
- The coalition will find and disarm chemical and biological weapons, thus lessening the chances that terrorists will get their hands on them.
- If freedom and democracy can be shown to work in Iraq, then it perhaps can take hold in other areas of the Middle East.

Some of the repercussions that have resulted from Saddam Hussein's dictatorship include:

- millions of Iraqi refugees;
- two wars, initiated by him and responsible for the deaths of millions of people, not to mention the destruction of unimaginable amounts of property;
- the documented torture of prisoners in Hussein's prisons;
- the continued support of terrorism, for example, by sending money to families to provide volunteers for suicide bombing missions in Israel, rather than spending it for the benefit of his own people.

As a result of UN action following the first Gulf War, Hussein signed agreements for disarmament. However, disarmament was not accomplished after 12 years, even after additional UN resolutions. My question: "Who will remove Saddam Hussein from Kuwait the next time he invades? Canada? France?"

What is irrational to me is that the world allows such a dictator to remain in power. Where is the concern for the people in the area? Anti-war protesters have joined forces with the following 'historical defenders of peace and freedom in the world':

- China, ignoring such past events as the Cultural Revolution, Tibet and Tiananmen Square;
- Russia, ignoring: the history of non-democracy in the Soviet Union; Russian opposition of UN actions in Bosnia;

the sale of armaments to Iraq both in the past and present – note the types of guns, tanks, missiles, planes and communication equipment currently used by Iraq; the construction of a nuclear reactor for Iran; the current situation in Chechnya.

- France, ignoring: a history of opposition tactics in the UN; Algeria; the sale of armaments to Iraq and the construction of a nuclear reactor in Iraq in 1980; the current Ivory Coast situation.

The preoccupation of the so-called peace movement with Iraq and its support of a tyrant/dictator also appears most irrational to me.

Cynicism for the US goals in this conflict abound. Statements about oil ignore the simple arithmetic on the cost of the war. The events of September 11, 2001 have changed the world. This was not the first time that the US was attacked by terrorists. Americans have a right to defend themselves. As Canadians, we should support our neighbour, trading partner and close friend.

I recommend that those interested in reading rational arguments concerning the war on Iraq (dated, interestingly enough, October 2002) consult the URL  
[www.policyreview.org/OCT02/asmus.html](http://www.policyreview.org/OCT02/asmus.html).

*Henry Wolkowicz*  
*Department of Combinatorics and Optimization*

Feminists on campus owe Jan Narveson a debt of gratitude for his letter to the editor (February, 2003) that attempted to set the record straight about my wrong-headed review of Hannah, Paul, and Vethamany-Globus, *Women in the Canadian Academic Tundra* (January, 2003). If any of us doubted the presence of a chilly climate on the UW campus, Narveson's letter surely exemplifies its salient features. Deployment of only those data that support his ideology, elevating an undefined "objectivity" as his sole criterion of legitimacy, deprecating the book's anecdotal evidence while affirming unsystematic anecdotes of his own, and claiming victimhood as a senior white male: Narveson's rhetoric illustrates that his prejudices about faculty women have nothing to do with either logic or essential collegiality.

For more recent data on faculty women on the UW campus, I recommend to him the "Report of the Provost's Task Force on Female Faculty Recruitment," available from the Secretariat.

*Jeanne Kay Guelke*  
*Department of Geography*

# RESEARCHER RIGHTS, UNIVERSITY OBLIGATIONS AND RETIREMENT ISSUES

by Sandra Burt  
*Department of Political Science*

As the university approaches “middle age”, an increasing number of its faculty is approaching the age of retirement. The issues facing faculty members approaching retirement go beyond those of pensions and benefits. Some retirees have opted to continue teaching as sessional lecturers. Others have maintained active research programs. In the absence of a comprehensive university policy on issues of space and resources for retirees, departments and/or faculties have developed individual guidelines, some of which are vague and difficult to administer and others of which are inconsistent with some of the operating principles of the granting agencies that provide research funding. The situation has become even more complex in the face of new and increasing pressures for departments to compete for private research funds and new mega projects such as the Canada Research Chairs. And of course they are expected to do this with fewer resources and shrinking space!

Nevertheless, a recent case in UW’s Department of Physics illustrates clearly the need for the Faculty Association and the University to work out appropriate guidelines for retiring and retired researchers. The issue is particularly acute for those researchers who are currently working full time but will be retiring prior to the end of their current granting period. In the Physics case, a faculty member retired at the end of August, 2002. His NSERC operating grant was in effect until the end of March 2003 and he had applied for a new grant in the fall of 2002. In addition, he was the principal investigator on a CFI project that had been funded in 2000. However, within one month of his retirement, both laboratory space which he had been using for his experimental work and all of the equipment which NSERC had awarded to the university for his research projects had been reassigned by the department chair to another researcher in the same department.

The details of this particular case are less important than the principles which were violated by the department’s actions. Indeed, there may be other similar instances of inappropriate and illegal reassignment of resources in other departments as well. The University of Waterloo recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the Roles and Responsibilities in the Management of Federal Grants and Awards:

[www.nserc.ca/institution/mou\\_doc\\_e.htm](http://www.nserc.ca/institution/mou_doc_e.htm)

The spirit of this document is that the signatures of university officials (including department chairs) on research grant applications bind those officials to providing an appropriate physical and organizational infrastructure for the conduct of research funded by the granting agencies, irrespective of the status of the grantee. It is also quite clear that the granting agencies award equipment to the university on the condition that it will be made available to the individual grantee and not to the department of that grantee.

The Department of Physics case illustrates that, even when the University is made aware of inappropriate actions, remedial measures are hard to negotiate. How much easier it would be for both researchers and administrators if there was a clear policy in place that conforms to the Memorandum of Understanding and is visible to all concerned. Retirees who continue to teach and do research can continue to make important contributions to the university community and, in particular, to students. It is obvious that their rights must be worked into a policy that is consistent with the needs of full-time members of departments. But the current climate of decentralized decision-making and vague guidelines is a breeding ground for dissatisfaction and misunderstandings.

*Editor’s Note: The Forum welcomes readers’ opinions on this matter.*

## FAUW Office

Room 4002, Mathematics & Computer Building

Phone: 888-4567, ext. 3787

Fax: 888-4307

E-mail: [facassoc@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:facassoc@uwaterloo.ca)

Website: <http://www.uwfacass.uwaterloo.ca>

## SALARY SETTLEMENT FOR 2003/04 RE-VISITED

*by Metin Renksizbulut  
Department of Mechanical Engineering  
Chair, Compensation Committee*

As you may recall, on February 4, 2002, we signed a two-year salary settlement covering the period from 1 May 2002 to 30 April 2004. The full text of this settlement is available at the FAUW web site (<http://www.uwfacass.uwaterloo.ca/>). On January 22, 2003, Statistics Canada announced that in 2002, the annual average all-items Consumer Price Index increased by 2.2% over its 2001 counterpart, and with this key piece of information, our salary settlement for 2003/04 has now solidified as follows:

Effective May 1, 2003:

- Across-the-board scale increase shall be 2.2%.
- A one-time Excellence Award is to be distributed in addition to the annual selective salary increases by treating the Selective Increase Unit (SIU) as being 500 units greater than what it would otherwise be; that is equal to  $2686 \cdot (1 + 2.2\%) + 500 = 3245$ , where 2686 is the current (2002/03) value of the SIU. Note that this Excellence Award affects the salaries permanently but not the value of the SIU; that is, the permanent increase in the SIU shall be limited to 2.2% in accordance with Article 13.2.2 of the Memorandum of Agreement. However, the salary floors and thresholds shall be increased permanently by 2.6% to the values given in the following table:

	Floor	Threshold (T1)	Threshold (T2)
Lecturer	\$ 38,726	\$ 71,922	\$ 88,518
Clinical Lecturer (Optometry)	\$ 49,791	\$ 88,518	\$ 105,116
Assistant Professor	\$ 49,791	\$ 99,583	\$ 127,245
Associate Professor	\$ 62,516	\$ 99,583	\$ 127,245
Professor	\$ 80,220	\$ 99,583	\$ 127,245

Members contemplating retirement should note that the option to exchange 1 week of vacation allowance for a one-time 2% increase in salary when within three years of retirement has been extended to April 30, 2009, with retirement on or before May 1, 2012 (see Article 11.4 of the Memorandum of Agreement).

On a separate note, you may wish to take a look at the following table if you are curious about our salaries relative to other universities in our comparison group, plus WLU and Guelph for obvious reasons. This table has been prepared using the latest information available from Statistics Canada.

### SALARY COMPARISON BASED ON STATISTICS CANADA DATA (2001/02)

(Non-medical/dental faculty only. Excluding senior administration, including lecturers. Age group less than 30 ignored.)

UNIVERSITY	Age group:	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60+	Institutional total and average	Avg using UW age cohort
GUELPH	Number of faculty:	36	57	84	114	105	129	87	612	
	Salary:	60819	68460	74821	85864	89669	95022	97813	85536	82149
	Percent over UW:	-0.9%	-5.8%	-6.3%	-1.9%	-4.3%	-7.0%	-9.1%		-5.5%
McMASTER	Number of faculty:	39	69	75	78	72	84	54	471	
	Salary:	63936	69234	75453	83708	92726	96263	99892	84109	83274
	Percent over UW:	<b>4.2%</b>	-4.7%	-5.5%	-4.3%	-1.0%	-5.8%	-7.2%		-4.2%
OTTAWA	Number of faculty:	45	81	99	105	144	111	66	651	
	Salary:	60239	65100	70886	83132	90053	99079	103759	83785	81850
	Percent over UW:	-1.9%	-10.4%	-11.2%	-5.0%	-3.8%	-3.0%	-3.6%		-5.9%
QUEEN'S	Number of faculty:	45	78	87	78	75	90	75	528	
	Salary:	68926	75591	79172	82346	92173	96206	102400	86288	85477
	Percent over UW:	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	-0.9%	-5.9%	-1.6%	-5.8%	-4.9%		-1.7%
TORONTO	Number of faculty:	126	201	210	225	237	288	267	1554	
	Salary:	79740	81675	88832	93918	100091	109292	114414	97810	95532
	Percent over UW:	<b>29.9%</b>	<b>12.4%</b>	<b>11.2%</b>	<b>7.3%</b>	<b>6.9%</b>	<b>7.0%</b>	<b>6.3%</b>		<b>9.9%</b>
WLU	Number of faculty:	30	33	42	57	57	48	30	297	
	Salary:	61230	65696	68125	73888	87071	98402	106529	80673	80028
	Percent over UW:	-0.3%	-9.6%	-14.7%	-15.6%	-7.0%	-3.7%	-1.0%		-8.0%
WATERLOO	Number of faculty:	63	99	132	93	96	96	87	666	
	Salary:	61388	72668	79860	87501	93653	102166	107632	86942	86942
	Percent over UW:	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		0%
WESTERN	Number of faculty:	57	120	114	114	120	138	105	768	
	Salary:	65925	64053	71906	73896	86942	94046	100522	80770	79548
	Percent over UW:	<b>7.4%</b>	-11.9%	-10.0%	-15.5%	-7.2%	-7.9%	-6.6%		-8.5%
YORK	Number of faculty:	33	111	102	132	156	207	252	993	
	Salary:	69260	73780	77121	81318	84897	93959	100900	87810	83121
	Percent over UW:	<b>12.8%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	-3.4%	-7.1%	-9.3%	-8.0%	-6.3%		-4.4%

*Reprinted with permission from The Chronicle of Higher Education (from the issue dated February 21, 2003)*

## OUR CODDLED STUDENTS

# How Harvard Compromised Its Virtue

*by Harvey C. Mansfield  
Department of Political Science  
Harvard University*

Harvard University's virtue – indulge me that old-fashioned word – is something I have observed with interest and concern for the 40 years that I have taught there. I have not made an academic study, but to understand a university today you must first take the pulse of the students. I have watched my students, asked their opinions, and read the undergraduate newspapers.

Harvard is America's leading university today not because it has the best faculty members or the shrewdest administrators, but because it has the best students – it gets the brightest, most-talented pool of applicants and the highest yield of acceptances from that pool. Its prestige does not come from seeking to be unique, as the University of Chicago once sought to be uniquely intellectual. Harvard's prestige comes from being at the leading edge of trends, thus justifying my focus on this one institution.

What happens at Harvard sometimes presages, sometimes reflects, what happens at other colleges and universities. And today, what I see occurring on the campus signals the damage that may result when higher-education institutions compromise their virtue to minister to the self-esteem of students.

Aristotle divided virtue into the intellectual and moral, and I shall begin with the first and move to the second. Harvard's intellectual virtue is respect for intellectual merit. There is little or no anti-intellectualism at Harvard, no anxieties that having a strong intellect may make you unhappy. The fashionable postmodern disenchantment with reason, indulged by Harvard, does not lead anyone here to wish he or she had less of it.

Conservative thinkers at Harvard say that respect for intellectual merit is limited by political correctness (a cliché that bores clever people but still stubbornly persists at the university today) and assert that a sense of merit is wrongly extended to beneficiaries of affirmative action and wrongly denied to conservatives. While that is probably true in fact, it is not true in principle. The liberal faculty members and administrators who are in charge at Harvard maintain that the university's virtue is diversity.

They would be very upset if they felt obliged to admit that they violate the principle of respecting merit with their policy of promoting such diversity. Their peace of mind depends on being able to convince themselves that advancing social justice does not come at the cost of respecting merit. But even if Harvard has not abandoned merit, it has certainly failed to educate it.

Harvard today, or the New Harvard, misses no chance to proclaim its devotion to merit and diversity, or to diversity without loss of merit, as opposed to the Old Harvard of white, male Gentleman C's – represented by people like Franklin Delano Roosevelt – for which nobody has a good word. But I will say this for the Old Harvard: at least it did not spoil its students. When it was luxury to go to Harvard, the students were not coddled. Now that Harvard is open to anyone with merit, they are.

You often hear from Harvard students that it's very hard to get into Harvard, but not very hard once you're there. But the faculty, for the most part, does not realize quite how easy Harvard is now. It thinks only of the difficulty of getting into Harvard, arising from the fact that merit, and not family wealth, is now the predominant factor in admission. Thus, essentially all Harvard students are bright. But are they equally bright?

Grade inflation is a statement that they are. The phenomenon may have once arisen from the notion that grading is an undemocratic act of oppression by teachers over students, but nobody now advances that stale claim from the 1960s. Grade inflation has become a thoughtless routine convenient for faculty members, students, parents, and administrators, in which an individual professor overgrades his students as unconsciously as a parent might spoil his children.

Together with grade inflation comes its twin, the inflation of praise in letters of recommendation. Students may not see these letters, but they are written as if your mother were pleading for your life. They combine the greatest urgency with the utmost praise, the loudest tone with the highest pitch. Stock analysts and traveling salesmen could learn their craft from such letters today.

A third element in Harvard's easy virtue is the degree of choice in the curriculum. This year's catalog of courses for undergraduate and graduate students is more than an inch thick and runs to 860 pages. It purports to offer choice to students – and it does. But it also serves the convenience of faculty members, who get to teach specialized courses on their research.

Harvard does have a core curriculum that requires about a year's worth of courses. General areas like literature and arts are required, but not specific courses. Students can choose from up to a dozen courses in each area, and each of those courses is designed to give a sampling rather than a survey. You learn a literary approach rather than a body of literature – as if the idea were to learn how famous professors think rather than how great authors write.

Students at Harvard denounce the core curriculum, and yet they take more core courses than are required of them. The paradox reveals a hunger in students to consider big questions and to study great people and events, even while the regime of choice under which they study has no sense of the relative importance of questions, people, or events. Any item of knowledge equals any other item, and knowledge itself becomes a question of perspective. There is nothing a student needs to know in order to be an educated person.

For students, the regime of choice does not strengthen the soul. It does not impart a bracing independence of mind in charting one's own course. On the contrary, it ensures that one can almost always find a way around doing something one doesn't want to do or has underestimated the difficulty of doing.

I am describing the regime of choice as if it were more rational, more considered, more chosen than it is. It seems, however, to have come into existence not so much by deliberate choice as by default, through the loss – or surrender – of professors' authority. Socrates compared himself to a midwife helping to bring out the truth that is already there. But besides serving as a midwife, a professor needs to be a taskmaster. Learning is not self-expression. It is a joy, but the joy is in work. Almost all students need to be set to work, and to do this the professor must have authority over them.

It is hard now for professors to be hard on students. It is difficult for them to give demanding assignments, make unsympathetic comments, enforce deadlines, and be sparing of praise and tough to impress. Students are far from denouncing and protesting the authority of the older generation; they are sometimes just short of worshipful of their professors. But the respect of students for professors

is exceeded by the respect of professors for students. And it is not that professors are devoted to their students in gratitude for their students' respect. Their devotion is limited by their failure, on principle but also for their convenience, to consider what is good for students. The principle is that what is good for students is held to be mainly, if not entirely, what is their own choice. That principle conveniently lets professors teach what they have chosen for their own research. The only limitation on students' choices is that they must not choose an education someone else might think is good for them.

Course evaluations by students, typical at colleges and universities since the 1970s, also undermine the authority of professors. Such evaluations make faculty members accountable to students on the basis of needing to please them, like businesses pleasing customers or elected officials pleasing voters. The superiority of those who know over those who don't know is slighted, and the students' judgment comes down to the charm of the professor as students perceive it. What at first might be justified as useful feedback from students ends up distorting the relationship between faculty members and students.

Another factor in the loss of professional authority is feminism. Feminism makes the liberal males who dominate universities feel guilty for having dominated for so long, for doing so even now. In their eagerness to share their power and palliate the appearance of patriarchy, they do their best to accommodate the viewpoint of women and soften their own authority.

Feminism made its way among intellectuals less by argument and action, like the civil-rights movement, than by "raising consciousness" – a concept of therapeutic insinuation that feminism did not invent but adopted. That concept reigns today in college and university administrations. Deans no longer lecture misbehaving students gruffly, glare at them unsympathetically, or dismiss their excuses sarcastically. Therapy is the order of the day, unctuous care the universal remedy. This solicitude for the young is performed with great good will, but it suggests that the duty of those in authority is to forgive, and it often comes across as weakness. A student knows very well when he or she is getting away with a misdeed, failure, or lax effort.

Self-esteem is the promise of multiculturalism and affirmative action, the two university policies of our time whose purpose is to give everyone the easy confidence of George W. Bush when he was an undergraduate at Yale. Somehow, though, the result of multifarious therapy is closer to anxiety than self-esteem. One can get a hint of the problem by noting that Bush did not get his self-

esteem from receiving high grades.

Yet it would be wrong to stop here. The faculty provides a forgiving rather than demanding atmosphere at Harvard, but students also create an atmosphere for themselves. At the Old Harvard, students took it easy because they had it made: Their families were prominent and wealthy. Now, students want to make things easy for themselves because they don't have it made. Their greater merit does not induce them to work harder; it only enables them to be more opportunistic. Students want an unblemished grade record not so much because they like being lazy as because they are ambitious. They strongly compete for the best jobs and, even more, for the plums of postgraduate study. At the same time, the undemanding atmosphere of the university itself does not free them of anxiety but only increases it because they know it is up to them to distinguish themselves.

Why should students want to distinguish themselves? Here we come to Harvard's moral virtue. It's because they have a sense of pride that urges them to do something important in their lives, something worthy of the merit they know they have. For the most part, these students are not sheer opportunists; their opportunism is in the service of their pride. Sometimes, their pride impels them to avoid the easy way and to seek out hard courses from which an A is unlikely. It's no good, after all, to receive general respect for your fine record if you don't respect yourself for the way you got it. The educators who promote the idea of self-esteem do not reflect on the fact that self-esteem is a matter of pride.

Which is why, ultimately, Harvard's true virtue is neither merit nor diversity. It is something perfectly obvious to anyone who looks at the place – except to its faculty members and administrators, who are almost perfectly oblivious of it. That virtue is ambition – the ambition to make something of one's life.

Years ago a student of mine, a Harvard senior, told a story about himself as a freshman. In his English course, a new instructor asked each student in the class to say what he expected to get from Harvard. When my student's turn came after all the others had spoken, he said he came to Harvard to get an education. The instructor exclaimed, "At last, a Harvard student who doesn't want to be president of the United States!" My student frowned and said urgently, "I didn't say that!"

Harvard students are aware of their ambition but do not quite understand it. The trouble with challenging yourself to a difficult course is that you feel you are risking your future by not getting an A. So, rather than being pampered by others, you pamper yourself just like the

Gentleman C student. But the Gentleman C knew how to enjoy life, and you don't. You worry too much. Your desire to get ahead, instead of seconding your pride, gets in its way and makes you ashamed of both getting ahead and pride. That is why the pressure from peers works less well than faculty pressure from above.

Harvard is afraid to look ambition in the face. To Harvard, ambition and the responsibility that accompanies it look elitist and selfish. ("Elitist" is the fancy, political version of "selfish.") Harvard gives its students to understand that the only alternative to selfishness is selflessness. Morality is held to be sheer altruism; it is service to the needy and the oppressed. A typical Harvard student spends many, many hours in volunteer work on behalf of those less fortunate. But what he or she plans for his own life – a career – seems to have no moral standing. To prepare for a career is nothing but to make a selection under the regime of choice. It is careerism – a form of elitism and selfishness – that seems unattractive even to those contemplating it.

Selfless morality is fragile and suspicious: Who believes a person who claims to be unconcerned with himself? Yet mere selfishness is beneath one's pride. Harvard is caught between these two extremes; it has lost sight of its virtue. It cannot come to terms with the high ambition that everyone outside Harvard sees to be its most prominent feature.

The notion of self-esteem rampant in American education today is a debased version of pride. It is pride that shies away from any standard of good education, fearing that to apply a standard will hurt someone's pride. But true pride requires a standard above itself in which to take pride. True pride is neither selfish nor selfless, but both. It is not afraid of a test – and would rather lose than flinch.

Harvard should respect the self-confidence of its students and not pay so much attention to their anxieties. If it did, it would cease to be such a trendy place. It would regain its own confidence, sometimes misnamed arrogance, and re-establish its right to leadership in American education.

---

*Harvey C. Mansfield is a professor of government at Harvard University. This article is adapted from a speech to the National Association of Scholars when he received its Sidney Hook award.*

*The Forum thanks Prof. Mansfield for permission to reprint his article.*

*Copyright 2003 The Chronicle of Higher Education*



*Reprinted with permission from The Chronicle of Higher Education (from the issue dated February 21, 2003)*

## OUR CODDLED STUDENTS

# Kamp Kenyon's Legacy: Death by Tinkering

*by P. F. Kluge  
Kenyon College*

Since returning 15 years ago to teach at Kenyon College, where I was a student in the early 1960s, I've become especially sensitive to change, to the costs and benefits of what passes for progress. I've reflected on life and on death, which comes closer with every edition of the alumni bulletin – my class notes inching toward white space and the necrology of “oldest undead graduate.”

Lately, I've begun to sense the college's mortality, as well. I sense it the way the admissions sales force talks of “making the class” – filling, maybe even overfilling, the freshmen dorms. I sense it in curricular reviews that question what we do and don't offer. And I sense it in the shudder we in the faculty and administration feel at the talk of virtual classrooms and online degrees, at the possibility that this ever-more-costly private institution that holds classes only nine months a year – with its dormitories, playing fields, swimming pools, and tennis courts – is at best optional, at worst irrelevant.

Kenyon, like many liberal-arts colleges, is a torn place. At current prices, we're obliged more than ever to deliver the goods, to turn out English majors who don't regard the apostrophe as an unidentified flying object. But that obligation is matched by another demand: to accommodate students in order to attract them to the college in the first place. The result? We have both Kenyon College and “Kamp Kenyon.”

I didn't coin the latter phrase or its spelling; the notion of Kamp Kenyon has been around 10 years, at least. It refers to that aspect of the institution that lets students get away with a lot, that coddles and gets conned. Kamp Kenyon deals with campus life and student problems: drugs, date rape, harassment, gender bias, dyslexia, dysfunction, angst, anger, homesickness, seasickness. It seems that bringing more counselors, mediators, and advisers to our campus in Gambier, Ohio, and to other higher-education institutions around the country, is a growth industry. These people are thoughtful and hard-working, and much of what they do has developed in response to real problems. Yet I wonder whether their initially useful presence does not signal the piecemeal mutation of Kenyon College, and other institutions, into a therapeutic kibbutz – ultimately compromising the purpose of a

college education.

Although Kenyon is about challenging and testing students, Kamp Kenyon is about serving clients. Kenyon keeps students busy; Kamp Kenyon makes them happy. Kenyon has rules, to which it makes rare exceptions; Kamp Kenyon has excuses, which then become rules. Kenyon trades in requirements; Kamp Kenyon trades in appeals, which become precedents, which become entitlements.

Kamp Kenyon manifests itself in small, seemingly trivial things that add up. For instance, several years ago, in the middle of August, faculty and staff members were invited to assemble in dormitory parking lots when the first-year students and their parents arrived. We were asked to greet them, help them unload their vehicles, and move things into dormitory rooms. I wondered whether I was the only one who flinched.

A couple of things bothered me. Envy was one. I came to college with one suitcase and a small electronic device. I don't remember whether it was called a “record player” or a “hi-fi,” but the speaker was in the lid. These days, new students arrive looking as if they've looted Circuit City.

The other issue is more serious. When I first came to Kenyon as a freshman, I was required to attend a speech in the college commons by the chairman of the English department – eloquent, sardonic Denham Sutcliffe. The night belonged to him. His theme was making the precious time at college count, taking our studies seriously, regarding ourselves as professional students. I can still see him leaning back, pausing, and then proceeding to recite lines from Pope's “Essay on Man.” The setting and Sutcliffe's voice, his style, his quality of mind seemed the proper frame for how a new student should encounter a professor. It's hard to imagine Sutcliffe helping some kid from Wilmette schlep his sound system into the dorm.

But at Kamp Kenyon, we not only help students move in to their dorms, we help them move out of courses. Even though Kenyon allows students to drop or add courses a

few weeks into the semester, and considers petitions for course withdrawal at any time, Kamp Kenyon has a mulligan rule: A student can withdraw from a course once before the senior year, without penalty, up to a week before the course ends. In my courses I have students on waiting lists. Is it appropriate for administrators to decide that a student who doesn't give a damn can bail out a week ahead of the final exam – while someone who earnestly wants to attend has been denied a place?

Kamp Kenyon's overly accommodating approach continues through the end of the year. For example, with final examinations and papers approaching, April is considered a stressful time for students, especially those who have blown off the first 10 weeks of the semester. They're in a bind, all right. But wait a minute! The student-affairs office now annually sends an all-campus e-mail message inviting administrators and faculty members to offer "comfort zones" for pressured students. A prize is awarded to the most ingenious entry. Last year, one office had a tableful of snacks and soft drinks. Outside a campus building, someone offered Popsicles from a cooler to passing students. Just next door, someone else had arranged for local masseuses to give in-chair back rubs to overburdened undergrads.

Kamp Kenyon's needs are huge, as is its agenda. We brag at Kenyon that we don't have a student union; the whole college is that. But recently we've been building student unions in disguise. A rickety old building that housed offices has been converted into a late-night theater and hangout. Plans for our new \$60-million athletic facility show a movie theater, meeting rooms, audio-visual equipment, computers, a juice bar, and a pro shop. In an inadvertently revealing decision, a residence last occupied by Kenyon's provost will now be the home of an assistant dean of students.

Underlying all this coddling is the notion that students must have options – food options, athletic options, entertainment at all times – and that it is the college's obligation to provide and supervise such things. You might think, as I do, that a student can be left to his or her own devices at 3 a.m. – to sleep, read, talk with other night owls, make love. That was the point of locating a college in a remote location in the Midwest, to escape from diversions. Now people are committed on behalf of the college to providing them.

In theory, I appreciate the impulse behind some of Kamp Kenyon's activities. I must say that it's possible that if I saw a couple of parents struggling with a half-ton sound system, I might pull into the dormitory parking lot and lend a hand. I might counsel and forgive a student with

problems in my class. I might even have a chat about those memories of abuse and dysfunction that work their way to the surface in April, just ahead of papers and tests.

But the damnable thing about the administrative initiatives I've described is that they pre-empt such individual acts of kindness. They are the students' co-conspirators, their new best pals, figuring out ways through and around professors and requirements. The institution gets into the act, into what used to be the professor's field of force, and that diminishes us.

If a student has problems, I get an e-mail message – an issues-gram, I call it – from student affairs telling me that so-and-so is going through a bad patch, and my forbearance would be appreciated during this troubled time. What is the problem? I wonder, but in vain. Something like doctor-patient privilege has come between me and my student.

Liberal-arts colleges remind me of those poignant cases you've seen on TV shows like *Live with Regis and Kathy Lee*: nondescript, nervous women bundled offstage for a makeover and returning an hour later – now happy about their hair, makeup, nails, and clothes. So, too, colleges attempt to make themselves over, with new buildings, summer-camp amenities, counselors, programs. They thrive on changes. But they should be reminded of what should never change, what must be kept out of the hands of the campus makeover artists: a true and vital engagement between the professor and the student.

This, then, is the death I picture for my small liberal-arts college – not dramatic but certainly lethal: death from tinkering, death from accommodation. It's hard to say how it happened, when it started, who's to blame. But it comes down to this: In our attempts to attract students to Kenyon and keep them there, will the college itself become less worth attending?

---

*P. F. Kluge is writer in residence at Kenyon College and the author of *Alma Mater: A College Homecoming* (Addison-Wesley, 1993). This article is adapted from a speech to the Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences.*

*The Forum thanks Prof. Kluge for permission to reprint this article.*

Copyright 2003 by The Chronicle of Higher Education

## MISCELLANEOUS THOUGHTS ON LEARNING FROM JOHN MILLAR

by Ken McKay  
Department of Management Sciences

In this article I would like to share with you some quotes by John Millar, a former Deputy Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario, on the subject of teaching and learning. Teaching with students, student-focused teaching, engaging students and having students learn to learn are great modern views of teaching and learning. But are they that modern? The quotes listed below are taken from Millar's book, *School Management and The Principles and Practice of Teaching* (Briggs, Toronto), published in 1897. It seems to me that Mr. Millar describes a very enlightened view of what an educator should do. It is interesting to reflect upon what has occurred in the classroom since 1897. A question to be asked is whether we in the twentieth century have learned anything really new about the principles of teaching that were not known and prescribed in 1897.

Teaching in the way prescribed by Mr. Millar implies the need to actually understand and think about pedagogy when designing and executing a course. This takes training in learning, cognitive skill acquisition and substantial effort on the part of the instructor. Courses taught in such a way are high maintenance as they challenge the student, try to achieve learning in the classroom and do not spoon-feed the student. The instructor's door must be open to the students for many hours each week and the instructor must persevere when students get cranky as they surely will when forced to think for themselves and when forced to face uncertainty and the unknown. A course design based on learning should guide the student towards an epiphany, hopefully before the end of term. This will cause the students some discomfort as the traditional *memorize, pattern recognition, and drill-and-kill* approaches do not work. Introductory courses cannot avoid being a transference of information and fundamental principles and data. Intermediate and senior courses should challenge the students to apply the ideas introduced in the foundation courses, to think abstractly, and to develop the abilities to reason and to face the unknown. In intermediate and senior courses, we do the students a disservice when we simply reiterate what students can read for themselves from the text. Thinking, the ability to think for themselves, the ability to exhibit reasonable judgment, and the ability to approach new situations should be the characteristics of a university education.

Quotes from *School Management and the Principles and Practice of Teaching*:

The possession of knowledge does not guarantee wisdom. The person who knows a great deal is not necessarily educated. An educated person has power and skill, which depend upon the proper acquisition of knowledge. Judgment and reason are not always characteristics of a mind stored with learning. (p. 33)

Cramming. This is a term used to denote a faulty method of imparting knowledge. It implies the practice of filling the mind with badly arranged facts, and not allowing sufficient time to generalize them, to compare them with previous acquisitions, or to determine their full significance. Knowledge put into the mind in such a way is not digested or assimilated, and instead of furnishing power and skill, becomes useless lumber. Cramming and educating are not the same. The former is pouring something into the mind; the latter is developing the mind by appropriate exercise. Cramming unduly develops the memory. Good teaching cultivates all the mental faculties in proper proportions. (p.33)

To become intelligent, pupils must be trained to exercise the powers of the mind on the knowledge they receive. In this way they become educated. (p. 34)

Knowledge which is systematized is scientific in its nature; and, as a consequence, can be traced to the general principles upon which it rests. (p. 77)

True teaching is not that which gives knowledge, but that which stimulates pupils to gain it. In a sense it may be said he is the best teacher who instructs least. The mind must do its own thinking, and it is a mistake for the teacher to suppose he can make his pupils intelligent by his own hard work. (p. 208)

"Teach students to find out for themselves" is a safe maxim. (p. 212)

Knowledge which cannot be put in language is indefinite and uncertain. ... In all teaching the acquired mental power of the pupils should be constantly tested. The

ability ... to observe, to reason, and to use language, is measured when he is called upon to state what he has acquired. Power to recall, to imagine, to compare, to analyze, to generalize and to discriminate, may be cultivated by practice ... (p. 213)

From the known to the unknown ... simple to complex ... concrete to abstract ... wholes, then parts (p. 215-217)

### **FORUM EDITORIAL BOARD**

*Edward Vrscaj, Applied Mathematics, Editor*

*Paul Fieguth, Systems Design Engineering*

*Paul Malone, Germanic & Slavic Studies*

*Jeffrey Shallit, Computer Science*

*David Williams, Optometry*

*Catherine Schryer, English Language & Literature, ex officio*

*Pat Moore, Faculty Association Office, Production*

### **FAUW FORUM**

*The FAUW Forum is a service for the UW faculty sponsored by the Association. It seeks to promote the exchange of ideas, foster open debate on issues, publish a wide and balanced spectrum of views, and inform members about current Association matters. Opinions expressed in the Forum are those of the authors, and ought not to be perceived as representing the views of the Association, its Board of Directors, or of the Editorial Board of the Forum, unless so specified. Members are invited to submit letters, news items and brief articles.*

*If you do not wish to receive the Forum, please contact the Faculty Association Office and your name will be removed from the mailing list.*

*ISSN 0840-7320*

## EDITORIAL: IS THIS SOMETHING?



- (a) Yes, it is something: The sign indicates that we are standing beside an official auto route of the republic of Slovenia.
- (b) Yes, it is a crosswalk.
- (c) Yes, but it is not a crosswalk. It is a “traffic calming device.”
- (d) It’s not clear if it is “something,” especially to drivers or pedestrians. As such, it represents a potential disaster.

A few people on this campus will understand answer (a). For those who think that it is off the mark, please consult the URL <http://www.fotw.ca/flags/si.html>. So, if you answered (a), you get full marks. In what follows, however, I shall be concerned with responses (b)-(d).

UW pedestrians beware! As much as you would desire, for your safety and/or convenience, that (b) be the correct answer, *it isn't!* According to UW documents, the “something” captured in the photo is *not* a crosswalk but a *traffic calming device*. Therefore the correct WATanswer is (c).

Let me qualify that the phrase *traffic calming device* – henceforth to be abbreviated as TCD – is not another attempt by this Editor at sarcasm à la Richard Mitchell. If you perform a UW Google search for TCD you will retrieve at least three postings that refer to the installation of these devices, e.g. *UW Gazette*, 13 September, 1995.

UW crosswalks were removed in 1995. According to then-VPAP Jim Kalbfleisch,

Pedestrian crosswalks on the UW Ring Road have existed in their present form for many years. They have come under increasing criticism because they do not conform to provincial standards for signage and sightlines, and are not recognized as crosswalks by some motorists. Also, they are often ignored or improperly used by pedestrians. In response to these concerns, the Joint Health and Safety Committee recommended the establishment of an ad hoc committee to develop alternatives to these crosswalks....

In accordance with the committee's preferred solution, the current crosswalks will be removed and will not be replaced. A number of other measures will be taken to promote pedestrian safety on campus, including increased signage, use of some traffic calming measures, and improved traffic enforcement. The Safety Office and UW Police will be conducting an educational campaign to encourage motorists, cyclists and pedestrians to exercise care and courtesy while using campus roadways and walkways.

Based upon my observations of pedestrian/traffic interactions with TCDs (known as "speed bumps" before our educational system and language became innovative), consultations with colleagues and two personal close encounters of the nearly disastrous kind, I am convinced that (d) is the correct answer to this quiz.

Regardless of any educational measures that may be in place, there seems to be a general uncertainty on the parts of both drivers and pedestrians as to the role of these TCDs. (First of all, how would you expect visitors to know the system?) Many drivers will slow down when pedestrians are in the vicinity, as a sign of courtesy. Other drivers try to go through these TCDs as quickly as possible, pedestrians or no pedestrians in the area. (I've even seen cars that swerve into adjacent drop-off areas or bus stops in order to avoid the TCDs.) Not surprisingly, I've noticed that many pedestrians are not sure about what to do when approaching TCDs. However, there are some who, quite aware of an approaching vehicle, make no attempt to get out of its way, presumably making a statement about pedestrian rights. And then there are the many others who simply walk across the ring road, possibly near a TCD, unaware of what is going on around them.

Several weeks ago, a colleague and I entered the TCD pictured above, judging that a huge 1960's-type "boat" down in front of Engineering 3 could not possibly reach us even if it were travelling at twice the campus speed limit. During our negotiation of the TCD, however, the sound of the boat's Saturn Vs seemed to be getting louder much too quickly. Only because we both jumped at the last minute were we able to avoid being hit, and only by inches. I shall never forget the sound of that V8 engine *not* revving down. Nor shall I forget the determined look of the driver who seemed to want to make a statement about driver rights. My colleague and I spent a few minutes arguing about possible "root causes" of this incident. He quickly dismissed the driver in terms of a posterior area of the human anatomy. Trying to take a superior "moral and ethical" stance, I suggested that the driver was probably in a hurry to get to Ljubljana.

Here's an even more bizarre encounter that took place two weeks ago. I was using the same TCD but walking in the other direction, toward the Davis Centre. Just before I stepped onto the road, I noticed that a Chrysler minivan was being parked near the curb on the other side of the road, slightly to my right. This is a popular drop-off area in front of the Davis building and, indeed, a student was slowly getting out of the van. After I passed the middle of the road, the van – only about 10 meters away from me – suddenly launched forward directly toward me. It would have hit me had I not been able to draw upon my inborn, yet somewhat rusty, Canadian talent to dodge the issue. Only after I jumped out of the way, during which time I questioned very loudly the wishes of my Creator, did the van stop. I went over to the driver to politely ask if he realized that this was a crosswalk. (Of course, in view of the UW document cited above, I was incorrect. I hope that he is not reading this.) He very sincerely apologized to me, explaining that he knew that we were in a crosswalk (so he was wrong as well!) but that *he did not see me because he was busy looking at the construction on top of Engineering 3 !!!!!*

There is a quantum mechanical explanation for these two incidents, in which I became an unwilling "Schrödinger cat." A brief discussion is provided in the Appendix.

One of the goals of the ad hoc committee mentioned earlier was

to reduce the number of vehicles using the ring road ... and slowing down the remaining cars by creating a physical environment that reduces the need for enforcement....

I'm afraid that this is not a realistic goal unless the ring road is closed – either to traffic or to pedestrians – both of which seem impractical. It's a safe bet that the degree of activity on UW's ring road will increase with time. For example, it is anticipated that even more students will be coming to our campus. More people, more goods, more services, etc., imply an even greater degree of traffic which obviously increases the risk of accidents. Distractions such as construction, pedestrians, bikers, drivers with cellphones, pedestrians with cellphones, bikers with Walkpeople, cellphones/Walkpeople/water bottles with semi-sentient beings attached to them, etc., will not help the situation. And, to

make things worse, no matter what we are doing or where we are going – by car, bicycle, foot or even quantum teleportation – we always want to do it more quickly.

Here are two possible improvements to the present situation:

- (i) the reinstallation of crosswalks,
- (ii) pedestrian-crossing zones with traffic stop signs.

I'm afraid, however, that if this problem is revisited there will probably have to be another ad hoc committee, with extensive discussion and consultation and much attention paid to "signage," asphalt, pedestrian rights, driver rights, duck rights and the environment. And even if either of the above alternatives is adopted, some degree of *traffic calming* (shall we call it "Motoritalin" or perhaps "Ritoline"?) will probably have to be established over other sections of the ring road. People naturally want to drive quickly when they can and longer sections of unblemished road serve as a natural stimulus for these inner desires.

Personally, I prefer the reinstallation of crosswalks. But let's please do something before the pedestrian/traffic situation gets worse. In official *innospeak*, let's

LAUNCH A STRATEGIC INITIATIVE FOR SAFE PEDESTRIAN-CROSSING CAPABILITIES!

What do you think?

ERV

#### Appendix: Quantum Mechanics of the Pedestrian/Traffic-Calming Device Interaction

The problem of traffic calming devices/pedestrian transfer may be expressed in terms of quantum mechanics which, as we all have recently learned, will be able to solve many of the world's problems. Quantum mechanics claims that an observer and the phenomenon being observed cannot be considered as separate noninteracting entities. Rather, they are both part of a greater whole. When you step into a traffic calming device, your wavefunction  $\psi_{ped}$  becomes *entangled* with that of an approaching car,  $\psi_{car}$  so that the total wavefunction of the system may be given by

$$\psi_{ped + car} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}[\psi_{ped} + \psi_{car}].$$

However, there is a modified Heisenberg-like uncertainty principle at work here:

$$\Delta_i (\text{Is this something?}) \Delta_i (\text{What should I do about it?}) \geq \frac{C}{2\pi},$$

where  $\Delta_i(x)$  represents the uncertainty in  $x$  exhibited by component  $i$  and  $i=1,2$  are the indices for the pedestrian and driver, respectively. (Here,  $C$  is Chrétien's constant of inaction.) A marvellous consequence of this hitherto unknown uncertainty principle is that the wavefunction for the pedestrian/car system is transformed into the following form (for details, including the exact form of the interaction Hamiltonian, see ERV, *Bull. Sh. Sci. Soc.* **27**, 46-82 (2003), in press),

$$\psi_{ped + car} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}[\psi_{ped = hit} \psi_{car = dented} + \psi_{ped = missed} \psi_{car = undented}].$$

According to the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics, the result of the pedestrian/car interaction is unknown until the wavefunction  $\psi_{ped+car}$  has been collapsed due to an observation (most probably one by CKCO TV, if the pedestrian is collapsed as well).

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*by Catherine Schryer  
Department of English Language and Literature*

Greetings and Salutations!

This month's message has only one purpose – to convince you that the FAUW needs you and that you can benefit from more participation in FAUW affairs.

Due to the Memorandum of Agreement (M of A) with the University, the FAUW is your sole representative on all issues related to faculty working conditions. Consequently, we represent your interests on issues related to salary, pensions and benefits, individual grievances and on a host of day to day decisions that affect faculty. As your representatives, we sit on Senate, Senate Executive, the Faculty Relations Committee, the Pension and Benefits Committee and many other committees. The Administration is also required to consult with us on issues that directly relate to faculty. In fact, in many ways we are rather like His or Her Majesty's loyal opposition (except that we have no interest in assuming power). And, in a similar way, because of our M of A much of the work of the University cannot be accomplished without our active support.

So what does this have to do with you? Presently, the FAUW needs more participation from its members. Some of our committees are not at full strength, and some of our committees need renewal.

Becoming more active in these committees FAUW offers you many benefits.

Most importantly, assisting the FAUW can be an interesting and effective way to fulfill some of your service requirement. According to our M of A, "service to the Association shall be considered as service to the University." As you provide this service, the FAUW will, in turn, offer you many opportunities to learn a great deal about the University and the political/educational environment in which we work, as well as opportunities to affect that environment through policy changes.

The FAUW and its Board is a dedicated learning organization. By opting to join one of our committees or the Board, you will be offered many opportunities to learn about salary structures, pension and benefit issues and the inner workings of the University. Many of us may not have the time to sort through some of these areas on our own. However, by joining a committee, you will find yourself understanding these issues simply by being exposed to them. Also, the FAUW by its very nature is truly interdisciplinary. Our committees and the Board are populated by representatives from each Faculty. Consequently, you will find yourself keeping up to date with news and issues that affect the entire University and not just your own Faculty. Finally, the FAUW now has extensive online connections with political and educational organizations that keep us abreast of news and research related to higher education. All Board members and Council of Representative members have access to this information on an ongoing basis. And we would be more than willing to send this information to any committee member who wishes access to it.

As noted earlier, the M of A ensures that the FAUW is a partner with the Administration in terms of developing policies that affect faculty. Consequently, through our committees and the Board, your advice and input into new or revised policies will be actively sought and attended to. The Board, in particular, has a commitment to consulting and listening to a diverse range of views. Typically, policies and decisions emerge in draft form from our various committees and then make their way to the Board. This process ensures that committee members have an active role in the decision making process.

At present, we need more participation to ensure that we are learning about and responding to faculty concerns. If you are interested in helping us, please contact our administrator, Pat Moore, at ext. 3787 or email me at [cschryer@watarts.uwaterloo.ca](mailto:cschryer@watarts.uwaterloo.ca). We will surely find a place for you.