Oregon Daily
EMERALD

Why PE Grades?

As winter term wears into the darker and chillier weeks ahead, most types of physical education and related activities will necessarily move indoors.

Winter term is also considered by many as the ideal time to renew interest and effort in the care and feeding of lagging grade point averages.

For some, a physical education course (over and above the University's requirements) is an aid for the GPA, as well as a good chance to keep in condition and become reasonably proficient in certain physical skills.

For others, we suspect, the addition of a PE course as an opportunity for organized recreation will not help—perhaps even hurt—the all-important GPA. And these people are often the ones who could benefit most from a PE course.

Those interested in maintaining some form of physical fitness must accept a grade for what are essentially service courses.

It may be argued that physical skills learned in a PE class can be graded as justifiably as can skills learned in a more academic class, such as English or history. And such grades are justifiable for PE courses designed primarily for PE majors.

But when the course is an elective, taken for its recreational and pleasurable aspects, we can't see the need of grades.

Why not make PE courses—particularly the 380-390 series for junior and seniors—a simple matter of pass or fail? The pass or fail method, with one hour's credit given, would insure often-enough attendance, but would not put such a premium on native physical skills. The service courses are, after all, not designed to develop star athletes. The athletic department has a corner on that business.

The University's School of Health and Physical Education has a high national reputation and we have no quarrel with its professional offerings. We only wish that we could take an elective service course for its own recreational sake, without worrying about the added pressure of a grade.

Don't Be Cruel

It was inevitable that a team of reputable psychiatrists would go after the story behind the story of a 20th century entertainment phenomenon—Elvis Presley.

Writing in the January issue of Harper's magazine, James and Annette Baxter offer some serious thoughts on the new man, not in a gray flannel suit but in blue suede shoes.

The Presley pattern of rock-and-roll music is outlined by the Baxters in a discomforting definition: as an "authentic barometer of the times."

Something the article calls "an enchanter" is given as the chief reason that the Presley commodity appeals to the teenagers and not particularly to their parents.

Complicating the whole business, say the Baxters, is the fact that Elvis may just be prodigiously gifted: "To those attentive to the music itself the most conspicuous feature of Elvis' singing is the versatility with which he exploits the tradition of the Negro 'blues-shouter.' "

The Baxters opine that the adults of today have reached the realization of their great dream ("ranch-style homes, organization-man jobs and exalted community status") which is totally accepted by their children. Thus the need for a really personal emotional outlet is met more than halfway by Elvis.

Added to this, say the Baxters, is the fact that Elvis "is able to laugh at us, and at himself, without knowing it, and while remaining altogether serious." His native Southern charm represents the last remnants of America's only real cultural frontier, they add.

Perhaps it would not be going too far afield to compare the adoration of Elvis to the so-called "rebel" element in young society. We've heard much about insecurity and are residents in an uncertain age, to say the least.

The entire puzzling matter is summarized neatly by the Baxter analysis:

"This neither fish-nor-fowl quality can be a frightening thing to adults, who suppose that they have fully identified themselves in an identifiable environment.

"But to adolescents, who detest above all the status quo—who want the world to be so limitless in its potentials that they cannot fail to find their changeling selves somehow secure within it—to them it is the throbbing substance of life itself.

"And when combined with the frenetic pulsations, the hectic, nervous quiverings of rock-and-roll, the rhythms of their own vacillations, it is enough to make Elvis a millionaire."

Oregon Daily Emerald

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The 'Quiet' Term

Most of us started the new year with a complete list of New Year's resolutions and a vow to keep them. It's a safe bet that most of the lists included a resolution to study harder during the coming term. This resolution was doubtless underlined when the grade reports arrived in the mail.

Winter term is traditionally regarded as the quiet term, when everyone tries to shore up his sagging grade point average. But after a look at this term's activity schedule, one wonders just how quiet the term will be.

A busy basketball schedule, concerts and three varieties of lectures are on the calendar to compete with Religious Emphasis Week, Dad's Weekend and the Winter Carnival. To this list add house dances, the Frosh Sno-ball and the regular activities which go on and on and on throughout the year. The "quiet" term seems to be something of a misnomer.

So while you're writing or revising your resolutions, why not include one to limit your extra-curricular activities to those in which you are really interested or have genuine value.

It's the easiest thing in the world to get involved in more activities than you can possibly handle. And many have dubious value.

It's not too late to resolve to make this a worth-while, if not a quiet, term.

Footnotes

One Emerald reporter made a set of New Year's resolutions which he says are worthwhile as well as easy to keep. He resolved not to kick small dogs, not to rob mailboxes and not to turn in false alarms to the fire department.

Too Much Homework

"MATH 'F', PSYC 'F', ENGLISH 'F', AN' A 'C' IN PHYS ED. — JUST SHOWS YA WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YA SPEND ALL YER TIME STUDYIN' ONE SUBJECT."

James Marlow

Eisenhower's Speech Only Part of Story

By JAMES MARLOW
AP News Analyst

WASHINGTON (AP) — In his State of the Union message to Congress Thursday, President Eisenhower will outline the steps he thinks necessary to stay abreast of the Russians—if it is not already too late—or to get ahead of them.

The very steps he suggests will make his listeners, in and out of Congress, wonder: Why didn't he do this before? Why this late date? For instance, he will ask for a big money increase for defense, particularly for missiles.

This country was working on missiles and knew the Russians were. But the administration didn't develop a sense of urgency until the Russians shocked the nation with the evidence of their progress in missiles and Sputniks.

But these Russian blows to American complacency—with a new one added in a report a Russian had been fired 186 miles into space and returned—were not the only warnings to the administration that speed is needed.

In the past two months two reports by distinguished citizens—one still concealed by the administration and the other made public over the weekend—called for great effort to match or surpass Russia.

The still-concealed report was put together by businessmen, scientists and military men under the chairmanship of H. Rowan Gaither Jr., appointed by Eisenhower to look into our defense needs.

Bits of this one have leaked out, indicating the Gaither group has painted a frightening picture of the future unless this country wakes up and employs a greater energy and imagination than it has used so far.

The administration has even refused to show this report to the Senate subcommittee—under the chairmanship of Lyndon Johnson, Texas Democrat — which is now investigating the defense program.

The other report—made by a similar but different group of men working independently of the government under the sponsorship of Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Inc.—was released to the public Sunday.

It said that unless this country acts fast in a number of ways, at home and abroad, military superiority and the world balance of power will shift to Russia.

It is against this background—and to a nervous Congress and with a bewildered public listening—that Eisenhower will deliver his State of the Union message.

Any such presidential message—delivered every year by the man in the White House at the opening of Congress—must of necessity be simply an outline of plans stated in fairly general terms.

But if such a message is to have any real meaning a president must follow it up the rest of the year with specific proposals to carry out what he outlined in his general State of the Union message.

So what Eisenhower says Thursday is only part of the story. How he follows it up is what counts.

Our Contemporaries

(ACP)—The Asian Student reprinted this from the Hong Kong Standard:

Here is a suggested addition to our dictionary:

Suptnik v.t. -niked, -niking, 1. To outsmart. 2. To steal a march. To surpass in cunning. As in: He sputniked me and got a date with June. Syn., see Frustrate.

* * *

(ACP) — An enterprising group of young men at Montana State college, Bozeman, have been working on a booklet called "College Man's Guide to Freshmen Women." The Montana Exponent said the book contains pictures of some 300 freshmen girls.

* * *

(ACP) — More on married students on campus: At Colorado State university they're having a "Mrs. OSU" contest. Wives of students or married women who are students are eligible.

"For all those married women on campus who have dreamed of becoming queens," says the Rocky Mountain Collegian, "the opportunity of a lifetime has arrived."