

# Night of the Living Dead week

by Joseph J. Wheeler

The professor looked annoyed because most of the class hadn't done the homework. "I ought to give you more homework. Something difficult. Something to make all of you sorry."

It only took a moment, but a student called out, "Can't do it. It's Dead Week."

The professor's eyes glazed over, "Dead Week? What do I care about that?"

Another student joined in. "You can't assign new stuff or give us any tests during Dead Week. That's the rules."

By now the professor was pacing nervously, like a panther watching small, munchy children lap ice cream cones outside it's

cage. "This is ridiculous. I can assign anything I want!" he said. A dark expression clouded his features. "Can't I?"

With almost one voice, the class said, "Not during Dead Week."

Dead Week: A time for quiet retrospection and preparation for finals (with a mad dash at finishing term papers thrown in, of course). Generously given to students by the Faculty Senate in 1987, Dead Week was proposed as a week of study designed to help students better perform on final exams.

There are those who would defy Dead Week. They are the

professors who, to the ultimate psychological ruin of their students, ignore Dead Week. They are The Living Dead.

Like the creatures who terrorize George Romero's splatter-flicks, the Living Dead lurch at students until the final reel is played out. "Homework!" they hiss. "Quiz!" they groan. Slobbering over thick texts assigned to be read in the final two days of class, the Living Dead stagger about their classes, bumping into walls and mumbling incoherent nonsense about how tough classes were when they were in school. Their eyes resemble empty holes, their clothes are tattered and hang from their bodies in shreds.

They don't shower. "Arrgh, how about an hour-long, sit-down written exam?!" they howl.

Lets' face it, students resent professors who fail to honor Dead Week. Although certainly not a long tradition, Dead Week has already been distorted into more of a legend than than a fact. The students who told their professor that assigning homework was a no-no during Dead Week were simply wrong. Many students, it seems, have incorrect ideas concerning this phenomenon called "Dead Week."

The first misconception is the name itself. It's not Dead Week at all, but simply Study Week. There's nothing "dead" about it.

Classes continue, and the only thing professors are asked not to do is give hour-long, sit-down exams during the last week of regular classes. That's it. Homework can be assigned, assignments turned in, quizzes taken, and all the regular goings on of class observed, including taking attendance.

So professors who assign homework aren't the Living Dead. They're simply doing what they've been doing since the semester began. Students who gripe about it should remember what Study Week was meant to accomplish and not pipe up, "It's Dead Week!"

The only thing "dead" in that statement is the student's brain.

## A case for dignity

Dear editor,

I am tired, tired and terrified. I'm tired of hearing the anti-war yelling. I'm scared because I think that the cries now being yelled towards the government will be yelled at the soldiers later.

I still remember Vietnam.

My father served there for five years. Some said that to enlist to serve in a shooting war is like "wanting to kill." My father's reasons were different.

He was an extremely qualified helicopter pilot. He felt that by staying in he would take the place of another, and perhaps save a few lives of those who weren't so experienced.

He did save a few lives. Maybe he saved your father's life. But he had quite a homecoming.

He had just gotten off the plane in L.A., and there we were waiting for him, my mother and I. Before we were close enough to even give him a hug, a 19-year old girl walked up to him and spit in his face. "Baby killer!" she screamed at him.

I wasn't old enough to understand what was going on, then, but I am now. It was the screams of a girl — an angry girl who was tired of screaming at the government and who decided to take out her anger on an innocent soldier. The entire country did the same thing.

It is just in the last few years that the injured Vets are getting their due compensation. It is just the last few years that a Vet can say he fought in Vietnam without embarrassment or having to justify what he did.

My father is now in Saudi Arabia, as well as my brother-in-law, my uncle, my aunt, and many, many of my friends. I fear for them. And I pray every one of them survives, and comes home to an understanding nation. Not understanding, necessarily, of the actions the government may take, but of the sacrifice they made. Please don't direct anger at them again.

Nonja Ellis  
Sophomore, Hotel

## Test Site is harmful

Dear Editor,

Assistant Editor Joseph J. Wheeler made a startling statement in his Nov. 20 opinion piece that begs a response. The comment, "no one has ever shown one bit of evidence that the Test Site has harmed anyone in anyway" is seriously misleading. I don't know what passes for harm in Mr. Wheeler's mind, but the government's own documents make the case against him.

In a 1979 Nuclear Regulatory Commission document, it was calculated that 35,000 to 85,000 people had been killed as a result of nuclear testing. From the "Downwinders" of Utah who were exposed to fallout from the above ground tests in the fifties and sixties, the the Marshal Islanders in the Pacific who suffer from thyroid disorders and birth

defects to this day, to the "Atomic Vets," the estimated 235,000 U.S. soldiers who witnessed nuclear explosions in both the Pacific and the Nevada Test Site.

The Department of Energy admits that 1961 and 1987, 311 out of 567 announced tests vented radioactivity into the atmosphere. 50 of these released sufficient amounts to be detected off-site.

The United States is not alone in this. The Soviet Union, France, China, and Great Britain also test with the same results; the release of radionuclides into the air.

On the subject of the Greenpeace backcountry action to stop the joint U.S./U.K. test, "Houston," Mr. Wheeler simply missed the point. The basis premise of any nonviolent action is that there is a basic humanity in people that we attempt to reach. One way to

do that is to expose ourselves to the possibility of harm, even death, if it means that we can reach the humanity that we know exists.

We are not trying to claim anyone as an "enemy" (a phrase we do not use), but rather say, "We trust your compassion and sense more than we trust nuclear weapons," and hope that we are correct. Trust in your fellow human has always accomplished more than fear and weapons, and at much less cost. The actions we take are a witness to our belief that, given a choice, people would rather cooperate than fight. If civilization makes sense, nuclear weapons don't.

Ted Thomas  
Coordinator Backcountry Project for American Peace Test.

## Politics of the oval table

by William Holt

President Bush sits at the oval table quietly, then says, "Pass the sugar. What's new?"

Advisor #1 replies, "We have found that 75 million Americans are now or may later be well below our poverty line and may experience starvation."

Bush asks, "Is this true?"

Advisor #2 answers the president with, "I think these terms are too extreme. You know, Mr. President, it is we who define poverty. Most of those people won't realize, or won't think that they're poor. Plenty of people have been happy without food. Starvation is purely subjective."

Bush scolds his agitated advisor, "That was completely uncalled for and will not be repeated. We currently have five billion dollars waiting to be spent. That money came from the hard workers of this nation. It is the job of the president to compensate their efforts. We can't always think of ourselves."

Advisor #1 asks, "What is your proposition for our loose 5 billion, sir?"

Bush turns his head to the

third advisor, "Tell them what we have, advisor number three."

Advisor #3 injects, "The president and I have determined that we can either spend the entire five billion on the poverty dilemma in this nation and go ahead and wipe out poverty altogether, or we can purchase three nuclear missiles and place them strategically about the globe, increasing our times-over-destruction-of-the world capability by seven percent. The third member of our five billion dollar committee thought we might want to have only two missiles and pull only the deserving out of poverty with \$1.5 billion, like white middle aged males."

Advisor #2 complains, "This is ridiculous. I'm beginning to agree with our public. There are other things to spend money on. Why, with that five billion dollars, we could help the Rockefellers start seven new plants in third world nations and really help this country, give Reagan's trickle down theory another go."

Bush looks at his second advisor in a you're-out-of-line way,

"Are you forgetting why I let all of you be my cabinet?"

Advisor #2 whispers in a groan, "I forgot, sir. Screw 'em."

Bush takes the table as an orator and proclaims, "Gentlemen of the cabinet, I have considered the options at hand, and my decision: buy the three nuclear missiles and prepare them as planned. In the meantime, we will take three million from our "unnecessary taxes" fund and start a campaign to prevent our citizens from burning the American flag.

"I have on my desk a report of a young man who burned the flag in the middle of a street in Texas. I want \$3 million to go toward the exploitation of the incident and the arrest of our pawn, 'suspect', by inspiring other young men to burn the flag and create a national uproar.

"Students and concerned citizens around the nation will soon develop organizations against flag desecration, and that 75 million people will soon have more important things to worry about than merely not having enough

food.

"By taking these measures, we will have diverted the attention of the public, and soon the attention of congress, from issues that actually matter and will hopefully never be resolved."

Advisor #1 exclaims in a sweat, "Are you sure that millions of people will put flag burning as an actual priority and spend several hours a day to fight for an issue that never existed and really doesn't matter?"

Bush corrects his servant's lack of confidence with, "It will work, and they'll even have extra incentive, because they'll see a chance to affect congress as the democrats and republicans squabble against each other."

Advisor #1 whimpers to the president, "But how can this work (puzzled, as if in a dream)?"

Bush smiles and says, "Don't you see? The voters made the right choice. They've elected a genius. Like I've always said, never underestimate the Bush."

Bush orates to the trium-

phant music of "Stars and Stripes Forever," "Today, Operation 'Flag Desecration.' Tomorrow... (President Bush looks through the window out into space) da, da, da-da, da-da-da, da, da-da...

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