

Apathy - A crowded major

by Scot D. Campbell

I have reached the sad but inescapable conclusion that I am hopelessly naive.

I expected to find college a vibrant center of learning, a place where heated discussions led by probing professors would boldly uncover truths. I thought the university system was a magnet for the country's best and brightest, a place where the future of America and the world would be shaped, and not incidentally, a place where skills and marketability could be discovered and tested in an environment of ambitious experimentation.

Despite the fact that this is what higher education can and should be, all that I seem to see is

apathy everywhere around me.

The heart and soul of UNLV (or any university) is the classroom, and it is here that this lack of caring manifests itself first and foremost. For nearly every scheduled class meeting, it seems that there is no less than one third of the class missing, and every day is an adventure in new faces. More often than not, of those remaining students, there are always a few who are madly scrambling to finish assignments due for the next class. Inevitably, it is from this half of the class that squeals of delight can be heard for a "C-." Can anyone tell me why these people are even here?

In a day not so long ago, a college campus was where you could find people tuned into issues

relevant to the time with a hot finger on the pulse of the world. It was on the college campus that the nation's conscience could be heard, a bastion of enlightenment in a

tomind. But as I walk through the Student Union, the burning issues of today seem to be Friday's beer bust at Delta house. By no means can I call myself a radical, but even I yearn for a topic of conversation every once in a while that stretches the bounds of imaginations rather than the bounds of the grapevine. But it seems that today most of us are unaware of the world around us as well as our place in it.

So I guess it should come as no great surprise that employers are now viewing those with a college education with a cold lack of respect and a great deal of trepidation. Even those in our own career counseling department are now pointing out that the main usefulness of a college degree is in the

"area of promotability." What they're really trying to tell us is that no one is scrambling to hire people who don't care about something as basic as their own classes.

There are many out there who really do care, attending the university in a sincere effort to improve both themselves and their chances in the world. But thanks to the overwhelming sense of apathy that pervades our campus, the road to success is an uphill one, attempting to overcome an image of students as being ill-prepared and uncaring. Maybe I was just raised differently. I thought that college was no place to be average.

Campbell is a reporter with The Yellin' Rebel

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world waiting to go wrong.

If for some reason you can't recall Vietnam, perhaps the image of a square in Peking will come

The road goes ever on...Part 2

by Frank Ellis

Editor's note: Tuesday, Dr. Ellis outlined some of the difficulties in mastering Russian, and how the demand for qualified speakers of Russian will continue as the Soviet Union plays a greater role in world politics, sociology and business affairs.

My own career in Russian studies began in one of those fields. Having completed an army language course, I served in Berlin as a full-time Russian and German interpreter. It was here that I had my first serious encounter with Russian literature. Lermontov, Turgenev, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy and Zamyatin were all grist to my mill.

I felt, and still feel, an affinity with Dostoevsky. Madmen, pros-

titutes, psychopaths, drunkards, perverts, political fanatics, tyrants, visionaries and heretics inhabit Dostoevsky's fiction. These are men and women on the brink of insanity, collapsed personalities, driven and obsessed by ideas. What makes them so terrifying and fascinating is that they are very much a part of our world. A compulsive gambler, Dostoevsky would not have been out of place in Las Vegas. Walk in the streets and you will see his ghost.

Arduous study prepared me well for my first professional meetings with Russian soldiers and diplomats. There is one I will never forget. It was three o'clock in the morning. I was summoned to the Soviet checkpoint on the autobahn heading towards the Federal Republic of Germany. It

was January and bitterly cold. I was greeted by a Soviet colonel, who casually asked me whether I would like to collect the naked British soldier standing alongside their building. There to my utter horror stood a naked man violently shivering in the sub-zero temperatures. Drunk, he had tried to smash his way through the barrier at the Soviet checkpoint. The Russian guards, having stopped him at gunpoint, removed his clothes and let him sober up - some three hours before they summoned me.

Not all of my experiences were as dramatic. Conversations were often full of official banalities. On occasions, however, particularly under the influence of vodka, the mask fell away exposing a world into which I was invited to enter for a brief spell. I now reaped a handsome reward for the many hours spent studying the language. We talked about Stalin, Sakharov an Solzhenitsyn, and I might add, at a time when glasnost and perestroika would have seemed like the inventions of a madman. Nothing was forbidden. Such sessions were rare, which makes them all the more precious. They are something to be savored, a personal treasure; they bear witness

to the power of language to transcend the barriers of ideology.

In concluding this piece, I would like to return to the importance of Russian literature. It seems to me that Russian writers have an immense amount to say to the complacent, self-indulgent and materialistic West. The central and enduring theme of Russian literature is freedom. The experiences of Boris Pasternak, Andrey Sinyavsky and Alexander Solzhenitsyn, to name a few from a long and honorable list, repeatedly force us to ponder that freedom, as Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor observed, is indeed a terrible gift. Freedom without responsibility and sacrifice is not freedom; it is license. This, I would argue, is one of the most important lessons that Russian literature has for the West.

There is one other. The trials and tribulations of Russian writers demonstrate the inseparable link between freedom and language. While language retains its integrity, no tyrant will ever achieve complete domination.

Dr. Ellis is an assistant professor of Russian and German at UNLV.

Letters to the Editor



Take it from a Marine

Dear Editor,

The Leader's Code:

"I become a leader by what

First, congratulations on I do. I know my strengths and your independence. Secondly, I my weaknesses and I strive can writing to you regarding stantly for self-improvement. I what's going on with UNLV's lively by a moral code, with which Student Government. I set an example that others can

I strongly believe that Stu- emulate. I know my job and I dent Government is intended to carry out the spirit as well as the serve students through the hon- letter of orders I received. est and dedicated group of stu- "I take the initiative and dents who want to serve with seek responsibilities, and I face great leadership. Therefore, I'd situations with boldness and like to share two things I learned confidence. I estimate the situ- from the Marine Corps to be an ations and make my own deci- outstanding leader, from The sions as to the best course of Leadership Principles and The action. No matter what the re- Leader's Code. quirements, I stay with the job until the job is done; no matter what the results, I assume full responsibilities.

"I train my men as a team and lead them with tact, with enthusiasm, and with justice. I command their confidence and their loyalty; they know that I would not consign to them a duty that I myself would not perform. I see that they understood their orders, and I follow through energetically to ensure that their duties are fully discharged. I keep my men informed and I make their welfare one of my prime concerns.

"These things I do selflessly in fulfillment of the obligations of leadership and for the achievement of the group goal."

Philip Sue (USMCR) junior hotel administration

- Leadership Principles
1. Be tactically and technically proficient.
 2. Know yourself; improve yourself.
 3. Know your men and look out for them.
 4. Keep all hands informed.
 5. Set the example.
 6. Ensure that every task is understood, supervised and accomplished.
 7. Train your people as a team.
 8. Make sound and timely decisions.
 9. Develop a sense of responsibility among your subordinates.
 10. Employ and handle your men in accordance with their capabilities.
 11. Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions.

