The plus and minus: Drop them or keep them?

By KELLY TIEN
-Diamond Editor-

"An experiment! I didn't even know I was part of one," if you're a student at Dordt you're part of one whether you like it or not.

The experiment referred to is the "grading system experiment" that has been taking place since the second semester of the 1975-76 school year. The purpose was to evaluate what effect the "+" and "-" grading system would have on individual and overall grade-point averages. During this period the "plus" and "minus" was recorded on the report card, but it was not considered when computing GPA.

Results of the experiment revealed that 27.3 percent of the students were helped, 18.2 percent were not affected, and 54.6 percent were helped, 18.2 percent.

"If the study has shown that for the most part students are hurt by the new system, no matter how slight the difference is, then they should be allowed to have the old system," a student whose GPA was between 3.60 and 4.00 was hurt greatly. The decision now is whether or not to continue the experiment, from what seems to be the "+" and "-" system.

English professor Hugh Cook feels "the straight A, B, C method is too broad of an evaluation. A plus is better than a minus and should be recorded as such." He also feels "we are forcing 1100 students to take inaccurate scores in order to benefit the few who do go to a graduate school."

But the opposite view was best expressed by Student Forum President John Kanis. "If the study has shown that for the most part students are hurt by the new system, no matter how slight the difference is, then they should be allowed to have the old system."

"At the present time the faculty has voted to keep the experiment operation. The debate has begun; which side are you on?"

Second political conference planned

Many Dordt students attended the International Christian Political Conference at the beginning of first semester. A second conference is now being planned for this coming summer.

Professor Case Boot, one of the conference coordinators, says that there will be "more time to share ideas with fellow Christians." The '77 conference discussed the Biblical view of government and justice, and Boot sees the 1978 conference as "a time to put that basic view into some proposal or plan."

New numbers

Dordt's total enrollment figure went down from 1112 students last semester to 1069 students this semester. 97 students either transferred or dropped out and 54 new students were added.

We pray for God's blessing on those who left us, and give a hearty welcome to those who joined us.

Schaeffer series begins

The first segment of the Francis Schaeffer Series, "How Should We Then Live," will appear on the screen February 12, at 9:00 p.m., in C160. The celebrated Schaeffer series will show two segments at a time on consecutive Sundays, with this Sunday's films starting in the Roman age continuing to the Middle Ages.

The first film, "The Roman Ages," centers on the lives of Julius Caesar, Augustus Caesar, and the Emperor Diocletian. Schaeffer explains why he chose the lives of the Romans for his beginning of history. "I suppose any point in history would be good, but we are starting with Rome because it is a direct ancestor of the Modern West."

The film will revolve around the size and military strength of the Roman Empire, encompassing the culture of the era, the persecution of the Christians, the political regimes, and the fall of Rome.

Schaeffer asks the viewers of his film the following questions: 1] History does not repeat itself. But the parallels between history of the Roman Empire and the twentieth century West are many and obvious. How can these statements be reconciled? 2] How can a survey of Roman history in one-half hour be either useful or responsible?

The second film following the Roman Ages is entitled "The Middle Ages". Schaeffer takes his history from Aristotle to John Huss, centering on the life of the post-Roman world, the Church, the artistic achievements of the time, and the developments on the eve of the Renaissance.

Schaeffer asks his viewers to comment on the following statement: "To speak of distortions of belief in the Middle Ages is to pretend that the church should have stood still when the apostles died. But we have to adapt to new circumstances and ideas as the medieval church did."

To date, the Fine Arts Committee, sponsors of the series, do not plan a discussion following the showing of the films. However, the response of the first segments might warrant discussion following further segments. Students will be notified of any changes.
Dear Editor:

After the Varsity Club meeting of January 30th, I was urged by fellow members to publicize a statement concerning related Varsity Club issues. The Varsity Club (composed of those who've lettered in varsity sports) is probably the most powerful and influential student club on campus. Our club boasts a membership of more than fifty, and we annually make a profit of thousands of dollars.

But we're a self-oriented club. We're a service organization, with the mandate to aid and help areas we deem needy of our assistance, and to promote Dordt athletics. Twice. And now everyone thinks we deem needy of their assistance, and we hope for such action, I suggest we be-- with the times.

"But everyone else is doing it!" in our more "mature" days, we've all used this line once or twice. And now everyone thinks that because Calvin and Trinity have "legalized" dancing, maybe Dordt will soon follow suit. But before we either dread or eagerly hope for such action, I suggest we answer a few questions within ourselves. I'm not about to spew forth a strong pro- or anti-dancing editorial because I think the issue commands much more thought and intelligence than I'm capable of. It's too bad that so many times, decisions are made without even asking the right questions. And it's too bad that respected institutions often try so hard to "keep up with the times."

"I don't know if dancing can be God-glorying. Maybe it could be if done in the "right" atmosphere, but who decides what makes all those things "right"? When you're out on the dance floor, what are you thinking of?: what are you looking at?: just what kind of image is it you're trying to portray?: Most of you probably think these are rhetorical questions: ones that have been asked a million times. But they're real, and it's a real issue right now. To dance or not to dance is a decision many of us make very lightly. I know because I've done it myself. Sure, it's easy to use the excuse, "It's good exercisc;" "It builds up our bodies as God's temp les," and leave it at that. But wait a minute. What about that atmosphere?: Isn't that what it's all about?: Take away the strobe lights, tone down the music, clear away the atmosphere--what do you think now?: Boring...or is it perhaps an atmosphere where we can see, unclouded and well-defined, if dancing could, perhaps, glorify our risen Lord and King?

THE EDITORIAL BOARD

The latest headlines on campus...

The new pizza parlor was going to open last semester, but I guess the guy couldn't cut the cheese.

I guess we should apologize to Conductor Grotenhuis for the oversight concerning his Male Chorus Concert last week. Next time we'll make sure the reporter we send is ours!

Those student teachers must really be praying. I hear they've been staying home a lot lately due to the weather.

Three girls developed ulcers this past week. Twirp Week will do that to you, but don't give up. There are still two days left to ask that "one and only.

Northwestern's basketball team is prepared for the Defenders. They found three gorgeous "girls" to cheer them on to victory. After all, it worked for us, maybe it'll work for them?

Conferee reacts to Dating Conference

By MARY MEUTHER

On Friday afternoon, over 130 students gathered in C160 to open the session of the International Conference on Christian Dating. Each participant arrived with different sets of expectations. Doubts, and fears. Neither the conferees nor participant arrived with different sets of expectations. Doubts, and fears. Neither the conferees nor group discussion leaders, in their session of the International Conference on Christian Dating. Each participant attended with the challenge to return practical application of these ideas to the community. Comments in the practical application of these ideas will stimulate growth in the Christian community.

Neil recognized, "It is easy to experience al ot of good feelings and yet shy away from the challenge of the more enduring joy that comes from discovering each other. We now pray that those who come will really step out with boldness and see God's blessing in their relationships with each other."

Neil established an awareness of our present conformity to the world's standards of attractiveness and social acceptability and called us to honestly express our commitments to one another as fellow members of the body of Christ. To many, it became apparent something deeper than "dating" was being discussed. That word "dating" has some definite problems.

After an hour, the group was dismissed with the challenge to return the next morning to work out the practical application of these ideas the Lord's presence and guidance was genuinely felt.

We are striving to develop journalism which proclaims the Lordship of Christ. Individual opinions will vary, but we hope that the communication of these ideas will stimulate growth in the Christian community.

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LAYOUT WORKERS: Cindy Koldenhoven, Deb Maatman, Sue Terstacott, Fem Van Houten, Wilson Vander Hoogd, Colleen Vander Weele
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They’ve returned to find roots

If anyone has missed a few faces around our campus, they may belong to the students who decided to take a peek into their heritage with a semester in Holland.

In the above picture, Dordt students include Tony Bylenga, Alice De Jong, Annette Haizina, Helene Gietema, John Mulder, Barb Van Gilsela, Gordon Vlieg, and Trudy Van Delft. There are also ten students from Calvin and Trinity in the program.

After a two week initiation period at Trinity, the students flew to Amsterdam. They settled at Noordwijk aan Zee, a small coastal town, and will attend classes in Leiden which is about a half hour drive from there.

All students are required to take a full five course load Mondays through Thursdays. These are taught in English except for the Dutch language courses. Right now the students are studying Dutch language and literature, Dutch art and architecture, Dutch society, modern European history, and a supervised independent study of their choice.

During their two week Spring Break, the students must find their own transportation and may travel to any country they desire to see.

If anyone thinks these eight people may be lonely in Holland, feel free to drop them a line. Send it to: Trinity Christian College, 't Meeuwenoorde, De Ruyterstraat 10, Noordwijk aan Zee, the Netherlands.

Ozinga discusses Christian communications

Dr. Thomas J. Ozinga, director of college relations at Calvin College, examined the different facets of communication last week in a series of lectures. He also took a few minutes off for an interview with the Diamond.

Ozinga feels “many Christian journalists deal with the sensational--'How the Lord grabbed me and turned out in full-force to the tune of seventy citizens. I understand many of the meetings boasted six or seven people.

As I listened, Chairman Arnold Koekkoek brought out an interesting and almost unbelievable fact: the delegates elected at this caucus could, in all probability, elect the next representative for the First District. Fact is that there are four Republican candidates and no Democrats. In the June primaries, one of these four men must receive 35% plus one of the popular vote. If this doesn’t happen, the delegates selected at these caucus meetings would elect the representative.

So the people elected Willie Alberda for their new chairman, with assurances from Koekkoek that “the people you have to work with are very cooperative and pleasant.” Next, 41 people eagerly stepped forward for the honor of serving as a delegate. Only 38 were needed. Some volunteered for alternates, and the meeting moved on to the discussion of the party platform. Koekkoek quickly read through the 18 proposals with minimum discussion holding things up. Discussion was put forth regarding the legal drinking age, abortion for the poor, and the length and weight of trucks.

Finally, Jim Koldenhoven, candidate for state representative, told everyone to stand and stretch before he spoke. Koekkoek warned that he was timing this so “keep it short.” Earlier in the evening, as I counted delegate votes, I had missed Ken DeGroot’s speech. DeGroot, Lavonne Midland, and L. V. “Tuffy” Groeters are all running against Koldenhoven for state representative. But Koldenhoven kept it brief, and the motion to adjourn was quickly seconded and unanimously passed.

That was my first lesson on the election process. Candidate Koldenhoven told me a few days ago that he is writing an open letter to the students to inform them of the issues and the situation. There’s some interesting issues involved, so it should be interesting reading.
Sweethearts and lovers have been around since the beginning of the world. We see them everyday, holding hands, bestowing loving glances on one another, touching hands, and giving special smiles. "Couples" are a common, accepted part of our lives. But society honors "lovers" only once a year. One day, February 14, affectionately known as Valentine's Day, is the only time secret lovers can come out of hiding and openly express their love. On this day, the candy industry reaches its peak and the vats of valentine-red dye run dry.

Many years ago (for most of us) when your eyes barely reached the level of the blackboard, valentines meant the store-bought kind; the kind that could be punched out with "Make-your-own-envelopes" or 29-in-a-package-with-a-special-one-for-the-teacher. The sayings were usually simple and understandable for youngsters. For example, the colorful pictures depicted an Eskimo wrapped in a furry parka, carrying a small valentine in one hand with the caption "I'd love to rub noses with you, Valentine."

Each year the teacher handed out paper sacks to the children to decorate with valentine hearts. The sacks were taped to the side of each desk, and the children wiggled impatiently for the ceremonial filling. After the sacks were filled, the children sorted out their haul with secret happiness, eyes searching eagerly for the valentine that was "special."

As kindergarten children passed through the grade school system, the tradition of Valentine-giving faded. The boy-hates-girl stage fogged the 14th. Valentine's Day meant special people, a special boy or girl. Girls gave valentines to their special girlfriends if they didn't have a boyfriend. No valentines made you feel like Charlie Brown, who looks hopelessly into his empty mailbox every year, trying to suppress the feeling that no one cares or loves him enough to send him valentines.

Despite the lull in Valentine's Day, stores still carry big heart-shaped boxes of chocolates and candy, covered with big ribbons in elaborated bows. Those who can afford the expense splurge on not one-pound boxes, but two- and three-pound boxes of rich treats. Colourful cards line the shelves, splattering the stores in red, pink, and "love". Some cards are surprisingly crude, some funny, most dripping with sweet
Red roses and pink hearts are here to stay

With the back-up of investigation, we'll answer that question for you. It is true that the children of our society purchase the bulk of the Valentine treats, but they can't afford the expensive chocolates, roses or candy. Storeowners confess that the big items are purchased by college students, some of them disguised, some of them as red as the valentines they buy, but most of them with secret smiles on their faces. But don't stop there. It's the 'grown-up' people that foot the big bills. The veteran sweethearts covet the biggest and best Valentines available. If you're not sufficiently surprised, have a look at the photos accompanying this article. You're looking at some veteran sweethearts.

With a few loud laughs and covered shyness, the married professors on campus handed over some golden photos of their younger days. You may not be able to recognize the faces but their owners will admit that the love they felt "then" is still here now.

But what happens to the Charlie Brown person who never has a sweetheart. What happens to those of you who won't receive a Valentine this year--forever destined to have an empty mailbox? Should Valentine's Day be selective?

The Diamond would like to give you a Valentine this year. Perhaps we've stirred up your interest in an old tradition or have managed to give you a laugh at some "golden sweethearts". Whatever we've done for you we hope you have someone who will remember you with a special token this year. We submit that there shouldn't be a special day a year for Valentine-giving, but a daily expressing of our love for one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.

For all the Charlie Browns and Valentine Scrooges at Dordt, a Happy Valentine's Year.
The Force is a non-elite group, some of our members composed the Dutch Mafia last year. The group dissolved because of the yearly housing shuffle and graduating members. A veteran of the Mafia, John Meernik, commented on the implications: "The name Dutch Mafia had. We had a guy from the Sioux Center News phone us about the Dutch Mafia. He wanted to know if we 'rubbed people' out'. The name Dutch Mafia had its connotations as the Force does today, but the members assured any would-be image makers that the image was not 'tough'."

The Force is not the only group, with nothing in common except their group identification, from friendships, not the need of a secure image. "It's not that we always hang around together as a peer group. Very rarely are we together at the same time. It's not a prestige thing. When we do get together it's a lot of fun."

When asked about the possibility of group identification as opposed to individual identification, the Force admitted the possibility was there. "The Force is a good thing for us. We're not trying to be an elite group. We're more of a basement than a group. As responsible Christians we realize that sometimes we fail to let kids on campus see that we are brothers in the Lord first of all. We don't want to be labeled as a group because we want to be set aside. We're just a basement of guys that get along without getting at each other's throats."

The Force is not the only group on campus. Most of us have seen T-shirts bearing the Luther Brothers, The Prospectors, The Runners Up, and others. "The Force admitted to initial competition between themselves and other groups but that soon faded. As one of the Force pointed out, the group is composed of guys who were placed together, not guys who personally selected their housing. This prevents groups of regional kids or groups of kids in the same program forming a group. Besides the advantages of "togetherness" that is readily seen in the Force, the group likes to engage in organized activities. Last year the Force held several skating parties for any interested students and plans are in the making for a CRWRC fund-raiser later this semester."

The group also has its own traditions. "Forces" activities conducted by various members of the Group. Their favorite past time is affectionately known as the Sandy Hollow Express or Merl Hunt. The activities are long and complicated and seekers of similar activities are encouraged to ask members of the Force for details.

What does the group expect of themselves? "We expect the most from each other. That's because we're friends."

How long do they expect to remain identified as the Force? "Hey! We'll be telling our grand-kids about this! Years from now we'll be getting letters with the Dutch Mafia or the Force on them."

As the interview with the Force was completed, one member mentioned the group motto. "When you least expect it... Expect it." The motto is apt. The Force may not be tough, but they are forceful brothers in Christ.

By AUDREY VLIEG
-Diamond Editor-
record review

Medema sees through eyes of love

By STEVE LYON
-Diamond Editor-

It was almost two months ago that Ken Medema was on our campus to lead us in "performing" his new work "The Gathering." While he was here, I had a chance to talk to him about his music and his life. I had a chance to talk to Jersy, with his wife, Jane Ann, and we went to Grand Rapids Christian High School to talk to a large group of students. We had the opportunity to discuss the nitty-gritty of this new album, and it was a great experience. Ken has been bitnd since birth, and he tries to plan his tours so that he can stay home with his family. His son Aaron is a "true believer," and Ken truly understands what "family" is all about.

Ken is blind, but he can see more than most people who are using their physical eyes. The secret to his sight is found in the title of his latest album, "Through The Eyes Of Love." The title comes from the last cut on side one, "I see America." He says he sees America through the eyes of love. There's "tyranny on every side... hate on every hand..." there's work to be done before freedom's song is sung from sea to sea. But it's not just that. Ken says if you see the same America, put your hand to the job. 

If you were to pick up Ken's new album, and "just to see what it's like," listen to any one song, I don't think you'd be disappointed. Every cut is of the highest quality. The album is released on the Word label (the Deutsche Grammophon of "Religious" music), and is in every way a top-notch sounding album. Perhaps this is evidence of a trend I've been seeing for the last year or so that will eventually lead to the Christian artists setting the trends in modern music.

As the title would indicate, this is a "love song" album and it leads to a good insight of what love is all about. The song, "Why Am I Afraid To Love," asks a lot of questions that we all at one point ask ourselves. Why am I afraid to love? Am I afraid of losing what I give in love? Or, of giving what's not wanted? Am I loving only for myself? What if my love is unrequited? What if I'm turned away? And how does this searching end? "If I'm turned away, hold me close...let me stay..."

Ken has insight into many areas of life that really are important to many here at Dordt. Take, for instance, "She Asked Me To Dance." Here's the story as Ken tells it:

A few years ago I was asked to sing for a missions conference in a large metropolitan church. The conference was to begin on Sunday, but the young people of the church requested that I come a day early to join them for a 1950's party. The party was held in a very lovely home with probably forty or fifty young people eating, talking, singing songs from the 50's, and generally having a good time. 

After the singing we all went downstairs, put on some records and the kids began to dance. My up-bringing had told me that dancing was wrong; consequently I never learned how. When one of the teenagers found me sitting on the steps and said, "It's ladies' choice, would you like to dance?" I was caught quite speechless. After much protesting on my part, she and her friends finally got me out on the floor, I suppose I have never felt so ungraceful--and at the same time so adventuresome and free. The experience was the inspiration for the song, "She Asked Me To Dance," which was premiered the next day in church.

And so the song speaks of the experience being unforgettable, like a breath of spring on a cold winter day. "It taught this singer to sing in a whole new way!" And Ken's offering solutions is titled "If This Is Not A Place." It expresses the concern of many about the purpose of the church, and fellowship, and the showing of love. "If this is not a place where tears are understood when I go to cry? If this is not a place where my spirit can take wings, where shall I go to fly?" I don't need a place to impress you with how virtuous I am, or to wear my false smile... everybody knows it's not for real, So if this is not a place where tears are understood, where shall I go to fly?

And the album ends with "Brethren, We Have Met To Worship," the only song that even approaches a fast tempo. And what a fitting conclusion to a truly beautiful album, with the words, "Hallelujah! I will bless Jehovah's Name!"

film review

Winkler falls in love

"The Fonz" isn't just the hero in "Happy Days." Although he's not as self-sufficient as the "Fonz," Henry Winkler is also the hero in a movie that fits his image well--"Heroes."

Winkler and his co-star, Sally Field, relate a story that's sure to tear at the heart strings of even the most hardened. Winkler plays the part of a "crazy" Viet Nam war veteran, committed to a hospital for psychiatric therapy. He doesn't think he's crazy; what's wrong with starting a worm farm with the buddies you fought with. He escapes from the hospital with his box of worms under his arm, $87 in his pocket, and begins a complicated journey to California. His obnoxious behavior makes it impossible for people to ignore him, including a young girl who is running from her wedding day. Together they discover who they are--and who they aren't.

I recommend that you join them in their journey to reality.
Two close ones for Dordt

Last week saw the Dordt hoopsters take to the hardwood for two games that were as close as the score.

In the first game—against Sioux Falls College—the defenders played one of their best games ever—and lost.

The visiting Defenders played a see-saw battle with Sioux Falls College, and the outcome wasn’t decided until the final buzzer. And then it was decided on a desperation, turn-around, fall-away baseline shot by Brad VanLeur as the last seconds ticked away. The final score of the game was Sioux Falls squeaking out a victory, 69-67.

Saturday the Defenders came home and played another close one, this time winning 50-45 against Yankton.

The Defenders led all the way, and held on for the conference win. Balanced scoring aided the Defenders, and Dean Visser proved to be a vital part, making a perfect 6-for-6 from the freethrow line.

Buena Vista bombs Dordt

This game was a complete reversal from these two teams’ first meeting. In that game, Dordt totally dominated before defeating Buena Vista, 92-74.

This past Tuesday night, the B. V. Beavers must have had memories of that earlier defeat. The Buena Vista team came out shooting to kill, and their victim was Dordt.

The Beavers threw up long-distance ringers that seemed to rip the cords all night. Combined with a good inside game, B. V. gave Dordt one of its worst defeats of the season. O’Hern, Havens, and Malson led the B. V. charge with 15, 20, and 22.

While this was happening, the Defenders had a hard time buying a basket. Dordt shot 34% from the field, compared to B. V.’s 51%. B. V. also helped add to their cause by connecting on 23 of 31 free throws, while Dordt was only given seven opportunities at the charity stripe—making five.

Bob Rip and Jerry Vande Pol had 10 and 13 points respectively, in that losing cause. The final score: 93-63.

Matthau and Burns add the sunshine

By DEB BUTLER
Diamond Staff Writer

Friday, February 10, at 6:30 and 9 p.m., Chilton will present "The Sunshine Boys," directed by Herbert Ross. The movie is based on the 1972 play by Neil Simon.

His first movie was a complete reversion, it turned and blossomed and grew. In that game, Dordt was decided on a desperate turn-around, fall-away baseline shot by Brad VanLeur as the last seconds ticked away. The final score of the game was Sioux Falls squeaking out a victory, 69-67.

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Women meet four defeats

Although the women’s basketball team hasn’t looked too good as far as the winning record goes, Coach Van Soelen feels the players have been performing quite well.

Their twelve game statistics show Dordt shooting 38% from the field with their opponents also averaging 38%. However, Dordt has managed only 51% from the free throw line and their opponents boast 57%. Dordt has nabbed 477 rebounds to the opposing team’s 452. The high scorers in the past twelve games are Lisa Vander Wal with 18.

But even with such close and impressive statistics, the women have lost all of their last four games. January 26 saw them give way to Westmar in a 52-64 defeat. The next day Midland handed them a ten-point loss, 70-80. Then on January 30 the women gave Morris- Ide a rough time, but still ended up on the bottom side with a 52-59 score. This past Monday Dordt met Briar Cliff on the home court. Sandy Nieuwendorp put in 12 points, followed by Lisa Vander Wal with 18. But these efforts still left them behind at 67-78.

Their next game is this evening at the home gym at 7:30 p.m.

calendar

February 9 - 8:00 pm, Lawrence Dorr workshop, C158
February 10 - 8:00 pm, Lawrence Dorr, informal reception, in W. Commins
February 11 - 7:30 pm, Women’s Basketball, Dordt vs. Morning-side, at Dordt
February 12 - 7:30 pm, Film: "Sunshine Boys", C160
February 13 - 7:30 pm, Mean’s Basketball, Dordt vs. Northwestern, at Northwestern
February 14 - 7:30 pm, Film Lecture, speaker Dale Den Helder, on "The Farm Strike", C160
February 15 - 8:00 pm, Women’s Basketball, Dordt vs. Mt. Marty, at Mt. Marty
February 16 - 8:00 pm, Men’s Basketball, Dordt vs. Mt. Marty, at Mt. Marty
February 17 - 8:00 pm, Read Brick Variety Show, TePake
February 18 - 11:00 pm, Men’s Basketball, Dordt vs. Briar Cliff, at Dordt

What is the Bookstore for?

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Ken Medema
Chuck Girard
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