



the manly art of self de-fencing

Last summer I decided that I had been an 140 pound weakling long enough and that THIS time I was going to do something about it. So, I enrolled in a fencing class.

Rigorous training began at once. The instructor, who looked a little like Erich Von Stroheim with hair, put the class through a series of grueling exercises. Within five weeks, my flabby carcass had been bent, folded, and mutilated into physical fitness. I was a new man.

Even outside the class my life was radically changed. I had a new swashbuckling air of self confidence about me. I developed a casual bravura. I was confident that if I was ever attacked, I could always fence the mugger to death. Once again I could look my shower in the head without feeling any embarrassment.

Finally, my big day had come. It was my final "examination", an actual match.

My opponent was tough and burly and looked like he ate pig iron for breakfast, but that didn't bother me. I had seen Errol Flynn stand twenty pirates in "Captain Blood" and I was certain that I could do twice as well. The En Garde was given and immediately my opponent scored the first hit.

Recoiling amid a flourish of imaginary trumpets, I leaped upon the window sill and roared, "Ah me,

A touch, a touch; I do confess't.

Come for the third, Laertes. You do but dally.

I pray you pass with your best violence;

Before my body

I throw my warlike shield. Lay on Macduff

And damned be him that first cries 'Hold, Enough!'

With that, I leaped from the sill and swung across the room from the light fixture with my foil between my teeth amid the roar of imaginary tympani and the clatter of equally unreal sword play. "Turn thee, Benvolio and look upon thy death!" I lustily belted at my opponent.

His foil and his mouth dropped simultaneously. As he turned to flee in fear of his life, I set upon him, hacking at his hysterical form while uttering flippant curses of "Saxon Pig!", "Saracen Cow!" and "Chocolate Mousse!"

Needless to say, I won. At the official score, I had 132 more hits than I needed to win my match.

I casually tossed my foil to a bystander, secure in the knowledge that her majesty's seaways were once more safe from the pirate scourge.

"Tend his wounds," I casually said as I walked from the room. Meanwhile, two men were scraping my hysterical opponent from the floor as he was crying something about taking ballet lessons next time.

personal commentary

Lavatory monitors flush out smokers

by Ann Flanagan
Blueprint Staff Writer

The administration's decision to lock and patrol lavatories during the lunch hour in order to put a halt to in-school smoking can be seen as a positive step forward.

The closing of lavatories can be interpreted as a rather drastic step. But the reaction of the lav closings have been relatively mild. Criticism is not widespread and few students feel they have been greatly inconvenienced.

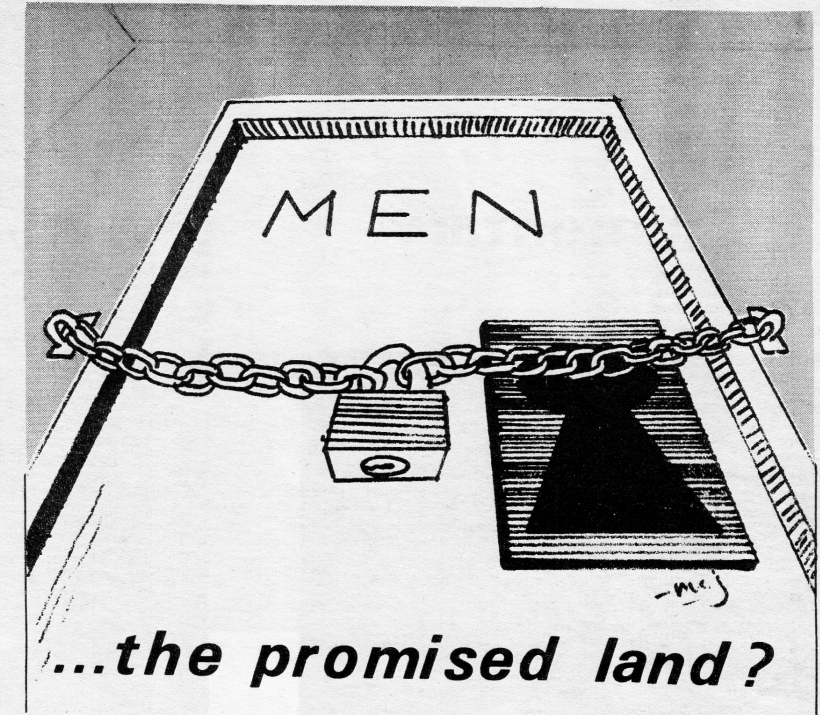
The greater criticisms come from students who build up elaborate and, in most cases, imaginary fears. These students imagine horrible things happening because someone, in a moment of need, could not find an open lav. The chances of any of these horrible things happening is nil. There will always be an open lav somewhere.

Because of confusion caused by the lock-up, there have been rumors that all the lavs would be locked. Although there have been days when more lavs were locked than usually, there have been so far no days when every lav was locked.

Student complaints about the lav situation are more likely to be heard over lavs that are unexpectedly closed than over lavs which students realize will be closed. The students seem most to dislike those changes that they cannot plan for.

The decision to lock some lavs and monitor others seems a good, concrete step towards ridding Ramsey of the smoking problem. Students who are tempted to smoke know definitely that someone is there with the purpose of catching them if they care to try.

There are no more rumors of teachers watching through peep holes or sneaking into lavs. Students know where they stand as far as the administration's views on smoking.



personal commentary

Theatres fail encore

by Mark Johnson
Blueprint Editorial Editor

When school officials and administrators sit down to chew the fat, probably all will agree that every school should have...no, NEEDS a theatre. Unfortunately, nobody puts their money where their mouth is. Inevitably, there are too many "should's" and not enough "gonna's."

Thus far, Ramsey has been denied a full-sized theatre as it was considered too costly and non-essential.

Recently, plans were submitted for the construction of a compact studio theatre. Every indication is that once more history will repeat itself and that these

plans will too be denied, in spite of its "valuable educational opportunities for the student." However, the rationale this time may prove more interesting.

The theatre structure would be relatively inexpensive, costing between \$4,000 and \$6,000.

Seating around 90, the theatre would be ideal for small group meeting. This would provide a meeting place for Student Council and Canteen Council as well as being ideally equipped for department and teacher's meetings.

The studio theatre would also provide a good stage for foreign language club productions.

Classes could combine and use the studio theatre for lecture or

video tape productions.

But, more important than all of these "practical advantages" is that, finally, the school will have a proper and adequately equipped stage, as small as it is, with which students can learn the basic fundamentals of stagecraft and drama.

No longer would interested drama students have to study stagecraft from a few knobby platforms lashed together forming something which appears a little more like a dock than a performing area.

In spite of all the "practical advantages" and the opportunities for interested drama students, the district will probably fail to give a studio theatre a second thought.

The drama department and the school deserve more than a fleeting glance. Hopefully, the district will start giving more than mere lip service to the merit of theatre and shell out a little old fashioned cash for at least the smallest semblance of a playhouse.

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