

THE Filthy Lucre

In Nonsense is Strength

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Give Us Your Children! Another Proposal

Horatio: Anonymous Contributor

As a newly arrived inhabitant of the scenic metropolitan area of Havre, home to Montana State University-Northern, I have recently been made aware of the struggles the administration of this temple of learning is perpetually embroiled in; namely the growth of the student body. As the institution is of great economic significance to the town, these administrators, are at their wits end to swell yearly enrollment so as to receive certain monetary assistance from the government. Tireless employees travel to high school career fairs across the state to broadcast praises of the town's glory, and athletic teams are required to supply a quota of student athletes to represent the school in intercollegiate battles, and to aid in increasing the overall amount of government funds channeled to such a worthy cause.

Unfortunately, these measures are not vigorous enough to ensure the longevity of MSUN. Therefore, I humbly propose that the firstborn child of every family in the county, or surrounding area (the Hi-Line, I believe it is called) be required to attend MSUN, with tuition waived. If Hi-Line students are thus prevented from being lured away to larger and more distant universities there will be such an abundance of students enrolled in this place that the subsequent government assistance should cover the cost of each student's tuition.

After conscripting the young people, it will be necessary to distribute them equally amongst the various programs the institution has to offer. As each set of students will, from year to year, demonstrate different strengths and weaknesses, it will be simplest to assign students alphabetically to the available program openings. The students will continue in their assigned fields for one semester, and may then trade or barter amongst themselves for their preferred fields of interest, creating a competitive academic atmosphere. I foresee that my gentle readers will have objections to this plan, but I am prepared to answer these challenges.

First, what if the child is too squeamish to become a nurse, too dull to learn the intricacies of the classification scheme of organisms requisite for a biologist, or (dreadful thought!) have his head so turned by nonsensical literature that he is not fit to receive a degree in diesel technology?

If the first born should prove incompetent to complete even a two-year plumbing degree, he shall forfeit his place to his next sibling, who may prove to have a more suitable disposition. Though I trust that these disappointing progeny will be few and far between, they may be delegated to swelling the ranks, now sparse, of the custodial staff and grounds-crew, at present most injuriously oppressed and put-upon, and redeem themselves by helping to make the campus fully functional and the aesthetic pride of the county.

Second, there is sure to be a small minority of students who are sullenly opposed to learning and lack the self-discipline to apply themselves to their studies. They may even display unjust feelings of resentment which may be manifested in unruly or destructive behavior. These overly aggressive students may be recruited to the athletic teams, where they will learn discipline and expend their excess energy until they are pliable enough to be trusted in a classroom setting. The malcontents could be distributed, according to physical characteristics, thus: the freakishly tall and those who are not driven insane by the reverberating echoes of gymnasiums will join basketball and volleyball teams. The animal lovers and those who look best in cowboy hats join the rodeo team. The irrepressibly angry would be sent to unleash their propensity for violence on students from other institutions and little white balls; football and golf teams, respectively.

Filthy Lucre Blind Items

What Interim Chancellor was spotted hobnobbing with the student body at a viewing of "No Country For Old Men," the Oscar winning film noir? We won't name names, but he seemed to enjoy the flick, and even stayed around for the discussion afterwards.

Have our dear readers heard of the ultimate fate of the much-missed Northern Daycare Center's paraphernalia, currently languishing in the windows of the Student Union Building's also-much-missed Northern Grill? An unnamed source suggests that a rummage sale is in the works, to raise funds for the proposed Capdeville Memorial Statue.

Third, for various unavoidable reasons, some of the firstborn may not be able to fulfill their duty to the community. They may become ill or die of a noxious disease, perish in a tragic accident, or fall in with unsavory companions and be atoning for their crimes in prison. If so, the same solution for the first objection would apply for this, with the qualification that the firstborn will, obviously, be unable to join the maintenance staff, being indisposed, imprisoned, or deceased. If the deceased was an only child, the grieving parents may confer their child's opportunity upon a deserving sixth or seventh child of a family of their acquaintance.

The families of the students will be relieved of the financial burden of providing their child with any education and (of great comfort to the average mother), keep him close to home.

If the students are, after graduation, indentured without pay to the community and surrounding area for a period of time equal to that of their education, the state would receive a full return on its investment and the Hi-Line will be eternally supplied with competent teachers, nurses, biologists, graphic designers, etc. This perspicacious addendum to my plan was contributed by a shrewd, but ingenuous, bystander with some connections to the institution in question.

The reader may rest assured that my advice is given freely, out of pure disinterested concern for my fellow human beings. I require no thanks or remuneration; I am sufficiently rewarded by the thought of being of some use to such persons as would benefit from any wisdom I have to offer.

Does anyone know the status of retired history professor Aart Dolman's emeritus status? He was twice nominated unanimously for this honor by Northern's Arts & Sciences faculty, but the nominations seem to have slipped down Northern's ever widening rabbit hole.

Where are all the bike racks on this campus? We witnessed a pitiful youth attempting to chain their bicycle to a tree the other day, and wept bitterly as their chain simply couldn't span the distance. They ultimately chained the bicycle to Professor Gilmartin's dog, which did an admirable job of guarding the device until the student's return from class.

Know Your Place.

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