**Light company: bright ideas**

By Gary Vegue

(Ed. note: This review is based on a preview, not available to the public.)

The Tech will present further comment after the official opening tonight.

From the theatre department of the Light Company of Cambridge comes 'Protestors, protestees, wah-wah pedal stompers and would-be wah-wah pedalists have attained something refreshing. Although not everything that it advertises to be, at least yet, it is certainly several cuts above what other, better-known theatrical efforts claim to be. The members of the cast, in the newly habited Blanc Beast of campus satire, are: T. MacKenzie, Cindy Hathaway, and Clayton Brown, Howard Jerome, Jan Selteval.

The opening performance January 7 in its preview performance given last week.

The Tech will present further comment on this company in a future issue.

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**Light company: Self-evaluation proposed**

By Harold Fedorov

Passive credit and no grades at all were among the new grading forms discussed at the Forum on Grading held in the Little Theatre December 16.

Undergraduate Planning Professor Edgar Schein, who chaired the meeting, attempted to direct the discussion to a system that would go beyond merely changing to a pass-fail form of grading, and would involve some sort of student-instructor interaction as part of the evaluating process.

Any evaluation proposal must provide some feedback on performance, and potential in the course field. It must also certify a certain level of learning.

Grades, it was felt, did not perform any of the above functions well, and did not perform at least one at all. Alternatives could be either standardized tests or personal evaluation.

The personal evaluation must be either self-evaluation, done by the professor, jointly, or even by other students.

Mike Albert '69, introduced a proposal, written by Bill Berry '59, Larry White '69, Mike Seaver '69, and himself, entitled "Towards a New Grading System."

This proposal would allow the student to choose his own grading system, except that the consent of the instructor would be required in order to take a course-pass-fail.

The choice of a system would have to be made within three weeks of the beginning of the term. After that time, any changes would have to be with the consent of the instructor. According to Albert, this proposal was drawn up after several discussions into the function of any grading system and with the thought of getting rid of the system for all who participate in the learning process.

This system is intended to avoid the artificial imposition of grades from the outside by the administration.

In a debate, Albert said that, in his opinion, the best grading system was passive credit. Under this, a person either passes or fails the course is made of his having registered for the course. In effect, therefore, it would be as if the student had done anything except that credit would be given for the course.

Two professors who had experience with pass-fail grading systems were asked to comment on their experiences with it. Professor Wedlock said that due to the course, 6.70, few students had more than a quarter of the work done with three-quarters of the term gone by. This credited in most students living in the lab during the last few weeks of the term.

Professor Duowich, who teaches 6.251, said that he had had similar problems. The students would stick off on his course, and too many were getting borderline grades. When grades were reinstated course work improved, more got done, and more people were getting either A's or B's.

There were several points made in rebuttal. It was pointed out that because the students were being honest, they would naturally tend to stamp out pass-fail, and concentrate more on graded courses.

Cyarella Pass '72 said that in her own course, 6.35, students were asked to do two things that were more personally meaningful to her than courses because she would have if she had to worry about grades.

One other problem that caused concern was that of motivation. Several people felt that the joy of learning was lost a sufficient motivation for people to study and learn. Under these new grade systems, motivation is made for students who do need grades to motivate them. One problem that was somewhat blown up was that it was felt that we would lose the ability to compare the student. It was felt that by no way is fun to flunk out people, then one gets the "undesirables" whose first priority may not be as MIT education. This point was not fully explored, however.

It was unfortunate that only about 30 students and about 43 faculty and administration personnel were there. A request was made for a sense of the meeting as a part of the TANG proposals. A majority did in fact seem to be in favor, but it is not at all apparent what will now happen. As of press time Prof. Scholz had not announced a decision on a future forum.

Ever since the election of Richard Nixon, this particular speculation has been made concerning the success and disasters which might befall the new leadership. It is indicative of the short-sightedness of the average mortal that he ignores the obvious and immediate answers to his deepest questions. Three answers concerning the loss, in the Arcana of the Tarot (adequate astrological facilities are lacking).

When this newspaper called upon Professor Donowich, who teaches 6.251, that he had had similar problems. The students would stick off on his course, and too many were getting borderline grades. When grades were reinstated course work improved, more got done, and more people were getting either A's or B's.

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