

Instructors focus of HSSP

By Bob Lefkowitz

HSSP is a program run by MIT students to teach high school students in a fashion different from that ordinarily seen in high schools. To accomplish this, everything is left up to the individual instructor, who can be anyone from a freshman to a postgrad. Only the most routine administrative details are standardized.

Thus, it is rather difficult to talk about HSSP as an organization. Each prospective teacher submits a course description which is incorporated into a catalogue. The teacher chooses the material he wishes to cover and his course format, and embarks on his own idea of creative or motivational education.

The complete freedom to teach whatever course one wants leads to a rather strange curriculum. This term, for example, there is "An Aesthetic History of the Streetcar" and "The Art of Batiking" (Batiking is a Javanese art of preparing fabrics with dye and beeswax.) Of course, there are also many serious courses in mathematics, humanities, science, and computers.

Few requirements

In attempting to deviate from the standard high school format, most teachers do not require homework, quizzes, attendance, or prerequisites. This leads to several problems for both teach-



Students in the HSSP program begin the term with bright faces and high expectations, but attendance frequently declines as the initial interest fades.

Photo by David Tenenbaum

ers and students.

Foremost among these is the wide background of the students entering courses with no prerequisites. Some students will be ahead of the teacher, while some will be behind. Both groups are dissatisfied, and the teacher's program is usually altered to accommodate one group or the other.

The lack of any written work removes much of the burden from the teacher. The students must find the motivation to do the work on their own. As many will not do so, the course passes

them by. Furthermore, the teacher has fewer ways to determine how effective his presentation has been and may not adapt himself to the students.

The use of textbooks varies. Approximately half of the courses require textbooks which are preferable paper backs. This is probably the only way in which HSSP resembles high school.

Short schedule

Classes are held on Saturdays and the term is usually scheduled to be ten weeks long. Unfortunately, nationwide exams and holidays whittle this down to an average of six or seven classes in which any productive work can be accomplished. Even though the classes are two hours long, having only six of them is a major obstacle to accomplishing anything productive.

Yet despite all these faults, HSSP seems to work quite well. This year, over 900 students and 80 teachers have registered initially. Some will probably drop out before the term is over, but most will remain, and maybe come back next year.

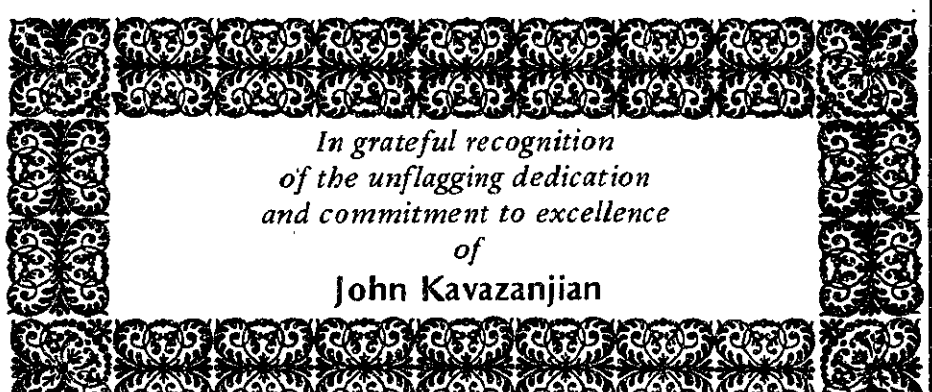
Wiesner warns Senate of surveillance dangers

Appearing at a Senate subcommittee hearing late last week, president-elect Jerome Wiesner warned that an ever-growing computer surveillance network is threatening our country.

Identified in nationwide newspapers as an expert on computer technology, Wiesner chilled observers by reminding the Senate investigators they could not be certain how widespread of well-hidden the information apparatus is. "I suspect that it would be much easier to guard against a malicious oppressor than to avoid being slowly but increasingly dominated by an information Frankenstein of our own creation."

Wiesner was asked whether the threat of government surveillance ever deterred people from exercising their constitutionally protected right to petition and dissent. Much of the left, he replied, realizes that their activities are probably monitored, but "I have... operated under the premise that I should not allow myself to be inhibited by such a possibility." He did note that students told him their fear of official dossiers had been a factor in their decision to avoid political activity.

Wiesner testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights.



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Announcements

* If you want MIT to send your local board in the fall the SSS Form 109 (Student Certificate) certifying that you registered as a full-time student, you must contact the Selective Service Office, Room 3-140, ext. 5836, before leaving for summer vacation.

* The Graduate Student Council is holding elections. You may obtain a nomination petition on the bulletin board of your Course headquarters or in the GSC office, 110 Walker Memorial. Petitions are due in by March 19.

* The Education Warehouse (698 Mass. Ave.) needs a volunteer Chinese tutor. Anyone interested should call Arlene or Linda at 868-3560.

* "No Dogs Allowed," this Thursday's Noonhour Concert will feature Ray Jackendoff and Stephen Umans on clarinet and Thomas Stepenson on bassoon playing works by Mozart and Shostakovich. The program will begin at 12:10 in the MIT Chapel.

* Nominations for the Goodwin Medalist are now being accepted by the Dean of the Graduate School. Please submit the names of any candidates to Dean Irwin W. Sizer, Room 3-134, before Monday, April 5, 1971. Nominations may be made by any student or faculty member and submitted through the Head of the nominee's department, the Undergraduate Association or the Graduate Student Council. The Goodwin Medal is awarded in recognition of conspicuously effective teaching by a graduate student who is either a Teaching Assistant or an Instructor. Further information may be obtained by calling extension 4869.

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