Looking at the funnies, from Pogo to Doonesbury

By Glenn Brownstein

Ask the average MIT student which parts of the daily paper he/she reads, and you'll get the answer, "the front page, the edit page, the sports, the comics." (With maybe an ad or two thrown in.)

The well-read, erudite MIT student would be expected to please the inquisitive tomes of the daily news and sports pages in order to remain informed although some students can use the advice found in Ann Landers or Dear Abbie columns. (especially the latter.)

But the most intelligent, scientific minds spend minutes of every day following the progress of "Doonesbury" or "Wizard of Id." Hard to believe, but it's true. In fact, the Boston Globe received literally hundreds of letters from Pogo fans last year when it dropped "Tank McNamara" from the comics page. The complaints turned out to be genuine, though, and "Tank" took a place at the top of the "Scoreboard" section of the sports page, where it remains today.

Indeed, there are millions of comic strip devotees across the country. When Connie Cusack, the middle-aged racecar driver, is shown on the cover of a Boston magazine, it's clear that marketing novelties and other items based on comic strip characters is big business.

Another popular example of a strip that made it "Pogo," discontinued last year following the death of its creator, were "Peanuts," the "father of the comic strip" Richard S. Schulz's. The strip, created by Charles Schulz over 25 years ago, has the unmatchable record of having never been dropped by any newspaper in the country. And hundreds of other items have been sold bearing Peanuts caricatures and cartoons: one aspect of the newspaper section that is as important ever. Even Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia, whose reputation suffered enter it, was revealed that he hired sec-

The true artist was now to be regarded as... a sorcerer performing a secret rite revealed by time to the dullest-witted masses.

By Roger Kolt

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