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The Arena

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THE ARENA

Student American Medical Association
Boston University School of Medicine

September 1967

The ARENA welcomes all contributions from students, faculty and friends. News, events, stories, poems, even just plain gripes will be read, and published, if possible, with a minimum of editing. Speaking of which, we are looking for editors from the first and fourth year classes. See either Raoul St. Pierre (BUSM III) or Dick Bernstein (BUSM II) if you'd like to give it a try. Maybe we can be a weekly this year. It depends on you. Keep in touch.

This edition is primarily for the freshman.

WELCOME!

The ARENA is the Medical School newspaper published under the auspices of SAMA. Its editorial policy is that of attempting to present to all those interested, including alumni and friends, the talents, interests and skills of the students. As such we try to reflect a bit of the atmosphere of the school as it and we change.

This reforming of our attitudes and personalities is a subtle event. It is more insidious than we realize, sometimes perhaps since the school can be an environment all its own, protecting its inhabitants. There will be much in the forthcoming issues that you will be pleased with or with which you will disagree. This is to be expected. Yet much the same influences that cause the contributing editors to write as they do will be acting on you.

In all it will be an interesting experience designed to please, to initiate and to inform those who are concerned with the Medical School.

Arras

A fast greek
 Dances in the back of my mind
 To music
 In the back of his mind
 And neither care.
 Yet the partner
 We share at the point of abstraction
 Is sitting
 Quite exhausted
 On a real rock.

Dick Bernstein
 BUSM II

GIRL MED STUDENTS OVERUN SCHOOL!

Well...no. But you didn't really believe me anyway. We girls are a small minority - about 10% of each class - and a rather quiet minority at that. However, our lot is not a hard one and by and large our feminine company is appreciated by the masculine class members. Even if they won't always admit it.

As much as we may like our male companions, gross lab humor may sometimes prove overwhelming. This is the time to seek out the Gregory Room. This haven on the basement floor of Building C is reserved for "Members Only". The members belong to the Gregory Society made up only of women medical students and the faculty. Although the Society has officers and collects a small dues primarily for maintenance of the room, formal get togethers are infrequent. The room itself is a relatively quiet, uncrowded and comfortable place with couches and cushioned chairs. There you will meet the upperclass women who will horrify you with tales of courses and exams to come. There's time for girl-talk, lunches, catnaps, last minute cram sessions before an exam or moaning 'sessions' after them.

Oh, don't be surprised if a stray male or two sneaks in while nobody's looking. They get tired too. Or maybe they just miss us.

Lockers for girls are scarce. Eddie McCarthy, unofficial dean of human relations at the school, is the man to see. He'll do his best to find a locker in the room across the hall from the Gregory Room.

Contrary to what you may have heard, you don't have to study every second, or shouldn't. But, there is enough sitting hunched over books to encourage Rear-End Spread. Some of the girls have fought the syndrome by getting together on week nights for basket ball or volley ball. If you can't work up team spirit, the Copley Square YWCA has swimming which is both relaxing and invigorating after a day of Dissection Back Ache and Microscope-Eye.

Come to the parties and dances.

GIRL MED STUDENTS con't.

They're great for relaxing and letting off steam. There are two school-wide dances, one in December and one in April. The April dance features a "talent" show wherein the student's dramatic interpretation of the professors is less flat-tering than hilarious. Your class will probably hold its own dances or parties and there always seem to be a batch of post-exam parties.

There isn't really a lot of advice to give a girl entering medical school. Your problems are not really so distinct from the boys' and you'll have individual ways of working them out. Study consistently, but get your beauty sleep. Nobody can take lecture notes sound asleep.

As a girl you have having to worry about working marriage, family and career together. And there will probably even be times you'll wonder why you aren't staying home. But being a woman in medicine is still a bit special and exciting and satisfying. I wouldn't trade places with anyone.

Barbara Rose
BUSM II

"Just Read Gray's....."

The other day in Brown and Connolly, the cash register was ringing, the salesmen were smiling (they never do, otherwise), and the line grew longer. And the line grew longer and the cash register louder and the smiles wider (was it all going into the till? Howcum that guy over there keeps opening his bottom desk drawer?) until in a wild crescendo the cash register played the last ten bars of "The Ninth", a smile became so wide a salesman inverted himself, and one poor freshman forked over one-hundred and twenty five dollars for his first term's books. Mr. Connolly, himself, had heard the excitement. He opened the large oak door to his outer office and just by seeing the glee on his people's faces he knew immediately what had happened. He, too, smiled broadly and walked importantly to the middle of the store with his hand

outstretched. Naturally the salesman thought he would be heartily congratulated, and he started toward his boss. No such thing. Mr. C was heading for the student, who by now was merely a head lolling crazily atop an unimaginable heap of books. "My boy, that's splendid, just splendid," and he stood with his hand out. What could our student do? He couldn't just smile at Mr. Connolly, THE Mr. Connolly of Brown and Connolly when he stood waiting to shake hands. The rest of the tale is a forgone conclusion. Obviously, a pile of books that includes Grant's, Greep, Guyton, Ganong, Selkurt, Sabota, Strong, Elwyn, Ellis, White, Handler and Smith etc. couldn't be balanced with one hand..... The student will be out of University Hospital next week. His Gross partners have been asked to leave a quarter un-dissected. Can he catch up?

Hoping to be paternalistic rather than patronizing, we offer the following advice. If you've already bought your books for the current term, don't worry you still have seven more chances to help send Mr. Connolly (and Mr. Brown and their families) to Bermuda for the holidays.

Required texts: Both words should be taken with a grain of salt. If a book list denotes a book as being "Required", find out who is requiring it. Does this person teach the bulk of the course or one week of it? In which case the required text might be great for one week and deficient for the other fourteen. Is the book list current? Or is it a careless reprint? (This happened last year - anybody want sixty psychiatry books?) Unless you are sure, wait till your professor tells you what is required and what is suggested and why. Similarly the word "Text" is misleading. Most medical texts don't read like novels, yet some are both interesting and well written. But don't plan to sit down and just read. You will get up after two hours having covered fifteen pages and be quite sorry that you didn't really sleep. Some books just don't "read" because they are reference texts. Other books are worth glancing through before a lecture just to get orientated, though their content matter may be quite different from what "so and so says". Still other texts will sound vaguely familiar as you plow through, like "you've heard
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it before". You probably have. Your professor does his homework too.

Now vs. Later: Quite frequently you will be faced with the decision, "Should I buy a book now or wait?" Maybe somewhere in the back of your mind is the idea that a particular volume will look especially impressive in your panelled consulting room. You can save yourself some trouble by remembering three things:

1. Look at the book carefully before you buy it. (Brown and Connolly has floor copies of most books.) Does it really have what you want or are you just being compulsive?

2. The Library has a copy of many of the books you want. (If not B.U., then Countway) If it is a book you will open twice, the library is cheaper.

3. The books that you will use ten years from now in practice will probably be quite different. And the things that you think are so important now, if they are important, will be covered again and again.

Wait for the clinical texts, they are usually more definitive. If you've considered these three things and you still want the book, buy it.

Baby Elephant Syndrome is quite common among first year students, though some sophomores not properly vaccinated still get recurrent symptoms. If you don't know what the symptoms are, watch a baby elephant and then look at your classmates. Are they, too, rocking slowly back and forth, drooping their trunks.....because they can't decide what ? which book ? to study ?. The baby elephant's desk is usually covered with ten books all on the same subject. The baby elephant himself is outside catching a smoke or his senses, or asking another baby elephant what he's reading. Treatment: Decide on ONE book and use it. (Turn to another only to help you with something you still don't get. Better yet, ask a friend.)
GOOD LUCK.

The Editors