

Cheat to Compete

“What We Know about Cheating in College” by Donald L. McCabe and Linda Klebe Trevino, in *Change* (Jan.–Feb. 1996), Heldref Publications, 1319 18th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-1802.

Although it doesn't show up in the glossy “viewbooks” that colleges give out every year to prospective students, cheating on exams has long been a feature of undergraduate life. And McCabe and Trevino, organization specialists at Rutgers University and Pennsylvania State University, respectively, report that it seems to have become much more common in recent decades.

Surveys of students at nine state universities found that the proportion admitting to copying test answers doubled between 1963 and '93, reaching 52 percent. The proportion admitting to helping another student to cheat rose from 23 percent to 37 percent, while the share of those who said they used crib notes jumped from 16 percent to 27 percent. Of the nearly 1,800 students surveyed in 1993, 38 percent said they had cheated on tests

more than three times.

According to the authors, female students are responsible for the increased cheating on exams. Whereas only 59 percent of the women in 1963 admitted having cheated at least once, three decades later, 70 percent did. In that, women were merely achieving parity with men.

“Thirty years ago,” McCabe and Trevino explain, “fewer women were competing with men in majors such as business, science, and engineering,” in which student cheating is rife.

One hopeful sign, from a 1990–91 survey of students at small, highly selective colleges: only 29 percent at schools with honor codes said they had cheated at least once, compared with 53 percent at schools without honor codes.

Orphanages, Pro and Con

“The Rise and Demise of the American Orphanage” by Dale Keiger, in *Johns Hopkins Magazine* (Apr. 1996), 212 Whitehead Hall, Johns Hopkins Univ., 3400 N. Charles St., Baltimore, Md. 21218–2692; “Orphanages: The Real Story” by Richard B. McKenzie, in *The Public Interest* (Spring 1996), 1112 16th St. N.W., Ste. 530, Washington, D.C. 20036.

House Speaker Newt Gingrich ignited a firestorm a while back when he recommended a return to orphanages for abused and neglected children as part of an overhaul of the wel-

the modern social-welfare system.

Orphanages first appeared in significant numbers in the United States in the early 19th century, Crenson tells *Johns Hopkins Magazine* senior writer Keiger. They were founded by private charities as well as by states and counties. By 1900, according to Crenson, author of a forthcoming book, *The Invisible Orphanage: A Pre-history of the American Welfare System*, there were close to 1,000 of the institutions, housing some 100,000 youngsters. No more than 10 to 20 percent of the children were orphans; most had parents who were alive but destitute, unwilling to care for them, or considered unfit.

Although some 19th-century orphanages were well run and had compassionate adults in charge, conditions at many others left a lot to be desired. Many of the institutions were highly regimented, with corporal



A century ago, boys at the House of Industry, a New York City orphanage, learned useful trades.

fare system. Ironically, notes Matthew Crenson, a political scientist at Johns Hopkins University, it was reaction to the problems with orphanages that originally paved the way for

punishment common. Older boys often preyed, in some cases sexually, on younger ones.

Progressives such as Jane Addams wanted to abolish the institution. Keiger writes that the 1909 White House Conference on the Care of Dependent Children, convened during Theodore Roosevelt's presidency, declared "that children should not be removed from their families except for urgent and compelling reasons, of which destitution was not one. If necessary, poor families should receive financial aid to support their children." Foster families were to be preferred for children who did need to be taken from their parents.

"The conference had a phenomenal impact," Crenson says. By 1920, 40 states had acted to provide so-called mothers' pensions. Although most states confined the aid to widows and wives of disabled fathers, a few states also assisted unwed mothers. These pensions,

Crenson says, were a precursor to the modern welfare system.

The orphanage did not completely disappear. McKenzie, a business professor at the University of California, Irvine, and the author of *The Home: A Memoir of Growing Up in an Orphanage*, reports on a survey of alumni, all age 44 or older now, of three modern orphanages. Measured by median income, jobless rate, education, time in prison, and other criteria, McKenzie says, the alumni seem to have done better than their counterparts in the general population. More than 92 percent said that, if they'd had the choice, they would have preferred their orphanage to foster care, and 75 percent said they would have favored their orphanage over the available members of their own families. At least some orphanages, McKenzie concludes, "appear to have known how to break the cycles of poverty, neglect, and abuse for hordes of children."

PRESS & MEDIA

The Suicide of the Newspaper

A Survey of Recent Articles

Wall Street danced on *New York Newsday's* grave yesterday," the *New York Daily News* reported last year after Times Mirror Company stock jumped on the news that it would shut down the 10-year-old daily. Times Mirror CEO Mark H. Willes then turned his attention to the chain's flagship paper, the highly regarded and very profitable *Los Angeles Times*. One-hundred-and-fifty positions there were slashed, and numerous special sections of the paper were eliminated. These dramatic acts were not simply the work of one crazed "cereal killer" (as Willes, who had come to Times Mirror from General Mills, soon found himself designated). They were part of a widespread trend, one that has some analysts worried that the days of the good newspapers now in existence may be numbered.

In business jargon, "the 'core competency' of newspapers—that service that no one else can do better—is reporting the news," notes Alex S. Jones, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist. "Yet throughout the nation," he writes in *Nieman Reports* (Spring 1996), "news budgets are being squeezed, news staffs depleted, news travel curtailed, news holes [total space for news] reduced, and the news

itself dumbed down." Challenged by the electronic "information superhighway," the nation's newspaper executives, Jones says, are busily undermining "the very thing that is the absolute essential key to their survival."

Why? Not because newspapers are unprofitable, John Morton, a media analyst for a Wall Street firm, points out in the same issue of *Nieman Reports*. Newspapers have serious problems—notably, waning circulation and readership, particularly among young people, and, as a result, some restless advertisers—but lack of profits is generally not one of them. Profitability in the newspaper industry is roughly twice the average for Fortune 500 firms, Morton says. Newspaper executives want to increase that to three or four times the average. This is not simple greed on their part—they are responding to what Morton calls "the inflated level of expectations" of shareholders.

In the mid-1980s, the newspaper business thrived. "Newspaper unions had been generally neutralized and high technology allowed huge savings in production costs," Alex Jones notes. "Most newspapers were the only ones