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## The passing of profitable politics

A COMMENT ON PAST STUDENT POLITICS

BY BENTON FERGUSON, '31



NOT long ago I had the pleasure of dining with several of the nominees for the supreme court bench of Oklahoma, and as the talk turned to the university and its relation to state politics a startling discovery was made: Every new member of Oklahoma's next supreme court will be a graduate of the university law school! Quite a feather in the law school's fedora.

Oklahoma in the past has turned out a number of men who have distinguished themselves in various professions. But woe to the graduates of tomorrow! Particularly those of the law school, for they have been deprived of the school's only real business training—profitable politics.

A short but turbulent history of paying political gyrations on the campus, based on hearsay, is more or less a history of the law school. This can be attributed chiefly to one thing. Lawyers were in school on an average of two more years than students in the other schools. And it is with a sad heart and a dimmed eye that we witnessed the passing of the four year rule in school honors.

This so called four year rule, which bars all five and six year students from participation in school activities was a death knell to a profitable school career. It takes at least two years to learn the ground work in school politics and the rest of the time should be spent in tireless effort to capitalize this political schooling and branch out, if possible, into new money making promotions.

There are a number of side grafts at the university but the two best bets, in days gone by, were the student council and the publications. Anyone with

power in the student council could usually get his share of graft from the dances, particularly the dance manager, who reigned supreme over the many thousands of dollars that rolled into the dances each year. That highly profitable graft, which had been slipping, was formally killed when the athletic association took over the student dances. Not that there isn't still some graft left, but it has never approached the heights which enabled some past presidents of the student council and dance managers to loaf for a year after school, or purchase a high powered automobile, as I understand many of them did.

The other chief source of revenue to student politicians is the publications. They have also been slipping since about 1926, but they still are a semi-lucrative field. The increasing power of the publication board, faculty controlled, because of split student factions, has been lopping off grafts, until now only editors get straight salaries. (And poor boys, they earn them.) This may or may not be a good thing for the publications themselves, but it certainly decreases the incentive for students to spend from one to six hours a day in tireless effort to put over the publications.

Without implicating too many former students of the school, I believe it is safe to say that the outstandingly successful ones were politicians in school. It's the best business training one can get in school because it strikes straight to the heart of the anatomy of achievement—the ability to get along with people.

Now, no faculty edict or law can change human nature. They will never be able to put a stop to politics in school. But either because the faculty, athletic

association, publication board, or what not, evidently begrudged so much money going into the pockets of students, they have curtailed as much as possible the main incentive that draws students into politics—profit. There will always be a lot of students who will revel in the fact that they belonged to so many honoraries, and were president of this or that, but as they mature, they begin to wonder where all those initiation fees go to and how they can get their share.

It's a shame the school isn't far sighted enough to encourage profitable politics on the campus. Twenty five years from now the student who will grant this or that school so much money for research isn't the one who won a medal for research on "The Psychic Reactions of Cleopatra toward Mark Anthony." No indeed! It's the student who dozed through that course and organized the student grievance society, with himself as treasurer—not president.

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### Indian motifs

Miss Margaret Giles, '32bfa, has just completed and hung two doors in the home of Mrs L. Turley, Norman, using Indian motifs as a theme for the design. The motifs were taken from some of the work of F. Galvah Zia, Santa Fe, New Mexico, Indian artist, who is doing research work for the Santa Fe museum. Designs for the two doors incorporate two variations of the thunderbird, mountain with flowers, and the raincloud, and a border with a symmetrical raincloud motif. The work was done under the direction of Miss Dorothy Kirk, instructor in art.