

GRADE INFLATION: **A Short Confessional**

**With a heap of papers
& limited time
how can I churn out grades
without provoking whines?**

**Should I pretend
effort alone counts –
or be honest & acknowledge
ignorance if it's pronounced?**

**When dealing with such questions
it's best seek the advice of an aged expert:
Jim Beam!**

[1 hr. & a few shots of whisky later]

Okay – back to the business of grading!

[clearing throat while leaning on a chair]

**Well, this attempt at erudition looks like an "A"
& perhaps this gibberish is a "B".**

[shuffling the papers randomly]

**These poor constructions are mediocre –
doesn't that translate into a "C"?**

[Gerpig loudly while dealing with a particularly odious
paper]

**This piece of plagiarism deserves an "F"
& this document is so lame
that nobody sober could give it a passing grade.**

[Pausing in reflection, then clearing throat]

**Wait a minute!
If I grade too strictly won't my teacher evaluations fall?
Isn't it safer to give lots of "B"s
so any criticism can be stalled?**

[swishing another glass of whiskey while gazing at a stack of papers]

**Even if most papers are trash
shouldn't I play it safe?
The less people bitch,
the more time I can devote to
my literary itch:
& don't students adore high grades?**



Satoru: (scratching his head) I'm not sure how to answer these questions.

Liao: (shuddering) I detest spineless teachers like this!

Tim: Hey, don't blame the instructors. The whole educational system is dysfunctional. Most teachers are simply ordinary jerks who are trying to get by creating as little trouble as possible.

Melissa: Perhaps we should question the whole notion of grading. Is there really any need to churn out A,B,Cs in a system that rewards mediocracy?

- T Newfields

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