

The Draft and Purdue Grad Students

Who is that holding a gun to my head, anyway?

How the Draft Worked: Misc

- Young men must register at age 18
- Preferred age (for drafting) was 25, working toward younger ages as the pool was depleted
- (Later, a lottery was implemented.)
- Deferments – generous at first, reduced as the pool was drawn down
- Exemptions – few categories
- Classification 1A – you're under the gun

How the Draft Worked: Appeals

- First level, within 30 days after reclassification
- A personal appearance before the board
- Appeal to a second level

How Dick Smiley Escaped

- Superior paperwork skills ... and a backup plan
- Paperwork: the Druid option
- Backup plan: emigrate to Canada

The Druid Option

- Apply for an exemption as a minister
- When the draft board questioned this, supplied supporting documentation – the more the merrier:
- Printed up business stationery for the Purdue Grove and the Carleton Grove.
- Got the Arch Druid of the Carleton Grove to write a letter or two of wishy-washy support

The Druid Option (Cont'd)

- Had a friend mail my letters from San Francisco
- First appeal rejected
- Personal appearance, where I made it difficult to tell whether I was serious
- Rejected again
- Sent appeal to next level, certified mail, return receipt requested

The Druid Option (Cont'd More)

- Ordered to appear for pre-induction physical
- Passed physical
- Ordered to appear for induction on August 18, 1969 (Happy 26th birthday from Uncle Sam!)
- Called draft lawyer (pro bono), who urged me to call the draft board
- Called the draft board, spoke to chief clerk

The Druid Option (Finally)

- Chief clerk found my request for appeal
- Stapled behind a letter from the Arch Druid of the Carleton Grove
- No substantiation that it had been mailed on time
- “I have a return receipt. Shall I send you a copy?”
- Asked me to decipher signature, which I did

The Druid Option (Happy Ending)

- Induction notice rescinded
 - Reclassified as beyond prime age
 - Happy birthday after all!
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- Filed Canadian information pamphlets for future reminiscences

How Richard Ragan Coped

- The closing window curtailed his academic career.
- Undergraduate: 3 years
- Graduate:
- Job:

How Hal Hart Escaped

- Doomed by the draft ... but wait!