

Some jobs unique, better

Being a junior, the time has come for me to sit down and decide what it is I really want to do with my life. I must say the Sept. 18 Career Fest sparked my attention and really put me in tune with the myriad of possibilities that await.

The reason I got so excited was not because of the employment opportunities that were presented at the showcase. Truth be known, the only reason I stopped by the "fest" was to see a friend of mine.

I saw a list of the different companies there, however, and it got my mind wondering. The companies on the list, many world-renowned, were all very good. However, when I think of the best jobs in the world, there are some other positions that come to mind that I would like to have seen there.

■ **Playboy** photographer. Call me perverted, call me what you will, but I will unabashedly rank this job as the mother of all employment opportunities.

If someone were to ever call me and ask me to take pictures of attractive, naked women and, on top of this, pay me to do it, there is no question. Case closed.

How nice would it be to talk to a representative from *Playboy* and chat for 15 minutes? I doubt it would be productive because most conversations would stop after the first question: "Can I see your portfolio?"

And by the way, it really bugs me when I see these photographers in an interview and they spew crap about how the human anatomy, in its barest form, is a beautiful expression of life.

For once, I would love to see some guy who is honest and says, "They're naked, so I'm shooting. I'm actually a volunteer, you know."

On a similar note, I wouldn't mind being a reporter for *Playboy*. That way, I could get the magazine and

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whenever someone saw me with it, I would be able to smile sheepishly and say, "I just get it for the articles."

■ **Superhero.** Another position in which you cannot go wrong. Even if you were something boring, you still have some power that makes you unstoppable. Mom always said you were special but this goes above and

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beyond what is inside.

I hope Wonderwoman would show up, though, because I have a bone to pick with her. While I do not like her wristbands, I can live with them because it is not unthinkable that she could block every bullet coming her way (although it is coincidental that all shots fired are between waist and neck level).

My problem is the "invisible jet." The invisible jet is great, in theory. In practice, it doesn't work because it fails to achieve a primary task: making Wonderwoman invisible. Every show, she gets in her jet, which only she can see, and then flies off. No big deal.

The problem arises when she's in the sky. It looks like Wonderwoman is levitating, in a seated position. She is never invisible, she just floats in air. Now maybe I'm missing some-

thing, but it would seem that this defeats the entire purpose of having an "invisible" jet.

■ **Substitute teacher.** Are you kidding me? Subs are the red-headed stepchildren of the teaching profession. The only thing they do is monitor a study hall or play games. Of course, there are always one or two subs that everyone likes and the class talks to him or her the whole time.

Unfortunately, there are also always one or two that try to be hip and relate to people half their age. These subs usually end up getting made fun of, secretly, by most of the class.

The thing that rules about being a sub is that you get paid to sit around all day and, literally, do nothing. There is no point in trying to teach the class because the "real" teachers discount the sub's lecture anyway and tell the class that the sub's information will not be on the test.

To those who believe subs' jobs are viable, I would like to use college education to prove my point. When you have a professor that doesn't show up for class, do you walk into the class and see one of your friend's parents sitting on the desk with his or her name on the board?

No. Class is cancelled because having class would achieve nothing.

■ **Professional football punter.** Okay, maybe you get hit once a game, but that is a walk in the park for the money you make (the National Football League's minimum salary is over \$150,000).

People always talk about how they would box Mike Tyson for a million dollars. I say, why risk it?

Become a punter, make some investments and live comfortably, and be able to pronounce multiple-syllabic words for the rest of your life without fear of drooling.



Student accomplishments should be acknowledged

ELIZABETH D. FISHER
STUDENT COLUMNIST

All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. And it doesn't make Jane a whole heck of a lot of fun, either. Let's face it, here at "Work Forest," we've all probably felt pretty unfun at some point.

Remember the time you passed on hanging out with your buddies for some quiet time alone with your physics book?

Remember when you gave up an off-campus meal so you could gorge yourself on philosophy and Pizza Hut breadsticks?

How about that fateful day when you left the Wake Forest vs. Northwestern football game to squeeze in an extra minute of Italian?

Every day, students make these choices. It's part of college. "It's learning to set priorities," my dad would say. OK, I'll agree with him. Every time I opt for a book over a movie, I'm making a commitment to improving my mind and capitalizing on the opportunities of a great education.

I applaud myself for this decision. But I seem to be alone in that approbation. And what is the sound of one hand clapping? I'm not sure. I'm reading that chapter next week instead of playing intramural flag football.

My point being, not that students are deprived of "life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness and a few fleeting moments of free time," but that we are not commended for the commitment we do give to academics.

Every time I ace a test, get a good grade on a paper or deliver a solid oral report, someone else in the class does better.

Students here are downright smart. And the grades reflect that. We get As and Bs. But what do we hear from faculty members or administrators as feedback? That the grading standards are too easy. That we must not really deserve those grades because we could not possibly have worked that hard.

Well, you know what? We can, and we do. After four years at the university, I have entered the library at every possible hour of the day. And, every time I am there, I have company. There is always another student, crouched over a book, squeaking out the last of her yellow fluorescent ink into a microeconomics text.

What reaction do library-going students receive when we leave the quiet solemnness of Z. Smith Reynolds world? That we are not "cultural" enough. That we are not sufficiently "intellectual."

Report after report, from the Lilly to the Montreat to the Kuh, all conclude that "Academics do not leave classroom walls" (to quote from a Sept. 19 *Old Gold and Black* headline).

Critics chastise us, saying we just don't engage enough in our material outside of the classroom.

Maybe these critics think of the library as one big extended classroom. But what about the hordes of

people toting backpacks to the Green Room, to Davis field, the Mag Patio and the Benson rotunda?

Now I realize that this is not the type of outside "engagement" that educators here have in mind when they talk of encouraging academic discourse on campus. But let's give credit where credit is due.

Students spend plenty of time outside of class reading, thinking about, taking notes on and discussing, yes, even discussing classwork.

Maybe the problem lies in where this interaction takes place. Most administrators and teachers only observe the silent practice of reading that each student learns to make a daily ritual.

Unfortunately, they miss the lively debates that spring up in the most unlikely of places. How about in the middle of *Seinfeld* when an English major explains to her fellow TV viewers the relevance of a literary allusion made by Kramer?

When two friends, jogging together, encourage each other by citing the physiological benefits of aerobic activity through cardiovascular exercise?

When a politics minor schools his coworker on the political ramifications of the flat-tax proposal on both his paychecks and the presidential race? Or even when two fraternity brothers weigh the opportunity cost of going to a party versus studying for a test Saturday night?

So, maybe the fraternity brothers decided to party. But at least they showed the usefulness of economics in a social setting. Not an easy accomplishment.

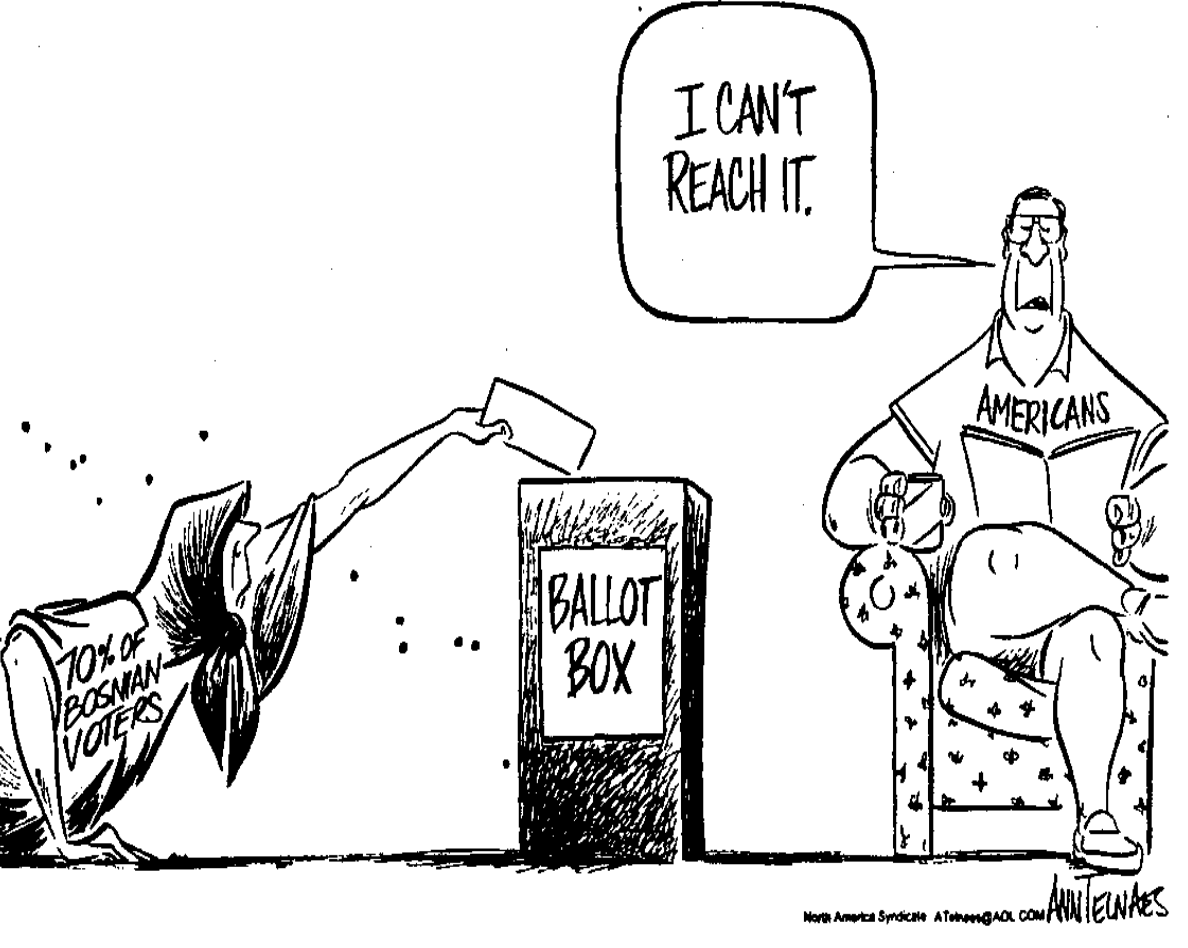
The bottom line is that the university is full of intelligent people. As intelligent people we like to try to remember some of what we learn in class.

That is, after all, the goal of a college education. To take the book-learning further than the book, and into the real world.

I commend the administration for wanting to make learning something more than rote memorization or classroom lectures. I agree it should be alive, integrated into conversations as much as ingrained in our minds. All I suggest is that students receive some recognition for the exceptional work we are already accomplishing.

For without such a dedicated, inquisitive and scholarly student body, there would be no ripe minds for educators here to stimulate to further discussion or debate.

So don't forget the brilliant work students do every day. And, to show us that you know, pat Jack on the back and give Jane an encouraging smile as you pass them on their way to the library.



Importance of life much like that of a well-written opus

JOANNA IWATA
GUEST COLUMNIST

Last month, I participated in a special pilot project which took a group of faculty, staff, and 30 freshmen up to the mountains of Asheville for a retreat.

As a group, we explored the many different facets of our life journeys which brought us to the university. We also examined how our expectations of what we hope to achieve during our tenure at the university can be met both inside and outside of the classroom.

As part of this retreat, we viewed the movie, *Mr. Holland's Opus*. We then followed with small group discussions about how to create a life "rich in purpose."

This created a space in time for me to reflect more deeply into the meaning of my own life through the metaphor of music.

I began imagining myself as a composer of my "life score" wherein I found myself grappling with the question: "If I am responsible for composing my own 'life score' or opus (in musical terms this refers to a musical composition or set of compositions) what would I want it to reflect about my life and how would I orchestrate it?"

It seems to me that every good composer receives his or her inspiration from different sources and this may be true for all of us.

Like a composer, our inspiration comes from our contact and connections with the many different people, events, memories of things which affect us — good, bad or indifferently. These then trigger the music or melody which reflect what we feel and how we think about our experiences.

Given the task of composing your own opus, there are several basic elements we must consider first in setting the stage:

■ **The melody.** In reflecting on your life, what melody comes to mind? For instance is it upbeat,

melancholy, jazzy, classical, abstract, nondescript?

■ **The rhythm.** Are there more than one, two or three rhythms which seem to depict various events in your life?

■ **The harmony.** What creates the harmonic or dissonant elements in your life?

■ **The dynamics.** What nuances affect the melody, rhythm or harmony of your life?

Being part of the chorale ensemble for the performance of composer in residence Dan Locklair's orchestration of Maya Angelou's *On the Pulse of Morning*, brings all of this imagery "alive" for me.

Our chorale conductor, Brian Gorelick (who describes himself as an interpretive musician) has a wonderful way of making the music come to life. While his instruction is one wherein he cannot change the melody, rhythm or dynamics of the piece, he can make small adjustments to the pieces we sing which ultimately affects what the listeners hear.

Applying this concept to our lives, I believe we too are all capable of being interpretive musicians. As perhaps it is not so much the big changes we make in our lives as much as the smaller changes which ultimately enhances what our opus, or "life score," reflects about us.

So in examining these musical metaphors for ourselves, what is it that you would want to capture and express through your opus?

How will you measure what you have achieved and its effect not only upon your life but the lives of other people?

How will you actualize what you desire in your life to create a life "rich in purpose?" Stay tuned ... I think I feel an "opus" in the making.

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