

OLD GOLD AND BLACK

The Student Newspaper of Wake Forest University
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EDITORIALS

Forum exemplifies faculty apathy

Whenever issues of apathy are discussed, it is usually in conjunction with students. Many times, this is justifiable, but it appears that the discussion should be continued further to include faculty members.

At a discussion on the Kuh report Oct. 24, which took place at the Chi Psi lodge, the only faculty present were those on the panel: Constance Dickey, an assistant professor of romance languages, Carol Browne, a professor of biology, Barry Maine, a professor of English and David Finn, a visiting assistant professor of art.

Of the 44 faculty members invited to the Presidents' Leadership Conference, which took place two weeks ago, only five decided to attend.

Browne and Maine have always been active on campus, expressing their thoughts on the future of the university. Both were among those authoring the Lily Report, a paper discussing the intellectual direction of students and contrasting it with the current social atmosphere.

The problem is there is a small cluster of faculty members on cam-

pus who are always in discussion groups and attending forums, but many seem to approach these activities as a chore, rather than an extension of their jobs.

No one is expecting all faculty members to attend many different activities. Most are teaching multiple classes and trying to juggle research on top of this, not to mention a personal life. Regardless, how is it that these select few professors are able to do this while also attending and sponsoring different forums?

The lackluster faculty attendance was contrasted by a supportive student attendance. Overall, around 35 students were at the forum, 20-25 students and 10 Chi Psi brothers. Those responsible for publicizing the forum should be commended, as it was obviously noted by a number of students.

One of the main points that the Kuh report makes is that there is a gap in communication between the faculty and the students. If this problem is to be rectified, a good starting point is at forums such as these, where open discussion can take place and strides can be made for the future.

Council's meeting avoids major issues

During Homecoming Weekend, the Alumni Council had their quarterly meeting. The group should have had plenty of topics for discussion, with the new gatehouses and the concerns of racial diversity that have been expressed in polls done by the Student Government Executive Committee for Race Relations and the Kuh report. Instead the council viewed the school from a cosmetic perspective, analyzing the publicity aspects and how the university compared to other schools.

This decision is a disappointing one, especially considering the topics of past meetings and the effects the discussions have had. And while the Kuh report was discussed over the summer, it seems that a new debate concurrent with the findings of the Race Relations committee would have been merited.

Last year, the council discussed the Lily Report and its affects on the social climate. Some alumni were vehemently opposed to a few of the report's recommendations and discussion was sparked because of their opinions.

Those opposed spoke of the memories they had of their days at the university and what they remembered and liked the most.

While social avenues are an important part of the college experience, they are no more significant than many of the issues that have been discarded this year.

In addition to the aforementioned examples, there is the new basketball ticket distribution policy, the new divinity school and the numerous buildings that are to be built in the coming years.

True, the alumni do not have time to discuss every new proposal that the university plans to adopt. Even so, any of these issues are ones that many alumni probably dealt with in some form during their years at school.

Surely, they have an opinion on today's proposals and surely, these are all issues of importance greater than the publicizing of the university.

The members of the council have a responsibility to scrutinize and debate the issues that will be affecting campus in future years. They have been chosen to do this and they should complete this task to the best of their abilities.

Being one of the few respected voices that remains independent of the administration, it is important that they exercise their power with effectiveness and work to maintain previous standards.

Abuses of propriety hurt society

ANDY FERGUSON

EDITORIALS EDITOR

I write this article in a foul mood. The year is 1996 and our nation is still condoning and celebrating Halloween. Every year, children dress up and parade around collecting rewards for their outfits, with no concern for those they are mimicking.

Obviously no one has taken the time to think about the numerous football players, power rangers and witches that will be offended by all of these children mocking them.

First of all, these kids should know better. What are the average ages of most trick-or-treaters? Probably in the 8-12 window, right? In other words, old enough to know better.

Secondly, what kind of parents allow their children to act like this? Most likely, the same sick and twisted ones who help their children construct these outfits of hate. Our society has been reduced to terms like, "propriety" and "politically correct," in an effort to appease the masses. Initially, this may have been a good step.

Unfortunately, though, an abuse of power has taken place on a grand scale. One step forward, two steps back.

It's time that we had more people like those at the Lexington City School System, who originally expelled, then later suspended 6-year-old Johnathan Prevette for the sexual molestation (kissing on the cheek) of a female classmate.

I would not be surprised if the

shine as beacons of hope for all wrestling with this issue. Discomfort does not justify drug abuse.

This is a call to our nation: relax. Everybody just go ahead and take five or 10 minutes, collect your thoughts and ease up. Society has been on a downward spiral for too long now and it is time to rectify the

the idea of expulsion was even considered is unbelievable.

Under this premise, why don't we take those caught stealing pencils and cut off their right hands. And all of those perverts who look up girls' skirts should have their eyes gouged out.

Understand, I am not condoning an action that makes another uncomfortable or violates their rights. Even so, we are talking about a 6-year-old.

There is a natural curiosity and innocence in these actions. While it may be wrong, it is not akin to a severe action or insubordination that merits expulsion.

And what about Ms. Taylor. It's midol, an over-the-counter drug. I sympathize with those trying to crack down on drugs and send out a positive message, but I am unsure that these drug police are as clean as they want everyone else to be because I cannot fathom a sober person being that overzealous.

To these people and others like them, please, get a life. Find something worthwhile to focus your efforts on because our society suffers from your actions. These blatant abuses of power are as childish as the victims being punished.

Improving society should be a selfless act that is done without malintent. It is ridiculous to put insignificant actions like the latter under a microscope, especially when there are so many problems that demand our attention.

This is a call to our nation: relax. Everybody just go ahead and take five or 10 minutes, collect your thoughts and ease up.

Another leader in the quest for propriety is the Fairborn, Ohio school system, who served 13-year-old Erica Taylor with a 10-day suspension with a recommendation for expulsion for accepting midol from a friend because she was experiencing discomfort.

Just the thought of her trying to ruin the lives of others with her addiction nauseates me, especially after all the leaps and bounds this nation has made curtailing drug use in school.

Expulsion is not the answer, though. All this is going to do is put her and her filth back on the streets, where she can ruin the lives of so many young women who possess an infinite amount of potential.

The Amish do not use midol; nor do scientologists. There examples

situation.

Before, things were bad, but they were tolerable. Adults were huffing at other adults, blowing things out of proportion and getting bent out of shape for a million different things. Still, though, the focus stayed pretty much on the adults.

Now, we are suspending a 6-year-old boy because he tests the cootie theory and expelling a teenager for being helpful. It's time for some reforms.

Think back to when you were six. How is it possible for anyone to construe the actions of someone at such an age to be deemed sexually harassing? The whole concept astounds me.

I can understand making our little kissing bandit miss a recess, or sit with his head down for 15 minutes, but to suspend him? And the fact that



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Water works

I have heard many negative observations about the drinking habits of students. My own observations have been very different and positive.

Ever since we permitted students to bring water in covered containers into the Z. Smith Reynolds Library, I have been amazed at the number of students who carry and consume bottled water. I am pleased to see that this excellent practice is now a common habit on campus, and those students serve as role models for me as I try to further reduce caffeine and start drinking more water. I do not know when bottled water became the daytime drink of choice, but it is great to see.

Rhoda Channing

Director of the Z. Smith Reynolds Library

J-Board changes

It has come to our attention that students accused of a judicial violation are not always clear about the workings of the system or even the charges they face. Specifically, current practices often lead to unnecessary failure to comply charges and Honor Code infractions. To that end, the Student Government Judiciary Committee is evaluating the existing procedures.

After preliminary discussions, the committee is considering the creation of a Bill of Rights for the Accused. The three primary components of our plan are as follows:

- Require that Resident Advisers clearly identify themselves as RAs when confronting students suspected of a judicial violation.
- Stipulate that RAs inform ac-

many students were disappointed, even angry, about the lack of support for this event, interpreting the low attendance as a sign of student and faculty apathy.

The tone of these complaints, moreover, imply a certain callousness and forgetfulness on the part of the university community. This has been interpreted by some as particularly lamentable in light of the unspeakable tragedy that took the lives of two students so recently.

May I suggest that part of the problem was the haste with which the open forum was called? Most faculty knew nothing of the event until it was too late to announce it to students, let alone make arrangements to attend themselves. I have been told that the logistics and timing of the forum was dictated by Governor Jim Hunt's schedule.

I have no difficulty in accepting such an explanation, especially if his presence was deemed important to the success of the event. But for whose benefit was the event scheduled? Why did it have to happen precisely when it did?

I fully share the sentiments of those who believe that drunk driving is a serious issue. This is precisely why it merits something weightier than a hastily convened and poorly planned media event that gives every appearance of offering a political sound bite.

In fairness, more substantive things may have emerged from the forum. Since I could not be there, I cannot say. But if the university wishes to address the issue of drunk driving in the manner it deserves, would it not make more sense to plan ahead and build support among the entire university community so that a truly meaningful, perhaps even redemptive, action may emerge?

The organizers might be pleasantly

surprised to see just how caring and committed this campus community can be.

David B. Levy

Associate Professor and Chairman
Department of Music

Bad timing

In response to the well thought out letter by Amanda Hummel and Jessica Lukas (Oct. 24, "DWI forum") I have one thing to say: How are students supposed to attend a meeting that they do not even know exists?

I thought that the university would have learned its lesson after the They Might Be Giants fiasco, but no.

Students were notified the day before the forum, and for most people with an intensive class schedule, one day is not enough to plan.

Had I known a week before, I probably could have moved my lab period, but the day before is asking too much.

Second, I really do not believe that the second most intensive testing week of the semester is the right time to hold a forum. Most people had at least two mid-terms that week.

And third, campus voice mail is not the most effective way to advertise. What percent of the student body has voice mail? I bet not even 75 percent. You must at least make an attempt to inform everyone. So Amelia and Jessica, have a little more faith in your apathetic student body.

Speaking for myself, I do care, and, yes, a drunk driving fatality has influenced my life, but for the three reasons above, the forum was not feasible.

I did want to attend. So, consider the lives and schedules of others before you chastise them.

Byron Miller

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