

OPINION

This column represents the views of the Old Gold and Black Editorial Board.

Good times and bad color 1997-98

The 1997-98 academic year is winding to a close, and restless minds have already begun to ponder lying on the beach, summer internships and new careers ahead. But before packing up the ThinkPad and dorm room (maybe for the last time) and heading over to the nearest storage shed, it seems appropriate to reflect upon the events that have shaped this year.

As students studied beneath the fluorescent hum of library lights, relaxed in Shorty's and cheered the Demon Deacons on to not-so-basketball-victory, much was happening on the campus.

Not all was great: Some events, namely the deaths of two students and one graduate, gave the campus a startlingly bleak glimpse at reality.

The deaths of graduate Amanda Edwards, freshman Alexander Gedicks and sophomore Greg Wilson served as a bitter reminder that a university is not a refuge from tragedy and death. Gedicks and Wilson were involved in many areas of campus and have been sorely missed by the university community.

However, much that was beneficent, like judicial reform, unfolded with the year. Here is what the *Old Gold and Black* thinks of the significant occurrences in 1997-98.

Cheers to Judicial Reform. After months of tedious work, Student Government was able to present a reform that students would support. With hope, the faculty's confidence in the judicial process will increase with these reforms. Jeers, however, to the method in which SG rammed reform down students' throats with its politically crooked "Vote Yes" campaign.

Jeers to the loss of another pillar of the university's social structure — the Kappa Sigma fraternity. It was unfair that the university subjected the entire fraternity to a punishment. Cheers, however, to the university's show of intolerance for hazing, in any form.

Neutral feelings toward *Playboy* for recruiting university women to appear in a women of the ACC pinup. We would hope that intelligent women would not degrade themselves by auditioning for the magazine, but they are free to choose what they please.

Cheers to the near completion of Polo Residence Hall, the latest in townhouse-style living. The university effectively followed through with the board of trustees' request that the

residence be primarily for independents. However, jeers to the fact that the segregation of Greeks and independents will proliferate.

Many jeers to the International Center for Computer Enhanced Learning, the latest company to sink its corporate claws into the soft underbelly of our liberal arts institution. The mutual boot-licking between university and corporations (IBM, PepsiCo, Nike) is destined to leave the university bankrupt of its liberal arts ideals. *Pro Humanitate* is fast becoming, "pro moremoneytoday."

Jeers to the new alcohol policy. Rules stipulating that students bring their own coolers to parties has been an unreasonable request. No one wants to look like they are enroute to a picnic when they are going to a fraternity party.

Additionally, the paperwork that students have been required to fill out upon entering parties is as complex as a W-4 form. The

university's efforts to curb underage drinking reached an unreasonable level this year.

Though the university may have had the students' well-being in mind when implementing the new policy, so far it appears that little has changed.

Jeers to the loss of the Delta Gamma sorority and to the large sizes of sorority pledge classes that have resulted from its loss. Cheers to DG and the Panhellenic Council for their attempts to preserve the sorority. It will be interesting to see what happens when Panhellenic brings a new sorority, Phi Mu, to campus next year. Hopefully, the decision to add a sorority will be a successful move and will enable interested women to become Greek.

Jeers to Edward Shlikas, the law school student who thought that he could sue the university's law school and win. Believing that first year law school students are treated unfairly, he decided that a law suit could revolutionize things. Going on a hunger strike to prove a point did not seem to help his case much either.

Cheers to the university for not caving in to the Baptists who wanted Shorty's to stop serving beer. Although the university dissolved its affiliation with the Baptist church over a decade ago, the Baptists felt that their voice should be heard on this matter.

Cheers to the university for letting students make this decision on their own.

Campus not for religious chalking

Chalkings inaccurately portray the university to prospective students.

April 18, the university welcomed a thousand people to Campus Day, the annual event at which prospective students and their parents explore the school, learn about our programs and meet students involved with the various campus activities. Despite the persistent

Shannon Bothwell

GUEST COLUMNIST

drizzle, it was a day for the campus to present its best face to the accepted students, except that April 18 the face of our campus had the equivalent of a breakout of festering zits, in the form of numerous Christian graffiti chalked on the Quad, the Spirit Walk and other locations. This display of irreligious fervor undermined the purpose of Campus Day and was an embarrassment to the university, other students, and genuine Christians.

Campus Day gives accepted students an opportunity to increase their knowledge about the university, in order that they may make a more informed choice about where to spend the next four years of their lives. While admissions brochures and college guides may provide some insight into the character of the institution, there is no substitute for being on campus and getting an intuitive "feel" for the place. So the whole point of Campus Day is to provide an accurate and multi-faceted view of what the university is like, and

what distinguishes it from other universities.

While the Christian Chalkers may have believed that they were helping out the admissions office by adding to the campus decoration, they were in fact destroying the very purpose of the event. Accepted students and their parents stared quizzically at the chalkwork, asking whether the university is always like this. Frazzled tour guides groped for explanations, hoping to convince the visitors that we are not in fact a school full of sectarians. The impression that many accepted students and their parents took away is one of intolerance and religiocentrism, which is simply not an accurate representation of life at this university.

As a non-Christian, I have been able to survive and even flourish here, despite not adhering to the dominant religious beliefs. Once I learned to avoid the first floor of Reynolda Hall on Friday evenings, I have only rarely been a victim of jarring Christian encounters. I have never been subjected to aggressive witnessing or proselytizing; on the contrary, I have met many Christians who are willing to discuss our religious differences in a non-confrontational manner. In short, religious intolerance is not a major component of the university's institutional personality, and to present it as such is incorrect.

I believe that individuals and groups should have the right to express their views in a public forum. However, piping up in public comes with responsibilities, one of which is the responsibility to tell the truth. The individuals who placed the Christian graffiti around campus acted irresponsibly by intentionally presenting a false and misleading view of this university.

Not all students here are persuaded that Jesus saves, but more important,

legitimate Christians would not fall prey to the poor understanding of theology evidenced by some of the graffiti. One item, placed on the Quad in front of Kitchin House, suggested that a higher grade point average is one consequence of accepting Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior: Christians will get an A+ in organic because all things are possible through God. This claim is an embarrassment to genuine Christians, who hold and practice their religious beliefs for deeply personal and spiritual reasons, rather than to gain admission to the medical school of their choice.

The Campus Day chalkings are an embarrassment to the school, both because they offer a distorted view of life at the university and because they are grotesque parodies of Christian theology.

The result of such behavior can only be to discourage non-Christians, or anyone who does not want to be confronted with such holy comments on a regular basis, from attending the university.

Had I seen similar messages while visiting the school, I would never have even considered enrolling. This Christian graffiti may serve to make next fall's entering class even less diverse, socially and intellectually, than it otherwise would have been. It may also be a serious blow to organizations associated with less-represented faiths that depend on new students for membership.

The last time I checked, the message of the New Testament is love. Boys and girls, this "Christian" graffiti is not about love, rather it appears to be a concerted attempt to dissuade non-Christian or non-fundamentalist students from entering the university, and as such it is an act of religious bigotry.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The ABC's of getting good grades

What's in a grade? Not a cliché; not a rhetorical question. I mean, really, WHAT'S IN A GRADE?

What is it about a grade that can say something about our mental capabilities, shortcomings, laziness, efficiency, etc.?

What is it about the three marks that appear in the form of an "A" or "F," and all those letters in between, that can determine our futures. I mean, really, WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

What about the new grading system? If I'm an "A" student, am I any smarter if I make an "A+," any dumber if I make an "A-?" Really, WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

Who is this omniscient, application-reviewing, transcript-overseeing, spell-checking (our resumes and job applications) god we have created in our minds throughout our academic careers? Is this entity the lord of our futures, ruler of our destinies, or are we?

I remember when an old professor of mine used to tell my classmates and me about how much more important a healthy lifestyle is than grades, or jobs or careers.

He would say something like, "So you failed a class. So what? You're probably better off in the long run. So maybe you'll even drop out of Wake — transfer to Duke. You'll probably do

well at Duke and become a professional ... in whatever field 'Blue Devils' are professional (Ha, Ha!). The point is, you'll live well." Another professor once told me this: "Ten years from now, who's gonna care that you have an "F" on your transcript?" Incidentally, I don't have an "F" on my transcript — PRAISE THE LORD! Do you feel what I'm saying?

Although our institution prides itself on doing things "for the sake of humanity," I have often felt that I was graded "pro humiliate" ("for the sake of humiliation.")

I mean, let's be for real. At times, grades are given in reward and in punishment.

We often tend to regard the lower grades as punishment. We often punish ourselves when we don't receive the higher grades.

My message to you is this: DON'T PUNISH YOURSELVES! It's not worth it. Jesus Christ asks, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul (Mark 8:36)?" This IS a rhetorical question.

So, the next time you are fretting over a course you're in danger of failing, remember this: there is at least one professor on this campus who never received a high school diploma — and neither did Michael J. Fox, a rich and famous actor, whose autographed poster from one of his most famous films hangs three floors below the office that published this article!

SAVE THE QUAD!

Clinton Wilburn
Senior

All are entitled to separate opinions

I'm all for anyone being able to speak your mind, but I found the lofty rhetoric of junior Paul "the ladies man" Lundberg's April 9 column, "*Playboy* debases women: pornography isn't justified" a bit overbearing.

Lundberg may be great at throwing around big words, but at the core of his column is the idea of "think like me or you're wrong." I think it's a bit arrogant to equate one's opinion with "the truth," regardless of how strongly one feels. I'm not trying to stand up for *Playboy*, but seriously, if you don't like it, don't read it. All I'm trying to stand up for, like Lundberg, is my opinion.

Alex Martin
Sophomore

Our letters policy

We welcome letters. Send yours via e-mail to letters@ogb.wfu.edu, by campus mail to P.O. Box 7569, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27109, or deliver it to Benson 518. We reserve the right to edit all letters for length and clarity.

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