

OPINION

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

Anthro department makes positive changes

Last spring the administration announced that the graduate program in anthropology was being discontinued, with the implication that the undergraduate program was also in jeopardy. Controversy then abounded as shocked students and faculty members of the department desperately struggled to defend its existence.

The move to cut the department was motivated by last year's program review, a process that each department at the university must undergo every few years as part of the college's accreditation procedure. According to the administration, the decision was made as a result of the recommendations of the outside consultants during the self-study part of program review.

Since this announcement and the notorious reactions to it, the department of anthropology has made positive moves toward change. Though they cannot change the fate of the graduate program, department members are now working to repair what the outside consultant found was an ailing department.

Because the consultants found gender biases within the department's curriculum, the department is adding a course on gender in anthropology.

The department is also cutting and reworking several other classes that were found to be problematic or insufficient in order to give the curriculum more of a focus, which was also a recommendation

of the consultant's report.

Also, because of reported relationship problems within the department, a consultant from Duke University was brought in this summer to help faculty members improve relations.

The fact that the graduate program was cut is unjustifiable. But the fact that the department is taking such definitive, progressive steps to change the problems that program review found is a positive outcome of this whole unfortunate issue.

The faculty was also promised that no matter what happens to the department, the Museum of Anthropology will remain in existence. This decision is an important one because the museum is a valuable asset to the university.

In another important move, the administration said it would consider the faculty's input in the decision about the future of the undergraduate program. If this promise is sincere, the administration has done some good in letting the faculty have a say (though it is debatable how much) in their fate, especially considering that the decision about the undergraduate program was made with no faculty input whatsoever — professors were left in shock over the surprise announcement.

The administration's cuts are deplorable, having threatened the anthropology department, scaring faculty into making these changes. But too often studies like this one are ignored, and since actual, positive change has come about, the report has in fact done some good.

Service memorializes students who died

Sept. 4 was a day of celebration, as students gathered at both convocation and at the memorial service for the four students who died last year.

Rabbi Harold Kushner, author of *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*, spoke at both events, helping the university community deal with its lingering grief on the first anniversary of the deaths of sophomores Maia Witzl and Julie Hanson. Graham Gould, a rising sophomore who died in a car accident last summer, and Matthew Alexander, a rising senior who died in the TWA flight 800 crash, were also memorialized in the service.

Turnout for the service in Brendle Recital Hall was high, a positive commentary on the university community.

Also, that the service took place a year after the tragedies shows that students, faculty, administrators and members of

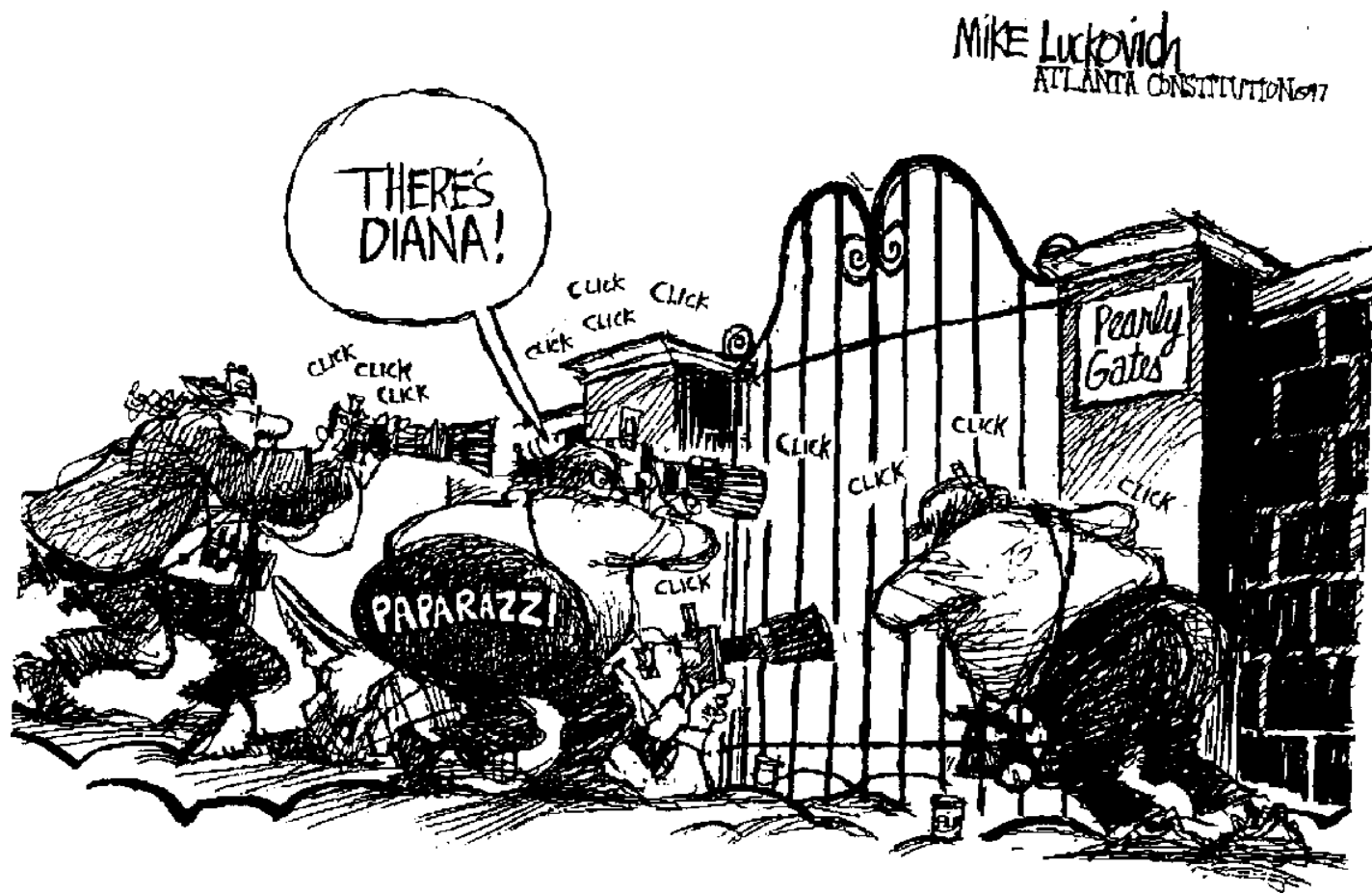
the community still care about and remember the lives of these former students — their memories have not been lost over the last busy year.

The administration should be commended for its selection of its convocation and memorial service speaker. Rabbi Kushner added a fresh perspective to the university and also fit in well with the Year of Religion.

Kushner, who spoke on ways to cope with tragedy, and stressed that the community should celebrate the good that came out of the tragedy of Witzl's and Hanson's deaths.

Students involved in the actions last year against drunk driving should indeed be proud of their efforts.

As we mourn the deaths of the students who died, we can take comfort in the fact that harsher state DWI legislation is in the works as a result of student action.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Three of four former SG officers clear their names

In light of the recent articles in the *Old Gold and Black* regarding the internal audit of Student Government, the three of us felt it necessary to write a letter describing the process leading to the internal audit to clear up any rumors or misunderstandings that may still surround what happened with the SG financial situation last year.

When conducting a monthly review of the SG financial records, SG Treasurer Chris Cathcart noticed excessive amounts charged to the College Bookstore account, which SG maintains for supplies necessary for our office.

Cathcart then consulted with Will Ashworth, SG Speaker of the House, who then accompanied Cathcart to the bookstore to investigate the nature of these excessive charges.

Cathcart and Ashworth reviewed the expense records for the SG account and found many items that could not be justified as legitimate SG expenses.

Cathcart and Ashworth then informed SG Secretary David Slade of the situation and showed him the records. Since we three all knew that we had not signed any of the receipts containing questionable expenses, we continued our investigation at the bookstore, this time asking for the name on the receipts.

After this process, the three of us found evidence of mismanagement of SG funds by a legal signatory on the SG account.

As SG's financial officer, Cathcart then decided to forward our findings to university officials, a decision supported by Slade and Ashworth. University officials responded by conducting an internal audit of SG. At that point the three of us withdrew from the process and the university took over (with the exception of Cathcart, who helped with the procedural details of the audit but did not conduct any further investigation). As we have previously stated for the

record, the investigation and internal audit by the university did not at any time focus on the offices of speaker of the house, treasurer or secretary, and also did not include the chief of staff, publicity director or any members of the SG Legislature. University officials will verify that this was the case.

We want to make it clear that the findings of our investigation constituted any and all evidence of financial mismanagement known to us at the time.

Any other rumors about financial missteps are, to the best of our knowledge, false. As to the findings of the internal audit, university regulations prohibit us from releasing any information; however, we can speak to the actions that brought about the audit, and we want to release our knowledge on those matters.

We hope this can shed some light (as much as we can shed) about an unfortunate situation that should no longer affect the former officers or SG as a whole.

Will Ashworth, Chris Cathcart and David Slade
Seniors
1996-97 SG Executive officers

Administration gives poor response to report

The Commission on the Status of Women recently issued its final report; the report, along with the administration's response, can be found on the administration's home page. After two years of work, the commission has identified child day care as an issue of fundamental concern to female administrators, faculty members and staff alike.

The establishment of a day care facility at the university is described as "imperative." The Commission's emphasis on the need for day care, which reconfirms at least a decade of similar proposals and committee recommendations, has met with a

temporizing administrative response. Rather than proposing any move toward the establishment of a day care center at the university, the administration calls for Louis Morrell, the vice president for investments and treasurers, to "examine all options and develop a plan for providing more access to child care."

Such a response indicates that the administration is primarily concerned with the cost of establishing and maintaining a day care facility. This concern seems incongruous with the continuing spate of new construction on campus, which most recently has included the brick esplanade in front of Tribble, a new classroom building between Calloway and Carswell Halls, an ROTC and Information Systems Building complete with food court, new townhouse dormitories and a state-of-the-art fieldhouse for the football team.

Some of this construction will undoubtedly generate additional revenue for the university, but it is not necessarily the case that a day-care facility would not do the same.

In order to attract and retain capable and dedicated faculty and staff (men and women alike), the university should move decisively to provide day care in the near future.

As an institution which identifies itself as progressive and prides itself on the notion of the "Wake Forest family," the university should recognize that its members have very real families of their own.

Susan Rupp
Assistant Professor of History

For more letters, see next page.

Our letters policy

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