

Opinions

The Banner

Editorial

Financial aid, anyone?

President Clinton recently endorsed the largest increase in Pell grants in twenty years, which may help provide a great source of opportunity to needy college students, according to an article in Wednesday's *New York Times*.

Maybe he should work on cutting out some of the paperwork as well.

For those of you who have applied for financial aid this year, the members of the editorial board apologize. Prepare to wait with us in endless lines, have your telephone calls constantly put on hold, and carry a pen with you at all times to fill out a mountain of forms.

Pray that your car doesn't break down, you don't need groceries, or rent doesn't come due. Because you certainly won't receive your financial aid award letter. When you need it, at least.

Ever wondered why the government uses up so much paper? Bureaucracy. That one word describes the heart of UNCA's financial aid office. First, you fill out preliminary forms strictly to apply for aid at this university. Then, you must fill out the FAFSA (surely you are familiar with the terms), receive your SAR in the mail, make corrections, and send it back to the government. Then, they send it to your university.

Seems like the process would end there, doesn't it? Hardly. Then, trek continuously up and down the stairs to the financial aid office, where you will be told that your forms are in the next file to be sorted through, or, 'we have other things to do than process your applications.'

The world would be a much happier place if students could actually afford to pay their way through college without the help of student loans, grants, and scholarships. But reality eventually sets in, and the process begins all over again.

It might be okay if students only had to fill out the pile of forms once, maybe at the beginning of their college career, but every year? It becomes such a headache, and hardly worth the effort when you're starving to death waiting for your loan check to come through.

Prepare yourself by gathering those tax forms, sharpening up your pencil, and rationalizing whether you really need financial aid after all.

If so, look forward to paying off student loans for the next ten years. Get ready for post-college debt.

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Unsigned editorials reflect the opinion of a majority of the Banner editorial board. Letters, columns, cartoons and reviews represent only the opinions of their respective authors.

The Banner welcomes submissions of letters and articles for publication. All submissions are subject to editing for clarity, content and length and are considered on the basis of interest, space, taste, and timeliness.

Letters should be typed, double-spaced, and should not exceed 300 words. Letters for publication should also contain the author's signature, classification, major or other relationship with UNCA. The deadline for letters is noon on Tuesday. If you have a submission, you can send it to The Banner, 208A Carmichael Hall, One University Heights, Asheville NC 28804.

The deadline for display ads and the FYI calendar is on Monday at noon. The deadline for classified ads is at noon on Tuesday.

It's Valentine's, so let's talk



Tracy Wilson
columnist

I was at the mall one day when I saw a sign in the music store. It read, "Romeo would have given Juliet a CD."

Oh, really? Would a young lover in Verona who spoke in fluent iambic pentameter and died for his true love give her a little metallic disk that he paid much more to purchase than the company paid to manufacture? I don't think so.

So, as Valentine's Day lumbers toward us with all the grace and style of a bright red greeting card, I am forced to complain. Without a doubt, we are afraid of silence, especially in the realm of emotional intimacy.

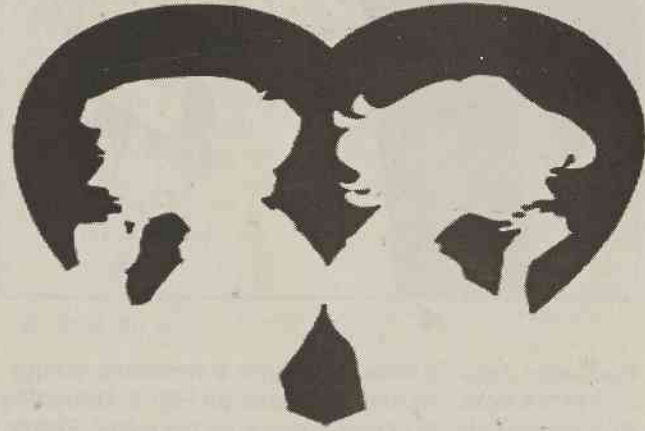
The fear of silence leads music stores to believe that a CD is a romantic gift. Don't know what to buy your lover for Valentine's Day? How about something to fill up the silence that will surely be there when the two of you see each other again.

Why are we so afraid of quiet? Beyond the fact that we're conditioned to be talkative, silence has a presence beyond our control. It exists until we interrupt it. It does not disappear until we force it away with sound.

Since silence frightens us into a state of perpetual chatter, we say things we don't mean. Not only are our statements insincere, often they just don't make sense. But, if we could just keep our

mouths shut long enough, we might just realize that silence is much more powerful than small talk and clichés.

Two summers ago, I went hik-



ing with a guy I was dating. When we reached the observation tower at the highest point in the park, we saw a group of very large black birds soaring around the tops of the mountains. Their wings reflected silver, and their shadows played along the mountains' curves.

He told me they were hawks. Over the winter break, I visited the same park, alone. I hiked to a different ridge, and there I saw the birds again, gliding around

the trees. When I got home, I happened to mention them to my father, who was kind enough to inform me that hawks are solitary. The most I'd see together would be two, and then only if they were mating.

"Then what were they, Dad?" "Turkey buzzards."

Now, my young male friend is a biology major at Florida State. He's a fountain of wilderness wisdom. That he would mistake buzzards seeking carrion for hawks flying over the mountains is quite unlikely.

Last summer, the same guy and I were halfway to a ridge in the same park when he noticed a deer watching us. Behind her, another appeared. We could hear several others heading down the mountain around us. The two we could see froze while the rest continued on.

I have never seen so many deer in one place. Neither had he. Neither of us had been that close to them before. We probably won't be lucky enough to be right in the middle of so many ever again. What a perfect time for a moment of silent intimacy.

His response? "This is the ultimate in coolness."

Did he realize that he didn't have to say anything? Probably not. But, there is a grand intimacy in silence. His idle chatter, brought on by the immediate pressure of silence, did a wonderful job of spoiling the moment. Being awestruck and being in love are two perfect times to just be quiet and notice what else is around you.

Oh, I'm just as guilty of useless prattle as anyone else. So, I remind myself, "Shut up, Tracy. You don't have to talk every second of your life."

Greeting card companies would have us believe that emotion is something to be bottled and sold, to be consumed once a year. All that's left is insensitivity and cliché.

We have red hearts on pink backgrounds and hideous "I love you" blubs on the insides of Valentine cards. I suppose that's convenient. It means we don't have to listen to the silence. But there is more to intimacy than the words "I love you."

How to be cool at the game



Nate Conroy
columnist

The basketball team is kickin' ass this year.

Losing the last two games is just the reality check they need (after an incredible 11-game winning streak) to get ready to win the Big South tourney and make it to March Madness. Even the mascot is better this year.

But let's talk about us, the fans. First of all, we have an entire side of the gym choc' full of students, and we act like we're not allowed to be loud.

It's so quiet, you'd think you were sitting in a library, a church, or a funeral home. You'd think this was the Asheville school for mimes. Or maybe school for the blind, if you can keep quiet after a Stevenson dunk.

Well, I'm here to let everyone know that housing does not enforce "quiet hours" in the Justice Center. The fact that musical instruments are allowed should have tipped you off to that!

At least the quiet people are watching the game.

The really annoying people are the ones that don't pay attention at all. This ain't socializing time, dammit, there's a game going on! And the team is good, so get up, make some noise, and you could

even stand up once in a while! If something good happens, get loud! If a player on the other team acts like a tool, yell at him!

When the other team is shooting free throws, try to distract them. Count down the shot clock for our team, and count it down a couple of seconds ahead for the other team.

If the ref is acting like a jackass, let him know it. Hell, if you're in front row and the he's acting like one, you can trip him. (Just kidding, there's no need to resort to physical violence.)

What you can do is stand up and make as much noise as you want—it's easy once everybody gets going!

Unfortunately, some people see basketball games as just another social event: another way to advance in that neverending quest for coolness.

This is their story. How to be cool at a UNCA basketball game:

- Come to a game for the first time and start talking about it like you're expert.
- Stay turned away from the court talking to your friends the entire game.
- Wear your best clothes, hair,

makeup and stroll up and down the gym walkway as if it were the runway at a Paris fashion show.

- Make the cymbal noise during the national anthem.
- Buy a drink from the concession stand and carry it with you everywhere you go.
- Sneak under the bleachers and steal coats that people drop.
- Never sit in one place for more than five minutes so you can "make the rounds."
- Walk down to a corner or some

• Run furiously up and down the hill outside the gym entrance when its muddy. Play king of the hill.

- Walk up and down the gym for the entire game.
- Yell and scream while eating popcorn and and spill and spit it all over the place.
- Bring back the "farmboy" chant.
- Secretly, wish the halftime unicyclers would fall.
- Join that elite fan club thing so you can eat cookies and drink coke at halftime. Don't come back until well into the second half.
- Count down the correct shot clock time for the other team.
- Participate in a halftime shooting contest, miss all your shots, then walk back to your boys with a grin and make excuses that you didn't have on your right shoes, etc.

• Bypass the easy shots in the shooting contest for tough ones, then airball all of them.

- When one of the players does something good, start talking about how you know him or how he was in one of your classes two years ago, as if you deserve some credit some for the play
- Claim a seat as "your" spot. Fight people over it.
- Mug for the newsreel, then get completely quiet when they turn off the camera.
- Yell at Craig Korbin.
- Watch the first half, sit through halftime, then leave at the beginning of the second half because you have to study
- Pick up a loose ball and throw up a brick.



place where you're not supposed to be and watch the game from there.

- Leave early to "beat the traffic," even if it's a 2 point game.
- Do loud, obnoxious play-by-play for the entire first half.
- Become the ball boy, then act like you're too good to move quickly or get down on your hands and knees to wipe up sweat. Act as if the only reason for being there is to shoot three-pointers during halftime.