

Famous poet gives reading at NCWC

By SONU SAINANI

Jonathan Williams, the famous poet, essayist, photographer, and publisher, visited the campus on April 11.

The event, held in the College Library, was attended by about 60 people, including Dr. Garner and his wife. Williams read some of his poems and parts of other writings that he has compiled. He also showed slides of some of his selected photographs.

Kelley's 'expose' raises questions about such books

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kept a record of how many homosexuals have been "uncovered" in these rags? When they reached Cher's daughter, I decided they didn't have much else to write about.

And look at what the television docudrama has unleashed. Rock Hudson's personal battle against discrimination and final defeat to AIDS were reduced to commercial-laden titillation. Joseph Kennedy's brutal rise to wealth and power was romanticized and distorted. Television sells what we want to see, not what we need to see.

Many people pay money and spend time to delve into intimate details of other people's lives. Do we postpone the problems in our own lives? Do we feel superior for a moment, superior to the very people who look superior most of the time?

I will defend the right of these writers to pursue their goals and write their books. I will defend my right to stand for 20 minutes in a mall bookstore (that has as much to do with what we read as the writer and publisher) and laugh at Mrs. Reagan's discomfort as these stories become part of the American view of her. But I wonder what we are doing to our sense of what history is or should be or could be. How much is too much? What matters in our attempt to understand history by understanding our public figures? If Kitty Kelley doesn't determine history, what are her effects on it?

And have I secrets which could be misinterpreted and made into a false or distorted picture? Would I laugh then? I think I know who I am. What would I think if I saw someone else's interpretation of me?

The event started with an introduction by Dr. Leverett T. Smith, Professor of English. Dr. Smith is the director of the College Press and also serves as coordinator of visiting writers. Dr. Smith spoke highly of Williams' achievements as a writer, photographer, and publisher.

"Jonathan's inspiration of us does not start with his poems or his art works, but from his publication," said Dr. Smith.

Williams started his presentation by reading some of his poems. One of the very interesting and amusing poems was dedicated to a lady called Minnie Block who is now 92 years old. Williams said that Block makes a variety of objects and figures out of gourds. She grows her own gourds and once organized a senior citizens all-gourd band. Williams later showed a slide of a photograph of Block wearing a gourd hat.

Apart from his poems, Williams also read quotes and signs that he has collected in the past. I recollect his mentioning a sign

that he noticed outside a store on a highway. The sign read, "Meat, fireworks, watermelon."

Williams also showed slides of photographs he has collected in the past. Most of the photographs were of common people whose talents and ingenuity has not been recognized by the world. According to Williams, the photographs he prizes are the ones that are sought in remote places.

One of the most memorable photographs was that of a skilled sculptor, who lives in Virginia. Sculptor Mildas Carpenter, who was in his 90's when the picture was taken, mostly carves wooden sculptures. In the photograph Carpenter had a sculpture of a woman sitting beside him in his car.

Another interesting photograph was that of a painting by a man called Sam Doyle. Doyle lives in an island off South Carolina. He takes roofing material and lets cars drive over the material for a few days. He uses that as the material to paint on.

Jonathan Williams was born in 1929 in Ashville. From an early age he took to writing and collecting pictures that appealed to his taste. From a small non-profit publishing house called the Jargon Society that has its headquarters in Highlands, he has for the past 32 years brought out several books. A critic says, "He can produce the kind of poem that makes even a haiku look overweight. Sometimes a simple phrase, found ready made, will be enough. 'O'Non's Auto Repair Shop,' glimpsed somewhere on the road, is a favorite of mine."

The Magpie's Bagpipe, Blues Roots/Rue and Bluets and the *Loco Logodeadalist in Situ* are some of Williams' famous books. *Blues and Roots/Rue and Bluets* is a collection of poems in verse of the Southern Appalachian folk. The book, says Herbert Leibowitz in his introduction, depicts Williams' "unpatronizing affection for his unlettered and poor neighbors, a satirist's relish for collecting piquant samples of human folly, an acute ear for de-

monic speech, and an alert eye for found art and graffiti."

Williams writes about the Southern Appalachian people — their religious beliefs, their cultural ideas, and their domestic life. This book is not only an amaneunsis of mountain folk; it also contains sophisticated poetry. For example, in one of his poems titled, "A Week from the Big Pigeon to the Little Tennessee River," he used the Latin name for the magnolia — *Lirodendron tulipifera*.

As a conclusion to the preface of the book, Leibowitz writes, "No literary virtue with megaphones should have to proclaim the virtues of this wonderful, quirky, melodious book. The poems will linger in the reader's mind and on his tongue."

Jonathan Williams' presentation was very impressive and educational. His brief visit threw extensive light on his life, writings, and photography. It is a pity that more students do not attend such cultural events.

'Insider' unloads complaints

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capped zone for more than an hour. You know who you are!

Now let's discuss Wesleyan policies, especially the one concerning alcohol use. Insider is aware of state and federal laws governing alcohol use, as are college officials on other campuses. Lighten up, guys! By strictly enforcing these policies, note the use of the word strictly, you are driving us off campus to drink. The farther away you push us, the farther it is to drive back, especially after drinking. Insider does not condone drunk driving, nor does he do it, but Insider is just one of the students.

Insider is not saying to eliminate the rules — for all we know that could never be done — but he is saying to loosen up. This statement is directed to the R.D.'s and R.A.'s. Insider has even heard rumors that R.A.'s have quotas to meet. Is this the highway patrol? Insider has also noticed a slight bias in R.A. judgment. Let's just say it's better to be good friends, or maybe even "brother" like with the resident assistant; this will certainly aid you in your effort to stay out of trouble. Insider does not hold this to be true

for all R.A.s, just specific ones.

The cafeteria, the kitchen of our college, the establishment which provides life-supporting material to us every day, is always a pleasure to walk into and see whose cheerful, friendly ladies who serve us. These are the people who act like doing their job is the worst inconvenience in the world to them. If they dislike their job so much, why do they persist? Insider does not have an answer to that. There are exceptions, in cases such as Fred, Joyce, and Cora. Insider has a suggestion for the staff: "Trade in your sundial for a Timex. That way you can open on time."

Finally, what is "red tape"? It is an immense circuit of branches and traps where every good idea and proposal floating around seems to be captured and held until it biodegrades. "Red tape" has even seemed to have captured the keys which should have been given to all fraternity and sorority members when the locks were changed. Without a key, they cannot even get into their own lounges.

It will be an act of God if this letter actually makes it through all the "red tape" and finds itself

on the pages of the *Decree*. But Insider has coated his letter with a special enzymatic solution that feeds on "red tape," plus he also knows the editor.

So what do we students have to look forward to next year besides a tuition hike? Probably nothing. Life in this snail shell we call school will creep on "in its petty pace from day to day." If these conditions continue to exist, it is Insider's opinion that Wesleyan will find itself with a skyrocketing transfer rate.

Insider is sure he has offended some people with this letter, to whom I give the words of Alexander Pope: "If once right reason drives that cloud away/ Truth breaks upon us with resistless day./ Trust not yourself: but your defects to know./ Make use of every friend — and every foe."

Insider would like to thank you for taking time to read his elongated opinion. Insider will be heard from again.

Name Withheld

Some of Wesleyan's trees needed cutting

Dear Editor:

No one abhors the destruction of woodlands more than I with its

subsequent effects on flora and fauna and the environment, be it in North Carolina or the rain forest of Brazil.

However, I feel it necessary to reply to the reference in your April 12 editorial, "American woods need saving first," regarding the selected cutting of trees on campus.

What many people do not realize is that the pines gracing the front of our beautiful campus are nearing maturity and as such as becoming prime candidates for the southern pine beetle which attacks and kills pines. Sadly but true, many of these trees may not have long to live and ultimately should be cut before the beetle begins to infect selected trees and spreads to others.

Our campus must manage these trees just as any farmer manages land and crops. This involves monitoring the trees, cutting mature trees, watching for signs of beetle infection, and removal of diseased trees. And as trees are removed, new trees must be planted to ensure the survival of this graceful forest area.

Melvin Oliver, Jr.

Assistant Professor of Business and Economics