

Hugh Stohler Interview

by David F. Dickinson

Hugh Stohler comes to Guilford College for the first time this fall as the new Director of Student Affairs. Because Hugh is a new face to this campus and because the duties of his office will require him to come into contact with a prodigious number of Guilford students, the Guilfordian feels that a personal interview would be the best way for the paper to introduce him to the campus.

This interview transpired on Monday afternoon in Hugh's office in Bryan Hall. During the interview, which lasted much longer than I had initially planned, I came to feel that here was an administrator who was genuinely interested in the students and their ideas. The single overwhelming image that I received was that Hugh Stohler is a person rather than a position. It is feasible that Hugh and administrators like

him could be the beginning of a bridge of understanding across the chasm that presently exists between most administrators and students.

At the beginning of the interview, I asked Hugh to relate what he did before he came to Guilford and to explain why he decided to come here.

Hugh explained that before coming to Guilford, he spent four years in various administrative posts at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the last of these positions being that of Coordinator of Residence Hall Programs. Prior to the position of Coordinator, he served as director of the campus YMCA and as a Methodist campus minister.

Before moving to Chapel Hill, Hugh spent four years as administrator at the University of Chattanooga.

Hugh stated his reasons for coming to Guilford as centering around a desire to

be on a small campus where he would have more direct and intimate contact with a larger number of students. He feels that his position at Chapel Hill, due to the size of the

University, locked him into the impersonal mold of the faceless administrator.

Being a native of Johnson City, Tennessee, Hugh also wanted to remain somewhere in the Southeastern United States. He drew up a list of several schools in this region that seemed tailored to his desires and Guilford was one of these. After sending a resume to Guilford last fall, Hugh heard no more from us until last spring when quite to his surprise, Ken Schwab called to invite him over and discuss taking a position here. By that point, he had decided to stay in Chapel Hill but after coming to Guilford and meeting several of the faculty and administrators, he decided that this was the place to be.

Upon being asked to describe how he perceived his role as Director of Student Affairs, Hugh emphasized that he saw his role as being one of human development. He feels that it is just as important to the growth of a student to have his social and political potential developed through various student organizations as it is to develop the intellect in the classroom.

Hugh approached this task, he says, by being both professional and intimate at the same time. I took this to mean that while he desires to be close to students, he wishes to retain his professional identity to a degree that would prohibit him from "partying" with students. Therefore, he might be best described as a friend but not a consort.

At this point in the interview, I determined to test Hugh's true mettle by asking him for his opinion on the rather controversial issue of regulations for dorm visitation. He responded by saying that whereas he supported "liberal" visitation policies

(what we have now is deemed liberal), he could not advocate a policy of 24 hour "open" visitation. He proceeded to explain to my satisfaction his reasons for this. I cannot relate them here because he desired for that part of the conversation to remain "off the record". He did state however that he could envision further liberalization of visitation, though not to the 24 hour system.

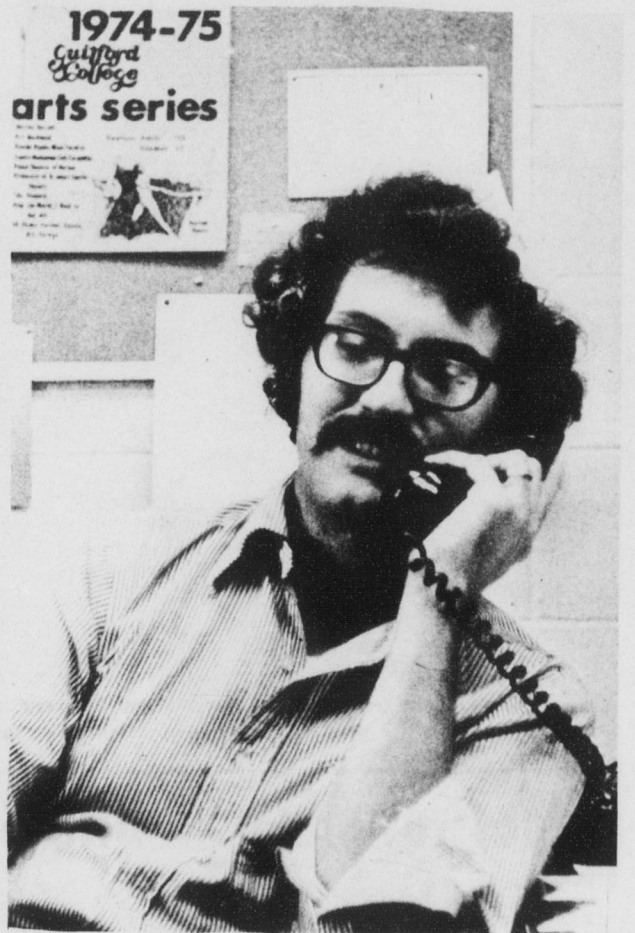
Tied in with the question of visitation was my question of how far he felt administrators should be willing to go to accommodate student desires. Hugh gave the response that he did not feel that administrators should "go along" with all student demands. He feels that it is pretentious of administrators to pretend to be nothing more than "super-students". At the same time, he does not feel that an administrator is performing his duties properly if he ignores student demands and assumes a close-minded dictatorial stance.

I ended the interview by asking Hugh to explain to me the nature of his world view, the manner in which he perceived the correct moral, political and social orders. His answer was simply that he was a "democrat". He believes in the rights of all men and women. He says that his philosophies border on Socialism and are tempered with the concept of Christian self-understanding.

I believe the man is for real.



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Hugh Stohler, Director of Student Affairs, hassles with Shirley Verrett's manager over hotel accommodations during interview. photo by Gearhart

Consciousness Cont. from P.2

questioning of our identity, feelings, and roles as women.

Through our group effort, we created an environment where we could talk freely and honestly, and work out problems together.

In the beginning, we talked about how we felt as women. What it's like growing up female and how it effects our relationships with others. From this broad basis, we branched out into particular areas of discussion, such as competition, discrimination, and sexuality. The purpose of this self-analysis was to find out what we wanted to change and how to go about it.

To me the whole experience of consciousness raising is overwhelming. Through my experience with the group and the areas we covered, I have

found a sense of pride and support among women that I didn't know was there. Personally, I've found strength, courage, and love that I never thought I had. I find the group a useful, integral part of my life.

Women interested in joining or forming their own consciousness group should do so. There is no reason to be afraid to explore your own feelings, or to discuss them with others. Only through constant questioning and review, can we ever discover our own individual potential. Women interested in participating in consciousness raising should contact Paula Swonguar in the counseling department or Vickie Spiers in the Woman's Center in Cox.