



Editorials



We Sing Swansong

This has proven to be the most difficult space to fill each and every week. The dreaded responsibility has bounced back and forth between the co-editors' shoulders. The deals that have been struck in order to escape the torture of the HOUSE EDITORIAL are beyond belief.

The situation is no different, this, our final week as co-editors of the Guilfordian. What do we have to say to the Guilford College Community about our experiences?

We surprised ourselves a year ago when we moved out of the ranks of the "apathetic," (though ever-critical and complaining students) into "campus leaders" by applying unopposed and being appointed co-editors for the Guilfordian '83-'84.

Our goals and expectations were high, despite the realistic warnings of friends and foes alike, "If you do it right, everyone will hate you." We've obviously not reached perfection yet!

We encountered many difficult, hard-core journalistic decisions early in our 19 issues. Large chunks of our naivete vanished as we tore our hair out, consulted our advisor, searched through journalism text books and looked for precedents set in previous Guilfordians, until we finally took the plunge and made the decisions, quite from gut intuition.

It is likely that we are known for some of our more stringent guidelines: our famous "conflict of interest" restriction on writers of stories; the incessant use of the colorless word "said"; a noon deadline on Saturday (HA! HA!); and finally... come rain, sleet, snow, or even tests or papers—an issue per week!

Seriously, all of these idealistic guidelines and aspirations had a purpose, basically to provide Guilford College with a weekly, trustworthy, NEWS-oriented newppaer.

This was more difficult to accomplish than we had anticipated. People who are not accustomed to the presence of a non-judgmental, questioning body are more likely to take a negative view of such a body. Questioning does not have to have negative connotation. The right to question and free press have served as vital forces in the development of our nation.

Our challenge to subsequent Guilfordian staff is to improve on what we have established and go far, far beyond.

The "truth" as we see it is that Guilford College needs a free press as badly as all the communities in the nation.

Letter to the Editors

Walkmans

Dear Guilford,

As "walkmen" become more affordable and more of us start relying on them, it is wise to consider the negative effects of such portable, private music machines. Studies are now coming out warning about the health hazards of extended periods of loud noise played at close distances to the ear. The volume levels of these headphone machines are deceiving; they are much louder than they seem because virtually all of the sound is focused directly on the eardrum.

As a non-walkman, I feel that these technological goodies also pose a sociological hazard by reinforcing the alienation that already exists in our impersonal society. When you wear your "walkman" in public you block out a vital part of your environment. You make an obvious statement by turning on the tunes and treating your surroundings as "visuals"—the sounds of birds, of planes overhead and wind through the trees, of conversation or laughter, just aren't good enough. For those of you who make it a habit of walking around sucking on your walkmen

like I used to suck on my thumb, I have this to say—no hard feelings, but I've turned you off. I know you're probably not the sort that's imaginative enough to hum a tune or sing or whistle or just enjoy the rhythm of your own footsteps. You might even be having a hard day, clutching to those tunes that cocktail your way out of the dull life that those of us without walkmen are forced to inhabit. You have become just another dull part of my scenery. Gee, I can't wait until I can get a set of portable television glasses so I won't have to look at boring people like you.

Karl Miller

Lynch's Line

Distinguished Visitor Prods Conscience

By Janice Lynch

When I was fifteen years old, a schoolmate struck me in the back with an electric cattle prod. I screamed, thinking the school bus had been rear-ended and my back broken. I am a stranger to physical pain, but I have never forgotten this incident.

A month ago, at the conference on South Africa, Motialepula Chabuku noted that the Reagan administration had recently authorized that 2500 electric shock batons—cow prods—be sent to the South African police for "riot control." This horror seems more real to me than any other.

It is "old news" that Dr. Hendrick van der Merwe was this year's Distinguished Quaker Visitor and leading speaker in a symposium entitled, "South Africa: Search for Solutions." The news from South Africa is not old; it is not disappearing; atrocious human rights violations occur there daily. This news is not dated.

At the conference, I was quick to condemn van der Merwe, an Afrikaner, for apologies he made

for the conditions in South Africa. It seemed as though they had been said too often. Now I wonder how I should apologize for the electric shock batons which were sent in my name as an American citizen. Certainly we are both at fault.

I have since come to realize that van der Merwe's is a voice to be heard. The man walks a difficult line in South Africa, juggling his relationships with Afrikaners and blacks in a search for peaceful conciliation between the two factors. While his solutions may slowly bring about change under the current system of apartheid, his seem to be the only solutions which will ensure the survival of the country.

In the Greensboro Public Library I saw a book on Steven Biko, the black student leader slain by the South African police in 1977. Van der Merwe had worked with Biko; in fact, one of his books was banned for its reprint of the text of a speech made by Biko.

For a man who did not shake hands with a black until he was 21 years old, van der Merwe has certainly come far. Perhaps one day other Afrikaners will embark

on this same struggle and come to realize the inherent evils of apartheid.

As van der Merwe noted in the Greensboro Daily News, change in South Africa must incorporate certain guidelines if it is to occur at all. Among these:

- working for human rights for all South Africans;
- realizing that apartheid is an issue of the privileged class and change will not occur unless pressure is brought upon them;
- sanctions with conditions-ration, rather than emotion, guiding actions.

Two years ago I was walking with two black females in West Berlin when an elderly white man approached us. He asked my friends where they were from, but would not tell his own citizenship.

"You would not speak to me if you knew," he said.

"Then you must be South African," my friend turned away from him.

"Yes—look, I lived there all of my life and I want to tell you that I am sorry for what goes on there against blacks. I did nothing to help, but I am sorry.

At the time, the three of us were angered by the man's apology and, by his own admission, his failure to work against apartheid.

I see now that the apology was a difficult one. I understand van

der Merwe's apologies. While ten thousand apologies will not end the suffering in South Africa or restore human rights to all of her people, certainly they are one move forward in the struggle against apartheid.

Guilfordian

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The Guilfordian reserves the right to edit all articles, letter and artwork for taste, veracity, and length. The deadline for copy is 122:00 p.m. on Saturday preceding the Wednesday of publication. Material may be left on the office door upstairs Founders, or mailed to Box 17717. The opinions expressed by the staff are their own and not necessarily those of the paper or of Guilford College.