

PERSPECTIVES

In Defense of Artistic Drive and the 1988 Quaker II

Andrew M. Stuart
Guest Writer

"On time and under budget"—those were the words which the wife of Guilford's president used to describe the 1990 Quaker when she spoke to me at a recent Guilford football game. And those words pretty much sum up what most people strive for at Guilford College. Like most of the people of fifteenth-century Europe, Guilford is convinced that the world is flat, and they are scared to death to venture toward the edge.

It is extremely ironic to me that Peter Smith was the individual who wrote the article, "Lessons to be learned from the 1988 Quaker?" You see, Peter and I both attended the same high school in Nashville, TN—Montgomery Bell Academy, M.B.A.—is the one upon which the film *Dead Poets Society* was based. One of Peter's and my fellow alumni from M.B.A. won the Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay for that film earlier this year. At M.B.A., we had a short, but to the point, motto. Our ultimate goal, one which we took very seriously, was to strive to be, and hopefully, become "Gentlemen, Scholars, Athletes." Although some of the physical aspects of that film—the architecture of building exteriors and some other visual features—strayed a bit into the realm of Hollywood, the important part of the film, the spirit of the film—the incredibly intense English classes; the camaraderie between the men of the school; the drive to learn and learn, to be the best; to compose stories and poems and then to recite them from memory before one's classmates; to perform first-rate productions in the theater before the entire intellectual and supportive community: parents, fellow students and the student's from M.B.A.'s

sister school Harpeth Hall; to compete against one's mates in scrimmages and intramurals and against rival schools in varsity athletics in all sports—I can go on and on—the SPIRIT of that film was real; it exists; but unfortunately, not at Guilford College. I had six unbelievably challenging years from seventh to twelfth grade in that environment. Yes, it was tense; it was stressful; the teachers and coaches pushed us to the breaking point and then dared us to go further. Yes, it was rough; but it felt damned good to be on the edge, to know that you as an individual, your mates, and your school were way out there, extended further than you had to be just to get by. Peter Smith has obviously and unfortunately lost that sensation and has succumbed to the status quo policy, the mediocrity of Guilford College.

"On time and under budget" is all Guilford is and all it will ever be with its current upper-level administration. Guilford is a school in a swamp with an anchor, wallowing and drowning, gasping for air, but always inking further into its self-constructed, self-perpetuating quagmire. Maybe yearbooks do not deserve or warrant any serious discussion—as Smith says, "I don't think many students are going to lose sleep over a college yearbook..." He says instead that students "... should be losing sleep over their academic studies." I covered every square inch of Guilford's 300 acres during my journalism career from 1984-1988, and what I found was that there were, indeed, a lot, a substantial number, a great percentage of Guilford students losing sleep; but believe me—I have seen everything imaginable—it certainly was not because of their "... academic studies (or for the) pondering (of) past problems in history..." I photographed and wrote about over what

Guilford students were not losing sleep; and if you look at page 367 of the 1988 Quaker, you can see what the Guilford admissions and public relations offices, administrators, and supposedly, students' parents thought about it.

So, it is with great certainty that I make the supposition—verified by Mrs. Rogers' statement to me—that Guilford is tremendously pleased with itself that it received the non-thought provoking, mediocre piece of mental masturbation which is the 1990 Quaker—(although I must add that the 1989 Quaker is a considerably more precise representation of the Guilford community's drive for excellence). I am quite hilariously amused that Peter Smith has gotten his "reality check" which "has enabled him to get on with (his) life"—if yearbooks are not worth losing sleep over, then why did it take a yearbook for Peter to "get on with his life?" Why is he glad to have his "reality check?" Because it allows him, and many others, to use the 1990 Quaker as a standard for Guilford College publications. The 1988 Quaker will soon be a distant flicker in Guilford's history, no longer being a standard which Guilford's students could use to strive toward; instead, everyone can revert back to the high standards of quality set by the 1984, 1987 and now the 1990 Quakers: seminal standards in mediocrity.

Certainly, Peter Smith feels safe now, having had his "reality check." Guilford lets students like Smith go from an environment like that portrayed in *Dead Poets Society* whose tenets such as *Carpe Diem* appeared all over Guilford's publications during the 1989-1990 school year—to that

of the typical Guilford student: an alcoholic who plays sexual musical chairs, or should I say leap frog? Believe me, Peter, you haven't a clue to what *Carpe Diem* means.

What about the 1988 Quaker's coverage of Guilford's sesquicentennial; the exhaustive coverage of all Guilford sports; the 100+ page photographic section showing practically all of Guilford's student body during 1987-88; the coverage of nearly every one of Guilford's clubs and organizations; the coverage of all of the semester abroad programs; the coverage of Serendipity; the representation of all seniors who wanted to be included in the book along with their personal thoughts; the coverage of homecoming, plays, faculty, dorms, coffeeshops, and many other special events. Never have I seen a yearbook with more complete coverage of all aspects of Guilford College. But who cares, because when I made this book I was, as Peter says "misguided... confused... (and) blind." But Peter's most important point is the one which I want to emphasize; the fact that: "It is indeed sad to see someone so out of touch with reality." Peter, when you publish your Nobel Prize-winning treatise on "What Reality Is," I would certainly like to read it.

You may ask how it was possible for me, "someone so out of touch with reality," to be appointed to the position of Editor-in-Chief of the most difficult and time-consuming of the three student publications. The answer is fairly simple: I was the only applicant. You may ask why I was given,

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Union Disappointed with Budget

Bill Stoesen
Guest Writer

Does the Ricks administration want to be a champion of students' rights or the Saddam Hussein of Guilford College? Some feel that it is thwarting Union's efforts. Currently, Union and Senate officials are at odds: now that the budget report is out, Union wants more money. In order for the officers of Union to carry out their campaign promises, they must have the amount of money they thought had been promised them. Neither side has documentation of the promise. Here is what happened:

According to Union's constitution, a finance committee (instead of the Senate budget committee) is to decide what percentage of the student activities fees (SAF) Union receives. That decision must then be approved by Senate. Such a finance meeting was held last year after the elec-

tions for Senate and Union officers. The four Union-elect officers, another Union representative, two then Union officers, the president and treasurer-elect of Senate, and the then Senate treasurer attended. The Union-elect officers left the meeting believing a recommendation would be made to Senate that 31 percent of the SAF should go to Union. However, a recom-

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From the Editor:

The *Guilfordian* will produce six more issues this semester for release on the following dates: Oct. 7, Oct. 14, Nov. 11, Nov. 18, Dec. 2 and Dec. 9.

Our staff meetings are Sunday nights at 9 p.m. in the Passion Pit for all interested students.

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