

# Guilford in the 21st Century—Wake, Davidson Wanna-be?

Lisa Pope  
Editorials Editor

The time has come to say goodbye... Yes, it's finally here. The close of the semester, finals, graduation, summer, the rest of your life (if you're a senior), THE END. And we're all tempted to hang it up, pack it in, concentrate on getting out of here, say goodbye and not give Guilford more than a passing thought for at least three months (or, as I said before, the rest of your life). So long. Ciao. See you later, Alligator.

But before we close the door (with a bang), let's spare a brain cell or two and think about (oh yes) Guilford. More specifically, Guilford and its future. Now humans (particularly students) always have a way of lamenting change and measuring everything new and different by their own personal yardstick of experience. The refrain runs something like this: "the school/campus/students are different AND I DON'T LIKE IT! They're cutting down trees and opening 21st century telecommunication centers and THE TIMES THEY ARE A CHANGIN'!" It's got a comical ring to it and some might be tempted to dismiss such refrain as merely

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the demented ravings of yet another generation. To dismiss it, though, is to ignore the note of sober truth hiding behind the hyperbole and comedy. The times they are a changin' and what are they changing to? Telecommunication jokes aside, what is a 21st century Guilford going to look like and, more importantly, what is it going to feel like?

I came to Guilford because I wanted a school where professors went by first names and classes could be held on the lawn and IDS was more important than engineering and not many people really cared about football or homecoming or "school spirit" and lots of people did care about the Guilford College tree. I didn't come because of a library or apartments or computer labs or brand-new buildings and I still wouldn't.

Maybe I buy idealism easily but Guilford didn't seem to be a place where there was split between message and reality. Unfortunately, that seems to be more and more the case nowadays. We look at promotional brochures promising community, integrity, and virtue and we laugh. Call me crazy but I find that disturbing. We shrug off publicity and look at reality instead—look at Jim Keith leaving and apartments being built at the expense of long promised dorm renovations and divisive debates over "respect for persons" and "political correctness." The kind of reality that slick brochures don't show. The kind of reality that bright and shining new buildings obscure.

When I visited Guilford as a high school senior, I was impressed not by brochures or buildings or computer facilities but by

students who didn't seem to be cut from the Davidson/Wake Forest mold, an administration that seemed to be in touch with its students and an overall spirit of tolerance. I would hope that a 21st century (or even 1991) visitor might leave with the same impressions, but the signs of the times haven't been too encouraging. You might say that Guilford's having an identity crisis—and I'm just wondering what it is going to emerge. As another year winds down, maybe it's something that we all should be wondering.

## Correction

In last week's feature article about Guilford's study abroad program misidentified Camille Hayes' class year. She is a senior.

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Also, at the Spring Awards Convocation on Wednesday, the program failed to mention **The Guilfordian** under its list of student organizations. We assume the College Relations Office regrets the error.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Respect Rights of Alternative Organization

To the Editor:

As this year draws to a close, I would like to add a few final thoughts on this year's much discussed topic: the formation of Sigma Chi Alpha, an independent Greensboro fraternity.

Many members of this community have expressed their disagreement with the goals of a Greek organization, and have also expressed their desire that Guilford continue to be a school without a Greek system. I doubt seriously that Guilford will ever be a campus with a Greek system, and this is as it should be. Guilford stands firm on a rich heritage of Quakerism, and the school should continue to build on the Quaker tradition and espouse its principles.

Guilford also stands on a tradition of diversity. And the most fundamental principle of diversity is respect for other viewpoints. This involves not only respecting ideas similar to one's own views, but respecting views that may be completely opposed to one's own. Indeed, we would not be a community of diversity if we only allowed the official views of this institution to flourish, while all other viewpoints are stamped out and obliterated. I understand and respect Guilford College's position on Greek organizations. And I have never entertained the goal of seeking to change or even challenge this view.

Although I am a student at Guilford, I do not automatically adopt all of the philosophies of this institution. I believe that a fraternal organization has many positive attributes to offer. I, as an individual, felt the need to be part of such an organization. I felt that this experience would enable me to build lasting friendships based on common interests, and also allow me to contribute to the greater Greensboro community in various ways.

I do not seek, now or ever, to make the organization I am a part of an established part of the Guilford campus. I have

become part of this group not as a student of Guilford, but as an individual citizen of the United States who has the freedom to associate with any group I so choose. I have the right to belong to a Greek organization, just as any other Guilford student has the right to belong to the NAACP, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Communist Party or any other organization.

No one in this community should feel threatened by the existence of an independent, local fraternity of which some Guilford students may choose to belong. Persons who do not support a Greek organization have the right to exercise their dissent by not becoming a part of such an organization, not supporting the organization financially, and not attending events that are related to the organization.

I have the utmost respect for this college's beliefs against Greek organizations. I only ask that, in the true spirit of diversity, members of this community respect my right to have a different opinion and to act accordingly.

Christopher J. Tigani

### Condoms Worth the Expense to Spare Lives

To the Editor:

I just finished watching the evening news on ABC with Peter Jennings, where the American Agenda was about condom distribution in the high schools. Yes, high schools. And for free, in New York City and Philadelphia. No, they don't give education to everyone who wants one; no, they don't require parents to give permission (where permission is required, distribution is slight); yes, pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease rates are down where condoms are readily available.

And then I thought about the great condom debate in the Guilford Senate. And I despaired. What a great cost—oh yes, 1-2 percent of the current Student Activities budget or roughly 2-3 percent of the current cost of IDS 101 to provide 30,000 free condoms to students through the Student Health Service. This is the rough equivalent, based on relative student population, of the number of condoms Wake Forest University distributes to

their students and high school students who wander in. We might not be able to afford one band sometime during the year at that rate.

And I thought about the current rate of infection of AIDS among college students—2 to 3 per thousand (who know it), and more who don't. Kenyon College in Ohio, with roughly the same size student body as Guilford, has provided condoms free through a basket in Student Health, plus condom machines in the residence halls, for years. Yet Guilford is relying on students to be prepared with two quarters, or to take a trip to the drug store right after payday, when there are probably two or three students on campus who know they're infected, and 18 to 28 who are infected but don't know.

Oh yes, you had sex with more than one person, but in the heat of the moment... In two months or two years or 10 years you might develop a fever that won't go away, you might get a rash in your mouth, but gosh, wasn't it worth it. Well, is it worth it? Is the debate over \$145 for 2000 condoms so great that we are willing to read obits of our friends at our 10- or 20-year reunions? I hope not. I hope someone, whether in the Senate or the Administration or the Board of Trustees, places lives over budgets. Anything less is abhorrent.

Lucy Allen Powell  
Triad Health Project Speaker's Bureau

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