

## Letter to the Editor: Frank Massey is not expendable

BY ANDREW TAYLOR '11  
GUEST WRITER

After a brief perusal of the now infamous APSA report (I initially thought my friend had just misspelled "ASAP" in his forwarded email; turns out this is a real thing), I've concluded that the committee does a phenomenal job of implementing exactly one half of the College's core value of stewardship: "We are committed to making decisions that will ensure the long-term survival of this institution."

Despite flipping the cover page ready to be outraged, I found the APSA report thoughtful and measured, if haphazardly researched. I hope folks will give the document the benefit of a full reading instead of simply parroting the selective excerpts circulating on the Internet.

But alas for the APSA report, the declaration of stewardship continues: "We must maximize the value of our human, financial and physical resources in ways consistent with our Quaker heritage."

The APSA's otherwise thoughtful evaluations included a laughable evaluation of our esteemed campus ministers. The committee laid out two specific prescriptions:

Prescription #1: Stop doing so much off-campus ministry and focus instead on the physical Guilford campus.

Before moving onto Prescription #2 — the one which primarily concerns this editorial — it's worth noting that such a recommendation is akin to asking the geology department to stop their Appalachian trips because, like, why can't they just study the rocks on Guilford's campus?

Prescription #2: "Given our current economic constraints and need to reduce costs, we recommend elimination (sic) of the position created and previously funded by the Lilly grant which is now being funded by the College budget."

I imagine most folks' thought process on reading this sentence mirrored my own: "Oh yeah, well, if there isn't enough money then I guess...OH SWEET JESUS THAT'S FRANK MASSEY."

It's hard to imagine the elimination of Frank's position as being consistent with Quaker values except in the most liberal applications of the transitive property.

Normally, this would be the spot in an editorial where one extols the positive qualities of the person in question and relates short anecdotes showing their humor or wisdom.

But if you're reading this, you're probably a member of the Guilford community, which means you're also already aware that Frank is one of the wiser, funnier and more compassionate people you know. So if it's all the same to you, I'm just going to skip to the part where Guilford doesn't eliminate his position. Cool? Cool.

Even the most preliminary readings of APSA's methodology bear a little light (though not of the inward variety) on how they might have reached such a counterintuitive decision. Notably, they apply the same rubric to grading both Campus Ministry and, for example, the Professional Development and Training Center. Imagine the giggle Max must have let out in The Hut when he sat down to type an answer to this question:

"5b. What are the quality indicators for measuring success in your program, such as peer data, benchmark data, and/or internal historical data, and how does

your program compare? In comparison, is your program doing better or worse?"

You would think the latter question was implicitly asked in the former, but grammatical issues aside, it's the "such as" that ought to make you chuckle. Frank being a good deal more intelligent than me, I don't know exactly how he defines success in his "program," but my hunch is it has more to do with spiritual seeking than benchmark data. By a metric along the lines of "lives transformed per hour worked," Frank would be phenomenally overqualified for his position.

**One way of interpreting that data is to say, "Oh my God, we have 1.6 too many ministers." Another way is to say, "Hey, we're better at meeting the spiritual needs of our students than nine other Quaker institutions. Go team."**

In fairness to APSA, such a metric is admittedly difficult to measure. Guess what? So is a liberal arts education. But our institution stands on the belief that such ethereal skills are central to the human experience, and worth learning and cultivating for the good of ourselves and society at large.

But in evaluating Campus Ministry, APSA instead retains their usual penchant

for statistics and finances. Though they claim this is not the only rationale behind their recommendation to remove Frank's position, APSA notes that "the average staffing for campus ministry centers is 1.4 among the 10 Quaker colleges in the United States," whereas Guilford has three full-time faculty devoted to ministry.

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If Guilford decides to define itself in relation to "peer institutions" and "aspirants," and expects students to do the same, almost inevitably we'll always come out behind. Our faculty-student ratios lag behind those of our "peers," our test scores are lower and our endowment is far too small to support our myriad academic and social endeavors.

But if instead Guilford chooses to define itself by the talented and quirky members of its community, and on the laughing wisdom exchanged when they are gathered together, suddenly there are few more alluring places to spend four transformative years engaged in becoming a better human. The Spirit for which Frank provides a daily vessel is worth more in retention than all the glitzy marketing plans our admissions folks can formulate.

Hard financial decisions must be made, and they will be. Beloved faculty will undoubtedly be let go, treasured programs cut. But if Guilford still claims to be in the business of transforming lives, then there is no more fiscally responsible option than to retain Frank Massey as a campus minister. Dollar for dollar, no one is more valuable than the man we already employ.

A Friends Meeting in financial straits no less dire than the ones facing Guilford once called an emergency budget meeting to discuss slashing their budget in order to survive. After tense hours of silence, debate, discussion and further silence, a woman called a man's abundant budget proposal foolish. The man responded, "Sometimes, the Spirit calls for foolishness."

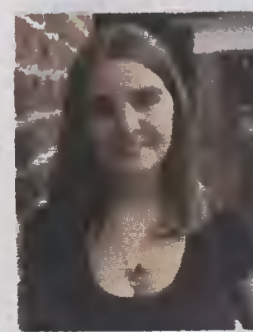
If I have learned nothing else from Frank, it is that sometimes the Spirit calls for foolishness. And when it beckons, who are we to impede its work?

Andrew Taylor graduated from Guilford in December 2011.

## Police officers reported using excessive force should have benefit of doubt

Shoot first. Identify the body of the innocent later.

That is how some people perceive the policies of law enforcement officers when it comes to violent instances with civilians.



BY KINSEY DANZIS  
STAFF WRITER

The thing is, it just is not that simple.

Take the recent shooting in Charlotte. A white cop shot an unarmed black man to death, firing his pistol 12 times. Many of us immediately jump to defending victim Jonathan Ferrell and berating Officer Randall Kerrick for racism.

"It's dangerous to come to conclusions without having all the data or a large amount of it, especially with an issue that's occurred multiple times," said sophomore Avi Dintenfass.

Ron Stowe, director of Public Safety and former High Point police officer of 32 years, agreed.

"We as a society are so quick to jump to conclusions and try to make up our own mind to whether (the officer) was justified or not," said Stowe. "Clearly it looks bad, because you've got a situation where (Ferrell) was unarmed. But we're going on just what we've seen or heard in the media."

I have also heard countless complaints about the

condition of police officer training as a cause of this continuing issue. Many people seem to think that better training programs would significantly lessen these instances of civilian deaths.

But do those people actually know the specifics of police training?

When it comes down to the wire, training can only go so far. In the event of an emergency, a police officer has to be able to make a split-second decision, taking into account both his life and the lives of those around him. It is not an easy thing to do, and it certainly cannot be perfectly simulated in training.

"It's reaction more than a thought process," said Stowe. "You have to rely on the information you have available, your training, your own personal experience ... all those things have to play into that reaction."

Improving training is not a foolproof way to reduce shootings, unless that training can change officers' instincts and guarantee what the circumstances of every single emergency will be like.

Likewise, solely addressing the issue of possible racism is not guaranteed to lessen shootings, as some people seem to think.

These instances of violence are not a matter of playing the race card in accusation of our officers. That is not the problem here, and we as civilians are in no place to accuse them as such.

The problem is that as soon as the media mentions race while covering a shooting, as with Ferrell's death, many people automatically assume that the shooter fired the gun because of racist beliefs.

"People think, 'Oh, if you mention his race, then you think there's ill intent on the part of the officer,'" said Jeremy Rinker, visiting assistant professor of peace and conflict studies. "That's not the same argument. It doesn't imply that this person is racist by saying that race is involved."

Will Pizio, associate professor of justice and policy studies and former New York state trooper, agreed that race is not what runs through an officer's mind when faced with the possibility of danger.

"When danger appears, in whatever form, officers will act accordingly and appropriately for the specific danger," said Pizio.

As sad as it is, there is no completely solid solution to the issue of excessive force used by police officers because the circumstances are different every time. Addressing only racism or training will not solve the problem because they are hasty conclusions oftentimes drawn without solid facts to support them.

We rarely have the whole picture when it comes to episodes like this, and it is vital to have as much information as possible before passing judgment.

These incidents are never as simple as we think they are.