

## Secession threats aren't needed

New Colorado? Liberty? Free Colorado?

These are names being thrown around for the proposed 51st state, essentially five rural counties in northern Colorado.

Since the 2012 elections, rural areas in Colorado and California have decided they are no longer accurately represented, and initiatives are underway to secede from their respective states.



BY RENEE DEHART  
STAFF WRITER

For Colorado, the five counties together only have a population of 29,000 people, roughly 10 percent of Greensboro. States should not secede from themselves unless they have the population to support it and better reasons than not liking a new law.

"We do not feel like we're getting fair representation," said 51st Initiative spokesperson Jeffrey Harris in a telephone interview with The Guilfordian. "We don't like things forced on us, like renewable energy, legalization of marijuana and gun control."

But it is not just Colorado getting into the secession game.

"If the government in Sacramento is unwilling or unable to afford the citizens of Modoc the equal protection and fair representation to which they are entitled, then it is time to consider creation of a new state, in conjunction with our similarly situated neighboring counties," said California's Modoc County Commissioner Geri Byrne in an email interview with The Guilfordian.

Despite the political rhetoric, spokespeople from both states claim this is not a dispute between Republicans and Democrats.

"The reasons behind this are not of a conservative-versus-liberal nature," said Byrne. "Instead, they are of a rural-versus-urban or a producer-versus-consumer nature."

However, in the 2012 election map of Colorado and California the counties involved in this effort do have a Republican majority according to politico.com, implying their motives are driven by conservative stubbornness.

Movements for secession are obnoxious responses to show disagreement, like children threatening to run away.

"I think it's just symbolic," said Maria Rosales, chair and associate professor of political science. "I think they're just trying to suggest that they're not happy. Maybe they're hoping if people think they're unhappy they will make more concessions for them."

Starting a new state is expensive, but funding poses no issue for these rebels.

"Initial findings show that we're about \$460 million to the (positive) when you count county revenues and income taxes versus county expenses," said Byrne.

\$460 million might be enough, but the 51st Initiative works with a smaller budget and employs more strategy.

"We have to untangle ourselves from the federal government methodically," said Harris. "We have to accept funding for certain programs like Social Security."

"However, we will not accept federal funding for education because we believe our state Board of Education can do a more efficient job."

Still we should not add more stars to the flag because a few people are unhappy with a few laws.

"It's incredibly unfeasible," said Rosales. "The way the constitution is written now, a state cannot separate unless both the area that wants to secede and the legislature of the bigger parts wants to secede."

A state split has not occurred since West Virginia split from Virginia during the Civil War.

Harris does offer a compromise to avoid secession.

"The best solution is for every county to have one state senator representing them in the capitol," said Harris.

However, that would challenge the 1964 Supreme Court case "Wesberry v. Sanders," which supports representation based on population.

Their conservative ship is sinking fast, but if they can learn to swim rather than fight the currents, they may learn these new progressive waters are not so scary and these new laws are actually helping a lot of people.

This Week's

## STAFF EDITORIAL

## College needs to expand campus-wide accessibility

The Editorial Board of The Guilfordian recently underwent diversity training with the help of Jorge Zeballos and Jada Drew from the Multicultural Education Center. Among other things, it renewed our sense of purpose with regard to the language we use when we write about people with disabilities.

As a newspaper, we vow to use person-first language. For example, person-first language would mean saying "a person with special needs," instead of "a special-needs person." Doing so affirms that individuals with disabilities are not defined by those disabilities.

While we look inward, we are also prompted to look outward in our community. As we have previously acknowledged, we are proud of the improvements the College has brought about in accessibility on campus.

Many of our buildings have been made accessible by the addition of ramps and elevators, including most of the buildings with classrooms.

The Learning Commons also provides support for members of our community with less visible disabilities, such as alternate test-taking options for those who need them because of different learning styles.

However, there is still room for improvement.

One of the most noticeable areas that needs improvement involves the doors on campus. They do meet the requirements set by the Americans with Disabilities Act, but not all of them are truly accessible for the members of our community who use wheelchairs.

This is especially pertinent for The Guilfordian staff because the spaces in Founders where we meet, the Publication Suite and the East Gallery, are not accessible to those in wheelchairs since the doors do not have automatic door-opening buttons.

Meanwhile, none of the residence halls are accessible to wheelchairs beyond the first floor. This also applies to Dana Auditorium. Most of the Old Apartments are not accessible at all because there are stairs to get to the front doors.

Realistically, we know that not all of these things can be immediately remedied, whether it be due to the structure of these buildings or to budgetary shortcomings. Still, it is important to be mindful of these limitations regardless, and to strive for improvement where we can.

As the Guilfordian staff works to be more conscientious about our language, we encourage the College to continue to grow and improve in accessibility so that all members of our community can feel included. We think that additional automatic door-opening buttons in public spaces could be a good start.

REFLECTING GUILFORD COLLEGE'S CORE QUAKER VALUES, THE TOPICS AND CONTENT OF STAFF EDITORIALS ARE CHOSEN THROUGH CONSENSUS OF ALL 16 EDITORS AND ONE FACULTY ADVISER OF THE GUILFORDIAN'S EDITORIAL BOARD.

## YouTube fame should be for everyone

Ever been told that you have no hope of achieving your dreams?

No?

Well, welcome to the comments section of YouTube.



BY KINSEY DANZIS  
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We're no strangers to YouTube. Most of us visit it all the time to watch movie clips, footage of adorable kittens and, of course, music videos.

"YouTube is for everyone," said Kami Rowan, associate professor of music. "It's a good thing because it allows for individual expression. It's nice for people to have a platform."

Musicians can even catch big breaks online rather than going out to audition for a record label. Just look at the recent YouTube Music Awards — Response of the Year winners Lindsey Stirling and Pentatonix got their fans from YouTube, not from record companies.

But for every artist who finds success on YouTube, there are countless others who only find hateful feedback from someone who doesn't find the video to their taste.

Take Rebecca Black's infamous song "Friday" for example. Personally, I don't like it, but she has as much right as Panic! at the Disco to post a song on YouTube,

and the last thing I want to do is put down her dream with hateful comments.

"There is lots of crap on YouTube, and it can be annoying, but the internet is a democratic forum," said Judy Isaksen, associate professor of media and popular culture studies at High Point University, in an email interview. "Anyone can participate and everyone has a right to his or her opinion."

I agree, but it's not difficult to tinker how you voice your opinion so it doesn't come across as demeaning. That, sadly, is something many viewers don't do.

On Black's video, YouTuber zoOism posted a perfect example of what not to do: "These moles are barely in training bras and they're kicking in the front seat, kicking in the back seat? I would rather have a jackhammer slowly inserted into the crack of my a-- than listen to you sing. Your lyrics are written by a dyslexic 4 year old."

Wow. Hate to go all cliché, but don't like it? Don't watch it.

There's a difference between constructive criticism and hateful judgment. One helps, one hurts. Simple as that.

"If you put something out to the public, you've got to be able to take the feedback," said Tim Lindeman, chair and professor of music, in an email interview.

Feedback: yes, by all means. zoOism's comment: no.

"Judging artistry and musicianship



isn't fair," said Rowan. "It takes integrity to be an independent artist."

It takes integrity to be any artist, really. It's a big step to put your work out into the world. It doesn't matter if a musician is independent or signed; they work equally hard.

"I don't assume that an independent artist is any less talented than a signed artist," said Wendy Looker, associate professor of music and director of choral activities. "Entertainment can take different forms from different people."

Aspiring musicians on YouTube aren't very different from signed musicians and famous independent artists. They share the same goal: to put their music out into the world for people to hear. The only real difference is the support they get, or the lack of support in most cases.

As Andy Warhol once said, "In the future everybody will be world famous for 15 minutes."

So who are we to block these aspiring musicians from achieving that fame and realizing their dreams?