

Letters to the Editors

Dear Editors,

As my final year at Salem comes to an end, I wonder why in the world we have to be out by 3:00 on Saturday afternoon after Graduation and the Champagne Brunch. I wonder if the administration is aware of the fact that we probably will not get out of the Brunch until 1:00 or 2:00 and an hour is just not enough time to pack up four years and say good bye to the best friends we have ever had. I live in Greensboro and have already made 2 trips home with various things from my dorm and there is just not enough time for me to get everything together between now and Graduation. Some people have plans right after Graduation and have to take care of that instead of trying to pack up four years of stuff from Salem. I just cannot figure out what the problem is and why we cannot stay in the dorms until at least 5:00, after all we have paid some \$50,000 to come here and why in the world can't we stay a little longer so we can enjoy our last few days at Salem College.

Sincerely,
Jenny Savage

The Oracle

The purpose of "The Oracle" is to involve faculty and administration in expressing their views about pertinent issues concerning students and today's world, around or beyond the square.

We, the editors, pulled this idea from an old issue of The Salemite, let us know what you think.

by Dean Eulalia Cobb

I cannot think of a student newspaper for which I'd rather write than *The Salemite*-- it has boldness and substance, and it is read by the students and faculty about whom I care very deeply.

The past year has not been an easy one for Salem. The prolonged illness and death of our beloved Clark left his friends exhausted as well as sorrowful, and the College is undergoing change, with its attendant risks and anxieties.

I have a habit when things become hectic in the office, of suspending all perusing of files, all writing of memos, all calling and holding of meetings, and taking a moment to listen to the College. I listen to the thumps of books being stamped at the library's checkout desk, the squeak of chalk on blackboards, the whir of PC's being turned on-- all the rumblings and stirrings of the academic machine at work. I cock my ear to catch the crescendos, pauses and accelerations of teaching and learning. These are the sounds, in academic parlance, of students undergoing intellectual change. In my school we used to call it "getting our minds messed up."

When I was a sophomore at my own small liberal arts college, a group of us would sit around for hours in black turtlenecks and jeans drinking coffee and discussing Sartre until we grew dizzy from the combination of caffeine and existentialist despair. At those moments we felt that what we had come to college for was really happening to us. We were, in the words of one of my friends, finally getting our minds messed up.

Despite our naivete, I think we managed to define quite accurately the essence of the college experience-- getting our minds messed up. By that we meant that from our lectures, readings, class discussions, arguments in the dorms, tete-a-tetes in faculty offices, and especially over coffee and Sartre our minds were being rocked from their foundations, jolted out of their ruts, smoked out of their lairs. What our parents said, what our high school teachers had taught, what we ourselves had believed to be clear and distinct ideas were suddenly tilting perilously over we knew not what abysses. And quite literally we did feel dizzy, as one does when standing at the brink of a peak, and seeing where one has come from, and measuring the distance.

Throughout my time at Salem I have taken great comfort in the sounds of subtle jostlings, stirrings, turnings, and stumblings, the dramatic oscillations and revelations that assure me that at this college students are hard at work getting their minds messed up. In the last two years we have suffered tragic loss and various kinds of storms. Through it all (remember last spring's finals?), the obligatory gallops through Russian novels, the thinking so slow and difficult that the neurons can be heard groaning in the quiet room, the pounding and plucking of keyboards and harps have continued practically undisturbed, thanks to a faculty who know that their single most important task is to be there in the classroom-- or under a tree-- messing up students' minds.

Your single most important task, in turn, is to be there too, getting your minds messed up with all the intensity you can muster. That is the only way to get your money's worth out of college--any college--and the very best way to ensure that this college will sail triumphantly into years to come.

Dear Editors,

Monday, April 23rd was House Council Appreciation Day. If you did not take the time last Monday to say thanks to your Hall Advisor, Secretary/Treasurer, Dorm President, and any other member of the Interdorm Council; then do it today. Students involved in residence hall government at Salem share some common characteristics: an above average academic record, ability to interact well with other students, active involvement in campus life, and an ability to be a good friend and listener 24 hours a day.

House Council members make up one of the most selfless, dedicated, and giving groups on this campus. Your House Council arrived at Salem a week early last August to prepare for the upcoming year. Once school started they did everything from making sure the halls were clear to planning hall birthday parties to checking visitation sheets at 1:45 am on Saturday. House Council members take on a huge

responsibility for a strictly volunteer position.

A lot of decisions made by House Councils are unpopular and a lot of their work goes unnoticed. For instance, did you know that several members of Interdorm were largely responsible for getting 24-hour visitation passed for the three big dance weekends? These individuals worked long hours researching, preparing a proposal, and then presenting it to the Board of Trustees. Without a few people's dedication Salem students might not have been granted this new privilege. The Visitation policy is just one example, look around campus and you will see numerous examples of Interdorm/House Council influence.

For my part, I want to say thanks to Gramley House Council for making my job easier and my life a lot more interesting.

Sincerely,
Jodi Smith
RHD, Gramley Dorm

Dear Editors,

As the year ends I want to thank all of my "daughters" for your smiles and friendly conversations, which are the most enjoyable part of my position at Salem.

Although my primary job is to create and maintain an aesthetically pleasing environment, being able to help with dances and special programs, to assist with your well being and safety, to be a part of your activities is especially rewarding and I want to thank every one. The kind words and compliments mean a great deal, and I appreciate each one.

Sincerely,
Sandy Tilley
Grounds Supervisor

Dear Editors:

In response to the last issue's "Viewpoints" on the death penalty:

A society that condones execution operates under the assumption that human beings have the ability to determine whether or not another human being deserves to die. This kind of morality minimizes the significance of taking someone's life, and thus creates a climate for murder. This, I think, is one explanation for the decrease of murder rates in countries that have abolished the death penalty.

And as the United States' murder rate steadily increases, so does the probability that we are executing innocent people. And with every mistaken execution we are guilty of that heinous crime which we are so desperately trying to abolish.

Sincerely,
Sonya Cobb

Dear Editors,

A Paper Deficit?

It seems quite ironic to us that the students receive all sorts of "junk mail" from all over campus, and yet are not sent a flyer announcing the new Dean. The President's Office is worried about wasting paper. Bravo!!! Did anyone suggest recycled paper?

Perhaps we are being silly college students, but do you think wasting paper on junk mail is more important than "wasting" it on our new Dean?

Sincerely,
WOODSY

Dear Editors:

I am writing to commend the editors of this years *Incanabula* Kara Hayes and Jennifer Wood, as well as the wealth of submitting artists. What a wonderful job they have done! While the rest of us sit around and wish we could create beauty -- these artists have.

Not only is the issue rich in sheer amount of work, it is rich in talent. Once I opened the issue I was entranced -- not putting in down again until I had devoured it! I was taken on a trip encompassing both the world of Salem and the world beyond its borders.

As a senior, I will be proud to take this issue of the *Incanabula* with me into the world beyond Salem as a testimony to the talent found here -- in our faculty as well as in our students. Again, I commend the staff and artists of this years *Incanabula*. The diligent work is apparent.

Sincerely,
Shannon Stone