

Student Says Heather Ross Miller Is No Poet

Mr. Editor:
If Heather Ross Miller is a poet, then I'm bordering between John Milton and Alfred Lord Tennyson. On February 22, 1967 in room C-220, Mrs. Miller, who quite ironically calls herself a poet, gave a superb example of arrogance personified. In 20 B.C. Horace, the noted literary critic said that poetry is to please and to instruct. Well, her's does neither.

I attended the poetry reading somewhat embarrassed because I have never read any of Mrs. Miller's works, but when I left there, I was pleased that I hadn't. Her doctrinaire attitudes not only impregnated her feeble attempts at verse, but also spilled out into her generous remarks about anything from World War II to America in the 1960's. Mrs. Miller spent a large portion of the hour trying to convince her small (quite fitting) audience that she and her idol, Randall Jarrell, are the

greatest things since Shakespeare. From what I know of the traditions in English literature, I assume that Mrs. Miller began and ended her study with Mr. Jarrell.

For her opener, Mrs. Miller praised the teaching profession and spoke of her intense desire to obtain her Ph.D. I thought this was quite admirable for she and I do agree on the attributes of the teaching profession. However, after she made some of her trite remarks and read from her poetry, I could only take the previous remarks as hypocritical. She in no way indicated that she had any sincere desire to teach, for 4 good reasons: (1) Effective teaching has a very basic and essential prerequisite which is an ability and a desire to communicate. Mrs. Miller had no desire to communicate but rather, I think, she was more interested in indoctrinating us. To inject a jargonism (my word), her arrogance was hanging out all over. She seemed perfectly content to stand and gloat in her glory and smile occasionally when she thought she spotted a fellow D.A.R. member in the audience. (2) Also, the dedicated teacher, of literature anyway, should have as much as possible an objective mind. Again basing my comment just on what she said, I think Mrs. Miller is about as objective as Robert Welch, and, by the way, many of their ideas closely coincide. (3) Teaching requires a profound respect and desire for learning. If Heather Ross Miller has these characteristics, she certainly is deceptive about them. I believe she already knows it all, though. (4) The teacher should have a willingness to explore new and different ideas. Of course, one who knows everything really has no need of any conjecture to which he does not already subscribe. In one of her readings, Mrs. Miller referred to the bars of the human body; I do not think that any person can be bound more stringently by any intangible than she is bound by dogmatism.

kaze pilots of Japan during World War II. She said they all died in a fitting manner because they died for their country and didn't even burn their draft cards. (Evidently she doesn't know that religion was involved). Her hero, Mr. Jarrell, of course, didn't get drafted or burn his draft card during World War II, but he (with emphasis) joined the armed forces.

We were honored, I suppose, to have Mrs. Miller on campus for I am sure she felt that she was lowering herself when she came here to speak. If Heather Ross Miller is indicative of the English faculty at Pfeiffer, then they must surely have a lot of lost souls there. I am not saying that all literature ought to be taught in the liberal fashion dear to me, but at least the professor can teach it objectively enough so that the student can think and make conclusions for himself. Indoctrination and propaganda have no place in the fields of teaching and yet these are the things Mrs. Miller thrives on. If Pfeiffer students are accustomed to her methods of teaching, I only wish some of them could take a few literature courses at UNC-C. I'm sure the chance for free-expression and interchange of ideas would shock them for she evidently doesn't believe in just anyone thinking. Undoubtedly the reactions would be similar to the experience of being born again, though not in the sense that she would teach it.

Dickey, a real poet, last spring, you know what I mean. In one of James Dickey's explications, he made a remark which impressed me so much that I think I will never forget him as one who can elevate the commonplace. He spoke of a time when he was a child and saw men working on a chain-gang beside the road. As one of the men drew his axe back beyond his head, the sunlight reflected from it giving him the impression of a bird flying away in its elegance. Most of you nor I would have experienced this sensation, and I don't think Mrs. Miller would have either. Rather, I think Mrs. Miller could have seen nothing elegant in anything that was any way associated with one working on a chain-gang; she would have seen the men as degenerates and morally dangerous to the society. The ability to see beauty in anything is a rare and noble quality and one I think which is quite exemplary of the poet and separates him from the masses. No, I don't think Mrs. Miller is a poet.

Maybe I was a little too sensitive to her slanderous remarks but they were directed particularly to young males (under 25 as she put it) and I fit in that category. Perhaps the problem lies in her manner, but I can only assume that poetry is as good as its presentation. Heather Ross Miller is one of the masses. Her conservatism and arrogance destroy the good qualities she might have. I know nothing of her novels and of her poetry, only what she read. And for her as a person, I know only what she impressed on me at the reading, and I found that to be deplorable and certainly unfit to be called by two of the worthiest of titles—the poet and the teacher.

Jimmy Price

Wonder Whose Sore Spot Was Hit?

Mr. Editor:
Wow, we must have hit a sore spot. The Editor had to chop up the middle columns to get his answer included, and then gave himself the heading on our letter. It's understandable though, he lays out the paper.

We won't argue with the absurdity of the suggestions of the committee; he is entitled to his opinion on this. What we wonder is, why all the worry about sharing a mascot with anyone? In five years, what difference will it make from whom we conned our name, assuming we cannot be original. This is the point we cannot fathom. To view the Editor's point, if a new prep school is built on N. C. 49 in Charlotte and they choose 49ers, and we have 49ers, do we have to automatically change our mascot just so we won't be associated with a "lower" rank in the peck order? This action could be frustrating if new junior and senior highs continue to be built as they probably will. Heavens, one may even adopt the name Chargers! What then?

One of the reasons the Editor

liked the Chargers was that it could be associated with rams and bulls. Does this mean we should get a ram and copy Chapel Hill? Has he considered that J. C. Smith already has the bull? We would be willing to bet that more people over the state associate rams and bulls with the institutions above than do Cougars with Charlotte Catholic High. However, one thing that hasn't been considered by the Editor is that if Cougars is chosen, maybe Catholic High will get mad because we copied them, and change to Chargers.

In all seriousness, being Biologists, we would like to have an animal for a mascot. Considering the choices, nothing but Cougars remains. Since the primary purpose of a mascot is to give the school some extra spirit, a symbol of unity, we would like to see the student body drag itself from its state of lethargy and poll at least 314 votes in March, even if some of you have to vote twice.

Dr. James F. Matthews
Carolyn Campbell

Point Blank by Larry Keith

The Glory That Wasn't Rome Is Here



I had a dream once, a silly flight of imagination. I was trudging through a snow flurry with a thick book under one arm and a thick coed under the other. A guy behind us was smoking a pipe and the snow was sticking to his beard.

We found shelter in an ivy covered building and sat down in a large lecture room. The professor, an aged fellow in a long, black robe, open from top to bottom, came in characteristically late, took his seat before 150 students, and vouched for communism, atheism and a new morality.

It was college so we understood.

But at UNC-C, the buildings are new and there is little grass. Too few coeds are sexy and no one will lay claim to heresy.

So I ask where is the glory that was Rome?

I call my teachers professor and they call me Mr. Keith. My major is poli sci not political science.

I'll get an academic degree and conflicting offers from business and armed service.

But I am sad. This isn't the college life I expected.

No one protests.

No panty raids. No bull sessions in the dorm. No fraternity-gatherings. No bond fires for a football team that might go to Florida over New Years.

My friends laugh. They come home for Christmas and I come home for dinner.

I hear some of what I'm missing.

"You won't believe this," one said. "I got kicked out of my dorm for flooding the basement with water hose. It was a riot."

So in one semester he had made the Dean's List and the dean's list. But he had nevertheless made it.

And then there is the guy I know who met girls and liquor the same week. "It's the only way to live," he is known to remind. "But I don't guess you have many social advantages at Charlotte College."

--How Did My Dorm Team Do?

"By the way, how did your dorm team do in intramural basketball?" Life is cruel but I am not ready for such insults.

There is a cute little blonde I know at South Carolina who isn't a loser even though she did date football players. When basketball season came she said, "The Gamecocks will be tough this year."

She knew because some Gamecock had crowed in her car. But Forty Niners don't talk much. They practice at Derita Elementary and play games at Garinger High.

So I wonder if I'm not cheating myself.

Is this college?

Am I being Educated or educated?

I shouldn't have to read "The Truth About Campus Life" to know the truth.

--Not A Kook In The Place

There aren't enough beards. One guy out here has a beauty, but he laughs too much. He isn't a communist, a leper, or anything.

Nobody marches for civil liberty or withdrawal from Viet Nam. The kooks never last longer than a semester, anyway. At UCLA they are a voice.

I see a picture of a sexy coed who is in trouble because she is a sexy coed. She couldn't attend here. Her mother wouldn't let her leave for school in a tight skirt.

There was brief reprieve this fall. It was worth being a Skinny Rat in a football game that was won the Senior Surfers because somehow you felt you were Joe College.

So did The Charlotte Observer. There we were the next morning on the second front. There we were the next afternoon learning that someone in the inner sanctum had asked that the name of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte not be harmed.

I will be old and gray when my friend forgets I never went to college. Meanwhile, ten per cent of us vote in an election, five per cent go to a concert, one percent attend a lecture.

Where did I go?

Out.

What did I do?

Nothing.

And it makes me sad.

Heather Ross Miller's material is geared solely for the little old ladies who play bridge all afternoon, join book-of-the-month clubs, flock to art shows, operas, and poetry readings, but never stop to think about anything. Mrs. Miller writes and reads for them, the ones who read poetry not as it is meant but according to the rigid standards they have established for themselves and the society.

For those of you who were not present at the reading, I would like to inform you of some of her more shattering insinuations and implications. For her first mistake of the day, she made a crude and uncalled-for remark about Mario Savio. Perhaps she was correct in her assertion that a quote he had made was absurd, but she had no legitimate reason for carrying her cynical and sarcastic remark over to Berkeley. She made several other remarks about Berkeley throughout the reading, all being equally derogatory and illegitimate. I am sure she knows very little or probably nothing about Berkeley and therefore, she should have kept her unfounded remarks to herself.

Other of her uncouth remarks included nasty insinuations about: any student who protests anything, anyone who does not advocate United States involvement in Vietnam, any male who has any reservations about the draft, and anyone who questions the traditions of the Judeo-Christian belief. She also inferred that anyone who has a beard is a beatnik and an undesirable of society. Her next reference from out of her radical, right-wing hat was to the kami-

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