

# Weekly 'Coffee House' offers healing doctors can't

By Waynette Gladden  
Staff Writer

It is shocking to see young children at a concert wearing hospital gowns and toting an IV behind them as comfortably as students carry their book bags. But for the children who attended the latest "Coffee House," sponsored by NC Memorial Hospital, it's more than music they came for — it's the healing that no shot or pill can offer. Every fourth Thursday from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., the hospital's Guitar Club, Employee Recreation and Recreation Therapy present live music for patients, hospital staff and visitors in the ninth-floor Recreation Center. The musicians include hospital staff, visitors and even patients. There is no structured band; this is a bona fide jam

session where nothing is rehearsed and any musician who shows up is allowed to play. Instruments vary from electric guitars to harmonicas. The interesting twist to the performance is the audience. Hospital patients ranging from children to senior citizens and their nurses eagerly come to listen and enjoy. They are burn victims, cancer patients, psychiatric patients and others being treated at the hospital. Some wearing street clothes are distinguishable as patients only by hospital band around their wrists. During a rendition of "House of the Rising Sun," performed at the February coffee house, lyric sheets were handed out. One patient actually picked up an acoustic guitar and played along. He sang his own rock-ballad version of "Jesus Loves Me" on the acoustic gui-

tar. The Coffee House is entertainment for hospital visitors, too. "I've been in bands all my life, and I thought I'd come up here and listen," said Curtis Buchanan, 26, of Brevard. Buchanan's mother is receiving a lung transplant, and during a visit, he read about the Coffee House on a flyer. Later, he joined in with two "progressive bluegrass" ballads on the acoustic guitar. The Coffee House is important to both patients and musicians. For the musicians, it is a chance to meet other musicians and perform. For the patients, it's therapy. Michele Barr, a recreation therapist, said the guitarists are a great way to divert patients' attention from their pain. The Coffee House provides an escape for them and allows them to enjoy them-

selves as they might out in the community, she said. It's a chance for patients to socialize and forget their problems. Joy Preslar, a cardiologist technician, coordinates the musicians for the Coffee House. "We try to be very patient-conscious, but at the same time make them feel that they're getting the same format that they would outside the hospital," she said. The Coffee House began as an outlet for the Guitar Club to perform. Barr joined the club and suggested that it would be good therapy for patients. Late last summer, they organized and the Coffee House began. Calling all musicians: if you would like a great chance to perform for a worthwhile cause, contact Preslar at 966-5123.



Ken Shauger and Joy Preslar jam at a recent Coffee House

# RTVMP faculty restructuring report calls for new name, new focus for department

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Radio, Television and Motion Pictures is an academic department in the Division of Fine Arts of the College of Arts and Sciences. For nearly 45 years the Department has been the center of research, service and teaching in the electronic and film media on the Chapel Hill campus. The Department was created by Professor Earl Wynn, who envisioned a communication center which would combine service facilities for audio, video and film production for the campus in addition to research and teaching both undergraduates and graduate students at the M.A. level. Professor Wynn and others created WUNC-FM radio and WUNC-TV (later becoming the state public television network).

Over time, the mission of the Department changed as the radio station and the television network were transferred to other administrative structures and the media services were assumed by the Center for Teaching and Learning. As new faculty joined the Department, other areas of research and teaching were created which were not organically tied to broadcasting. These included critical studies, cultural study, studies of race, gender and class, examination of new technologies, etc. While the faculty retains strength in all aspects of broadcasting and film (production, management, history, law, ethics), the developing field of Cultural Studies has gained the interest of the faculty.

The faculty members have debated the future direction of the Department for more than two years. At a retreat in the fall of 1991, strong interest was expressed in developing in the area of Cultural Studies. By Cultural studies we mean the study of contemporary culture which is shaped by mediated communication. The generally accepted anthropological definition of culture as the way of life of a people, the sum of their learned behavior patterns, attitudes and material things and the statement by Edward T. Hall that "culture is communication" might be guiding principles for this research direction. While a major concern of the faculty is with the relationship of mediated communication to cultural patterns, Cultural Studies are not necessarily limited to this relationship. We look to those British scholars such as, Raymond Williams, E.P. Thompson, Richard Hoggart, Stuart Hall whose seminal works originated the field. The original work of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham and the Media Group of the University of Glasgow also shaped the field. In addition to the intellectual ferment from the United Kingdom we see the field strongly influenced by such continental cultural theorists as Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu, Jurgen Habermas and Jacques Ellul. Some 30 years of intellectual work has produced a substantial body of theory. Now the quality and volume of contributions to theory from American scholars is adding substance and new directions to the field. The faculty of the RTVMP Department believe this is a critical period in the development of Cultural Studies and are convinced that the reshaping of this department to devote itself to this field would provide an exciting opportunity for the Department, the University and national

scholarship. The faculty is also committed to a Program in Documentary Studies as the other part of the restructured department. This program at both the undergraduate and the M.A. level would be intellectually rigorous. It will emphasize research on the subjects of documentary, script writing, preproduction and production in the appropriate and available media (such as audio, still photos, film and video). Students would be expected to produce documentaries for public presentation and critique. The connection to Cultural Studies would take numerous forms, such as the development of a subject out of current research and serving as a medium for the presentation of research. The Program in Documentary would combine intellectual and artistic work from the social sciences, humanities and fine arts. The faculty, in planning to meet the challenges of the next century recognize that new technologies are making fundamental changes in all aspects of human relationships. A rapidly developing change in a modal one toward interactivity with the technology. Linear programming is yielding to an environment in which the viewer is an active participant in selecting the information that is received. Current research in human-computer interaction, multimedia databases and networking and data compression and transmission is propelling the fields of Media and Communication further into this mode every day. These new technologies obviously have profound consequences for contemporary culture and the construction of mediated communication and the functioning of organizations and institutions. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has already made a substantial commitment to information technologies with advanced computing facilities and research, participation in the state-wide CONCERT video teleconferencing and a proposed comprehensive multi-year plan for extending an electronic pathway of all digitized information to all of the UNC campuses as well as the UNC Center for Public Television and the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics.

As a result of their deliberations the faculty is prepared to recommend a plan for a renamed department, indeed a new department, which would combine Cultural Studies and Documentary Studies within the context of new technologies.

### NAME

The faculty propose to change the name of the department to THE DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA STUDIES. This name is more descriptive of the program that is being proposed. It is becoming a part of the popular vocabulary; increasingly new students are asking about "Media Studies" courses. In addition several Universities have newly created departments with that name. The name is shorter and less cumbersome than the existing Department name.

### UNDERGRADUATE - PROGRAM

At the Undergraduate level the faculty proposes a program with two emphases which are complimentary to one another: Cultural Studies and Documentary Studies. We believe we can begin to build both areas from our exist-

ing faculty, with anticipated new faculty to add greater depth in particular areas as positions become available. Further, we believe this emphasis is entirely consistent with our position in the Division of Fine Arts.

The Department of Media Studies would offer a B.A. degree which would consist of courses in Media and Cultural studies, for example, an introductory course on media and contemporary culture; gender, race and class studies (or culture conflict), culture and new technologies, image ethics, taste cultures, image analysis. We would anticipate these courses would have strong appeal for a wide range of undergraduate students. At the present time the Department teaches a Social Science Perspective and a Fine Arts Perspective for the General College and a Non-western Historical perspective for the College of Arts and Sciences. Courses from the program in Media and Contemporary Culture would meet the requirements for the General Education curriculum.

The Program in Documentary is another essential part of the new undergraduate program. Documentary study could involve a type of oral history, an exhibit of photographs expressing an issue, a political or cultural movement, problem or artistic vision. It would eventually involve video and film documentary productions. Present faculty members, who include experienced and active documentary filmmakers, will teach in both the Undergraduate and the Graduate Documentary studies program in addition to producing their own work. However, the faculty has concluded that with the present severe limitations of our film and video equipment and the absence of an adequate budget for new equipment the Department cannot sustain both undergraduate and graduate film and video production. We are hopeful this restrictive environment will be short-lived. A plan for multimedia laboratories using new technology is presented in the appendix.

The program in documentary would be intellectually rigorous. It will emphasize research on the subject, script writing, pre-production and basic production techniques. Students would be expected to produce productions in media available to them (such as still photos, audio, etc.) for public presentation and critique. The connection to cultural studies would take numerous forms: developing a subject (such as, the meaning of popular music for adolescents, media and the development of taste cultures, the Southerner in the American collective unconscious), research techniques, interviewing techniques, etc.

North Carolina and the Southeast have rich literary traditions. On this campus the Program in Folklore and a new Center for the Study of Southern Culture (which has just been established) could provide advice and stimulation for the production of a wide variety of documentaries.

### Assistant Chairman/Development officer

The program in documentary should also facilitate the production of quality documentaries by faculty. Therefore, the Department should designate an assistant chairman with a reduced teaching load who is responsible for identifying and negotiating with funding sources for documentaries and research.

### GRADUATE - PROGRAM

1. Master of Arts degree  
The Department of Radio, Television and Motion Pictures has offered a Masters of Arts degree for more than 20 years. Alumni of this program are now leaders in the broadcasting and film industries. The faculty feel strongly that the Masters Degree should continue, but with a more narrow focus, one that would be consistent with the mission of the Department.

The faculty proposes that the M.A. degree become a Masters in Independent Documentary. As the program develops the faculty believe it should include history and theory of documentary, research techniques (which could include a course from the Program in Folklore on The Art of Ethnography and from the History Department on an Introduction to Historical Research), production techniques and a final major production thesis. With careful management of the resource utilization we believe this program will be a high quality Masters program which will meet a need for advanced training in documentary film/video. It has the potential to open up opportunities to graduate students not previously available at Carolina. Details of the program should be developed over the next two years.

### 2. Ph.D. in Cultural Studies

Two years ago the faculty proposed a new Ph.D. program in Cultural Studies in cooperation with the Department of Speech Communications. However, the faculty of that Department wished to develop their own departmental Ph.D. program which would provide training in their discipline.

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# new focus for department

wide-spread interest in the field of Cultural studies on this campus and at Duke University. The faculty feel this is the time to begin planning for a Ph.D. Our proposal consists of the following. A Center for Media and Contemporary Cultural Studies should be created with a connection to the new Department of Media Studies. The Center would solicit and receive research grants and would house the Ph.D. program. Planning for the program and policy formulation would be determined by a board of 10 active Cultural Studies researchers from the University of North Carolina and Duke University. Faculty active in Cultural Studies but appointed in other departments (such as sociology, history, Political Science, Anthropology, Art, etc.) would receive appointments as adjunct professors to the Center and would serve as the faculty for the Ph.D. program. The Center would have a director, who would be on the faculty of the Department of Media Studies. This organization was suggested by the Communications program at the University of Illinois, which is housed in the Institute for Communications Research and faculty from various disciplines relating to Communications. The details of both the Masters in Documentary Studies and the Ph.D. in Media and Contemporary Culture would be developed under the leadership of a new chairman of the Department, yet to be selected. It should be possible to begin the Ph.D. Program within five years, assuming approval of the UNC-Chapel Hill administration and trustees and the Board of Governors.

### CONCLUSION

The RTVMP faculty are greatly encouraged at the possibility of a vital and exciting new direction for the Department. With the very rapid change in technology which will no doubt impact cultural patterns (are we facing the end of mass communications?) there is a need for creative thought about the future place of communication and cultural studies within the academy. We believe the proposed restructuring which we have outlined will provide the framework to meet the challenges of the present and the future and will provide the kind of clearly defined mission to permit the achievement of distinction as a national leader in the field.

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