

Common sense—the Carolina crisis of spring

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By Elliott Warnock

Now is the time that tries students' souls.

The foul-weather student, the winter pupil will shirk the tasks at hand. As spring unfolds its breezy days before us, some students will desert the ranks of the faithful and disappear into the sunshine. Some will even go as far as Florida.

Now is the time for all good students to come to the aid of their diplomas.

The diploma, ticket to the greater amusement park of life, worshiped idol of the freshman, sacred talisman of the graduate, still lays unshaped and misty before the eyes of weary seniors. Spring sunshine will burn away the clouds of winter and the promised parchment will suddenly loom before us.

Preregistration slips, class tickets and tuition checks will dwindle in significance. We, who once marked time in Chapel Hill in semesters, will begin to count weeks, then days and classes left until the end. We will try to remember every slipping moment, savor each Miller top popped, throw each Frisbee better than we ever have before.

The importance of academics slowly pales in comparison to the bright glow of nearing graduation. It no longer seems nearly as necessary as before to excel; the only important thing seems to be completion. And

completion appears to be pre-ordained.

Providence surely would not have brought us so close to the end of four years (some of us closer to seven) only to see us fall by the wayside.

Yet, it should be remembered that many have fallen already in service to the cause. Some fell in the early days of their first semester, overcome by the heady freedom and good fellowship brought about by liberty from the yoke of well-meaning parents. These student basked in the late-summer sun, romped through autumn leaves and never missed a home football game, with a fifth and a pleasant companion. By the time basketball season got underway in November, they were finished.

Even if they survived into the next semester, or the next after that, they were finished. Destiny had other plans than a standard four-year education for them. Some heard the roll call of the military; some headed for the limbo world of evening college and part-time employment; some headed back to Hometown, U.S.A. to work for Dad.

Other students were crushed by the very idol they worshiped. Seeking to do service in the cause of academia, they dug into the trenches at Wilson Library; they barricaded themselves behind stacks of books in their rooms; they fought under a barrage of papers and term projects; they braved inhuman food at the Hunger Hut and survived insidious Psych 10 labs; they laid waste to enemy professors with lightning-swift pens and calculators.

Most of these unfortunates simply went mad, but they remain martyrs to the cause.

It has been easier for the majority of students. We've stayed behind the front lines of action, letting our braver compatriots answer the tough questions. We've been little more than support and supply troops.

Now is the time to remember the efforts of our fellows.

We of the Gentlemen's C, we of the Cliff and Monarch Notes Booklet-of-the-Month Club, we of the Budweiser Battalion, must not falter. We must strive toward the end.

Now is the time to stand together in awe of our common destiny. Now, as newly elected leaders prepare for their inauguration, as spring-break plans are made, as apartment leases run toward termination, we must remember we are students.

Our Phi Beta Kappa allies have shown valor, and have been duly decorated with a badge of honor for their work. We must attempt to follow their example in these dire times.

We must never forget that the battle is not fought on yellow

computer printouts of grades; the battle is fought in the classroom and library. The war is not for academia; the war is for our education.

The cost has not been cheap, therefore we do not esteem our education lightly. How could we keep a low estimation of anything that cost our parents between \$10,000 and \$20,000? Heaven knows the proper price of things, and so do we, and it would be strange indeed if anything as commercial as our diplomas were not highly valued.

As we enter the last weeks of the battle for our diplomas, let us never forget to strive for the highest marks, the best education and knowledge. And, above all, never let us lose sight of our goal, a diploma, and what it stands for, a job—a job from those people who fell by the wayside in their freshman and sophomore year and who have two to three jobs' worth of experience on us. W

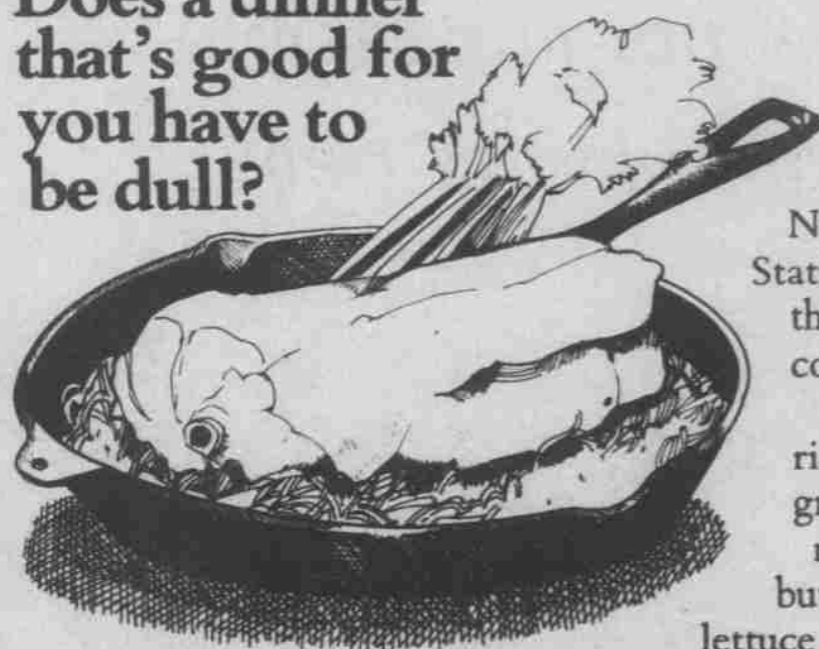
Elliott Warnock is staff columnist for Weekender.

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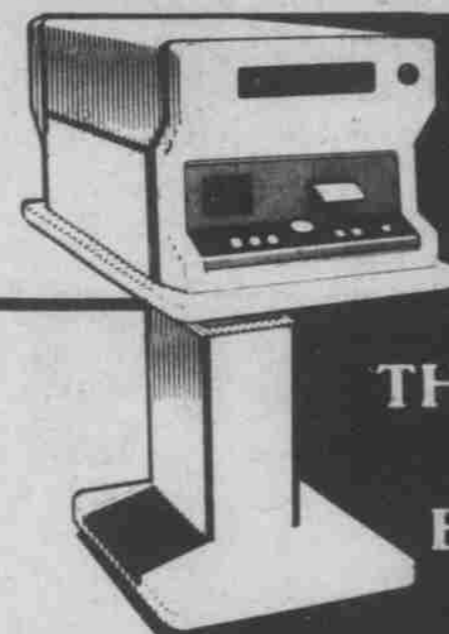


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