



Sandra Neely Smith was active on and off campus during her years at Bennett.

Sandra Neely slain

by the Banner Staff

Sandra Neely Smith, Marxist organizer, was murdered by a right-wing extremist shotgun blast in the same area of Greensboro where less than six years ago she served as SGA president of Bennett College.

Smith, head of the student body during 1972-73, was killed Nov. 3 along with three other college-educated radicals in the fateful "Death to the Klan" rally directed by the Communist Workers Party (CWP) at the Morningside public housing project. A fifth party member has subsequently died. Fourteen men with Ku Klux Klan or American Nazi connections have been jailed without bond, 12 charged with murder and two with conspiracy to commit murder resulting from the lethal assault of gunfire. CWP leader Nelson Johnson, local activist, was arrested on a charge of inciting a riot.

Born on Christmas, 1950, in Piedmont, S. C., Sandra Neely Smith, 28, was a prominent student who is clearly remembered at Bennett. Teachers and peers are grieving over what President Isaac H. Miller, Jr. sees as a "tragic loss of talent." Echoing the views of many others, Miller profoundly regrets Smith's CWP involvement. "Sandra had to have a first-hand knowledge of the black experience that was free of political overtones," Miller maintains. "Had she had a lifetime to spend applying her compassion and expertise (to the needs of her people), she could have made continuous inroads on correcting and redressing injustices that we all are dissatisfied with."

Expressing the sorrow of the campus community, Miller states that "we genuinely mourn her loss. I have always looked upon our students as my own children in a sense. I mourn her loss as I mourn the loss of one of my own."

According to teachers, counselors and peers, Sandra Neely's career at Bennett was characterized by commitment to the transformation of injustice and to scholarship. A Social Welfare major, she was an above-average student—sometimes making the Dean's List—whose professional objective was to become an employment counselor. She was a "joiner," and her campus activities included reporting for this paper and serving on the Handbook committee.

But Sandra Neely wasn't content with on-campus involvement. She took her convictions into the community, working in voter education, youth programs at East White Oak Community Center and within the Greensboro Association of Poor People. Harold E. Bragg, dean of student affairs, recalls that Smith was a "genuine and dedicated humanitarian."

Marcella Whidbee, Smith's roommate for two years, remembers a flurry of work on Smith's part. "She spent a lot of time outside of the room," Whidbee says. "She was always into struggling for the less fortunate, working in neighborhood groups and

things. She always had late night meetings, and she was forever making posters about something."

By all accounts, Smith didn't have the rigid, dogmatic personality that often accompanies political fervor. Whidbee points out that "we were quite different, and I think it surprised people that we got along so well, but we were really very close." Associate professor Leon McDougale remembers Smith as a large girl with a big smile and a "radiant personality." Ltc. Charles T. Byrd, bookstore manager, says that "she was quite pleasant to everybody. Whenever she passed by here and I was out there (at the counter), she would always speak." Assistant professor Willie Mae McCallum's impressions coincide with the general portrait. "As far as I was concerned," states McCallum, "she was congenial, very likeable, friendly, very easy to get along with and very interested in people."

Although Smith was amiable, she was also candid in the expression of political views. "She wasn't what you would call a radical," claims Cynthia Y. George, a classmate of Smith's, "but she was very outspoken about some things." Dorothy J. Harris, director of freshman studies and academic support services, concurs with George, saying that "she always let you know her feelings. You always knew what her position was because she spoke out on things she believed in."

To analyze Smith's gravitation toward radicalism, the political climate of the late sixties and early seventies must be considered. Sandra Neely arrived at Bennett in 1969, a year after the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy. Turmoil involving black militancy and anti-Vietnam War demonstrations dominated the time. In the spring of 1970, students were murdered at Kent State and Jackson State, and these events, coupled with the Nixon administration's approval of bombing in Cambodia, prompted a massive demonstration in Washington.

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Who's Who honors 15

by Myra George

Fifteen Bennett women have been selected for inclusion in the 1979-80 edition of "Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges."

According to Harold E. Bragg, dean of student affairs, the successful candidate "must have a minimum 3.0 cumulative average and exhibit leadership involvement, potential leadership and good citizenship." Bragg also explained that while candidates are chosen by a campus nominating committee, the entire faculty votes on the students to be honored.

Among the women receiving "Who's Who" status are Miss Bennett, Kathy N. Crosby, an Early Childhood Education major from Charlotte,

and editor of "The Bennett Banner" Debra A. Hodges, an ISP-Communications major from Mount Holly, N. J.

Other students winning this distinction are Marchelle Boatwright, an Accounting major, and Dino M. Brown, a Biology major, both from Cincinnati; Sandra M. Brown, an ISP-Communications major from Charleston; Melissa L. Graves, a Sociology major from Burlington; and Carolyn Hall, a Medical Technology major from Cross, S. C.

Also cited for all-around excellence are three Greensboro natives, Elementary Education major Randy Jones, Home Economics major Roberta Judd and Mathematics-Engineering major Linda B. Smith.

Other women who combined solid scholarship with impor-

tant contributions to campus life are: Elementary Education major Sharonlyn Jones, Montgomery, Ala.; English major Regina Pegram of Durham; Mary J. Simpkins, a Medical Technology major from Waynesboro, Ga.; Gail L. Wiley, an Early Childhood Education major from Madison; and Edwina C. Wilson, a Pre-Medicine major from Blackstone, Va.

There had been some controversy over the requirements adopted for this award, but Bragg maintains that clarification is forthcoming: "The committee will convene before this semester is over to evaluate exactly what our criteria consists of."

Nevertheless, these women will admirably represent the college in the next "Who's Who."

Names and events you should know

College organist Alfred T. Carter will give his first recital at Bennett Nov. 18, 8:00 p.m., in the Annie Merner Pfeiffer Chapel. The presentation includes baroque and contemporary compositions by Bach, Dandrieu and Heiller.

The new dorm director of Merner Hall is Patricia Eason, a 1978 graduate of North Carolina A&T State University where she majored in Political Science and History. Eason's experience includes teaching in the Charlotte public schools. Her main goal is "to attend law school and pursue a career as a prominent attorney striving to help my fellow Black brothers and sisters, giving my all to the American political system."

A minor fire occurred on the second floor of Reynolds Hall Oct. 17 at approximately 6:00 p.m. When the residents screamed "Fire," two young men visiting the dorm bolted to the scene and helped extinguish the fire. A clock "exploded and burst into flames," according to Iris Settle, sophomore Early Childhood Education major, who added, "I'm just thankful no one was hurt." Settle and roommate Diedre Kennedy were able to return to their room after the smoke cleared. There was only minor damage.

LeAnder Canady, as a result of his recent art exhibit in New York, has been commissioned to do a painting. To meet the request, the artist has begun an abstract. "Having my work in private sectors is a good experience," Canady says. "The people who

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Photo by Bernetta Hamilton

Literature and advice were plentiful in the booths set up in the union foyer during the Health Fair sponsored by the Zeta Xi Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.