

OPINIONS

Bringing light to our own mis-education



Kelly Genova
Columnist

Whether it's walking around the quad, eating in the cafeteria, or even attending the few small parties that happen around campus, I am struck by the idea that even in college, at a university as liberal as UNCA, students have managed to naturally segregate themselves by race.

I am hard-pressed to define this action as natural. However, I believe this is a problem people feel in their hearts, yet refuse to recognize as their own mis-education.

In effect, it is this separation of race that has a profound impact on the attendance of UNCA by minority students.

What else would explain why we only have about 100 black, Asian and Hispanic students on campus, and they all seem to hang out together?

Sure, people at UNCA are willing to say they are open and accepting of all people. But what has UNCA done outside of a few classes and events that has really allowed students and faculty to confront their

own biases and prejudices?

Perhaps if we had the opportunity to begin exploring these racial issues, we could find an answer to UNCA's lack of racial diversity.

A class was once proposed to the education department which allowed future teachers the opportunity to explore their own biases and prejudices related to race, age, gender, handicap and sexuality.

"What has UNCA done outside of a few classes and events that has really allowed students and faculty to confront their own biases and prejudices?"

This class, in turn, would have allowed students the opportunity to become more accepting and open of others, specifically of their future students. The education department met this proposal with great excitement and curiosity.

However, months passed and this idea was still just an idea.

This is a perfect example of how people love to talk about diversity.

However, when it comes to action, few are willing to brave the obstacles involved in breaking the barriers of prejudice.

As long as people at this school continue to ignore the comfort barriers they have created around their own groups of friends and colleagues, UNCA will continue to be just a school with a few ethnic groups and a bunch of white hippies taking African dance.

I propose not only a class for educating students on confronting prejudices, but also a class required for all students at UNCA.

This class would allow people from all majors to get together and discuss issues of race, gender, age and other related topics that have come up in their own lives.

For this class, an instructor would center discussions, readings, group projects and lectures on the psychological impact these prejudices have on all people, and how it affects the distinct social makeup of our college campus.

People are faced with racism and prejudice everyday. Sure, it's not always directed towards them, but few have the knowledge or the power to identify and confront these issues.

With an idea such as this class, hopefully UNCA can become a place where people are not only willing to accept diversity into their school, but make it feel welcome as well.

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Letters to the Editor

New ID system implemented

Dear Editor:

Here are some things you need to know about your UNCA student identification card:

Your official University ID is the property of UNCA and should be carried at all times while on campus.

All replacement IDs will cost \$10 and there will be NO temporary IDs issued.

Student IDs will be available between the hours of 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday in the OneCard office (Dining Hall, room 255) located in the campus bookstore.

If you have any questions, call the OneCard office at 251-6767 or email onecard@unca.edu.

For OneCard updates, go to www.unca.edu/onecard

Freda Cooper
OneCard Manager

Commuter parking unfair

Dear Editor:

As a commuter student, I feel that the allocation of parking spaces is stacked against commuters. What options do we really have for parking on campus? Maybe if you're lucky and have classes in Rhodes-Robinson Hall, then you can park fairly closely to the building. For anywhere else on campus, you are forced to park halfway to Bosnia in the deck close to the gym.

On some other college campuses, freshmen aren't allowed to have cars on campus, the commuter parking is closest to the buildings, teacher parking slightly farther, and the residential parking is the farthest yet.

Here at UNCA, it is the exact opposite. The parking for the teachers is closest to the educational buildings. Residential students are

in the optimal lots closest to their dorms (which, in some cases, is closer to the educational buildings than commuter parking), followed by commuter parking in the farthest spots.

For those of us who have jobs that we must be at shortly after class, the walk back to our vehicles takes as much time as it does to commute to our places of employment.

I understand that the professors need to be close to the buildings, but they do not come and go like the vast amounts of commuters. On days where we experience bad weather, many of the commuter students are forced to walk the farthest distances, while the faculty and staff get to jump right out of their vehicles and into the protection of the buildings.

Another point I would like to bring up is that there are no visitor parking spots near any of the dorm buildings. As a commuter, I have always felt that the campus does not reach out to commuters enough in any of the social activities.

The residence life plans activities for residential students, but in my years here at UNCA, I have not heard of a commuter life organization who puts anything together for commuter students. Many of us commuters have residential friends, but when we want to visit them during normal business hours, we are forced to park in the designated parking areas that are nowhere near the dorm buildings.

My final point is the additional parking at the base of the hill to the entrance to Westridge and Southridge halls. I have not seen sufficient security at that location to warrant parking my vehicle down there.

For those readers who are unfamiliar with this parking lot, it is right across the street from where the construction headquarters are, where all the rubble from the torn down buildings from the Governors Village were kept until it was hauled away.

As a graduating senior, I have been made aware of additional buildings to be built on campus causing an even greater decreased area for commuter parking. As a soon-to-be

alumn, I find that parking has not been treated with the same regard as the new development. Parking for residents was given up due to the renovation of the Highsmith center and the demolition of the Governors Village, and that small addition of a parking deck does not sufficiently make up for the loss.

As an environmental studies student, I suggest that many of the professors begin car-pooling to work to reduce the number of parking needed by faculty. If commuter students can car-pool, they should as well, but often times there are schedule conflicts.

The campus is not large enough to have shuttles running from the farthest lots, yet it is large enough to cause an infringement in flow of commuter students. The lots are not close enough to the educational buildings to wait for one class to let out to find some commuter spaces, and then walk to class and be on time.

For those students and faculty who are willing to car-pool, there should be a process in registration where people who are within zip-codes to be made aware of such opportunities. This will help in the greening of UNCA.

I do commend Public Safety for their enforcement of the designated zones, even if I do end up with a parking ticket every once in a while for being parked in a residential lot. Visiting my girlfriend on bad weather days means I have to spend excess time in the cold or rain more so than the faculty and staff and the residential students.

I simply ask that the school put more thought and consideration into the commuter student population.

Just by looking at the number of commuter student parking compared to the number of residential student parking, commuter students make up for most of the students, yet we receive the least amount consideration in the decision making process. Please don't let this pattern of neglect continue into the future.

Blase Kusterle
Senior, environmental studies

Return of the 'safety psychos' after the holidays



Craig Lovelace
Columnist

The first thing I want to say in this New Year is that I'm glad Christmas is over.

It's not the rampant commercialism that bothers me.

Likewise, I don't get hot under the collar over rude people, Salvation Army bell ringers causing guilt trips, or being stuck behind minivan-bound soccer moms who haven't changed their oil since the Reagan Administration.

I can handle the biggest news story being "the malls are really crowded," and the fact that some cretin weatherman who can't spot monsoon-level rains can suddenly zoom in on a sleigh pulled by eight tiny reindeer.

Even the holiday decorations that look suspiciously like overstock from New Age Crystal Knickknack Emporium don't get to me. As far as I'm concerned, the worst part of the year-end festivities is the annoying visibility of the Safety Psychos.

Like their cousins, the Health

Nazis, who believe we should all exist on rice cakes, tofu and spring water, and the Amateur Psychobabblers, who feel compelled to assign you to at least three categories of abnormality, at least one of which must be sexual, the Safety Psychos are part of the Perennially Indignant, the only true permanent underclass.

These control freaks are determined to eliminate all sharp edges, staircases, and heavy tools from our lives.

The last three months of the year, the Psychos show up everywhere, doing their best to scare the crap out of us with quoted statistics and demonstration films from a small company in Wisconsin which can't afford good fake blood (needless to say, the results are usually more funny than shocking - it's like watching an Ed Wood murder scene).

The Psychos start out innocently enough - warning about the risk of fire if you plug 208 strands of blink-

ing lights into the same outlet. Then, a subtle change comes over them and they start warning you about all sorts of things that don't make sense.

Suddenly, your Moravian star's points could poke an eye out of an unwary child on stilts. Your light-up Santa could be mistaken for a landing beacon by an oncoming Lockheed TriStar.

You could injure a buck that decides to mate with your plastic Rudolph (incidentally, I'm not making that one up). You get subjected to constant streams of this, as they try to get you to subscribe to "Bad Living: The magazine for the discriminating paranoiac."

The worst thing, however, comes when these nut jobs link up with professional worrywart organizations and come out with television specials and 20/20 features on "Dangerous Toys."

I don't even watch these anymore. They're just too predictable. "The Consumer Committee to

Prevent Natural Selection from Culling the Stupid from our Ranks has determined the following 10 toys are the most dangerous of this year's popular gifts..."

Invariably, clothing and sleeping bags featuring the year's kiddie-brainwashing character are number six or seven on the list.

"You'll notice that when we apply this welding torch to this cloth that

tion skeleton that can be exposed and poked into the child until said child resembles a spaghetti strainer.

Never you mind the fact that it took this full grown adult pair of pliers to expose the wire. After all, children are devious little creatures. They'll find a way, probably using an ingenious application of the butter dish.

Next, of course, is the die-cast toy car. This presents a choking hazard to small children, especially if such children haven't eaten that day and are starting to think the lead paint looks tasty. Apparently, all of a child's thought process is tied up in wondering if there's a cream filling in their toys.

Of course, we can't forget the cute, talking critter doll. This is hazardous because children, being inquisitive in the fashion of Victor Frankenstein, tend to take things apart.

Once they have the toy in pieces, they can choke on tiny pieces, cut themselves on the voice boxes, or electrocute themselves with two C-cell batteries.

Just ignore that it took a mechanically inclined adult 20 minutes to take it apart, and most kids can't sit through 10 minutes of television without Ritalin.

The Safety Psychos basically want

to make sure that the blame for any accident falls on an external source. They can't blame people that have jobs, kids, hopes and dreams.

It's much easier to blame a big, faceless corporation that doesn't care enough.

The Safety Psychos are being quite selfish. They want children, but don't want to be bothered with raising them. They want gain without risk, forgetting that risk is a part of life, and always has been.

It's easier to blame somebody else than to take responsibility, but since we don't want to blame anyone specific, let's place the blame at the feet of one of these evil corporations.

Given our cultural climate, I'm amazed blame-shifting isn't going to be a sport at the next Olympics.

I'm going to devote my time, in the interests of being remembered, to creating a product that will bridge the gap between the Safety Psychos and corporate America.

I think a rigid, airtight plastic bubble to protect them from the cold, cruel world would be a big seller.

The best thing, though, would be to get rid of the Safety Psychos. I'd much rather have the regular Psychos.

At least Norman Bates could make himself useful and stuff my hunting trophies.

"It's easier to blame somebody else than to take responsibility, but since we don't want to blame anyone specific, let's place the blame at the feet of one of these evil corporations."

we've soaked in cooking oil, this adorable tee shirt actually combusts! Just think what would happen if your child was inside!" (Apparently, the Safety Psychos punctuation is overstocked with exclamation points.)

Still, I can see their point. When I was six, my blowtorch and I were inseparable.

Number five or so is always the popular articulated doll. This insidious device has a wire articula-