

An Interview with Richard Buckley

For the past five years, Richard Buckley, current SCA President, has been more than active in student life and student affairs here at N.C.S.A. He has seen the enrollment nearly double in five years. To many, he has been dubbed, as "the first real SCA President of the N.C.S.A."

To some students, the act of being a student is completed when their arts classes have met. But to Richard, this is only a beginning. He has worked off and on with the SCA since 1969, and is also an accomplished bass trombonist. His main hobby, he says, is "getting to know people." He first performed at the age of two, has sung with the Metropolitan Boys Chorus, and

community. He began the Community Services Budget, which gave financial support to the Black Panther's Breakfast Fund, the N.C. Prison tour, and other community development projects. Steve was a very integral part in the growth of the Student Council, and he was instrumental in breaking the concept that students "do not know and do not care to know," idea.

Personally, I hope that we've broken the public relations block, meaning that we (the student council) are more than a little group sitting up through a stinking popularity vote. Which is not true. We in the council, I hope, are an outgrowth of their (the students) feelings, instead of

they have.

N.C. Essay: Now that we understand a specific role of the SCA, then what is the specific duty of the SCA?

Buckley: The duty of the SCA is to get into everything that they can get into and to establish methods, in which, they can get students involved in what they are doing. Only when the students unite, can their influence be fully felt by the administration. And, when the students unite and develop a school, or a total community spirit, then when they speak, the administration will listen and there will be nothing to stop them from achieving student rights or anything else that they want.

N.C. Essay: O.K., then what is the student council doing to increase the rights of students?

Buckley: The only way, you can increase student rights is to develop the involvement and concern of the students. Here, we just haven't united to a single cause yet. Our goals are to make our school-community a more fruitful, overall community, to form a working union between the SCA, the students, the faculty, and the administration, and to open the doors for better communications throughout the school-community. Also, we hope to obtain a better student body which is concerned on an individual basis. And, finally, we must use our past experiences as guidelines to the future.

We are trying and we are accomplishing things. Slowly but surely we are getting things done. Look, we have the snack bar open, where students can get something substantial to eat between 8:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. every day, and I think that this will help to pick things up on the weekends. The snack bar is costing us \$6,000.00. We have bought the equipment, and the catering service is working for the cost of food and labor. The remaining profits will go back into our loan or back into the budget, so we can continue to do something. This year, students have refrigerators in their rooms for the first time. The Community Services Budget supports the Creative Learning Center in C-D lounge, the prison tours, TREE—the coffee house—a place for the students to go just to get away from campus, and we are working hard to find a suitable place in which we may be a pre-fabricated house. Also, we are working on APPLAUSE - an agency which will help locate jobs for students during the school year and also during the summer months in an effort to get the students out into the community and help them, as well as, helping the school at large.

N.C. Essay: What can we do as students to help the SCA?

Buckley: You know! We, as students, have to become active in student affairs. To have concern for ourselves and our fellow students as a school-community is the only way.

N.C. Essay: Do you think that the students here are apathetic or ignorant to what is going on here?

Buckley: In any student body, you have a little of everything, the whole mode of things depends on the percentages you have. I think here, overall, people care, but are not really doing anything about it.

N.C. Essay: Considering that the SCA is newly organized, what plans, if any are being made to re-organize, and research other student governments, and do you feel that the SCA needs any re-organization?

Buckley: Well, nothing is perfect. Basically, the student council should be a continuation of interest and should grow year after year. The council at the present starts in September and ends in May. This is a damaging



DARK LIGHTS WILL SHINE

I have searched all my life for a life-style or profession where I could play the part of an everyday man-child born of woman. I have searched for the lead in the role of a human, an everyday, ordinary member of humanity.

Theatre just seemed to be the easy answer. One can very easily dream that the stage allows him to play any role he desires. Today one could be Muhammad Ali, Joe Louis or Marvin Gaye. Tomorrow one could be Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth, Rap, Tiny Tim, Huey or any member of humanity you choose. It is not so hard to dream of being another fellow human being, as long as one realizes it is only a dream and a dream it will stay.

I searched for a life-style where I could live life for life and not have to deal with labels, categories and stereotypes. There was a time when I didn't want a label as a Black this, a Southern that, a Carolinian what, but society forced me to be proud of my natural born labels. As a kid I wanted to be an actor, just an everyday hard working actor. Today I am proud to be a Black actor.

One can readily see the joy in discovering there is such a thing as Black Theatre. The Black artist has one of the hardest jobs in the world because he must become a stereotype to remove the old stereotype images of the minstrel shows and the white-eyed, greasy-faced, handkerchief-head flunkies with which the stage and networks poisoned the world's minds. He must show the real life-style of a people. He must show their hopes, dreams, frustrations, joys and their tragedies. He must show something that will give hope to those that became hopeless from watching too much Amos & Andy, Buckwheat, Lightning, Shine, Coons and just jive-time-niggers.

Like any actors we wanted to be recognized as actors. We wanted to learn plays and study American Theatre. We sadly discovered you don't teach American theatre, only the WHITE side of it. We want to see the stories of a people so often forgotten. You have shown us so much ugliness that for a long time Black Artists didn't want to be known as Black Artists and now we proudly ask for true recognition, everybody is getting uptight. Dig! We didn't create any labels! You did! We didn't create any stereotypes! You did!

We attend NCSA and study the Russian plays, European plays, French plays, Greek plays, and you'll even dig up some restoration plays before you deal intelligently in your own back yard and study Black Theatre. Yet when the question is put forth everybody wants to know why Black people want to study Black Theatre. "Ya'll already know Black Theatre." To ask that question to a Black person one must be considered either a racist or a super fool. To all those so-called intelligent people that ask that question I challenge you to name one school system that teaches Black Theatre anywhere in America.

We have proven we can pronounce the thee's and thou's. We have proven we can play the Ibsens, Shaws, Williams, Shakespeares, Millers and O'Neils. It is silly to even think we can't play Shakespeare when all of our lives we have been asking, "TO BE OR NOT TO BE THAT IS THE QUESTION, FOR IT HAS BEEN A QUESTION WE HAVE ASKED YOU FOR CENTURIES." It really doesn't matter whether or not we can play Shakespeare, but does anybody know we are here.

America, when you take away a people's culture you kill the roots of a people and without its roots any tree will die. To deny the existence of Black Theatre you deny the existence of Black people. We don't need to give you anymore great white hopes, but we very seriously need some GREAT BLACK HOPES. We need them now, today, yesterday.

We are saving our culture and we will not die. We do exist and our theatre does exist. We will produce new hopes. We will do theatre, we will play plays with new forms and with new rituals. If our plays seem racist, then it is only because we are your illegitimate babies and babies often take after their mothers...

P.S. Sidney, Jimmy and Harry...hurry home!

-H.J. Pankey



has performed at the Greek Theatre in Hollywood. Next year, he plans to attend one of six institutions to work on his Master of Music degree, and hopes that in the future he may perform as well as conduct.

N.C. Essay: Richard, if you would, please describe the evolution that has occurred in the Student Council from 1965 to the present?

Buckley: During the first two years of the N.C.S.A.'s existence, there was no real organized student government association. Then in 1967, David Jones was elected Student Council President. At that time the council met every Saturday afternoon and was considered, more or less, a social organization, and remained that way until 1969. Actually, the council had no powers or even worse no real channels in which they could go through to aid them as a council. Then in 1971, the SCA developed the basic foundation which had led the SCA into its present paths of influence. This influence not only plays a large role in the school community, but the working role in the total community at large. Also, it was during this time that the SCA suggested that the SCA President should be a member of the Board of Trustees.

Then in the 1971-72 school year, Steve Henderson worked diligently to bring N.C.S.A. into a new realm outside of the school-

a little group elected by a popularity vote. Students have begun to realize if they want a say-so in student rights, then they need people in the Student Council that will work through the proper channels for them.

The problems we have had here for the last couple of years can be routed and solved. The main thing here is that the student must be living a personal existence, and that for him to grow as an artist, he must also grow as an individual as well.

At least, I hope that we all are here as struggling artists. You know, to be a really professional artist, you have to be a dedicated person, and you must be able to cope with emotional and overall stimulus.

More importantly, you have to be a person before you can be an artist!

N.C. Essay: Well, what is the specific role of the SCA?

Buckley: Actually, the SCA is a representation of the students themselves through the SCA and its President. The single most purpose and goals of the student council is simply to do what the students want to provide a nucleus in which the students can come together, and through their unity command a great deal of influence. The students have the right and a duty to voice their opinions, and this is what a Student Council is about.

If the students use this right to voice themselves, then they can use effectively the best tool which

factor to the council and limits us. Improvements should come freely, and the most freedom is derived from the students themselves.

N.C. Essay: What steps are being taken to re-organize student elections?

Buckley: Presently, we are open for suggestions and are in a position in which we can make revisions easily, if the students will tell us what they want. Each year we have two elections, one in the fall to elect Student Council vacancies and one in the spring, in which, SCA officers and class officers are elected. At this point, I would like to point out that the fall election will be in a couple of weeks, and under a new amendment, new students can run and hold offices.

N.C. Essay: What steps are being taken to re-new the prison tours and other student involvement tours?

Buckley: The prison tour was a success last year, and we hope that the students here will get together and push forward for this tour. These tours are completely student organized, then they are submitted to the deans,

and if approved, then they are taken out. These steps can only be taken when the students begin to work.

N.C. Essay: Lastly, Richard, what do you project will be your success or failure as student body president?

Buckley: If we, the entire student body, can come together and help make the SCA a vital part of the student's life and achieve more student involvement, then we will have a fruitful year, and our work will be successful. In the past we have seen that the attitude of the school is formed by the attitude of the students. If the spirit is high, it will be reflected in all phases of campus life, thus creating an atmosphere for which the school was originally designed.

The student council has faith that there is a reality obtainable in Victorio Giannini's original concept, and we believe that with the help of the present faculty, the administration, and an active role by the students themselves, then we will be able to work together in realizing that goal.

- Larry Faw