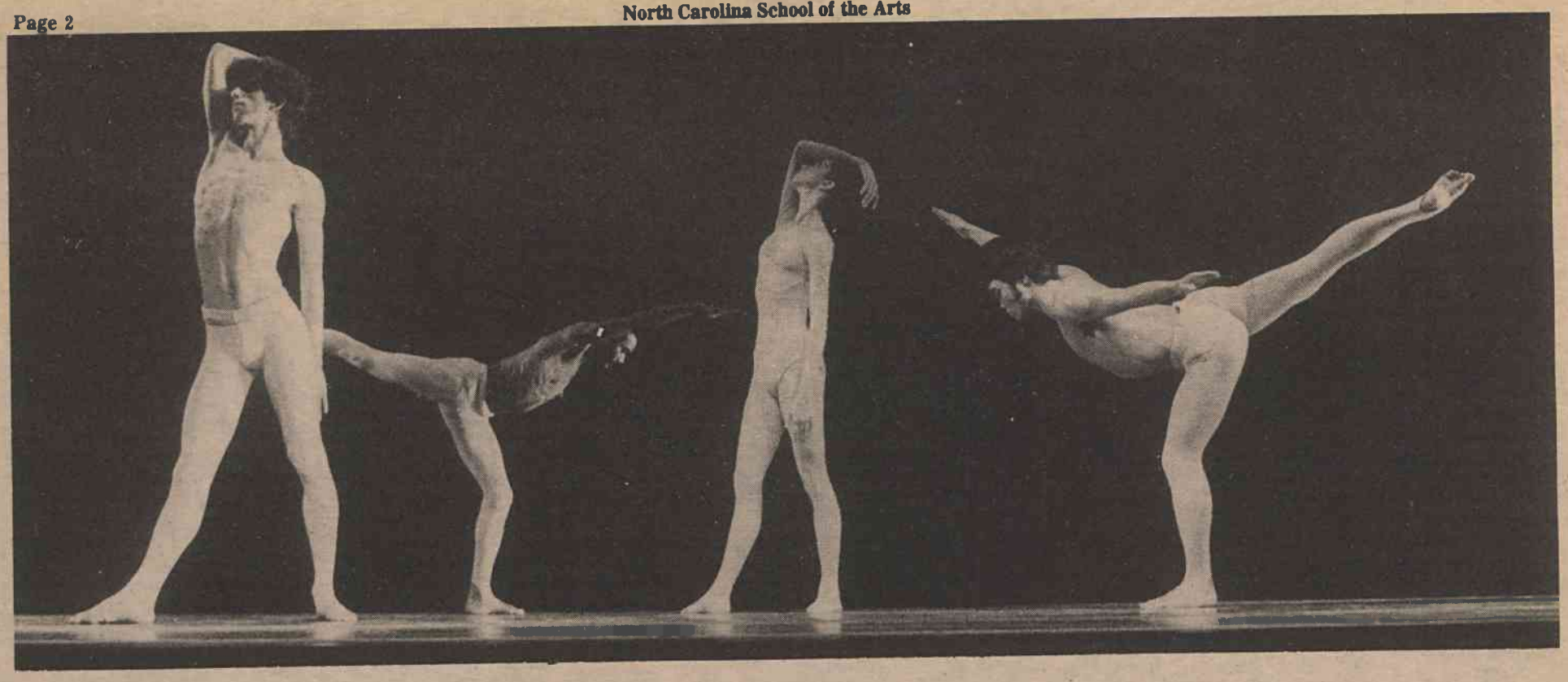

STUDENT FORUM

THE NCSA EXPERIENCE - AN ALUMNUS' VIEW

What constitutes the NCSA experience? Through exposure to different schools, students, and intuition, I think I can categorically state that there's no other place quite like it. Only after four years of being here, experiencing virtually every substrata it has to offer, from acid-dope head to Judicial Board Chairman, have I finally outgrown it. My complaints of its shortcomings are more in the realm of half-affectionate parting thoughts that have occurred to me from time to time that could possibly increase the viability of an education here.

One thing that I always seem to be aware of, probably more so in the Music Dept. since I was in it, is a general feeling of a lack of stability. Ever-changing faculty, many of whom are in their early twenties, I think is a major contributor to this. Dissatisfaction is all right if change is brought about because of it but if there seems to be no effort at improvement in the Administration, then the steady grumbling among faculty and students cannot help but create a feeling of frustration and insecurity, much of which is manifest in seemingly unrelated activities.

In comparing this school with other schools one reocurring thought always pops up in my mind; that being here is more like being at a summer camp than being in a high school-college situation. There seems to be a relatively high tolerance level for laziness and hangers-on which tends to hold down any kind of excellence (the exception to this, I think, is evident in the Dance Dept. probably due to its having one Dean since the inception of the School). Talented individuals do manage, however, to keep everything going which is true everywhere, I suppose.

Another aspect of this school that could use circumspection is the dichotomy between the "academics" and the "Arts". These two divisions always seem to be at odds to one another and very little attempt at integration has been made in this direction. There also seems to be a strange type of stigma attached to the academic dept. probably as a result of constant references to these courses as being "required".

Of course, one has to be generous in identifying some of these internal disorders as the growing pains of a young school; and a one of a kind, at that. The cases that I have seen of positive growth here, and I must include myself, have been in the realm of personal and social awareness, rather than purely artistic maturing. This is not to say that the school has not turned out some fine artists, because it has, but merely that I, personally, have grown more as a human being than as an artist (my separating the two is more for argument sake) here and I see a similar pattern maintaining a prevalence among other students.

Editor's Note: Last year a special commission and the entire faculty worked on this problem.

To a certain degree, of course, this can't be helped since many high school and junior high age students are simply not as goal-directed as some of the other students. And in many respects, overly-high admission standards for high-school students would be unrealistic for the age-group. Nevertheless, strong examples are set by the college-level students and tighter criteria for admission in this level might assure better examples.

One thing I think I'll always associate with NCSA is its abundance of top-flight insanity. This is the cliche'd hallmark of the artistically inclined where spontaneous bursts of unexpected chaos join hands with the horrendous, the anarchic, the sublime, and the stupid in a synergetic combination more outrageous at times than Alice Cooper in heat. Seriousness aside, my host of associations with NCSA is plentiful enough to fill a book and I'm afraid that's what I'll eventually end up doing with them. The egotistical humility that characterizes this place is endearing in a young school but as the years dribble by with new generations of students, this, too, will change, as all things must, leaving only the assured memories in the minds of the alumni of an era that existed in time and space and that can never be recaptured.

-Clifford Young
'73, Music

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Compulsory Class Attendance - - Why?

For many years, colleges and universities everywhere have insisted that their students had to attend all their scheduled classes. Today, most colleges and universities have liberalized their class attendance regulations. N.C.S.A. is one of the few who have not let up on this rule and is one of the even fewer who enforce this archaic rule.

Perhaps compulsory attendance rules were necessary in the past, I don't know. Today's college student is demonstrably more mature than his predecessors were. He can, by law, do most anything any other adult can and in most cases is considered personally responsible for his own actions. He is allowed to take more college courses of his own choosing on the basis that he knows best what he needs and wants to take. Why, then, is he not mature enough to decide for himself whether or not it is necessary for him to go to a specific class?

There are students with very high I.Q.'s or students with excellent training or demonstrated super-ability in specific subjects. College administrators are reluctant, and rightfully so, to advance place students in many subjects. The result is that many students end up taking basic courses in subjects they already know or can learn with a minimum of effort. This type of student need not be required to attend class meetings in these courses.

There is, on the other hand, the student who will suffer (academically speaking) from missing class. He will eventually find himself so far behind or not learning enough to pass the course. This student must also be given the right to decide whether or not to attend class. If he fails the course, he will know, next time, exactly what it is necessary for him to pass a specific course. Administrators may argue that this consumes the students and the school's time and that the same thing may happen again with the same student in a different course. The student's time is not wasted; he never went to class anyway. The school's times has not been wasted since the course would be taught and classes held whether or not the student is present, or, for that matter, even enrolled in the course. As for the same thing happening again, if the student is mature, it won't happen again; and if he is not mature, he is probably not ready for the self-discipline required of today's college student.

There is another argument for compulsory class attendance that the student should attend out of respect for the instructor. This writer believes that respect is earned not given. A teacher who is interesting will have his class full, regardless of the subject he teaches.

Compulsory class attendance is not necessary for the successful completion of most academic courses. As long as students and instructors have different personalities, there will be many reasons for attending or not attending classes. It is the duty of today's college administrators to realize this and take proper action to revoke archaic rules regarding mandatory class attendance.

Marshall Thomas

Pickles and Turnips

Everyone is not at NCSA certainly. Certainly but there are many and it is of these that are that is this. And so. Certainly there are many. Certainly there are many and they are here and in time many will still be being here and certainly this is so and many won't also and then they will be gone. Certainly.

Certainly many are here. Certainly it is so that many are here being doing the things one does and they should be and if not why not. And certainly many aren't doing the things one does and they too are here.

Who are these many that are here these ones being doing and not doing the many certain things one does and what is to show.

A fire in a desert is a debatable instigation is the fire in the desert or is the desert the fire within fire or is the fire neither a fire nor a desert. This to think to think yet it is certainly a something this thing but what for whom. Also and why too. A spark in the desert is a big one a big spark not because it is big no but because it is a spark which is a rare thing for a desert. Of course. Each flame is larger than life it being in the desert and it is and so fires in deserts are larger than life and this is not interesting being that it is so evident but find to notice yes fine to be always noticing this business. This business fires in deserts to be sure and more.

Now what is being at NCSA and this is it well pepper and garlic enliven a soup and pepper garlic paprika onion thyme rosemary vinegar salt chili powder and clove will certainly make it enlivening and certainly too much so naturally many so many spices certainly do not complement each to each but outweigh the soup in entirety. Of course. What flavor soup is NCSA or is it and of its ingredients are there many so many or aren't there. Have a care.

Is an arts school an arts school and who are the ones being in it all and some of a time how many unsavory spices does one see in the halls. Can such things though. Yes we are many here many doing and being doing what one does and does not do ones certainly going on being doing what one always does and does not and certainly this is a place. Certainly talent roams these places here perhaps a few geniuses and many other people perhaps some braniacs more likely to be pseudo intellectuals many many glazed hippies proud of their stones and so many outdates and ones outdated in concept and existence so many ones being here so many to form composition of an arts school such a carnival of bad taste and hostilities and personifications that what does one care to know. A rosebed of plastic flowers. A very rosebed of plastic flowers. So and so and so. And so and so. Outcast to be and. Outcasts at heart. Through and threw. Can one reason of it. Is it to be reasoned with in a microcosm. Perhaps not and so why.

There is no room for simulation and yet there is there is there is