

N.C. ESSAY

A RESPONSIBLE STUDENT NEWSPAPER

On Black Grievances

Representatives of the black community at NCSA came unannounced to a student council meeting last month. They came to present a list of grievances to the Student Council. The grievances were in the areas of discrimination in hiring of faculty, black students' financial aid problems, discrimination in housing, discrimination in hiring of student resident assistants in the dormitories, and entertainment. We agree with the Student Council that action should be taken on these matters.

There are several openings on the faculty and more will probably be announced before the year's end. We think the administration should make every effort to fill these vacancies with qualified black people. We stress the "qualified" because we don't feel that the educational integrity of the school should be subjugated to any cause, however just the cause may be. Also, if new faculty positions are created (by act of the state legislature), especially in the academic department, we suggest that qualified black people be found to fill them.

The black students' financial aid problems are all students' problems. No one can get a straight answer from Frank Ruark, NCSA Financial Aid Administrator, on even the simplest question. Also, there are no written guidelines on financial aid available to students. Students don't know what aid may be available to them or even the rules that go with the aid they do have. We also agree with the blacks that lists should be compiled and published of aid which is available to special interest groups, whether they be black students, students from South Dakota majoring in home economics, or what.

We believe that discrimination in housing does not exist on our campus. If there has been any discrimination it was totally unintentional. The housing problems at NCSA are really quite overwhelming. We believe that the response to student problems in the area of housing has improved 100 percent this year. Karen Shortridge, Director of Housing, has said that she will be certain that the question of discrimination will be considered in all her future decisions involving student housing problems. We think that the black students should accept this as a matter of policy in the future and bring any complaints in this area directly to Ms. Shortridge.

On the question of discrimination in the hiring of student resident assistants, we see no evidence of discrimination. There is a rather complicated procedure of hiring these people. First, a student must apply for the job. Then the list of applicants is taken before the entire Student Affairs staff for evaluation of qualifications and desirability. From this meeting, separate lists of those considered desirable for college and high school RA's are given to the Director of Housing (for college) and the University Resident Administrators, Tommy Williams and Sara Lou Bradley, (for high school). The college and high school administrators then choose from these lists their respective RA's based on which people they think they can best work with. Therefore, we suggest that if black students wish to be RA's next year, they should apply this spring and hope they are considered qualified and desirable. We do not think it is the job of the housing department to go out and recruit black students for these jobs simply because they are black.

What to schedule for entertainment at NCSA has always been a matter of much concern to the Student Council. There has been little student interest in the planning of these activities, so the job has been handled by Dave Belnap, Director of Activities, and his assistant, Karen Shortridge. Belnap and Ms. Shortridge are constantly looking for new ideas for activities. There is a student activities committee which is supposedly responsible for planning activities in cooperation with the Director of Activities. We urge students, and especially black students, to join this committee. Ideas in this realm have a way of becoming realities.

In general, we agree with the grievances that the black students have. Some of the points raised are very valid, and we will support the student council in whatever measures it chooses to take to correct inadequacies. Some points, on the other hand, seem, to us, picayune and even invalid, or else they require positive action on the part of the complainants. We strongly urge black students to take action in these areas.

Notice To Our Readers

Due to final exams and spring vacation, our next issue of THE ESSAY will be printed on Tuesday, April 16, 1974.

A Letter To The Editor

Dear Editor,

Forgive me if this letter seems out of place or otherwise offensive to any member of the school community, but I feel that an issue is making itself apparent on the campus and I feel that some time must be spent discussing the problem of violence.

It seems that after four years of being on this campus, most of the time, one would be able to witness the changes that have taken place. Some of the changes have been for the better and some have not. It's true that people change over periods of time, and I'm sure that I have since I have been here. However, I feel that anger should be handled in such a manner as not to cause harm or danger to others or other things. This idea that I have is one not of universal peace or anything like that. I just think that a

more mature attitude should be stressed around here. How do people think it's going to be on the "outside"? Will they be able to vent their anger or discomfort with violent actions and get away with it? Can anything be done about this uncontrolled physical expression of anger? Where the hell have all the "family" feelings gone? I remember when everybody knew everybody else and if you had a beef, you just went to the person involved and talked your way through it somehow. Where is rationale these days? Can this be a learned process? Is there a way to deal with the "problem"? Is there even a problem involved? Or is it just people being people? Please explain.

Feed-back welcome,
Peter Girvin

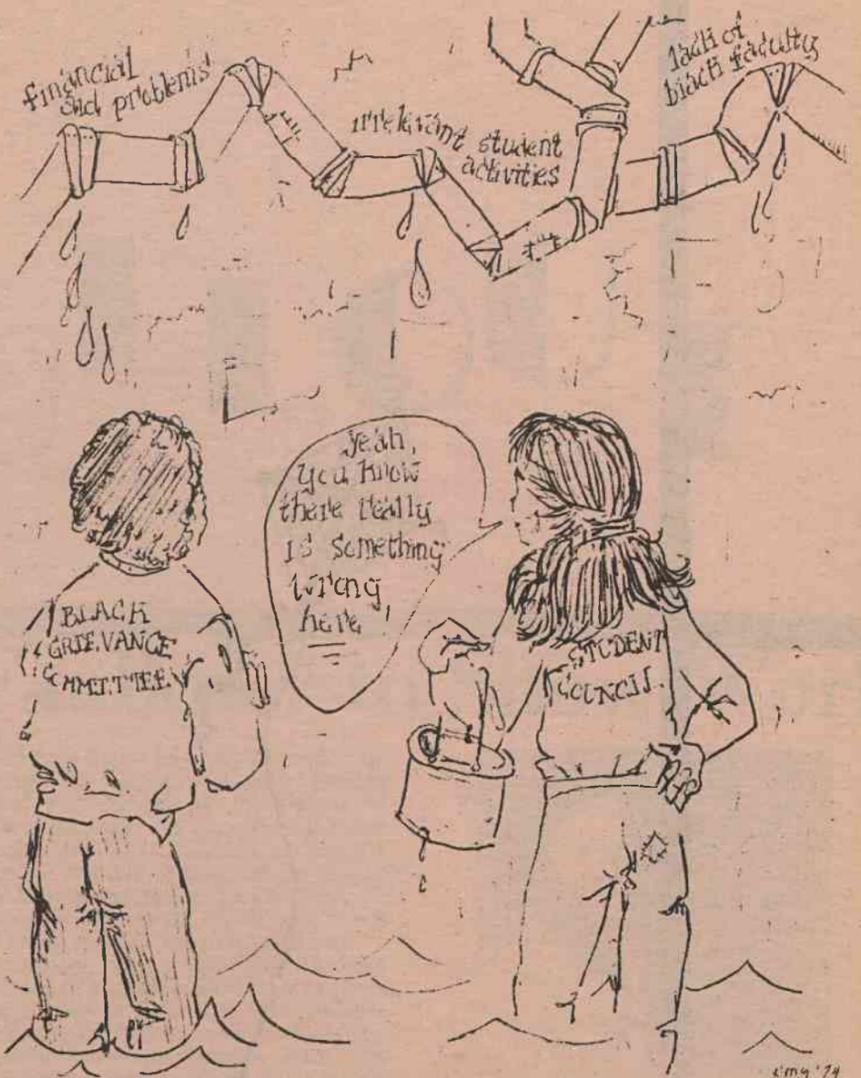
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Hopping a Train

By MUFFIN COLUMBIA

It was 2 A.M. and colder than I thought it could ever get in December in North Carolina. I was standing in the train station in Greensboro on my way back to New York City for Christmas vacation. There was a motley crew of people hovering about their luggage waiting for the train to pull into the station: parents with their children clambering all over them, families going north to spend their vacations with their relatives, swarms of students. The train from New Orleans was late. I stood with a group of four other students from the School of the Arts, our fingers freezing in the cold night air and our breath steaming whenever we spoke.

Finally the train pulled into the station, roaring so loudly that you could scream at the top of your lungs and still not hear yourself. A swarming mass of people, flailing their suitcases and other belongings began moving up the ramp to the train. Steam making hideous, choking and coughing noises poured from under the coaches.

Frantic people were shoving their tickets into the conductors' faces asking where to go, what to do. Irritated conductors were shouting to be heard above the train, pointing and sending everyone flying off in different directions. We raced back and forth along the platform trying to find the right car to board, my arms felt as though they were being torn off from dragging my luggage, and my fingers and toes and face were stinging from the wind. It was like a scene from "Dr. Zhivago." I felt like a Russian peasant fleeing from Moscow during the Bolshevik uprising. We boarded the train as I was about to resign myself to death by freezing.

Once on board, I was amazed at the contrast between the outside and the inside of the train. The car was delightfully warm and silent. The choking and hissing sounds were barely audible. The shouts of the conductors and passengers sounded tiny and muffled and very far away. I put my suitcase on the rack above my head and glanced out the window. It was like watching a silent film with a bunch of silent desperados racing about the platform.

Southern Railways' cars seemed unusually wide and spacious, with seats big and comfortable enough to fall asleep on. I settled down in a seat by one of the huge windows and the train started to move. By then it was nearly 3 A.M. It was

so quiet on the train and I was so exhausted that I dozed on and off into sleep. I woke as the train slipped into silent stations where passengers boarded and got off, and the train glided on into the noiseless night.

During the periods when I was awake, I looked out the window. It was like a huge screen with a panorama of photographs flashing before me. Three days previously, there had been a snowstorm. The ground and trees and sloping roofs in the country were covered with a thick blanket of snow. moon was huge and orange that night, as orange as the sun at sunset.

As we travelled through North Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland, the view from the window was continuously changing. We passed deserted country houses covered with snow, deciduous trees with naked branches silhouette against the sky, clumps of evergreens thick with snow, cows enclosed in frozen pastures, and silent train stations, with the full orange moon hanging low in the sky, a constant backdrop.

The night passed pleasantly and rapidly. We ate breakfast the next morning in the dining car and pulled into Washington Station at about 9 A.M. From there we took the Amtrack and arrived in Penn. Station at about 1:30 P.M. The entire trip had taken less than twelve hours.

The reason I took the train home was not for the sole purpose of taking a leisurely pleasure ride. Because of reduced student rates and escalation in ticket prices, the plane fare would have cost me approximately 50 percent more than the train fare. Although I enjoyed the ride once I was seated, the hassle involved before boarding made me realize how drastically train service must be improved if it is to become a practical means of mass transportation.

Muffin Columbia is a high school senior violin major.

