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grade just like everybody else. I wouldn't give him an 'A' just on his name."

Dr. Colonnese, an English professor, made quite a few students' "Toughest Teacher" lists. Rumor has it that Dr. Colonnese once flunked nearly an entire English 101 class. One student joked, "that man gave me nightmares." She went on to say that although Dr. Colonnese was a tough teacher, she learned a lot from him. "He smoothed out my technique; I'm better at bringing out my main points," she said. Another student said that, although he did well in his high school English classes, he got a "D" from Dr. Colonnese in English 101. "He's a tough grader," this student said. "He will drop you a letter grade for minor grammar mistakes." Other students had difficulty with the course load. "Every time you turn around," one frustrated student reported, "you're doing another paper."

Suggestions for getting through Dr. Colonnese's classes ranged from "use big words" to "proofread your paper at least ten times." One student suggested talking to Dr. Colonnese during his office hours. "If he knows you're trying, he'll help you out a lot," he said. Some people mentioned that Dr. Colonnese talks about the students' papers in class, so "be prepared for criticism." And last but not least--watch out for vague pronouns!

Dr. Colonnese, like Dr. Walsh,

believes that his tough-guy reputation has been blown out of proportion. "I've never flunked anything approaching a third of my students, much less fifty percent, although there were times when half my students probably deserved to flunk," he said. He also said that, while he knows that he is considered a tough teacher, "I'm certainly not a prescriptive grammarian. Instead, I stress simple clarity."

Dr. Colonnese believes that "many entering freshmen are ill-prepared for the rigors of college study." He feels that high school English teachers spend too little time teaching students the rules of basic English usage. "Multiple choice questions on *Huckleberry Finn* do not necessarily prepare students to write college level essays," he said.

When asked if it were true that he criticizes students, Dr. Colonnese replied, "It's true that I correct things, and that I believe in honesty and directness. I believe it serves no purpose to provide students with an inflated perception of their own abilities. Conversely, if something is well written, I tend to be lavish in my praise." Dr. Colonnese said that if students are having trouble, he would be happy to help them. In fact, he said that he helps so many students outside class that his office seems like Grand Central Station.

Another name that came up frequently was that of Dr. Perkins, a history professor. One student

said that the tests he took in Dr. Perkins's class had forty multiple choice and two essay questions and that "all the choices [on the multiple choice section] seemed right." Furthermore, he said, "it is impossible to get full credit on the essay questions." This student had given up even trying to study for Dr. Perkins's tests. "Just guess," he said, "because his tests are impossible." Another student thought that Dr. Perkins didn't interact with the class during lectures; consequently, she said, the students didn't always understand the information that was put out. "When the highest grade in the class is a C+," this student said, "you have to question his ability to get the point across." This student found Dr. Perkins's tests "abstract, not directly from either the book or the notes," and suggested that those studying for his tests "read the text very carefully, paying attention to small details that might not seem very important."

"Frustration" was a word Dr. Perkins used often when he spoke to *Small Talk*. "There is frustration at both ends of the educational process," he said. The students are frustrated, he says, because understanding a subject like history requires that they have a high level of verbal proficiency. "If they have trouble understanding the text, they are going to have trouble on the tests. Some of my students don't have the requisite

background to do well in this class and I, like most college professors, don't have skills in remedial teaching."

Dr. Perkins also mentioned his own frustrations. "I'm frustrated because I don't see a lot of motivation in my students. I've heard people say, 'I don't understand why I got a low grade; I studied three hours for this test.'" Dr. Perkins said that some of the best students don't consider it unusual to study ten to fourteen hours for a test. Dr. Perkins says that he sees a positive correlation between motivation and test scores. "Students who take summer classes are usually more highly motivated, and the grades tend to be higher in those classes."

Dr. Perkins says that his teaching style is "to start out by showing the students the forest, then the tree, then the limbs, but it is up to the student to put the leaves on the tree. But some students spend so much time worrying about each individual leaf that they never get the big picture."

Dr. Ward, Dr. Kline, and Dr. Collins were runners up in the informal "Tough Teacher Poll." Dr. Kline expressed surprise that he had not made the cut; Dr. Collins and Dr. Ward expressed disappointment. I have never taken a class from Dr. Kline, but if it's any consolation to Dr. Ward and Dr. Collins, they both made my personal "Tough Teacher" list.

Dr. Hendricks Speaks at Opening Convocation

by Diana Pressley

Opening Convocation was held Monday, Feb. 3, 1992, in Reeves Auditorium at 1:00 p.m. Dr. Hendricks was the featured speaker.

Kim Ratliff, student body president, spoke first by bringing the student body up to date on the activities of the Student Government Association. Ratliff explained that the student body was in the process of organizing more forums between Dr. Hendricks and the student body. The SGA has also fostered communication with the administration and faculty by placing a student representative on all committees. Ratliff

also explained that the senators would be meeting to work on revisions of the constitution and would begin a survey of students and faculty so as to better locate Methodist's weaknesses and improve in those areas.

Next, Dr. Bitterbaum spoke of the community's well-being and our caring, respect, and understanding for each other. He introduced Dr. Hendricks' speech which was entitled "What Does the Eye Say to the Ear?"

Dr. Hendricks spoke of how we should recognize and appreciate the diversity in our nation and here at Methodist.

He explained that "... a strong and effective society demands

more than diversity. It also requires unity. One of the results of a good liberal arts education is that it helps us to appreciate people from other backgrounds, cultures, and traditions. We learn to appreciate not only other places but other times. A person who knows only people who are just like him or her has a very limited range of view . . . But some people fear those who are different. If they meet someone from another race or culture they are automatically suspicious and on guard. For many people 'different' signals 'dangerous'."

The president went on to speak about the persecution of the

early church and said, ". . . some historians suggested that this persecution was due to the fact that the church allowed slaves and women to have an active part in the church. This was a threat to the established order and contributed to the persecution of the early church."

Dr. Hendricks ended his speech with a series of suggestions for the audience. "We come from different traditions and cultures . . . Each tradition is to be valued and appreciated. . . Each tradition helps us to be more than we would be alone. . . We must never forget or fail to appreciate our own roots."