

Editorials

Abductors may be children's parents

Milk cartons, posters and television commercials all over the country picture many missing children who are believed to have been abducted.

The subject of missing children has been widely publicized and discussed recently, bringing to light the serious and widespread problem. The advertisement campaign was initiated by children's assistance organizations as an attempt to help officials locate more victims.

The ads usually feature a photograph of the child, a brief description and the general location where last seen. There is usually no information pertaining to the circumstances of each abduction, giving the reader the impression that the abductors are strangers to the child. But the Greensboro News & Record reported last week that many of the missing children are actually kidnapped by a parent in a custody battle and that several major children's assistance organizations now recognize parental abductions as the greater problem.

Although children kidnapped by a parent may not be in as much danger as those taken by strangers, there may even be danger involved in these cases. Kidnapping is a crime regardless of who commits it. Therefore, the courts must be trusted in their choice of the better-suited parent.

Often the kidnapers relocate, change the children's names and dye their hair to make identification less likely. This is bound to be a frightening experience for a child, even with a parent.

Printing photographs and/or descriptions of the abductors would perhaps make locating and identifying the missing children somewhat easier. However, revealing that a parent is the abductor might cause viewers to take the situation less seriously than they should. Many people would assume that the child is not in danger with a parent.

Perhaps, then, it is best not to explain the circumstances behind the abductions. It would defeat the whole purpose of advertising for no one to give it serious attention. Therefore, I feel that on this one occasion, advertisers are justified in not presenting the whole picture.

Letter to the editor

-By Jane Kidwell

Prof applauds Study Abroad

To the editor:

Several of Elon's students at the London campus this fall have written to tell me what a wonderful experience the Study Abroad program is. Tad Helmstetter writes that there are more plays and concerts than anyone can possibly see. Elizabeth Dobson writes, "Professor (Will) Mignuiolo invited us all to his apartment for breakfast last Sunday before we went to St. Paul's for mass. Our hotel is located in the perfect spot—just down the street from Paddington underground station and within walking distance to Hyde Park

and Kensington Gardens. This weekend a group of us are going to Scotland. I heard you were coming here Winter Term. I'm sure you and that group are getting excited."

This is my first trip with Elon's Study Abroad program, but I've been to London before. Last summer I taught with Eastern Michigan University's European Cultural History Program. Travel abroad with professors, who help you know what to look for and explain what it is that you are seeing, is a marvelous way to learn, especially if you've never traveled out of the country before. Every student at Elon College should take this opportunity.

Dr. Anne Ponder
Associate professor of English and communication

Peanuts® by Charles Schultz



"When I was at Elon, you could buy beer when you were 19, drive without a seatbelt, and Playboy wasn't considered obscene."

Seat belts required in N.C.

By Seth B. Pomeroy

On Tuesday a mandatory seat belt law went into effect for motorists in North Carolina. Drivers and those sitting in the front seat must now wear seat belts at all times, when driving or riding in vehicles.

Chief R.F. Shelton of the Burlington Police Department said that the law applies to anyone who is driving a passenger car that was made after the 1967 model year. Before this date seat belts were not always included as standard equipment. Shelton added that for the next 15 months (until Dec. 31, 1986) only warnings will be given. After that, a \$25 fine will be imposed on the driver of the car involved.

Although failure to "buckle up" will be rather costly, it will not add points to the driver's record. As most students know, these points, when accumulated in great enough numbers, can

lead to higher insurance rates and sometimes a loss or suspension of a license. Points can be issued for speeding tickets, reckless driving or DWI infractions. The seat-belt law is classified as a misdemeanor, similar to a parking ticket or minor traffic violations.

Some Elon students have expressed concern over the responsibility of the driver for front seat passengers who fail to wear their seat belts. The law does hold a driver responsible for the safe operation and conduct of the automobile; however, he is not held accountable for warnings or fines incurred by a passenger who fails to buckle up. Simply put, a driver will not be fined for one who fails to be "belted" — the passenger will be.

Kim Hayes, an Elon human services major from New Jersey, said the law will keep people safe and prohibit death. She pointed out that in her home state, where

a similar law has been in effect since last year, the rate for traffic fatalities has declined.

In the past "buckle up" was only a slogan from ad campaigns by auto makers and public safety groups. Today, the N.C. legislature has taken the idea a little bit more seriously and made it a costly reminder for those who fail to comply.

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The Pendulum welcomes letters, 250 words, from our readers. Longer letters may be submitted as opinion articles. Letters submitted must be signed, and a phone number given so that the letter's validity may be checked. The editor reserves the right to edit for length, libel, good taste and accuracy. The deadline for submitting material is Monday. Our office is located in 1022 South Avenue, phone 584-2331 or 584-2332. This paper is published by the Communications Media Board of Elon College. Founded on October 14, 1974, as the student newspaper serving the Elon College community. The Pendulum is published Thursday during regular terms except during examination and holiday periods. The Pendulum is printed by The Burlington Times-News.