

Viewpoint

Calling all dissenters: Put some muscle behind the mumbling

Jack Duval issued the challenge and for once you responded. He pleaded for letters and you wrote. He conveyed to you that the pen is powerful and some of you picked one up. And believe it or not, your words will be read and they will make an impact on someone, somewhere.

We as a newspaper staff were reminded of that fact this week, that we are not writing for ourselves to see our names in print and that we are not producing a paper just to send home to Mom because nobody else seems to care. There is indeed somebody out there, a readership that is concerned about what's going on around here; we just never heard from you before. Mumbblings under your breath don't make headlines and they don't change policy and they don't get heard. Words in print do.

This week marked the most letters *The Pendulum* has received this year to date and it is encouraging to see that Elon's campus does indeed register a pulse (although still a weak one) and that it is indeed reading and thinking.

Now that we're moving in the right direction, let's take it a step further. It's time to get off our collective butts, shut up and put out. "Never mistake motion for action," Hemingway once said. Without action behind the rhetoric, it's all just a jumble of empty words.

You're mad that the yearbook is folding? Complaining about it won't get the book finished any faster or keep it in existence any longer. If you care enough to complain, care enough to help out. You're grumbling because *The Pendulum* isn't covering issues you're concerned about? We can't be everywhere; it's called being short-staffed. If you're that concerned, write us or better yet, actually do something about it.

Magic fairies aren't doing all the work around here: behind every organization are the faces of students just like yourself who have chosen to risk involvement and all it entails. Many of them have 18 hour course loads, just like you. Many have part-time jobs, just like you. The difference is that they have chosen to make a difference. They are making their time at Elon College count.

The world has enough dissenters and complainers and angry young men. What the world needs more of is people who use their anger and their concerns to bring about change.

Pick up a pen, pick up a hammer. But whatever you do, do something.

The Pendulum

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Alamance ER

A hellish night in the life

An old man, his mouth agape, was being pushed down the aisle. His lifeless legs hung from the front of the wheelchair carelessly in a pigeon-toed manner. One of them slipped from the fold-out platform and began to drag on the ground. The lady pushing him stopped to collect the numb leg and stacked it back on top of the small platform.

A woman, not past her early 30s, sat in the corner with her two children. Her gaunt face and hollow eyes spoke of a textile job, late payments and the looming, unknown future. Her gaze was as vacant as an abandoned building. She looked as if the life of her had been drained away by a thousand bottomless problems.

And there I was, exhausted, with a 101+ degree fever, extreme muscle aches and what felt like an ice pick being driven into my skull, sitting at the front desk of the Alamance Memorial Emergency Room.

Jack Duval



I sat there for at least five minutes before anyone even acknowledged my existence and when they finally did notice me, all they did was take my name and tell me to "wait until the nurse called my name." Thirty minutes later my name was called and I went to a small room where a nurse took my temperature and blood pressure.

"I have to tell you that it will be *three* hours before a doctor can see you," she said. I asked her if she thought it would be better for me to come back the next morning. She replied that she had "no way of knowing how crowded it would be the next morning." I reminded her that she worked there and must have some

idea what the mornings were like. She remained obstinate. I was too sick to argue.

This was the first emergency room I'd been in that took an attitude with its patients. And for two hours I was able to ponder this while I waited for the doctor to see me. This was when I noticed the man with the numb legs and the woman with the 1,000-yard stare. They were in the same fix as I, only worse.

Everywhere I looked there were despondent faces staring into others just like their own. They were searching for hope, I imagined, but hope doesn't grow in the white-washed, sterile environment of the hospital.

Finally, the nurse called my name, and I was led to an "Ob-Gyn" room and put on an operating table that was too short to lay on and just tall enough to make my back spasm when I sat upright.

Another 30 minutes passed

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