

## Viewpoint

You know the drill.

Take a perfectly good hour and a half out of your life one evening and, at the behest of your sadistic history teacher or your evil, *evil* Global prof, march dutifully to McKinnon, Whitley, McCrary or wherever with your notebook in hand and slink, five minutes late of course, into the latest diatribe by some boring speaker you've never heard of. "Sieg heil Elon," you grumble.

You slump down in your chair, yawning, scrawling whatever notes it suits your fancy to record and half dozing, until, blessedly, the question and answer session starts. With the speed and agility that only a desperate freshman or a well-seasoned upperclassman possesses, you hurdle over people's legs, scramble up the aisle and out the door, making it home just in time for "Ally McBeal."

Members of *The Pendulum* staff attended the recent speeches and lectures given by Morris Dees, Robert Kennedy Jr., Richard Simmons, Jean Bethke Elshain, Bob Moser and Elon professor David Crowe, some under orders, some by choice. All were great speakers with plenty of different views and ideas to share, yet everytime this behavior by students was an alarming consistency.

So why is this happening? Elon draws some very relevant and well-renowned speakers, so why the lack of interest... and politeness?

We don't think Elon students are inherently rude, however we do think that perhaps more could be done to stimulate the student body into being active, and therefore more attentive, audience members at lectures.

First, Elon needs to bring in the names that students recognize, and with those names, bring any attendant controversy. Think of the turnout if Jesse Helms came to speak! If students have their emotions touched by someone, then that person should be a prime candidate for a lecture.

Even if we can't get the big name speakers, simply have more publicity for the speakers we do get. Most notably, heavy publicizing worked for Morris Dees, even if students were just there to see if the Model Center would be blown to Klan-induced smithereens.

Finally, try to get professors to tie the lecture's topic into the class... and not simply as an extra credit incentive. Have pre-lecture discussions, perhaps in an informal setting like the coffee shop, and have it relate to the class. Maybe then we can cut down the lecture exodus.

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Informing the Elon College Community

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The purpose of *The Pendulum* shall be to inform and entertain the Elon College community. *The Pendulum* shall be a forum where all members of the college community are able to express their ideas and opinions.

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## Calling home is not a help

The other day I was reminiscing with a high school buddy about the time we were caught with a bottle of rum on a trip to Puerto Rico with my high school Spanish class.

The Monday after we got back from the trip, we returned to school only to have the principal summon my friend and I to his office to question us on the incident. When I got to the principal's office, I saw my father, who was president of our Board of Education at the time, walking out of the office.

Since my father was aware of the incident and not terribly upset with me, I thought that he was trying to help me out.

It turns out that my father was actually requesting that the principal give me a tough sentence to "teach me a lesson."

It turned out that even during my high school days I was quite politically savvy, so I was able to B.S. my way out of any punishment.

The interesting thing was that my father was advocating a strict punishment for me, his own flesh and blood, and I couldn't be happier.

One thing that I have come to realize is that my parents never sheltered me, pampered me when I

didn't deserve it, or come to my defense when I was obviously wrong.

If they taught me anything, it was that I would make mistakes and the only one who would be accountable for them was me.

### Mark Richter

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Sure, Papa Richter could have tried to get me out of a punishment, but what would that have taught me?

Yes, it would have taught me that I could get away with murder and Mom and Dad would come to my defense.

But then again, how would I become this brilliant politician if I was never taught to defend myself and my actions?

The other day I spoke with a friend of mine who complained about a problem she was having on campus. I asked her how she was dealing with it.

She responded that her father had made a few calls and everything is now working out fine.

Since she was a friend, I asked her, "What, if when you are working at your job, the boss reprimands

you for being constantly late?" "Daddy's company wouldn't do that," she responded.

That confirmed it for me. Were all Elon students like this?

No, of course not. I know plenty of people were dropped off here four years ago and haven't seen their family since.

It seemed all too often that I see students who rely too much on others when they make mistakes.

I'm currently taking a class in which I am very far behind on the assignments (and probably should be doing them instead of this column).

Instead of crying to my *wonderful* professor, I am taking things like an adult and hoping we can work things out. I know I will suffer for *my* mistakes, but I am mature enough to accept the consequences.

While you are a student here, or later in life, when you get into a predicament and it seems easy to call home, just think of what a disservice you are doing to yourselves.

Sometimes it is more admirable to stand up for yourself, you'll be glad you did.

## Speaking of ... Academics

### What is your definition of an "academic challenge?"



**Michael Hazel, sophomore:** An academic challenge is simply something that tests your ability to think or think methodically. It's good nutrition for the brain.

**Mandie Danielski, freshman:** An academic challenge is something that requires a lot of thought, a lot of research, probably a lot of writing, something that I find I need help with. An academic challenge would be something that I really need people to teach me.



**Emily Ehrens, freshman:** It's taking a course in something that you don't know anything about. I'm challenging myself academically now because I'm trying to transfer so I need to get in all the courses I can.

**Andy Kielty, freshman:** An academic challenge is a class which is going to challenge me to actually think and utilize my talents to get the answers.



**Todd Grassi, junior:** Not school. I don't think we're properly challenged in school for most of the tools we need in life. We need tools for business and the real world, not the stuff in textbooks.

**Jennifer Hager, senior:** Anything that stresses me out beyond belief or anything that requires more than two hours of work. It's anything that requires research outside of class or anything that's worth more than a hundred points in a class.

compiled by Carrie Lancos with photos by Emily MacDonnell