

Faculty Column

I missed Miss Axlerod and Mr. Moore last week and find myself hoping that the series of articles has not been discontinued or completed. Lately I've looked forward to my little weekly spate of outrage at the latest generality or oversimplification, and enjoyed the mental image of his true blows hitting their intended targets, even when these may have included myself. For Mr. Moore has landed many true blows in the past few weeks, pointing out forcefully some things we failed to realize, many more we have ignored or conveniently forgotten. His articles' faults have chiefly lain, not in his insights, but in the persistent and dogmatic generalities into which he has turned them. He writes confidently and angrily of the White Woman, Negro, Negro Man, White Middle Class, White Lower Class, White Southerner, and a few more, just as if these abstract categories had some tangible reality; as if "White Southerner" were a moral and political, even a psychological description, not merely one of geography and skin color. And this brings me to my real point, identity.

The frightening thing about "Black Power" is not the economic fact of black-skinned people gaining some measure of economic and political power--that is entirely justified and long overdue--but the spectre of so many people losing their own identities as human beings, submerged into one more mindless mob, one more mass of anonymous ciphers, like Nazis or Beatle-fans.

A decade or more ago, The Vanishing Adolescent warned that true adolescence, the time of rigorous and healthy individual self-definition, was growing rare. The enemy then was "straight" society with its rich rewards for successful conformity and its subtle--and other--punishments for individuality. The sixties have shown us an equally dangerous enemy, the phony and seductive "individuality" of stereotyped and all-too-conforming rebellion--the "individuality" of the "movement." At one end of the scale, high school students report that they often must make up complaints about their parents or imaginary adventures with drugs or sex, because these are the "in" things today, and they dare not appear different by refusing to "rebel." A little farther along the same scale we find the would-be individualist whose first step is to copy John Lennon's style of dress. Young people have always copied the fashions of their heroes, but I've never heard it called individuality before. Still farther along we find the "true believer" (read Eric Hoffer's book of the title--please read it!) Mr. Moore reported his own scorn for these people a few weeks ago, noting that the Movement had no use for those whose main qualifications were guilt complexes. Yet we find him apparently approving the final stage, the decision by otherwise sane people that identity can only be found on a group basis; that individual identity is impossible, at least for Negroes; and that those Negroes who have insisted that skin color means no more than height or hair color, who have defined themselves first as human beings--men like James Baldwin and Ralph Bunche--are somehow cowards or "Uncle Toms."

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Publicus

By EARLE WHITE

In a fund-raising dinner in Greenville, S.C. Governor Bob Scott states that North Carolina universities is a "testing ground" for violence creeping across campuses in the region. The good Governor referred to the "psychology of discontent" spreading across college campuses. His Excellency also states that "unless we are willing to face up to the mood of violence creeping across our college campuses, we will merely preside over the liquidation of excellence in higher education." Our imperturbable governor said that if discipline "does not come from within, then it must be exerted from the outside. It must come from somewhere." He said the question now transcends academic freedom and amounts to a question of academic survival. Governor Scott referred to the campus disruptions as "the prelude to Germany's Third Reich."

It is interesting to note that the good Governor deplors the violence of the activists but would not hesitate to employ violence to repress the activists. One wonders when these heavy-handed, police-state methods will end. It seems Governor Scott will suppress campus dissent by bayonets instead of reason. Apparently, His Excellency does not know or care to know the difference between reasoned restraint and the use of oppression in dealing with campus disorders.

The lack of confidence in university administrators is also displayed by the Governor. The Honorable Chief Executive of North Carolina feels that he is more able to administer discipline than the college administrators. This absurd idea will, of course, gain Mr. Scott many votes with the rank-and-file voter of North Carolina. Also, it will tend to alienate many college students who once had respect for the Governor.

Governor Scott is also willing to sacrifice academic freedom in the interests of academic survival. How can one have academic survival without academic freedom? Without freedom of inquiry and without freedom of dissent how may college students survive. Governor Scott will have academic survival at the expense of academic freedom and at the expense of the students' rights. The preservation of students' rights within the realm of academic freedom is a must. But the use of force will preserve neither the rights of students or academic freedom.

In his repressive policy toward college disruptions Governor Scott is misleading the people of North Carolina. Citizens of North Carolina are beginning to question the validity of student dissent. If this right of dissent is repressed by force, the citizens, as well

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Letters To The Editor

Dear Editors:

I am writing in reply to "The Elon Primer" published in the March 20th edition. I think it is about time somebody made a clear statement of what the so-called "radicals" believe. Because I am one of the "radicals" referred to in "The Elon Primer," I feel obliged to state what I stand for, and what I believe the majority of the "radicals" on this campus stand for.

Ever since Homer wrote the Iliad humans have been acutely aware of their desire for and the advantages of peace. Whenever a society is involved in internal or external conflict, the creativity of that society is drastically impaired. It seems only logical to prefer the settlement of conflicts through peaceful negotiations than through violence if at all possible. Is it so "radical" to believe in the goodness of peace?

Freedom was the guiding principle in the founding of this country. Ideally, freedom should exist in this country on all levels from the personal freedom of each individual through the freedom of the entire society.

Freedom was established in the Constitution of this country as the right of every man; the right of the white and the black man. A large part of the violence in this country concerning civil rights has not stemmed from "radicals" or the Negro, but from the refusal of some people to recognize the rights and freedom of all men. We were created as free people, and if any man anywhere does not have this freedom, he should do everything in his power to obtain it. Again, is it so radical to believe in freedom?

The right of dissent is included in the Constitution. The three women who wrote "The Elon Primer" should, when they think about the little demonstration in the cafeteria and the demonstrations all around the country, consider the demonstrations for women's rights in the early part of this century. If women's rights had not been achieved as a result of those demonstrations, "The Elon Primer" would never have been published. When the ears of authority will not listen, peaceful demonstration is an effective way to bring a grievance to the ears of the public.

Love, not in a personal sense, but as a love of mankind and a belief in the brotherhood of man are also beliefs of we "radicals". Love, in this context, is the one teaching common to all religions in the world today. If the human race does not soon recognize its common background the results could be fearful.

Although these are very high sounding ideals, and they are not always practiced as much as they are preached by some, I, and many other people, believe these ideals in sincere practice will result in a better world.

As for our personal appearance, it is of little importance. A man should be judged on his merits and personal beliefs, rather than his outward appearance.

The "radical" has been criticized long enough on this campus. The fact that these beliefs are considered radical reveals a society that desperately needs a change. Before we engage in any criticism of other people, we should be certain it is not blind

criticism.

Sincerely,
Russell Winstanley

Dear Editors,

After reading the Elon Primer in this week's Veritas, I feel somewhat affronted by the narrow outlook taken by these girls.

Concerning the "radicals" uniform, who is to determine what stipulations are to be adhered to? They seem to think that we should conform to their "impeccable taste." Those who wear the "uniform" do so only because it personifies an impression of non-materialism, something that we believe in strongly.

In the second stanza, they speak derogatorily of the food demonstration. They obviously do not realize that approximately two hundred non-radicals participated. Their research was inadequate, for the benefits procured were substantial.

'Apathetic' was a poor choice of words in the third stanza. The so called "radicals" only wish to see much needed reforms implemented. We respect and do stand for the faculty, contrary to the belief of some, but we will not be hypocritical and support something we do not believe in.

They insinuate that the "radicals" take some form of narcotics. There has been no basis upon which to make this presumptuous statement. It is a serious accusation which they make.

The last stanza is ironical. The vast majority of students saunter from class to class like zombies. At least the "radicals" are aware of present circumstances, which I feel is not true of these girls.

This poem is not only superficial but illogical as well. There is much more to the "radical" than these girls can comprehend. If they would take the time to get to know 'Him' maybe their poem would read differently.

Chris Walsh

Editors of Veritas,

I am not in the habit of bitching about professors, but I feel that I have several legitimate complaints about a particular professor here at Elon. These complaints are against Dr. Overton, an established member of the Elon College faculty. I am currently taking Religion 361 under him, and day in and day out he continues to amaze me with his utter lack of regard for the students. His lectures are on the verge of being incoherent as he jumps back and forth from one point to another.

Last week Dr. Overton gave tests to all of his classes. Our class was given a multiple choice test with one essay question. Before the test began, he stated that no one would be allowed to change their answers once they had marked them.

It is my opinion that with an objective test a rule such as this is not acceptable and contrary to recognized teaching methods. I have always been taught that once you finished a test, you should review it and correct any mistakes you may have made. I asked him what his basis was for not being able to change answers, and he replied that it was to cut down on cheating in class. Doesn't he recognize the honor code which he made us pledge on our tests?

Dr. Overton also came out with

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the statement that each student must make use of deductive reasoning to figure out certain answers. That's sound advice, but a little hard to follow when most of the test questions had little relevance to the main points emphasized in class. In class, Dr. Overton said that we should all do "scholarly research" for his course. I would like to know why; the class is composed mainly of non-religion majors. When the tests were returned, it was no great surprise that more than three quarters of the class failed. Now I ask you, when that many juniors and seniors fail one test, is it the fault of the students or the professor? When asked if there was a curve, Dr. Overton stated very explicitly that there was none, and added that he followed the old recommended grading scale. If this is the case, how does he explain grades in the sixties being marked D-minus, when under the old scale all grades below seventy are F's? Is it possible that no one would have passed had he followed it?

In my opinion it is quite obvious that Dr. Overton shows no regard for the educational process as practiced in most colleges. It really amazes me that he expects his students to benefit from the course when he makes it almost impossible for one to pass. Dr. Overton is, I'm sure, a very intelligent man, but it is my belief that he is not only unsuited to teach in college, but also detrimental to the educational process taking place here at Elon College. It is my recommendation that either the Administration discuss these irregular practices with Dr. Overton and work something out, or he be dropped from the Elon College faculty.

Sincerely,
David O. Bowlin