

Editorial

Controversy needed

By Jim and Dale Sheasley
Co-editors

We at Guilford College need to learn to fight well. In reflecting on this year at Guilford, it does not seem that we have learned to do this yet. Substantial arguments are confused with personal ones, people are afraid to "make waves", and people acquiesce to "foregone conclusions" without stating their objections.

Challenging the views of another person is never easy, particularly in a large group. In some ways, the Mechanism of consensus further compounds this problem. Consensus, which is a highly valued process in small groups where confrontation is easier, is achieved only by unanimity or by the abstention of dissidents. There is no place for those who disagree in the achievement of the final decision. The pressure is to conform or to just "let it go". Such a system understandably produces a great deal of frustration among the combatants. As a result, the next battle may well be a little more tense.

Another problem is that Quaker schools seem particularly vulnerable to filling their little world with idealistic visions while failing to act upon them—pacifism becomes passivity. Rather than offend anyone on their way to their goal, they sit and worry about finding the perfect noncontroversial means to their end. As Saul Alinsky says, "The means-and-end moralists, or non-doers, always end up on their ends without any means.... The most unethical use of means if the non-use of any means."

Being nice isn't necessarily being good. When faced with decisions affecting the future of the college, there is little place for sentimentality. Attempted changes stir controversy, but controversy is not the largest threat to Guilford's future. Rather, the largest threat comes from those who talk of improving the situation, but sit on their cans when it comes time for action. Their inertia holds back those who are willing to strive for improvement and for excellence. Controversy, rather than inhibiting improvement, stirs action and calls for resolution.

Implicit in the appreciation of controversy is the assumption that men will strive for a better world if given the chance. Controversy provides the chance by questioning the status quo and pushing change.

We are not satisfied with Guilford as it is, nor do we consider it irreverent to want to change it. If Guilford is to compete for a place in the dubious future of small liberal arts colleges the status quo is not acceptable. If making tough decisions raises controversy, so be it. Controversy is inevitable as the college attempts to fix priorities and allocate resources. Guilford must decide now if it wants to be a "nice" college or a quality institution.

The outlook for a "nice" college is bleak. It's hard to be a big happy family out in the street.

Raising student awareness

By David Davenport

The Southern Students Activist Network (SSAN) held a two day conference in Atlanta, Georgia April 12 and 13.

SSAN is an organization forged from varied student groups committed to "student input into increased awareness in and out of school," according to Larry Brooks, the leader of the conference. Mr. Brooks said that although most of the member organizations are concerned with different aspects of the society, the obvious common-ability among the groups is the realization that the system must be changed if all Americans are

to experience this country's democratic ideals.

The topics of the workshops reflected the diversity of interest at the conference. The lectures ranged from women's rights and abortion to racism and black education.

The consensus agreement on the biggest obstacle to the organization's growth was student apathy. (no stranger to Guilford College) Repeatedly delegates attributed to students unexplainable ignorance about the relevance of present issues in Society.

Helen Chavis and David Davenport represented BASIB of Guilford.

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Life of Staff

Handle on the scandal

By Constance Irving

A new scandal has been unearthed on the once peaceful Guilford campus; a scandal that makes the nepotism issue appear as nought. For years, students have asked about the mysterious "Dr. Staff", whose name curiously appears at pre-registration time, although the professor himself is never heard from during the semester.

A glance at the course listings for fall '81 reveals the almost omnipresent influence of Dr. Staff plans to teach over 40 courses on subjects as varied as Design I, Accounting Theory, and Early Childhood Education. Upon first reflection, one is struck by Dr. Staff's incredible scholastic diversity, as well as his apparently boundless capacity for work.

Further examination, however, reveals that Dr. Staff will be teaching classes that meet in different places at the same time, including several courses in Munich and London as well as here. Can Guilford, in these financially tight times, afford to fly Dr. Staff around the globe several times daily? We decided to investigate the situation.

It was not easy. Every time we mentioned Staff, we were either referred to someone else, or looked at strangely and sent away. Fortunately, Becca Newbold, noted senior and nudnik, gave us our first clue to the awful truth.

"My theory is that there's more than one of them. Every time I ask who's teaching one of his courses, the answer is invariably, "We don't know which Staff is teaching it." This seemed highly suspicious, and perhaps nepotistic, since



there were several with the same name. Newbold mused further, "I think you ought to ask a few professors, since "Faculty and Staff are always mentioned together."

Dr. Louis Fike of the 'Political Science department refused to comment, saying he did not feel it was safe to do so. He did, however, allude to "K122", apparently some kind of secret agent of whom we heard no more.

Since Dr. Staff seemed to wield such control over time and space, we determined to consult an authority in Physics. Our intuition paid off. Even before we presented the details, Dr. Sheridan Simon sensed what we were talking about.

"I think it's an obvious case of the administration taking advantage of a distressed man", Simon told us. "To me, it's just another sign of the

moral decline of Western civilization and the anomie of our time." Dr. Simon said also that Dr. Staff was "entirely unsalaried." He lives in fear because he's a refugee from a small South American country in the middle of the Indian Ocean. His wife teaches here, and she's not paid either."

We confronted Dr. Simon with the bold journalistic truth that Dr. Staff in fact received more money than several other professors combined, but Simon told us that he had never seen a check made out to Staff. Simon commented that the many parking places marked for "Faculty and Staff only" were never used by Dr. Staff. "They are only there to taunt him. Further, said Simon, "Dr. Staff does not own the cars marked with his last name. He has to wash them," said the noted Physics professor.

"Not many people know this, but Dr. Staff once had a



Letters to the Editor

All Letters must be submitted to the Guilfordian at Box 17717 by Friday night, and should be no longer than 200 words. Names may be withheld if requested by the author in person or in writing.

Real art world

Dear Editor,
Last Thursday was the student art exhibit, which I feel was as exciting as a professor's exhibit. Exhibitions are a time for showing the college the essence of one's work, thoughts, and character; as it is in presentations for independent studies, or works submitted to the Piper or Womansprouts. This expression is the same as an English major's style in papers, or the "angle" of a philosopher's logical reasoning. I came to the opening looking forward to viewing people's works, socializing and discussing works exhibited. I came in amazed to find that a "judging" was going on, all attention focused on the speaker. I couldn't believe it! That hit a note so deep inside that I found I wasn't the least bit interested in who won or what works were prized.

I had to leave. All I could think was, "I'm insulted; no, I'm grossed-out." My work

wasn't being exhibited; my work was in a beauty contest, my work was being prostituted. Now, if I had known that there was going to be a contest, a reward, I would have felt differently.

A contest to me is submitting my best works to be recognized, but the unknowing contest was a type of "contest-reward" which meant; these works are "the best"; these works please the faculty the most; these students have worked the hardest and created something the faculty is looking for; pat-pat. Guilford doesn't have a contest to judge the best English paper, or independent study presentation, or who has the best logic in philosophy. If we are going to have an art show with judging, call it a contest, not a student art exhibit. If I had known about the competition beforehand, I still would have submitted the same works with this in mind. But, many people probably don't realize how one bares one's soul in art work and, for me, how delicate that is. In a

contest one carries a shield or strength in preparation for judgement. Even if I had come in first or honorable mention I would have felt exactly the same way. I would have felt unknowingly prostituted for the beauty of my work, not the statement of it. I feel no resentment towards the faculty or winners, but the contest, which I feel, puts the winners on a pedestal and some how, separates them to a higher status than other students. I feel this was only because it was a contest and not an exhibit as it was called.

I realize the "real" art world is competitive, but Guilford is not a microcosom of the real world. It strives to create a unique community and I feel, as a few other art students do, that in such a small department, a contest is less beneficial than it is stimulating or inspiring.

Sincerely,
Katie Hellowell

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