

Simple Pleasures

Chris Weber

Staff Writer

"I swear Guilford is the duller place on the entire earth!"

"Nothing cool is ever planned for us!"

"This place is about as exciting as a morgue!"

Along with other Guilford students, I have made statements similar to these, and for a good reason. This campus can be ghostly quiet on weekends. There simply is not a hell of a lot to do here. However, the Student Union is not to blame. We are, because we are picky about what we consider fun.

In his column last week, Perspectives Editor Hardy Wallace astutely called us the "generation that forgot how to have fun." While I'm not interested in psychoanalyzing our generation, I agree. We're often too busy looking for *excitement*—the instant gratification huge universities hawk—to appreciate the simple pleasures around us.

Certainly, Guilford will never be called an academic Celebration Station, but this place is only as dull as we make it. This column is a re-

minder (a five hundred-word Post-It note) that fun need not be complicated. Here are a few basic, essential joys to seek when the Student Union does not tickle your pickle:

1. **Eat:** In my opinion, eating is one of life's greatest pleasures, despite the Caf's daily efforts to make meals painful. In addition to being fun, eating is also quality bonding time; it's a ritualized pleasure similar to showering. So enjoy your meals for a change. Order out. Better yet, cook for yourself. Plan a picnic. Acquire good food and good company and savor both.

2. **Get dirty:** Americans have a cleanliness fetish, but I assert that being clean is no fun unless a person appreciates being nasty. Sweat, dust, mud: choose whichever you like, but wear it. Passionate exercises like running or hiking are excellent ways to acquire filth. Getting dirty is a wonderful stress release, and it makes your next shower Oh! so sweet. The transition from stench to freshness is the epitome of a simple pleasure.

3. **Watch a Disney movie:** This one is self explanatory. While of-

fering first-rate entertainment, classics like "Aladdin" and "Fantasia" will also take you back to the simpler days of youth, which leads to...

4. **Hang out with kids:** Spending time with young'uns will probably entail baby-sitting or community service, but it's worth it. Kids give off better vibes than anyone, and they truly understand simple pleasures. Pick up some of those kid vibes. Read a story to a five-year-old or build a Lego mansion. I spend one night a week playing with kids at a homeless shelter, and they never fail to cheer me.

5. **Enjoy a back rub:** My favorite simple pleasure. Have someone knead those stress-knots from your back, forcing you to relax.

6. **Make a road-trip:** When all else fails, get the hell out of Dodge. It doesn't matter where you go or if you arrive—the drive is the important part. A road-trip will bond people together as nothing else can. And remember: any good road-trip ends at The Waffle House.

Next time you look for something to do, don't look so far. Keep it simple. Make it fun.

Questions Without Answers

This issue, we are introducing a new column in the *Guilfordian*; students will be the writers. We want to print the questions you have about campus issues that you have no answer to. Your questions can be simple or complex, humorous or thought provoking. We would like to give you the opportunity to express them to the community.

Here are our first six questions with no answers:

1. In an average day, how many Bryan residents are burned in the showers when a toilet is flushed?
2. Why are there cigarette butts on every square foot of campus lawns?
3. What are the squirrels on campus trying to tell us when they begin to growl and chatter at passing students?
4. Why are there handicapped showers on Milner's second floor, but no handicapped access to the second floor?
5. What is going on with the football team this year (they haven't lost yet)?
6. Why did only one guy take the opportunity to model nude for the life drawing class?

If you have an answer to any of these questions or any questions for next week give us a call (x2306), or drop your answer in the *Guilfordian's* mailbox. All submissions will be anonymous.

Mayibuye iAfrica—Come back home, Africans!

Shingai Jaravaza

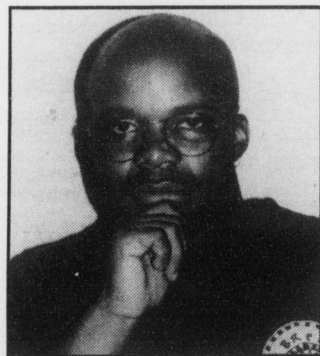
Staff Writer

The increasingly regular phenomenon of African scholars residing abroad is, at best, disturbing. Its impact is felt in every corner of the continent, dealing Africa a heavy blow. Large groups of people suffer from the negligent attitudes of those who choose not to give back to the communities from whence they came.

The saddening reality of such unscrupulous insistence on remaining outside the borders of their own countries keeps our scholars and professionals ossified in an emotionally claustrophobic trap. They are unable to conclude that their services are, personally and communally, more fulfilling at home.

Africa's lack of resources has passed its toll onto its sons and daughters, many of whom emerged from severe poverty wrought by the oppressive pre-independent era. They left home with the ambitious, yet noble goal, of acquiring an education that might aid them in ameliorating the conditions of the general populace.

Such social awareness is part of the moral fabric inculcated by the extended family structure. In Africa it is anathema to pledge allegiance only to the immediate family. Rather, ingrained in the language is a structure where my uncles and male cousins are



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all my father. Similarly, my aunts and female cousins are my mother. Their children are my brothers and sisters.

Throw in a century of Western indoctrination, and suddenly there is enough confusion that some wonder if indeed those whom the West identifies as cousins are really brothers. The issue of community disinheritance is the heart of the problem.

African scholars, rightly or wrongly, harp a mournful song of how oppressive their governments are. They argue somewhat convincingly, yet unrealistically, that they cannot live under the tyrannical rule of their respective states. They understandably blame the unfavorable economic structures for their personal inertia and lack of upward mobility.

Why unrealistic? In times of pre-modern learning the most advanced schools of sophic thought and learning were in Africa. The Greeks went

to Africa (Egypt) to study yet, unlike Africans, they always returned home, to share and impart the fruits of their education. This gave rise to some of the most revered thinkers and scholars of all time...Plato, Socrates etc.

Additionally, a perfunctory examination of Western revolutions presents a scenario that Africans ought to take heed from: during American and French revolutions, an educated class of scholars and professionals rallied the peasants into a cause that sought an end to the systematic exploitation inherent in the feudal system. This class allied with the voiceless underclasses to spearhead the revolution toward a more egalitarian, modern-day system.

Evidently the cream of our societies are engaging in acts of self deception captioned in self hatred and manifest in their adamant refusal to be part of the revolution that will turn Africa from beggar to major player in the global arena.

Through feelings of impotence in capacity or will and perhaps both, African scholars tend not to return home. They lack the initiative to counter power structures they feel militate against them; thus, overtaken by greed and blatant disregard for their community, the most astute sons and daughters of Africa offer their services to the West.

In their quest to achieve a comfort level that cannot, today, be afforded

under the limitations of African politico-economic infrastructures, idealism usually gravitates to frustration, moral and ethical inadequacy, as well as loss of self-esteem through denigration of cultural identity.

This phenomenon, which is also common among Black American successfals, signals a break from the traditional community-based approach to life, and a proclivity toward the Western ideal espoused by Adam Smith...the selfish ideal of self-aggrandizement.

Now squarely entrenched in the nuclear family model, an alien concept to Africans, they begin the plummet into assimilation and the dilution of Africanism.

An epitomic example of this is the case of a Dean of Engineering at NC A&T who denies his heritage and refers to his native Kenya as "that country". Others are less blatant; they send token sums of money home.

Such individuals seek approval and acceptance from their family and community at home; while here they also seek the approval of their hosts. Many are pampered with labels of being a "different black person" or not like other "lazy uncultured black Americans". To their behest however, they become unhoused individuals. They never gain acceptance from the larger family at home, never quite fit in with black Americans because they play into the white-man's hands, and never

approach acceptance by white America because they are not white, and therefore can never enjoy the privileges of the white establishment.

Unfortunately for our brother and sister scholars, their children grow up in this system that actively yet surreptitiously represses black individuals. Moreover their children grow up subjected to such pressures, without the support system rendered by Africans at home, kernelled in the proverb "It takes a whole village to raise a child."

These children usually turn out to be the black American youth that their western parents despise. The same is true for black American children of upwardly mobile families, as they (children) fail to identify with the more popular ghetto culture.

Africanism is progressively diluted in the first and second filial generations; resultantly, the initial purpose of being here, that of bettering their families, is nullified. Not only does Africa (the black community) lose its most progressive individuals, but the most progressive individuals lose Africa (the black community), disinherit themselves of their heritage.

The dream of helping the motherland dissolves to a nightmare of self disenfranchisement through cultural disinheritance. Our African and black communities will only develop when all the members recognize this neo-colonialistic bluff.