

# Forum

## GUILFORD'S NEW FACE

Honor McElroy and Sarah Byrne  
STAFF WRITERS

Guilford 2004. 1,600 students. Upgraded the athletic facilities. Hired an onslaught of coaches by August 2000. Better dorms. Academic attention placed on Management and Justice and Policy Studies programs.

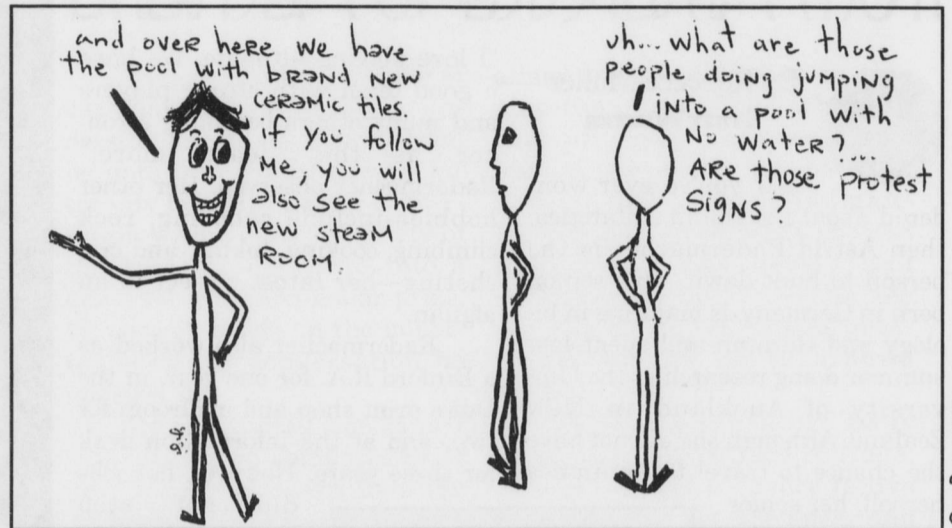
Upon reading the strategic plan, we found that it exemplified a feared "new vision" of Guilford. This vision is a Guilford that becomes a "resort school" in accordance with recent trends in the college market. Instead of strengthening a majority of our academic departments, Guilford will attract students by massive recruiting efforts and a face-lift of the campus. We will lure students with our swimming pool, nice furniture in the dorms, and better common areas.

Once there was a myth that a student went to school for an

education and tuition paid for pithy little things like a teacher's salary. The place that Guilford occupies in the college market as a highly selective school depends on successful student-teacher relationships.

English Professor Beth Keiser wrote a memo directed to the humanities faculty which urged everyone to examine the plan closely. She warns, "Guilford College attracts idealistic, highly motivated teachers, but it is unlikely that even this faculty can make peace with a plan that pays such scant attention to such embarrassingly low salaries." If professors are Guilford's most valuable attribute, why does the plan make it so emotionally and economically exhausting for them to continue as members of our academic community?

Besides the "scant attention" allotted to the improvement of



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faculty financial support, the plan also neglects the humanities departments. Not only did the English major generate the most interest from prospective students in 1999, it is also one of the cornerstone majors at Guilford, complementing our writing-intensive curriculum. This information contradicts the research behind the strategic plan, which demands an improvement in management and business courses.

If anything, it seems as if the administration has done very

little to get a true grasp of the student's desires. This editorial is a warning. Everything that this plan suggests uses the supposed desires of current and prospective students as validation for these changes. Read the plan. Figure out if it will improve your education. When registration rolls around and you can't get into the class that you want to take for your major, don't worry. You can always go lift some weights to work off all of that frustration.

### THE GUILFORDIAN

STAFF MEETINGS ARE MONDAYS AT 7:30 P.M. IN THE PASSION PIT. ALL ARE WELCOME.

*Statement of Purpose:* The Forum exists to facilitate dialogue and expression on matters of importance to Guilford College and its mission. Toward this end, active community participation in these pages is vital.

*Editorial Policy:* Every effort will be made to print appropriate submissions of editorials, cartoons, and letters to the editor. They must be signed, with the phone number of the author or artist included and turned in to the box outside the publications suite by 3:00 on Monday before that Friday's publication date. Editorials must be no longer than 400 words and letters to the editor must be no more than 250 words. The Guilfordian reserves the right to edit submissions for grammatical correctness and brevity.

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## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Matters of freedom of expression on a college campus—indeed, in our whole culture—are difficult and complex. A fine line has to be walked between yelling "Fire!" in a crowded movie theater and suppression of our rights of free speech.

When I saw Adam Thorn's cartoon in last week's issue of *The Guilfordian*, I had the initial reaction of "Oh, goodness; that is tasteless. Why did the paper publish that?" When I read the accompanying article, I was actually heartened by the opinions expressed about the "miraculous" of the everyday and the criticism of a scientism that denigrates the non-quantifiable. Of course, Adam had me eating out of the palm of his hand as soon as he spoke of his attendance at the Religious Emphasis Week Huston Smith lecture!

That said, however, I feel that it was ill-advised on Adam's part to choose that cartoon to capture people's attention, and it was ill-advised of the paper to publish it. Whether or not one agrees with the Christian

belief in the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ through his death on the cross, it is a fact that the cross and Jesus' shed blood are deeply meaningful concepts and symbols to millions of Christians—including hundreds on this campus. To show someone urinating on the cross—even to make a valid point—is tremendously offensive.

I HATE to parrot the words of syndicated columnist Cal Thomas, for whom I have a long history of disgust, but would we even dare do a similar cartoon in which the central symbols of Islam, Judaism, or various disenfranchised minorities were being urinated on? We need to remember that even if they are the "majority" culture in our culture, Christians still deserve some respect.

The cartoon, because of the accompanying article, did not "piss me off." I wonder how many others, though, failed to read Adam's good words because they couldn't see through the tears in their eyes.

Max Carter,  
Campus Ministry Coordinator