

Mr. Harris Finds Salem Students Above Average



Mr. David Alan Harris, specialist in American history, likes to bring "fireworks" to his classroom.

"The purpose of history is to back the impermanence of man, his institutions, and his civilizations. Only philosophy, or man's ideas, is permanent. For instance, the Roman Empire in a material sense is dead; but, in a philosophical sense, it is still alive in that its ideas still affect us today. The material power of a civilization will change and decline; but its philosophy may continue to exist although even this is not inevitable. Still, man must have the theory of progress; for otherwise the natural conservation of the world would keep man in a quagmire."

Mr. David Alan Harris, professor of history at Salem College, freely admits that his above statement should get a rise out of his colleagues and that this theory is certainly open to dispute.

Mr. Harris was born in Oneonta,

Alabama, in 1929. He attended Auburn University where he received both his BA and MA degrees in history. Interrupting his studies was a two year tour of duty with the Air Force as a public relations officer. Before coming to Salem this year, Mr. Harris taught at the University of North Caro-

lina where he also worked toward his Ph D. degree. Mr. Harris is married to the former Anne Barber, who is originally from Miami, Florida.

Mr. Harris finds that Salem students are above average in intelligence and believes that this fact is due to the careful screening and selection of the students before they enter the college; however, Salem is not cosmopolitan because of this fact. The girls here come from too similar backgrounds and income levels. As a result, they often express and hold the same views. Since possibly half of one's education comes from interaction with other students, this sameness at Salem results in isolation from new and different ideas.

Freshmen are particularly difficult to teach because they are often so apathetic. In order to get them involved in their subject matter, the teacher frequently has to take a completely unorthodox stand on some topic; "fireworks" often result. One reason for their apathy can be traced back to their high school education in history where, unfortunately, facts other than movements in history are often stressed.

According to Mr. Harris, whose main field is American history, democracy creates the most desired form of society; for it is far su-

perior to an aristocracy in building a nation. Only where a concept of individual freedom exists can great achievements in art, literature, etc., take place; however, the emphasis on democracy must not lead to extreme nationalism, which is a force that could destroy the world.

Mr. Harris adds that the present Cuban crisis is a clash of three nationalistic nations. Even communism is a nationalistic manifestation of Soviet Russia. In fact, communism was quite ineffectual until it aligned itself with Russian nationalism.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Six Wake Forest boys are to share their views on marriage for the Soc. 310 class on Monday, Nov. 19, at 12:10. All interested students are invited to attend.

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