

The Salemite

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Monday, February 26, 1973
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of cabbages and kings

by Sarah Dorrier

It takes two to speak the truth... one to speak and another to hear.

-- Henry David Thoreau

My mother and I are forever picking at each other for not remembering things. SHE thinks I didn't tell her the date of a party when I know perfectly well I did, and I am positive she failed to mention Aunt Agatha's illness although she swears she wrote me about it, etc., etc....

Sound familiar? Maybe the problem is purely due to lack of memory. I'm certainly no elephant-mind, but I refuse to believe I'm turning senile at the tender age of twenty-one. No, the problem is not lack of memory; it's lack of hearing.

Ours is a society in which everybody talks (some more constantly than others) but very few listen. We are egotistically preoccupied with the sound of our own voices, chattering on and on, giving opinions (sometimes informed but always infallible) on every conceivable subject.

Now, these opinions may or may not be truth. Old Henry David Thoreau was a mighty smart fellow; he knew that hearing the truth is just as important as speaking it. But, nowadays, nobody wants to listen for the truth. Because, obviously, if you're hearing it, that means somebody else thought of it first.

Having done an amateur case study, I've come to the conclusion that Salem College is suffering from a slight hearing disability. I can't pin my diagnosis on any one particular symptom; the malfunction is much too general in nature. At present, the damage to vital organs is minimal, but, if the malfunction is not corrected, permanent crippling may result.

In a community as small as ours, even a slight malfunction can be disastrous. One or two sweeping generalizations coming from the right people can blow up into a cloud that makes Hiroshima look like a tempest in a teapot. Misunderstandings caused by misinformation can make mountains out of even the smallest molehills.

Salem need not be a rumor factory. The truth can be found, but only if the students, faculty, and administration are willing to hear it. Perhaps communication would improve if we turned our voices inwards and our ears outwards.

Are you listening?
 Salem's calling you...

Group Reviews Petition

A petition was submitted to the Scholarship Committee requesting that certain students holding absolute offices of the Student Government Association of Salem College be exempt from the 120 hour annual work requirement for a general scholarship. The petition was started by

Pam Poe and Christina Spence, President of Salem's student government association.

The Scholarship Committee determined that it was not empowered to act on the request because guidelines pertaining to scholarships must be drawn up,

submitted to the faculty and approved by that group. This has not yet been done.

In view of the need for scholarship guideline approved by the Academic Council, the petition was referred to Dr. Chandler and Dean Hixson. Christina Spence, Pam Poe, Scottie Newell, Catherine Cooper, Margaret Brinkley, Averell Pharr and Laurie Daltroff, members of the committee who drew up the petition, were notified by Dean Hixson that students holding absolute offices in student government will be exempt from further scholarship work for the remainder of this semester. This means that holders of absolute offices need not contribute scholarship hours this spring as previously arranged.

Dean Hixson said that guidelines should be presented to the faculty committee by the Scholarship Committee by the end of the year. From now until that time, though, the students on scholarships holding absolute offices may replace their scholarship work by services "performed to the college community."

literary impact, indeed the dangers, of suggesting and leaving the rest to the readers' imaginations.

I should like to make several observations on the article on page two entitled "Salem Has Busy Year". I would suggest that the phrase "curriculum relevance" is meaningless. A thing can only be "relevant" in relation to something else. To me, somehow, the idea of Dean Hixson "serving her last term" at Salem College smacks either of penal or political jargon but I shall not belabor this point. I think, as one of the four professors involved in the interdisciplinary experiment in Southern Culture, I was supposed to be complimented by the observation that the program "is exciting students who have not enjoyed a single course at Salem". On the contrary, I was rather disappointed by the shallowness of such a statement and hope that the students were also. I have found, thus far, that the backgrounds and enthusiasms brought to the program by these students from their varying disciplines have been an integral part of our explorations and are the result of knowledge gained through the enjoyment of traditional courses offered at Salem.

I intend by my criticisms no personal indictments. I do, however, implore that the writers of future *Salemite* articles make a strong effort to search, gather and sift truth from half-truth, fact from fiction and hear-say.

Sally A. Rackley

Mrs. Rackley:

In stating that the Feb. 12 *Salemite* was the "Ultimate catalyst" for your repressions of "half-truths," you puzzled our staff. You clarified your accusation that we print half-truths by referring to the front page article entitled "Jan Somerville Named New Academic Dean."

As a head of a department, Mrs. Rackley, and because of your concern you probably have access to information pertaining to the method of appointment of Ms. Somerville, and the part played in her selection by "student representatives, members of the Board of Trustees, faculty re-

presentatives and the administration." If, as you say, the *Salemite* should have investigated and printed the method of appointment of the groups and continuity of the groups participating in the selection process, you could be of great service by assisting us in providing this information. We would welcome a future report from you. Prior to your accusation, our reporters had no premise for doubting the accuracy of our news sources. We attempted to obtain information objectively and without a paranoid attitude. If you have bases for feeling that we were given "half-truths" and "off-the-cuff opinions" by Dr. Chandler and other sources, please let us know.

We must admit that in the Feb 12 *Salemite* we found one piece of inaccurate information. The statement arose from a misunderstanding on the part of the reporter, who was unable to correct her mistake before the paper went to press. The sentence stating "This spring she will be on campus part time because her work with the Institute will take her to education (sic) institutes around the country," should be corrected. Ms. Somerville will be on campus part time this spring because she will be completing -- as a full time doctoral candidate -- her graduate course work at Duke University. We refer you to the interview with Ms. Somerville on page one of this issue to answer your other questions.

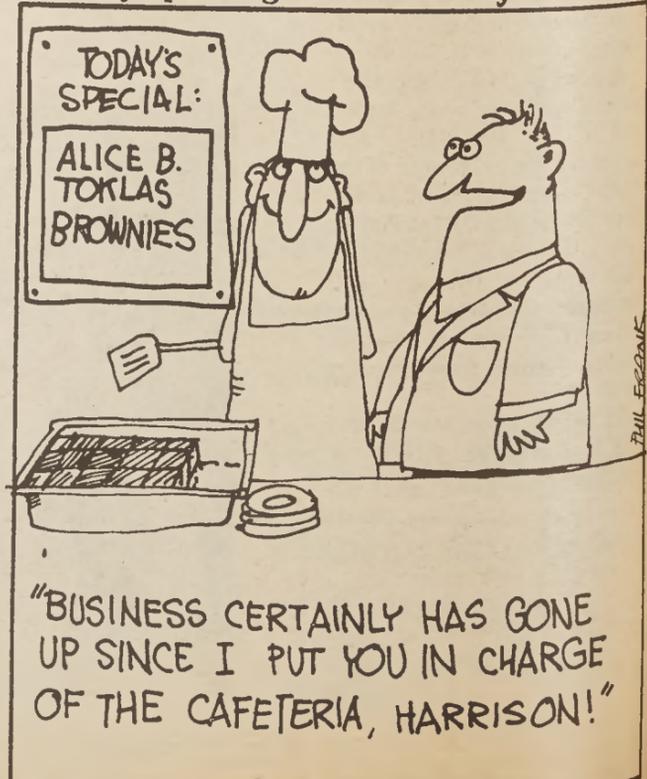
Our staff recognises, Mrs. Rackley, that you are concerned with upgrading the standards of journalism at Salem College and we are very grateful.

-Editor

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THE SALEMITE is the Uncensored Voice of the Salem Community.

Published weekly, excluding examinations, holidays and summer vacation, by Students of Salem College. Subscription Price \$5.00 yearly. Mailing Address P. O. Box 10447 Salem Station, Winston-Salem, N. C. 27108.

Application to mail at second-class postage rates is pending at Winston-Salem, N. C. 27108.