

Editorial

Ta-dum! Not only another issue of the paper, but an editorial to boot.

It is always nice to hear you have been missed. Staff and I have been steadily asked recently when we were planning to publish again. Good question. We have not been on vacation; our problem can be termed as "insufficient", as in time and money. Our allotment for the year does not provide for weekly publication. As for time, I am not sure I can define the term as it seems to be something we appear to have run out of on occasion. Anyway, thanks for asking. Your concern is the reason that when we do publish it has to be first class.

This week's issue reflects many sides of Salem, with tongue in cheek one could say from the ridiculous to the sublime. There are a few things I would like to comment on briefly.

Inauguration was the first time I have been not only happy to don cap and gown, but also honored to play a small role in a proud and beautiful story. There is something magical about this year at Salem. It seems as if the kind fates have tinged our days here golden. There are those moments as you walk across campus, sit in the refectory or look out your window when your chest tightens and your next breath is suspended by an unconscious love and respect for just being somewhere that leaves you breathless. There was an entire day like this: October 16th, 1979, Dr. Richard Morrill's inauguration as Salem's 16th president. For those of us that shared in this day, it shall be a cherished memory.

There are more projects underway at Salem now than leaves in the square or rats in the shadows. It is essential we be as aware of these plans and presentations, as we are of the latter. Security is moving from a cheap joke to a valuable reality, because students have voiced their concern. The student center is no longer an iffy proposal battered about in meetings, but a place to batter about other proposals with the insight from a beer or two. Lecture Assembly is in the process of presenting their symposium on the sixties and the seventies generation is paying close attention to where they have been and where they are going. A conference on Women: Careers in Science was met with overwhelming response, which ensures future programs of this quality.

May I re-iterate this is a magical time to be at Salem, because its family is indeed special.

Laura Castellanos del Valle
Editor

The Salemite

Printed by Lindsay Publishing Co. and published every Friday of the College year by the Student Body of Salem College.

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Letters to the Editor

To the Salem College Community

Any time the Admissions Office has an activity on campus, such as entertaining prospective students or sponsoring counselor workshops, the Admissions staff can do the organizing and even some of the leg work, but we must always rely on the support of the total community for its success. In the seven years I have been in Admissions at Salem, I have been pleased time and time again by the overwhelming interest the community expresses and the assistance it gives. And my confidence in you has once more been justified, as the success of the recent overnight for prospective students attests.

I thank all of you who played a part in this undertaking, and I am especially grateful to Martha Walker and the Fremdendienerin, Jean Fleming and the Senior Class, Suzanne McCaskill and the Dansalems, Patsy Miller and the Archways, Dr. Morrill, Dean Helmick, Dr. Lazarus, Dr. McKnight, Dr. Aanstad, Ms. French, Mr. Short, and Arie Tubb.

Very sincerely,
Mary Scott Best

Security update

Security...the age old problem and issue on Salem College's campus. What in the world is being done? Have no fear, Dr. Morrill's sub-committee on Security is very active trying to get recommendations for improvement presented to him by November 15th. The students have added a great deal of support by taking the time to seriously consider the student questionnaire and fill it out. A very impressive student interest was displayed (325 questionnaires to be exact). The committee wants to thank the students for their opinions and ideas and the results will be given soon.

We have a problem with Security at the present time; meaning, all members of the Salem Community need to work together. All Salem students need to be aware of the important role they play in this predicament. Students need to be on their toes and remain aware of their responsibility for their own safety. Until revisions and improvements are made in our system, we need to make ourselves less vulnerable! We can never leave our safety up to others--no matter how good the security is. The main responsibility for our personal security rests on our own shoulders and no one else's.

Progress is being made toward the improvement of our Security system but always be on the safe side and be cautious. How can you do that?

1. Know the security beeper number (761-9231) and the procedure for using the beeper. (Dial the number, wait for the beep, state your need clearly and be precise. You will get no verbal response from the beeper. Dial the number again, state your need to make sure the message was received.)

2. Don't walk on campus alone at night! If it is absolutely necessary, that you walk alone, go on a spree and invest in a whistle so at least you can make a commotion if an emergency arises.

3. Be sure to lock your car and put valuables in the trunk!

4. Don't hesitate to call a security guard to investigate a stranger seen on campus. By all means, don't let just anyone walk in your dorm because he says he's the vending machine man or telephone man, etc. Feel free to question him or at least report it to the residence hall director.

These are simple common sense protections that are so easily taken for granted. We have problems with security--that's a fact--and something is actually being done about it due to student interest. But let's not let interest turn into paranoia by getting too "worked-up". If we look out for each other and ourselves by being aware of our own responsibilities, we'll be taking a step toward a more effective Security System on Salem campus.

Diana Jolliff
Pres. of SGA

"The Future of the Past" cont.

the obvious can be exciting.

As a liberal arts school and college and as one for young women, we remain committed to several other allegedly ill-fated pursuits. Now is not the time or the place to bring out all our big guns in support of these two characteristics. Let me merely suggest that through these we can become a distinctive model of an alive and responsive and rigorous liberal education. The changes in the lives and opportunities for women are showing us the way. Women now have a choice about the kind of lives they will lead. There is no longer the silent expectation of the women's role as a delicate or passive observer of cultural and political life. It has been OUR students, and not some abstract movement, that have caused us to rethink the shape of liberal education at Salem. It is now increasingly an education which actively acknowledges a wide horizon of future possibilities. Surely it is more practical, but not by confusing education with vocational training. Its practicality resides in its addressing more fully a broader scope of life's texture and potential. It acknowledges and seeks to prepare women for new public and professional responsibilities, much as liberal education has always done for men. The focus is shifting and should shift toward the insight and knowledge and values that are required for intelligent choice and decision in a democratic society. Our democracy faces more than its share of troubling issues, and requires new civic virtues of us all. The old educational virtues of contemplative wisdom and knowledge for its own sake should not be abandoned, but given point and purpose and focus around the themes of choosing, acting, and deciding in the wider world. Liberal education may well prove not just to be the icing on the cake, but the whole cake.

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As we look ahead, there are several areas in which we can express our uniqueness directly in the curriculum. In particular, at the college we are in a position to develop a model approach to pre-professional preparation for women in medicine, law, business and other professions. We can avoid the narrow grid that these programs often involve, and provide a supportive setting that offers positive and attractive alternatives if the student's initial choice does not materialize.

In our programs at both the academy and the college we have a chance to strike an important and badly needed integrative theme. Liberal education typically includes an emphasis on general education--on an exposure to

a variety of fields through distribution requirements or a code program. The question usually left hanging is how these diverse studies can be given intellectual coherence and integration. We need a way to see the relationships among different ways of knowing, and to focus consciously on the abiding and substantive questions of human experience. What does it mean to be human? What are the limits and possibilities of knowledge? What are my personal and civic obligations? What ought I to do?

There is another facet of educational wholeness that is virtually unique to us as a dual but single institution. It concerns the ability we have as unified to be better and stronger than we otherwise might be as separate. We already have made considerable progress in sharing resources, programs and facilities between the academy and the college, but even more can be done. Consider, for example, the great advantage for advanced students at the Academy to get a head start in higher education by taking courses at the college. This has been started, and it should grow. The Academy and its programs, on the other hand, offers the college an excellent chance to meet the needs of the many able students who wish to start college after their junior year in high school. Salem would be in the rare position of being able to offer college preparatory work for early entrants who want to need it in one or several areas.

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In defining who we are and what we can do best our small size is essential. We, and others like us, speak constantly of the priority we give to teaching and of the personal commitment we make to it. We speak much less, though, of what is educationally important or distinctive in small size. Surely this is needed for in being small we give up the endless diversity of program that large public schools and universities can offer. As faculty members at the college we also sacrifice a primary commitment to basic research and to constant publication, and the professional costs of this are high.

What justifies our smallness is not simply a one-to-one relationship with students, or even that faculty and students become friends, or even small classes. Our smallness should have a primary benefit for LEARNING, for education, or it is pleasant but not decisive. The potency in being small is in the personal intellectual engagement that we can foster. Our faculties seek their fulfillment in the fulfillment of others--their students. William Perry's studies of Harvard students have shown that intellectual maturity and commitment come most decisively not

simply from the content of courses, but from the confirmation by a teacher that the student and her ideas count. That someone knows and cares how you think and what you think, that they invest themselves in you, is an affirmation even when unspoken. Estelle Rausenbush, like Perry, holds that the magic in good teaching comes from the student's feeling part of an important Enterprise one that is being shared with the teacher. She says that what the students cherish above all else is, "...That they know the teacher is going through something with them. The sense of communion lasts. Such teaching care about what becomes of their students." How all this can ever happen in mass higher education is a hard question.

We should not assume that distinctive and involved teaching is easy or guaranteed. It is exhausting and draining work. When it is set in the context of the current lack of professional mobility in most fields, and placed within the narrow borders of the small school and college where there are few persons in one's subject, the danger of professional burnout is very real. When the realities of change hit a small institution the results can be painful. There is no place to hide. One cannot get lost in research or in departmental administration. The answer is that the vital small schools and colleges of the future have to fine a way to make professional renewal a continuing opportunity. At Salem this work is underway. We should seek to expand the possibilities for summer sabbaticals, faculty seminars, professional travel and sabbatical and study leaves. We should seek new opportunities, too, such as the possibility of professional exchanges with cultural and business organizations in the city. Through mutual reliance and commitment, we should be able to take the threat out of change and find new rewards and open horizons in our professional lives.

Salem is special. Our hopes for the future do not reside in a feverish flight away from home, but in a voyage of self-discovery. Nothing is guaranteed because our history stretches back 200 years, and nothing is lost because we are a small, independent liberal arts institution for women. Many of the days ahead will be tough for we have chosen to count as strengths what the wider world calls weaknesses. We shall need the strong and unprecedented support and confidence of all who are and love Salem, for in our smallness and independence we are terribly vulnerable. But what we require beyond financing, beyond management, is an unshakable belief in ourselves and in the human importance of what we do and what we stand for. If we keep strong our sense of self-worth and self-confidence, then we shall do far more than survive. We shall excel. Then we shall count our past as a lost golden age, but as a prelude for the best of Salem which lies ahead.