

Letters to the Editor

CHAPEL CONTROVERSY

need for maturity

Dear Editor:
As members of the Freshman Class, we would like to reply to Brooks McGirt's letter in the Feb. 6 issue of the TWIG, which blamed the majority of chapel misconduct on the Freshman Class. We feel that this accusation is a gross generalization which, upon inspection, proves no more true of the freshmen class than any other class here at Meredith. True, there may be freshmen who cause a disturbance in chapel, but we have found that there are also upperclassmen who have not yet learned to sit quietly and listen to a speaker, a guest performer, or a choir.
This letter would be meaningless if our purpose were merely a

defense of the freshman class or an attack on Brooks' observation. It seems, though, that this literary dispute is a direct outgrowth of a failure to behave properly — and this failure is the responsibility of the entire student body — not one class, not one row of girls, not one individual.
There is one point in which we agree with Brooks — there is a need for greater maturity and respect in chapel — a need which only the whole student body can fulfill. And the entire student body is made up of freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

Thank you,
Penny Gallins
Gail Knieriem

student responsibility

Dear Editors:
Bud Walker's comments in chapel on Friday of REW prompted much student response and concern. Too often, we students grumble and criticize and then — do nothing. During REW, for the first time this year, I felt a part of a vital, thinking student community, but we must be careful not to let our soul-searching end here. Many provocative criticisms have been roused; they will not be easily dismissed with mere thought or discussion. They demand serious consideration, decision, and action.

Chapel is, or should be, intended to stimulate student thought, worship, and community spirit — only during REW has it approximated this aim. Why? Many students resent the stigma of required chapel attendance; others feel that an hour exceeds their voluntary attention span, or that 3 cuts are insufficient for required attendance 3 hours weekly. Chapel, merely for the sake of principle, is ridiculous — it must mean something to the student body, earn their enthusiasm and support or continue a source of unrest. Charles Parker must not be asked to shoulder this problem alone. I am sure he would welcome all ideas or suggestions students and faculty have to offer. Chapel is for the students; they should be mature enough to assume its responsibility, not merely gripe or docily conform.

Is there not some official channel through which student concern over this vital issue can be voiced and heard? Current chapel policy, which concerns the entire student body, demands and expects attention. Everyone seems to have pretty definite opinions about chapel, but is *opinion* all we have to offer a problem which threatens the entire Meredith community?

Sincerely,
Nancy Frost Rouse

chapel a crock?

Dear Editor:
This letter is in reply to a letter about chapel which was in the Feb. 20 TWIG.
A crock by any other name. . . ?
Required chapel may be a crock. I would be hard put to argue with you even if I were so inclined, for I am not sure of your exact definition. Let me play dumb (no effort required) and pretend that I really think I am going to find the answer by looking in Webster's New World. All the freshmen can follow along and thereby receive one free word study. "Crock" is from the Middle English "crocche" which is in turn from the Anglo Saxon "crocc"; considered a kin to the German "King." The first definition is "an earthen ware pot or jar."

Well, now we know what we are working with. I don't think the use of the term by the writers of one letter in the last TWIG was a bit inaccurate. What is a crock for? A crock is a place to put things that you consider valuable or worth having. If you have nothing valuable to preserve, then an empty crock sitting around does seem pretty useless. However, are you sure that you don't have something valuable to preserve?

The spirit of a college or university is not something that automatically goes with an assembled group of buildings, students, administrators and instructors. Some schools build the spirit (alternate words for

people who like "in" things are "community" or possibly "image") of the college around a football or basketball team, a fraternity/sorority system, or in rarer cases on excellence in a specific academic or technical area. But there must be something which holds and molds the beautifully different and highly individualistic people working and studying on a campus into a living college. This something needs an atmosphere where people come together for a common purpose so that they may have a chance to know each other and try to understand the goals and motivations of others. Right now chapel seems to be the only thing that gets a majority of the campus together at one time. If faculty and administrative personnel don't come, I think this is their own tough luck.

As long as you have your substance (spirit) in some kind of a container (chapel), you can stir, add to, subtract until you have the contents as you want it. If you break the jar or throw it away you may find yourselves standing, holding the precious contents in your hand, feeling slightly foolish as it dribbles through your fingers. Before you destroy one container you usually find a replacement.

In truth, I did not start this letter with the intent of defending chapel. I just want to know, "Do you have a better pot?"

Sincerely of course,
Mrs. Ruth Ann Phillips

THE STUDENT AS SLAVE

ncsu student's reaction

To the Editor:

When I first heard that you had reprinted Jerry Farber's article, "The Student as Nigger," and had even dared to editorialize about it, I was overcome with a feeling of exaltation. "If the chained and fettered 'angels' of Meredith have dared to stand up and 'tell it like it is,' perhaps there is still hope for this heart of southern conservatism!" I said to myself.

However, upon reading both your editorial and your brutal abridgment of Farber's article, I became more despondent than ever. Not only have you left out those things you found personally abusive, but you have completely destroyed the continuity, atmosphere, and the strength of the article.

Your crass deletions, aside from removing a few "profane" words (which can be heard flung about any Meredith dorm), have removed the sense of fire and urgency the article inspires, turning it into a piece of academic contemplation.

But even disregarding the literary piracy, the fact that you were afraid to run the entire article is equivalent to saying, "Yes Sir, I is a nigger, but I know my place, Sir, and I ain't about to step out of it,

no Sir. Don't Worry, Sir, I don't mean no harm!"

For a moment a breath of freedom was felt but was stifled like every other non-victorian idea that may have passed by. It is time to stand up, not with bowed head and an apology for getting in the way, but with chin out and a demand to be a twentieth century woman, not a nineteenth century "lady."

You have taken one step and beneath the surface can be felt a desire to run. Don't sit down now! Print the entire article for all to read. Stop talking about such trivialities as only three class and chapel cuts. Strike at the heart of the matter! No required class attendance—no chapel—no curfew.

Perhaps a "physical riot or rebellion" is not in order. But something more than a "re-evaluation of aims and purposes" is needed. Get stirred up! Together you can do a great deal more than anyone ever dreamed. After all, if a few lunatics hadn't gotten stirred up about "niggardly" conditions in 1776, where would we be today? Try it! Stand up! You are only a nigger because you let yourself be treated like one.

Mike Jacob
Physics, NCSU

meredith professor's reaction

Dear Editors:

I would like to vociferously applaud the fervor and eloquence of your recent editorial titled "The Student As Slave." Lack of dissent is an index of apathy, lack of involvement is the mark of mental poverty. The old, traditional myths in education are still operating at Meredith. The philosophy of medieval scholasticism is predominant here, as is the concept that educational procedures should be based on the thoroughly discredited principles of faculty psychology. The faculty recently approved, with four dissenting votes, the following statement of long-range philosophy and objectives for the institution: "There is a distinction between education which is primarily preparation for a career and Christian liberal arts education. Professional and technical education, on the one hand, is an effort to develop the human being into a better doctor, lawyer, teacher, business man, etc. That is, the end of the development of certain skills and competencies. Christian liberal arts education, on the other hand, is an effort to develop in the student his own realization of the significance of his humanness." This is the

quintessence of nonsense. It implies that humanness can only be taught in the traditional liberal arts curriculum and that the practice of humanness does not depend on skills and competencies.

At the present time a student is not permitted to major in education; the education department was demoted six years ago to a backdoor department whose only function is to provide courses so that students can get a teacher's certificate. This implies that what we teach lacks integrity and respectability, that the subjects we teach are not really subjects. (In long-range planning it is stated that education courses are not considered to be subjects.) We, in the Education department, have intense pride of profession. We feel that it is as important to educate a student in how to educate a child as it is to teach him how to diagram a sentence.

I know, as you state, that the voices of progress, of unfairness and injustice, are small. But it is these voices that will someday enable us to reach the New Jerusalem.

Sincerely yours,
Harry K. Dorsett

SABER-TOOTHED CURRICULUM

long-range planning

Dear Editor:

In view of complaints heard recently around campus (with which we comply) to the effect that certain courses included in the Meredith curriculum are completely outdated and in view of some glaring omissions in the course material offered, we offer the following excerpt from Dr. Harold Benjamin's address before a group of Colorado teachers, which is paralleled in his book, *The Saber-toothed Curriculum*, for the amusement of those who knew what he was talking about and for the revelation of those who honor tradition to the sad neglect of much-needed progress:

Three fundamentals marked the first educational curriculum:

1. Catching fish with the bare hands.
2. Clubbing tiny horses to death.
3. Frightening saber-toothed tigers with torches.

By studying these three subjects

in their "schools" the stone-age people got along fairly well until there came a changed condition caused by the movement of ice from the north, the forerunner of the ice age.

The stream became muddied and fish could not be seen to catch with the bare hands, so someone invented the net, made of vines. The tiny horses fled and the antelopes replaced them. The stone-agers invented antelope snares. The saber-toothed tigers died of pneumonia, but the big ice bear replaced them, and the stone-age men dug pits to trap them. So net-making, twisting antelope snares and digging bear pits became the three essentials of life.

But the schools continued to teach fish-catching with the hands, horse-clubbing, and tiger-scaring because they had taught them for years. Some "liberal" wanted to teach net-making, snare-making, and pit-digging but he was met with opposition. Some even wanted to do away entirely with the old subjects, but

they aroused a storm and were called radicals.

The old subjects must be retained for their "cultural value," the school people contended. The proposed new subjects had no place in the curriculum.

The conservatives said: "Training to catch non-existent fish with bare hands is the best way to achieve muscular coordination and agility; training in clubbing horses that do not exist is an education in stealth and ingenuity; practicing to frighten tigers that do not exist develops courage. Some things are fundamental and sacred in education and must not be changed."

This excerpt may be found in the second edition of *American Secondary Education*, written by William Marshall French, published by the Odyssey Press, New York, on pages 138-139.

The parallel intended should be obvious. Recalling that Mr. Charles Clifford Cameron, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, referred to the mythical "flexible curriculum" at Meredith College before assembled board members, honoraries, staff, and students, we think it would be a shame to make of him a liar. We serve notice now that we, with the support of most students, expect great things in this area from the Long Range Planning Committee. We further request that the work of this committee be made public; students should be aware of the changes being planned for Meredith in the next decade.

Thank you,
Nance Rumley, Betty Bryant

CAFETERIA

tray situation

Dear Editor:

Why do some students at Meredith College find it beyond their human means to carry a simple tray back to the kitchen after they've eaten lunch?

The cafeteria is understaffed, therefore, we are asked to carry our trays back. Every Meredith student has this simple responsibility, but many students have been disregarding it as of late. If students can wait fifteen to twenty minutes in the lunch line, they could spend just thirty seconds to remove their trays from the tables. Just look around the cafeteria. Is this too much to ask???

Sincerely,
Beatrice Rivers

A COMMUNITY

For a deep sense of security
A look that shall be
Where one finds quiet
A neat orderly place
Friendly air, beyond compare
To keep the pace, a smiling face
As a lively tune brings a recurring
thought of pleasant memory,
That is brought and lingers still into
the night;
Assures everyone that all is bright.
Where Lux is there
Frees one from care.
And to quote a phrase,
As fruit cake—
It grows more mellow with age.

Guard

Letters, features, suggestions and other contributions for the February 20 issue of the newspaper should be in to the TWIG room on first Brewer or to 305 Potat by February 15.

The TWIG staff appreciates the many letters in this issue and hopes its editorial page will continue to be a sounding board for student, faculty and administration opinion.