

College celebrated annual Founder's Day tradition

Founders' Week emphasized Meredith's history in three morning assemblies. Featured speakers were Dr. Mary Lynch Johnson, college historian, Miss Mary Bland Josey, director of admissions, and Miss Jenny Lancaster, a 1971 graduate.

Speakers in Monday and Wednesday convocations spoke on Meredith's religious heritage, the continuing atmosphere of freedom, and the quality of experiences which make a Meredith education different from that of other colleges.

In the Founders' Day service on Friday, Mr. Elizabeth Davis Reid gave tribute to Oliver Larkin Stringfield, one of the college's early and most effective fundraisers.

Mr. Reid spoke of Stringfield's desire to establish an education for women which would make life "a little finer than culture, a little rarer than competence, and a little nobler than success."

William L. Bondurant, executive director of the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation and himself a graduate of a church related liberal arts college, spoke of the need to

know where our education is leading us.

He commented that he liked Founder's day events because they "cause us to measure the vitality and relevance of our own commitments by examining them against the noble causes of the founders."

"Students get ready for the future," he said, "under 'compelling circumstances' and also by following an in-ner voice."

"Excellence is not competitive," he said. "It is a response to that internal truth."

"Students sometimes get sidetracked by the 'lorelei' always present," Bondurant continued.

Students prepare themselves for the future by developing skills and attitudes to think, to communicate, and to choose among values.

"In choosing values," Bondurant said, "the difficulty begins when one must choose between competing values." He believes that a liberal education helps a person to discern between the complexities of life so well that life soon reflects a simplicity of values.

"Education is lifelong," Bondurant said, "and goals can only be achieved imperfectly at any time."

"But a liberal education helps you know where you are and where you are going, and gives you enthusiasm for the

job ahead," Bondurant concluded.

Maggie Odell and Debbie Doss

Scholars analyze death and dying

Meredith Christian Association Spring Forums featured a panel discussion on death and its implications for the living. Dr. Clayton Stalnaker, a professor of philosophy and religion at North Carolina State University and an expert on death and dying, was the keynote speaker. Meredith professors Jack Huber, Allen Page, and Sally Page were panel members.

Dr. Stalnaker

Dr. Stalnaker prefaced his remarks on death by saying that this is the first century in which human existence has been a problem.

"The problem of knowing ourselves stems from the culture we live in," Stalnaker said.

Stalnaker proposed to retrieve human existence by examining death.

"Death is 'unbelievably ambiguous,'" Stalnaker said, "because of the double response it always elicits:

People experience the polarities of fear and curiosity, avoidance and preoccupation, and denial and acceptance."

Stalnaker said, "If we could face death authentically—and we need to know what that means—and its radical significance, it would throw new meaning on life."

Stalnaker explained that while it was easy to define inauthentic existence as it appears in America, it was difficult to know what authentic existence was, other than retrieving the individuality that is lost in rows of split level houses with basketball hoops at the end of every driveway.

Life is an infinite range of possibilities which must develop, he concluded.

Dr. Jack Huber

Dr. Huber, Chairman of the psychology department, contributed the ideas of Freud, Adler, and Jung to the explanation of death and its

possible meaning for human existence.

"For Adler," Huber said, "all of life was a becoming, a growth, almost denying death. Freud, on the other hand, spoke of the wish for death, a deadly yearning expressed in the 'deadly little games' we play."

Jung, in contrast to Freud, saw life as a development and growth, said Huber, and accepted death as part of the growth process.

Dr. Sally Page

Dr. Sally Page spoke of the ways death was treated in literature. The first was the portrayal of actual death.

"In this first instance," Dr. Page said, "the artist trusts to life experience to give death meaning."

The second instance of death was the spiritual death as it is described in twentieth century works by such artists as Franz Kafka and James Joyce. Always in this kind of work, said Dr. Page, emptiness and decay are described.

The third kind of death is related to creativity. "When the artist opens himself to creativity, he loses sense of self and becomes one with nature," Page said.

"This loss of self is a kind of death which enables many artists to affirm that death is not an end but a step in a growth process," Dr. Page said.

Dr. Allen Page

Dr. Allen Page concluded the panel discussion with a discussion of the religious traditions surrounding death.

"We haven't been willing to confront reality of death, said Dr. Page, so we have been concerned with what comes after."

"While the Hebrews haven't always believed in life after death, Christians have inherited a tradition of life beyond death with a system of rewards and punishments," Dr. Page said.

Dr. Page suggested that considering the cultural situation we are in, "we have to consider the possibility of death being the end in a more direct way than religious traditions have done in order to confront the meanings of our present existence."

Maggie Odell



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