

Editorial

Dorm Conditions Aid Attrition Rate

Money problems seem to be everywhere. The stock market rallies one day, then drops the next. Gold has risen two hundred dollars in a matter of months.

But it just doesn't seem to hit home until we find it in our proverbial "back yard."

The financial situation the college finds itself in is serious, but not inescapable. As a report from Dr. Bentley states, Mars Hill College has been around a long time and that gives us a great advantage. But the question in most minds is "Why did we get in this spot in the first place?"

Undoubtedly, a number of reasons. The state of the economy. The decline in eligible college students on the market. Rises in college costs.

But a significant factor in our current situation has to be the attrition rate faced by the college. Many students are transferring out of the institution in lieu of finishing their education here. Students not staying for the full four years have to make a difference in cash input. We believe that attrition rate is a serious factor, but is one that can be corrected.

We have heard those who say it is because Mars Hill doesn't have co-ed dorms. We're not 'up to date' on the trends in college therefore the students aren't content with what they find here, and they transfer out.

We have heard those who say it is because Mars Hill's rules are too stringent. No alcohol is allowed on campus, so students can't have a "good time" at their school.

From the student's point of view, I don't agree with the aforesaid philosophies. I don't hear students complaining because they can't have their boyfriend or girlfriend in their room. I don't hear students complaining because they can't get soused on campus grounds.

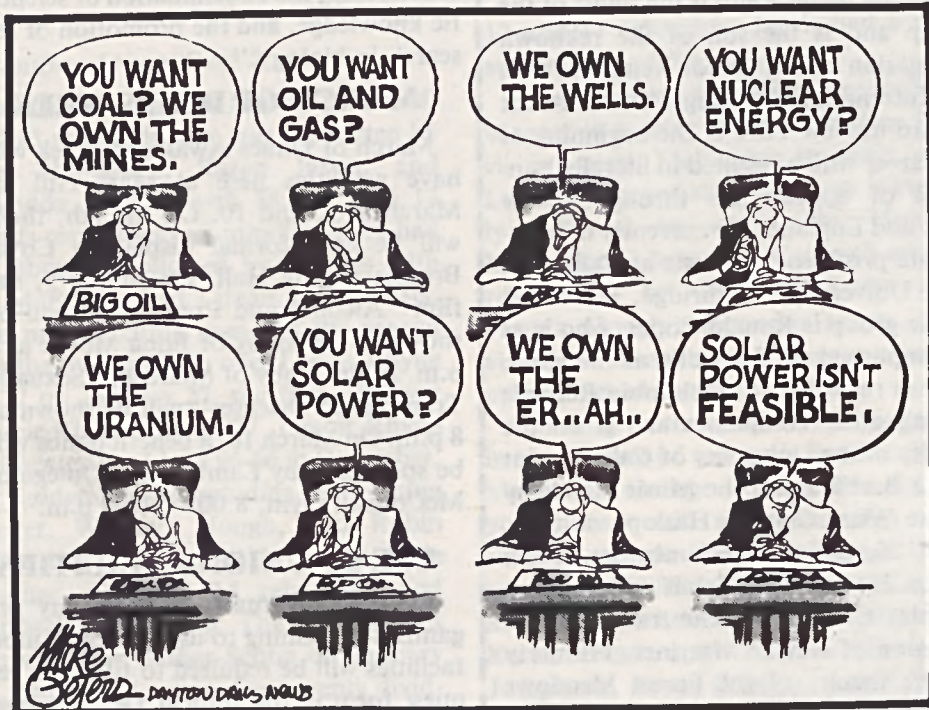
Ninety percent of the people I hear complaining are talking about the dorm conditions. Students know about the integrated dorms before they get here. They know beforehand that they don't bring alcohol on campus. But you don't know what a dormitory is like until you've lived there.

The entire institution could be a class "A" school, but if your room is ninety degrees at night, what difference does it make? If you are forced to take cold showers in the mornings, you're not really going to be concerned with academic standards.

The point is, no matter how good the school, if you don't give people a comfortable place to live they're not going to like it. And if they don't like it, they'll transfer out. And the institution is the loser.

This seems to put us in double jeopardy. A college in a tight financial situation trying to make cutbacks can't afford to put money into dormitory improvements. But a college who doesn't give its residents satisfactory living conditions will lose those residents, and a lot of money with them.

It is the opinion of this newspaper that improvements to Mars Hill College dormitories would be money well spent, and would pay for themselves in the long run. Those of you in the administration wondering why so many are transferring out, don't discuss it among yourselves. Come to the source.



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Letters To The Editor Thank You

Dear Students:

Thank you for your support of our petition concerning better security around the women's dorms. We are hoping that appropriate action will be taken. Once again, our appreciation is extended to those of you who cared enough to help us out.

Terri Walker
Virginia Pumphrey
Karen Costello

THE HILLTOP



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