

Editorial

Just the Facts



Craig Cox
Columnist

Scraps

One of the banes of any writer is "writer's block." This condition not only afflicts seasoned writers, but comes home to us amateurs as well. This amateur has been hit particularly hard recently, especially considering the generous amount of space which I am asked to fill. The block comes not from having any topics about which to write, but rather from not having enough to say about a given topic. This column, then, is dedicated to miscellaneous observations and comments which may or may not have a particular theme. (I really won't know until I finish, because I'm making it up as I go along.)

I have received many compliments about this column, and I would like to publicly offer my thanks. The names are too numerous to mention, but be sure that I am indebted to both of you. On the other hand, I have also had reason to believe that some of my writing is not appreciated, and I would like to address that point before I make any serious enemies.

This column is not to be taken seriously. It is intended to be a humorous commentary on campus life, campus issues, or whatever else that I can think of when I have writer's block. I did not bribe anyone into letting me have space in the paper for fraternity-bashing, and if I offended anyone by having a laugh at the expense of the Greek associations here on campus, then I can only try to console that person by pointing out that I prefaced that by poking fun at myself as well. I do not wish to alienate any group on campus, but no group is likely to be exempt from having jokes made at its expense (bribes, however, will be considered). I hope that the different groups and organizations on campus have a sense of humor, especially Epicure, because their turn is coming rapidly. (Has anyone who got a kick out of Definitions looked up "epicure" in the dictionary? . . .)

As long as I have already started to drag Epicure through the mud, I might as well get it out of my system so I only have to publish one apology. It may be noted that in the first article, I left out a good definition for "food fight." In high school, this involved two or more students throwing food at each other. I have seen no less than eight food fights since I arrived here, and only one of those involved a student. In the other seven, four were won by the entree (3, 4, and 2 rounds respectively) two by the veggies and one by a dessert! I lost a lot on that last, having bet heavily on the casserole. The most remarkable battle I didn't actually get to witness, but saw the aftermath of a plate of spaghetti actually physically attacking a student. The person's name I don't know (and wouldn't reveal anyhow) but whoever it was wasn't very happy about the incident. The meal, as I recall, was charged with assault and pepper [stop the puns or I cut the column — ed.] Ok, I'll be good, I swear.

When I first came, I was amazed at the number of devout students who prayed before each meal. To thank God for a meal was a common thing at home, to be sure, but nobody in a school that I had attended ever thanked anyone for the meals there. I wondered about the devout attitudes around me until I got close enough to one of these people to hear them mutter, "Please God don't let this kill me." Now that I understand, I can be seen in the cafeteria occasionally praying over my food, too.

If you happen to be lucky (?) enough to get it all eaten before it wakes up, the responsibility of the defense of the body passes from the hands and silverware to the digestive system itself.

This often results in embarrassingly loud noses being made for no apparent reason. James Herriot, British veterinarian and author described the sound best in his book *All Things Bright and Beautiful* when he wrote, "the only other time I have heard such sounds was in a cow with an advanced case of displacement of the abomasum." Mr. Herriot had just finished a large roast beef sandwich, several beers, some large pickled onions, and a glass of some kind of liquor.

Having bitten the hand that feeds me, I must turn now to utter a short word in its defense, which is simply this: it could be worse. My roommate (who you may hear a lot about; he provides so much material for this column that I may ask him to write it a time or two) spent time at another school (which again will go nameless to avoid lawsuit); it was in the cafeteria at this college, he tells me, that the food service director was heard to say in a loud voice, "I don't care what color it is, I don't care what it smells like, and I don't care what's pupating in it! Just cover it with pasta and feed it to them!"

As an afterthought, I might add that in case the cafeteria workers decide to take this column seriously (in spite of the above disclaimer), that the picture that appears at the top looks absolutely nothing like me. Honestly.

So much for food. A subject about which I have been hearing a lot lately is C.L.P. I have asked around, and cannot reliably report whether this stands for "Community Life Program" or "Chapel Liability Problem;" it all depends on who you talk to. Possibly the whole problem is that not everyone has the same beef, if indeed everyone has a beef with CLP. I had the privilege of attending an entertaining meeting with Dean Schmeltekopf in the lobby of Myers Hall some time ago, and there was a disparity in the nature of complaints. The most famous, that of the student handbook passage, is being dealt with elsewhere, but some of the lesser complaints deserve attention as well.

"Put sporting events on the list! How can we assure attendance?" Simple: people attending home games, who want CLP credit, have a ball and chain placed on their ankles as they go in; when it comes off, the CLP point is earned.

"Put dances and other social events on the list! You don't get a good mix of students and faculty, as faculty don't generally attend student socials." Well, you didn't get a good student mix at chapel before it became CLP, either. Simply place a requirement on the faculty to show up at a certain number of events that they wouldn't ordinarily attend.

"Chapel is boring/so don't go, there are other options." Has anyone thought of inviting Richard Pryor or George Bush or some other celebrity to conduct chapel?

Of course, it will take time to get the new program into shape; but with helpful suggestions like these and students who are eager to work with the administration, we will soon have a committee-produced program which will be the wonder of college campuses for miles around.

A final word about writer's block: students who are concerned about writer's block, please send "Just the Facts" column ideas and large cash donations to: The Writers Block Foundation, Box 265C, Mars Hill College, NC 28754. The Foundation is a 100% profit, non-tax-deductible organization, and if you have bought any of this, please see me about a sweet real estate deal.

Forum

Letter to the Editor: Bryan Garmroth, Assistant Basketball Coach — In reference to Glenn Smith's article: "A Weighty Matter"

No one is more aware of the inconvenience caused by the delayed gym repair than those of us directly associated with Chambers Gymnasium. I would certainly like to apologize for this inconvenience. Your frustrations are definitely understandable.

In defense of the "powers that be," I would like to explain why certain decisions such as closing the student weight room and small gym were made. Your article indicated some animosity in the fact that the ten feet between the door and the student weight room was roped off, and that the small gym was closed. It is true there were only about five days that the particular areas in question would have been impassable. However, during this work period the large gym floor was often covered in wet floor seal and wet paint. Ideally, we would like to have closed only the main floor. However, if you were to spend thirty minutes around the gym at any given time, you would discover the lack of respect for the building regulations and gym floor. The open entrance next to the student weight room and into the large gym is presently roped off. This has proven to be very ineffective. The majority of people crawl through the ropes and stroll directly across the gym floor in a wide variety of shoes and boots. It was our assumption from past experience that if the student weight room and small gym were open during this period it would be impossible to prevent people, regardless of ropes and signs, from walking across the large gym floor.

Closing the building to all recreation was not a favorable choice. Although after watching people crawl through the ropes that are up now, I am convinced that it was the only way to protect the floor while it was being repaired.

The building is now open for recreation, and we encourage students, Golden "M" Club members, faculty, staff and dependents of faculty and staff to make use of its many benefits. We do ask that the new instructions, which are posted, be adhered to. There are routes to every area of the building without walking across the gym floor. Users are also reminded to bring an ID for admittance. The new guidelines, as were the repairs, are not intended to create inconveniences but to provide and maintain the best facilities possible at Mars Hill College.

To the Editor of the Hilltop,
A response to the Hilltop's own "political" cartoonist.

The fusing of President Ronald Reagan and David Lee Roth, without any political motive or suggestion, is an insult to journalism and Mars Hill College. If Mr. Gossett wishes to satirize Mr. Reagan on a particular political issue, more power to him. I do not object to this practice for it has been a vital part of the media for hundreds of years. However, the drawing that appeared in the October 2 issue of the Hilltop made no statement other than the fact that Mr. Gossett is adept at caricatures and is particularly equipped when it comes to expressing chest hair. This is an institution of higher learning. As students of this institution, we deserve more thought-provoking commentary and analysis.

Joseph W. Scott

The following is a list of the Hilltop's copy and distribution dates for upcoming editions. We welcome contributions, story ideas, and editorials.

Copy Dates	Distribution Dates
Oct. 16	Oct. 30
Oct. 27	Nov. 6
Nov. 10	Nov. 20
Dec. 1	Dec. 11

Offensive? Or Humorous?

Paige Lancaster
Guest Writer

"They're profane!"
"They're not helping the problem. They're making fun of it."
"How could anyone wear them?"
"I don't like gays. So I like the shirt."

"I think the shirts are a good idea, and people get the message."
Reaction to the message on T-shirts designed by a friend of John Weeks, a Mars Hill College senior, is definitely split.

After selling the shirts at his home in Virginia Beach, Va., Weeks decided to sell them at Mars Hill to make extra spending money. In three weeks he sold out his stock of 100 and has ordered more.

But many people are offended because of the message. The back says "STOP AIDS." On the front pocket are stick drawings of two figures in an "embrace." The words underneath are: "No N Da Butt."

"I'm sure people feel the shirts are profane, but they need to realize that [the shirts] are not aimed to cut anyone down; they primarily represent how the AIDS virus is spread," Weeks said.

"Homosexuality should be banned, and if gay people see these shirts they may think twice," a female senior said. Another student stated, "If wearing these shirts opens the eyes of the public, I hope everyone wears one."

Others disagree. "The T-shirts aren't helping the problem of AIDS. They are making fun of it," said one coed. "They're also making money from someone else's misery," added Dr. J. P. Schubert, professor of English.

"I consider it to be gross and unappropriate behavior on this college," stated Dr. Don Anderson, chairman of the Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Dr. Ken Sanchagrin feels even more strongly: "If a student came to my class wearing one, one of us would have to leave."

Some have other views. "I think they're humorous," one student said. "And it doesn't hurt to laugh at a problem every once in awhile."

Others believe that AIDS is in no way humorous. "Worldwide, AIDS is



Back of the T-shirt.

primarily a heterosexual disease. Only in America is it labeled as homosexual. And that perception is rapidly changing," stated another professor.

"When I first saw them, I felt the individuals were within their first amendment rights of freedom of speech," said Tim Story, a senior. However, I would think that mature individuals would have a moral obligation, especially toward this campus, not to display something that would offend a number of students. The message further promotes the hysteria based on false information surrounding the tragic disease, AIDS. It's a time for understanding and research. A lot of innocent people and children are contracting AIDS."

How AIDS came to the U.S. is in dispute. A letter in the Asheville Citizen-Times said that The British Medical Journal, April 1985, reported "the purchase of huge quantities of plasma from Haiti and Zaire in the 1970s by major American pharmaceutical companies. The plasma was pooled with hundreds of donations at a time, allowing one infected donation to contaminate hundreds."

"I think the AIDS T-shirts are a cruel joke or a serious problem. AIDS is killing us and only 10% [of the cases] are caused by homosexual activity. If they want to help the problem, the money should be sent to the AIDS foundation. It's like wearing a T-shirt with a stick figure and a line through it saying, 'No Starvation,'"

said Leah Pardue, a sophomore. Weeks defends his use of the stick figures by saying, "I don't think the T-shirts would sell if they had two people 'shooting up.'"

"I'm not trying to make any particular statement. I feel there is a humorous side to most everything. I realize the seriousness of AIDS and that one can get it many different ways. The initial spread of AIDS was mainly restricted to homosexuals," Weeks added.

Dr. Tom Plaut, professor of sociology, sees the T-shirts as vulgar not only because they portray anal sex but also because they scapegoat a particular element of the population.

"If you're going to have a T-shirt about AIDS, have one about the victim. T-shirts focus on homosexuality to the point where you wonder 'Is the shirt against AIDS or homosexuality?'" Plaut said. "What kind of response do you want people to have? Anger or compassion?"

Plaut compared the shirts to Hitler's blaming all Germany's economic problems after WWI on the Jews.

Thus, many people feel the shirts show discrimination and capitalize on prejudice. If so, "Are the shirts spreading homophobia when Christian compassion is needed?" one professor asked.

Whatever the answer, because of the controversy, more shirts probably will be sold.

NFL Strike: Give Me A B

Glenn Smith
Sports Editor

Well, they have done it. The National Football League has struck. Now check me if I'm doesn't it seem a little ridiculous someone who is getting paid of dollars to play a game? I'm not of line going on strike? I have never played the game. I'll give me 11 million and I will give you without a helmet or for the shoulder pads. If the NFL is trying to find a cure for the teaching our youth, I could they could warrant a strike. They are in the field of entertainment it is hard to feel sorry for so many other people have for ten times less than mediocre players get. I will they do work for years of talent to enable them to professional sports, but they that it is a gift and they honored to be chosen to play. The main strike negotiations seem issue of free agency and of years a player must be before he can declare free. The players want it to be while management wants Doesn't it seem that a seven years could be reached while, however, people MHC quarterback Joe Plaut giving it their best shot for five thousand dollars a

I arrived that had a crowd of people rather discussed about to ask m but then Christians are what I rearing in what are so eloquently "scab" games. I salute the Free Loaders (get it NFL) giving it their best shot for five thousand dollars a

Person just w

Keith Kramer
Guest Writer

Last night a young woman with through, but I felt comp that he this experience of dying as father was a young woman of 30 (her year-old daughter. Leukemia cause of death.

We had talked during didn't realize at the time she was. She took a big 5:00 p.m. and her dropped to nearly nothing help of some fluids, she up into the 90's (systolic was no sure). But in a short time, fall again for the last

Earlier in our talks I had been a bit confused some of the things she made too much sense as all. I asked me if I thought wives and get out of here. I told her but that we could try to give up hope. And after her, I wasn't sure that the right advice.

It had been a painful her family battling this loss of hair and discolor products of the last year. She started to go, and I knew this was it. It was a struggle, but it wasn't right hope and nothing for me do but watch her die.

It was quiet among held her hand and strok an attempt to somehow in life. We repeatedly was not alone; we were would not leave her. I there was comfort in the sions for her. Her heart and she took her last secretary hugged her n ran down their cheeks. when we called upon G other for strength to t stand. Holding her hand prayer for her as she d had ended, and I felt mine go with her.

Friday Children

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ENTER THE IMAGINATION Chapter III

After a mystical doorway appears in Gerard's bedroom, he passes through finding himself in another plane of existence!

Follow me Gerard of the Reality Plane

Maybe I should've picked door #2!

Be not afraid! Who are you, and why am I here? Your questions will soon be answered.

... a shrouded figure wearing a golden mask. His voice echoes throughout eternity, yet is soothingly paternal.

Created by Mike Houston

Gerard of the Reality Plane, you have been chosen as last hope for existence. Our plane of imagination through which you will survive any chance of surviving the real world. You are now in the world of imagination. Will Gerard help the masked figure? Find out the whole story in the next issue!