

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK: Notes From a Closet Humanist

By Laura Woodworth

In last month's editorial I discussed the situation of gay students at NCSSM. Now I'll discuss another oppressed minority here: the humanists.

Those who know me well know that I consider myself a humanist and that I am sometimes militant about it. I am out of place here. That makes it difficult for me to criticize the school. The things that bother me about NCSSM don't bother many other students.

I don't want to feed you more cliches about being well-rounded. We get enough of

Seniors Advance in Westinghouse Competition

By Kenro Kusumi

NCSSM seniors Will Carr and Craig Steffee have been named to the Honors Group of the 43rd annual Westinghouse Science Talent Search Competition. Out of the students nationwide who entered the Westinghouse competition, 300 students were selected to be in this Honors Group for "evidence of ability and interest in science." Steffee and Carr were the only students in the state of North Carolina to be selected for the Westinghouse Honors Group.

Carr's project, entitled "Spatial Orientation of Crayfish Using Plane Polarized Light", describes his behavioral research with the response of crayfish to uniplanar light. When Carr heard the good news, he was both surprised and excited, but in retrospect explained, "when I did the project initially, I did not know I would get into as much mathematics and physics."

Steffee's project, "Clinical Applications of Ion Exchange Resins in Collections of Urine Sodium", was done during his mentorship at Duke University, where he worked on the construction of an ion exchange resin device to extract the sodium out of a urine sample. Ion exchange resins rely on the ionic properties of molecules to differentiate anions and cations. When he heard that he had been included in the 1984 Honors Group, Steffee reported, "I was very surprised, myself; the results

that in our propaganda. Instead, let me ask you a question: Is well-roundedness always a desirable goal? Isn't it possible that in a frenetic effort to be all-round students we might become dabblers in all fields and masters in none?

Students who have the talent and desire to become chemists, physicians, physicists, mathematicians, etc., should be allowed to pursue their goals. This means not saddling them with more than a minimum of humanities courses (say, two.)

Likewise, students whose abilities and interests lie in

that I had were not solidly entrenched in data."

Steffee's faculty sponsor, Martha Jenner, and Carr's sponsor, Mary Louise Bellamy, said that Steffee and Carr did much of their research on their own at their former schools. Jenner added that their achievements "are a very good indication of what can be done at NCSSM in the future." She went on to say, "We hope that students who are interested in independent research projects will check to see if the resources are available."

Composer at Work at NCSSM

By Lillian Rinker

Did you know that there may be a budding composer in our midst. Although she has never had formal training on any musical instrument or in music theory, she finished a significant piece for the piano during her junior year. Presently, she has completed one piece for the flute and has started a string trio. Since the start of the school year, she has been taking an independent study in music composition under the guidance of Steve Hicken, music instructor.

Angela Womack has studied various composers such as Elliott Carter, Paul Pacioni, and Dmitri Stravinsky, among others, to learn from their compositional techniques. She also studies different methods of composition, including: using atonal music (a twelve-tone system where a half step instead of a whole step equals an octave); taking a cell (where three or so intervals are chosen and a piece is composed from variations of the three intervals; and, using a row (a sequence of numbers, 0-11, which are used in different patterns to compose a

literature, history and social sciences, art, and philosophy should not be forced to gain more than basic knowledge in science and mathematics.

NCSSM is giving neither the science and math types nor the humanists what they want. There are far too many requirements here for anyone to do good work in his best subject.

Ostensibly, NCSSM is for students with ability and interest in science and mathematics. In reality, it is a school for gifted students to which the S and M name was tacked in order to get money from the state legislature. We have here students who are not getting what they want academically.

The way to solve this problem is for NCSSM to be what it says it is: a school of science and mathematics. Students like me should never be admitted here. Then, for us, the North Carolina School of the Humanities would be built. There is a real need for NCSH; I hope it is founded soon.

piece). She plans to compose some electronic music during the second semester.

Womack says her compositions bring her immense enjoyment, but that there is frustration at times. For example, she believes the pressures from other classes stifle her creativity in musical composition. Composition of tonal music (ie., music similar to that of J. S. Bach, Beethoven, pop music, etc.) can be discouraging as it tends to sound very much alike. Because of this characteristic, it is difficult to develop an independent style of composition. Lastly, it is terribly frustrating when she thinks of a beautiful passage and then is unable to write it down due to circumstances or the difficulty of the passage.

Womack hopes to attend a college or university with a good music composition department. Although she is not yet sure what she wants to do with her musical gift, she emphatically states that she will continue with it in some capacity. An event to look forward to this spring will be a concert featuring some of her recent works!

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