

# Somthing Inside Of Me Says I Have To Give A Damn

PHOTOS AND STORY BY ALAN GUGGENHEIM



David Blevins spoke to a small crowd at the Moratorium meeting here at UNCC last Friday. In his brief talk, he reiterated his opposition to the war in Vietnam and said that the thrust of his court action against the Disruption Policy of the University will still intact.

In a more candid remark to the audience, Blevins revealed his reason for his constant work for social change: "Something inside me says that I have to give a damn."



DAVID BLEVINS: "RATHER WEIRD"

If David Blevins had the time, he would probably be a normal person living in the nine-to-five rut with two weeks paid vacation each year.

However, Blevins works far more than eight hours a day for the Charlotte Area Fund. He is happily single and rooms with two other men, one of whom is black. They live in a predominantly black Ponderosa section of town because, "the people don't hassle us as much here about having racially mixed meetings and parties."

Blevins was evicted from a white apartment during the summer of 1968 because of his integrated parties and meetings.

On Sundays, Blevins regularly

leaves his black neighborhood and drives across town to Myers Park Baptist Church. He is on a "close personal basis with the minister," though some of the members consider him "rather weird." Others are "very, very opposed to my actions," and tell him so every Sunday.

Blevins is an unconventional graduate of Wheaton College in Illinois with a masters degree in social work from Columbia University in New York.



## MORATORIUM - "A SIMPLE THING"

The neatly bearded Blevins first came to the public's attention Oct. 15, 1969 when he violated the statement of University policy adopted by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina.

The particular chapter violated was Section 5-1, part b which is: ANY FACULTY MEMBER (INCLUDING ANY FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME INSTRUCTOR) WHO, WITH INTENT TO OBSTRUCT OR DISRUPT THE NORMAL OPERATIONS OR FUNCTIONS OF ANY OF THE COMPONENT INSTITUTIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY, WILLFULLY FAILS OR REFUSES TO CARRY OUT VALIDLY ASSIGNED DUTIES SHALL BE SUBJECT TO DISCHARGE.

Blevins was a part-time instructor teaching an extension course for the Chapel Hill based Graduate School of Social Work. During the class period prior to the Oct. 15th National Moratorium Day, Blevins told his class that they would have to meet without him on the 15th. He wished to observe the Vietnam Moratorium and to help the opposition to the war by boycotting his class. The School of Social Work in Chapel Hill was also notified of his intentions and they sent a substitute to conduct his class.

By this simple act of cancelling his class, Blevins became embroiled in the most controversial issue on the six campuses of the Consolidated University. President William Friday said that Blevins was the only teacher at any UNC branch who failed to meet his classes on Oct. 15. As a result of his classroom absence, Blevins was tried by a University Hearing Committee which ruled last Jan. 20, that he had violated University regulations. There was one dissenting vote in the ruling, and it was cast by law professor and former Chancellor, William B. Aycock.

Ten days after this preliminary ruling, Blevins and his attorney, Adam Stein of Charlotte, asked

U.S. Middle District Court of Greensboro to reinstate him as an instructor because there had been no final ruling in his case and therefore was still, "pending before the University Hearing Committee." Blevins named Chancellor J. Carlyle Sitterson and Consolidated University President Friday as defendants in this new trial.

Though a final ruling had not been delivered by President Friday, he said two days after Blevins took his case to Middle District Court, that he "considered the case closed, because," Blevins' instructorship contract with the Chapel Hill Graduate School had expired.



BLEVINS: "I AM NOT DISCOURAGED"

However the case was not closed according to Blevins. Since Oct. 15 the issues in the case had grown far more complex than just simple opposition to the war in Vietnam. At different times during his trial by the Hearing Committee, Blevins said that he wanted, "to establish the right of a professor to speak his conscience as long as he does it responsibly," and that secondly, he wanted, "to teach and establish my right to teach."

This new appeal for academic freedom, "on behalf of both me and all of the University professors," had been his defense for cutting class. He considered his dismissal, retaliation "for exercising his Constitutional rights."

U.S. Middle District Court Judge, Eugene Gordon, found last Friday that there should be a hearing to decide the issues Blevins raised concerning the constitutionality of his dismissal.

Judge Gordon however, declined to issue an injunction forcing the Chapel Hill Graduate School to reinstate him as an instructor.

Blevins said that he was not discouraged by the ruling because the main purpose of his suit is to challenge the constitutionality of the Disruption Policy of the Consolidated University.

In a letter of appreciation directed to the UNCC Student Legislature for their gift of \$100 to the Blevins Legal Defense Fund, Blevins said, "If I win the suit, this will not only vindicate me, but it will provide some assurance to other professors and instructors that they do not need to fear oppression or reprisals. Thirdly, I sincerely hope the concept of academic freedom and the right of effective freedom of speech will be strengthened as a result of the testing of the Policy."

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