

# 82-year-old author promotes autobiography

By HELENE COOPER  
Staff Writer

Virginia Foster Durr leaned forward, stubbed out the half-smoked Marlboro cigarette in her hand and began her talk about growing up as a "Southern lady" in Alabama.

"In my day, if you wanted to work and keep your status as a southern lady, you either taught school or opened a tea room," she said. "If worse came to worse, you could work in a department store."

Durr said she had experienced a great deal during her 82 years. She has been subpoenaed for supposedly trying to overthrow the government, has helped bail out Rosa Parks, who is credited

with initiating the Civil Rights Movement, and has recently published her oral autobiography *Outside the Magic Circle*.

She sat in the Bull's Head Bookshop Monday to discuss her autobiography before an audience of about 30 people.

Throughout American history, everything has been done to benefit the white Southern "lady," she said. "... (But) while blacks were treated very badly, Southern white women were treated badly, too."

Most American women want to be free to work but also want to get married, Durr said. "My advice to you is to marry a man who can cook."

Durr also discussed everything from

"Mr. Reagan" to sex education in the 1920s, which was quite lacking, she said.

"They showed us a couple who met and shook hands ... then kissed ... then got married ... and two weeks later had a baby," Durr said, smiling. "We couldn't figure out what happened between the wedding and the baby."

As for President Ronald Reagan, Durr was quite candid about her feelings. "I will announce firmly that I hate Mr. Reagan," she said. "He's the biggest fool I've seen in 82 years."

Durr said she was concerned about the fate of black men, adding that jobs, not morals, were the problem in black single parent homes today.

"They (black men) have no jobs, and

Mr. Reagan has no plans of giving them any jobs," she said. "They get young girls pregnant and can't stay home and take care of them, because they don't have the money."

Durr said she knew of no way in the state of Alabama to appeal to Reagan to give jobs to young blacks. "We're appealing to a government who doesn't give a damn," she said.

Durr invited members of the audience to disagree with her comments. "At least you have free speech in North Carolina (unlike Alabama)," she joked.

A lively debate with the audience about Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* followed. Durr said the book was an example of pure racism, because the two black men in the novel were not representative of all black men. Most black men do not rape their children, she said.

Durr did not simply answer questions from her rapt audience, however, for she had plenty of her own to ask.

"How in the hell can an educated state like North Carolina send Jesse Helms to the United States Senate?" she asked her audience members, who quickly pointed out that Helms did not carry Orange County.

## Assembly to determine who won in Philippines election

From Associated Press reports

MANILA, Philippines — The government-dominated National Assembly held the first meeting Monday on its official vote canvass, which by law will determine who won the disputed presidential election.

In the slow count of ballots cast last Friday, the government election commission showed President Ferdinand E. Marcos leading by 53 percent to 47. An unofficial count by a citizen's poll-watching group of more votes showed challenger Corason Aquino ahead by the same margin.

### Pope ends pilgrimage

BOMBAY, India — Pope John Paul II ended his pilgrimage to India

## news in brief

Monday, urging an audience of 100,000 to press for change through peace and nonviolence, even as Hindu militants tried to burn him in effigy.

The pontiff flew to Rome after the 10-day, 14-city tour that was his 29th foreign trip and his longest to a non-Christian country.

Police detained a small group of Hindu fundamentalists, who arrived carrying black flags and banners reading "Pope, go back" and "The Pope is the agent of the CIA." Several others tried to burn an effigy of the pontiff, but police stopped them and took them away.

## Non-student classes open

By ALICIA LASSITER  
Staff Writer

Triangle area residents can take non-credit classes on topics ranging from swimming to U.S. national security policy, this spring.

The series of classes, titled "Carolina Community Courses," is offered through UNC's Extension and Continuing Education Division, said Bobby Wagoner, assistant director for Continuing Education.

"We sent memorandums to the faculty members to find out what courses would be of interest in the community," Wagoner said. The classes are designed to meet the needs of adults in the area, he said, but students are

not excluded.

The courses have no entrance requirements, but fees range from \$25 to \$100. "We don't try to generate funds but to break even," Wagoner said.

Some of these courses have been offered in the past under different titles, he said. "In the past, the response has been very good."

Swimming classes are offered Jan. 29 through March 7 and March 19 through April 25 for adults over age 21 who want to improve ordinary or competitive swimming skills.

Another class, "Russia: Past, Present and Future," will examine Gorbachev, Marxist-Leninist ideology and the differences in Russian and American tradition and culture. It will be offered Feb. 20 through April 17.

"Reading Speed and Comprehension," offered Feb. 24, is designed to improve speed and efficiency in business, professional or personal reading.

Other classes offered are "Using Mass Media Effectively," "Developing People and Performance for Managers," "Your Personal Health," "American National Security Policy," "Beginning Sculpture of the Human Head," "Sex Hormones and Reproduction," "Basic Sailing and Seamanship," "Camping Skills for Women," "Understanding Statistics," "Practical Strategies for Managing Stress" and "Communicating at Work."

Interested people should register in person or by telephone and credit card number at least one week before the beginning of the course. For more information or to register, call the Division of Extension and Continuing Education, 962-1106.

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