

W&L SPECTATOR

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 2

MARCH 1995



JOHN W. ELROD

WASHINGTON AND LEE'S NEXT PRESIDENT

RG 39

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WASHINGTON AND LEE SPECTATOR

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Locker Room Talk for Lee Chapel

From the hype that surrounded "Hot, Sexy and Safer," one would have thought that it was the most important event at Washington and Lee this year. Originally scheduled for Lee Chapel, the program was moved with less than a week's notice. Apparently, after the posters went up advertising "Free Condoms," enough of the student body protested to change the location. The speaker, Suzi Landolphi, took pride in mentioning the "controversy" more than four times in the opening minutes. For many people, however, moving it to Evans Dining Hall might not have been far enough.

Landolphi has made her reputation through appearances on the numerous sensationalized tabloid talk shows, including Sally Jesse Raphael, Ricki Lake, and Jenny Jones. With credentials such as these, students must start wondering when Michelle Richardson will find it necessary to bring UFO abductees and transvestite prostitutes to speak in Lexington and start hitting up student organizations to fund it. Since when did appearing on tabloid television shows develop into proper references for addressing W&L?

With this sort of background,

one could have easily predicted the result. Landolphi's behavior was deplorable. Her program revolved around gossip over such topics as: masturbation, looking at one's private parts in the mirror, achieving orgasms, and, of course,



"Ever seen one of these little boy?"

oral sex. Her mannerisms consisted mainly of spiritedly running around seeking male students to drag on stage for "audience participation." The embarrassed participants were asked to do things such as portray a homosexual person or kneel down while Ms. Landolphi and a female participant (the only one

involved in the entire show) placed a condom over his head.

The night consisted mainly of energetic male-bashing which kicked into high-gear midway through the program as Landolphi chastised society again and again for "hundreds of thousands of years" of male domination and forced feminine submission. While much of the program was somewhat amusing, most of the cheers and laughs came from girls. But not everybody was amused or even pleased. After the program, a few girls claimed that they wanted to leave but worried about being "singled out" or "embarrassed" by Landolphi, so they just sat through the ninety minute tirade. These worries appear to be well-founded, considering one person who left toward the end was referred to -- drawing the audience's attention. Some guys, too, were heard complaining that the event was a "waste of time."

Ms. Landolphi's closing diatribe sounded like a litany of liberal mush. She claimed that we should all try to end racism, sexism and homophobia. She also claimed that stereotyping AIDS as a homosexual or drug-user disease was wrong, yet her argument seemed to encourage a blind acceptance of these

tatistically high-risk lifestyles. Even ignoring her misleading statements and purposeless message, it is clear that her antics served mostly to just irritate or embarrass the people listening. Any positive aspect to "Hot, Sexy and Safer" was lost on a majority of the people. Even her claim toward the end to have an HIV positive brother fell on many deaf ears, as most people just wanted to get out and try to catch the end of *Seinfeld*.

This presentation should be kicked back to the tabloids, the only place where behavior such as this is condoned and welcomed.

What Landolphi prefers to call her clitoris and when she had her first orgasm in gym class are irrelevant. What is important is the question of why the school would bring a forty-four year old woman to this campus who never seemed to leave locker-room dialogue in the locker room. Her presentation is the kind that would cause even Andrew Dice Clay to cringe. There must be other, more qualified speakers that could have come in her place and delivered an informative and helpful presentation on sexual issues.

What this says about the taste of the "Dean of Fun," Michelle Richardson is alarming. This was her show. She went to student organizations with the idea of bringing this specific program to Lee Chapel. If there was anyone who was aware of the program's content, it was Washington and Lee's own Student Activities Coordinator. Regardless, Ms. Richardson wanted to hold this event in Lee Chapel. This event brings into question the

motivations behind hiring a student activities coordinator and promoting this type of "educational" programming at

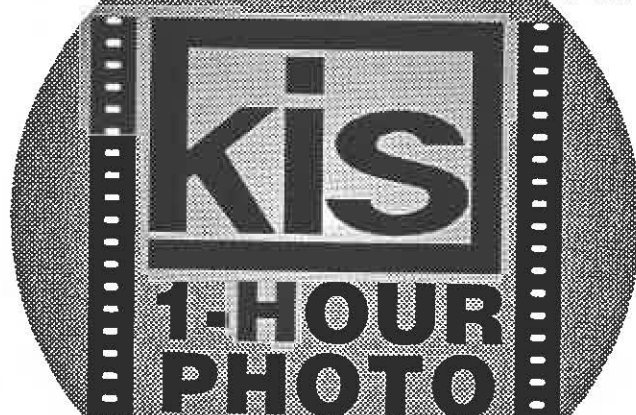
This event brings into question the motivations behind hiring a student activities coordinator and promoting this type of "educational" programming at W&L.

W&L. It is unfortunate that it required student protests to remind the school's administrators of the sacredness of Lee Chapel, and it is disappointing that the administration does not listen to

student opinion more frequently.

Yet, even more surprising is that four student organizations contributed to this fiasco. Student organizations should use student funds more responsibly and resist the pressure from administrative agendas. If they had acted more responsibly, then maybe the University would have hosted a better speaker; people might have learned something useful about HIV; and Michelle Richardson could receive a pat on the back. As it stands, Landolphi's program was a bomb -- unless points are now given to speakers based on the quantity of people they harass and offend.

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Gaines, It's the Damnedest Thing

Too High A Cost

Recently, Dean Howison under the direction of the Board of Trustees lifted off from his Ivory Tower in yet another administrative trial balloon. The issue is a possible sophomore housing requirement. While Dean Howison may think he is Charles Lindbergh, we the students of Washington and Lee know he and all adherents to such a policy are not such great pioneers. Rather, they are misdirected and lost pilots.

A sophomore housing requirement would destroy student autonomy and erase the tradition thereof. In addition

the policy would disproportionately affect Washington and Lee's female students. Though such a change undeniably would bring some financial

I would argue that the nature of our social interaction is determined by who we are as individuals, not by where we reside.

benefits to the school, is it worth selling our souls for a few pieces of silver? I think if we examine this issue on both a

philosophical and a practical level we will see that such a policy is ill-advised.

Germination of the Idea

The prospect of a sophomore housing requirement arose last spring during a meeting of the Board of Trustees. The Budget and Audit Committee proposed that Dean Howison examine the housing issue. Dean Howison later broached the matter during an October meeting of the Campus Life Committee. This wonderful committee on Campus Life,

however, has no student member, a dubious sign. There were three students present (Kevin Batteh, Kelly Brotzman, and Elise Brown), but they were there on other and unrelated business. Hence, they had not had a chance to develop what may be called student opinion. This makes us wonder to what degree Washington Hall values student opinion.

November 4, 1994

Dean Howison distributes a memorandum on the possibility of a housing requirement. While such a requirement is supposedly only under discussion, this interesting document implies that the administration has actually gone further than a simple broaching of the subject. In fact, the memorandum states, "[u]nder this plan, seniors and juniors would continue to choose whatever housing options they prefer and would be given priority in requests for University housing." In addition the memorandum outlines the reasons for the development of this "residential plan for the future."

Reason Number 1: The housing policy would "improve the educational and social interaction among students." "Improve..social interaction." Is the Hill



really so arrogant as to state that it knows what "improves social interaction?" Fellow students, are our methods of social interaction solely the product of our housing arrangements? I would argue that the value of social interaction is determined by the participants. Furthermore, to the Hill, I would argue that the nature of our social interaction is determined by who we are as individuals, not by where we reside.

Reason Number 2: The Housing Policy would bring in extra revenue for the school to "support student life at Washington and Lee, including financial aid, books for the library and renovation of residence halls." While the validity of this argument cannot be denied, I think we must ask ourselves if we truly believe the extra money would go completely for books, aid, etc. The more likely scenario probably falls along these lines: The administration is now bringing in \$200,000 more annually. Consequently, the school can build a student center which would provide an environment conducive to appropriate "social" behavior. Clearly, this would help "improve social interaction." The school could appoint Michelle Richardson the center's director, increase her budget, and simultaneously phase out the Student Activities Board, Contact, and all other student-run organizations.

What happens if students choose not to use this "appropriate" social environment? The Hill will simply increase the number of weekends on which to prohibit fraternity parties. In addition, once fraternity rush has been forceably moved to the winter term despite the overwhelming student opposition, the freshmen and the upperclassmen will need something to do. With mandatory freshmen attendance at these "appropriate social activities," the entire fall term will be similar to the freshmen orientation

week's "playfair."

Explaining the Off-Campus Trend

While nothing in the above scenarios may be particularly frightening to you, there is an underlying question which must be answered. Why do students choose to live off-campus in the first place? This is the question no one seems able to answer. Yet the administration is willing to break 120 years of tradition and limit student autonomy so it can break this trend and *socially engineer* a correct environment. Are students currently not able to choose to live on-campus if they so desire? Are prospective students not told when they take the W&L tour that the main reason students live off campus is that Robert E. Lee himself encouraged students to live in and interact with the local community.

If Gaines and Woods Creek were

really what the students wanted, there would be a waiting list to get rooms. The administration argues that all incoming freshmen would know about the housing requirement, and thus they would be making their decision to attend Washington and Lee with full knowledge about their living arrangements. I ask, do these incoming freshmen really have all the information they need to make an appropriate decision? Has the administration told these future students that the school currently cannot fill its wonderful housing units and hence found it necessary to create the housing requirement? Do these future students know why present students choose to live off-campus? Does the Hill know why students choose to live off-campus?



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campus?

The budgetary concerns arising from high vacancy rates should indeed be an issue with which the administration must concern itself. The solution, however, is not to limit student autonomy when the budgetary impact is significant but not threatening to the school's financial stability. In addition the administration should avoid making statements which connote a desire to socially engineer student lives. The value of social interaction should be determined by the participants, not by an administrator who has listened to the minority which is unhappy with current social trends. Rather, those discontented with the situation, including the administration, should put their liberal arts education to use developing creative solutions which inspire and convince students to change their behavior and their housing patterns. Great leaders inspire, not require, action from their followers.

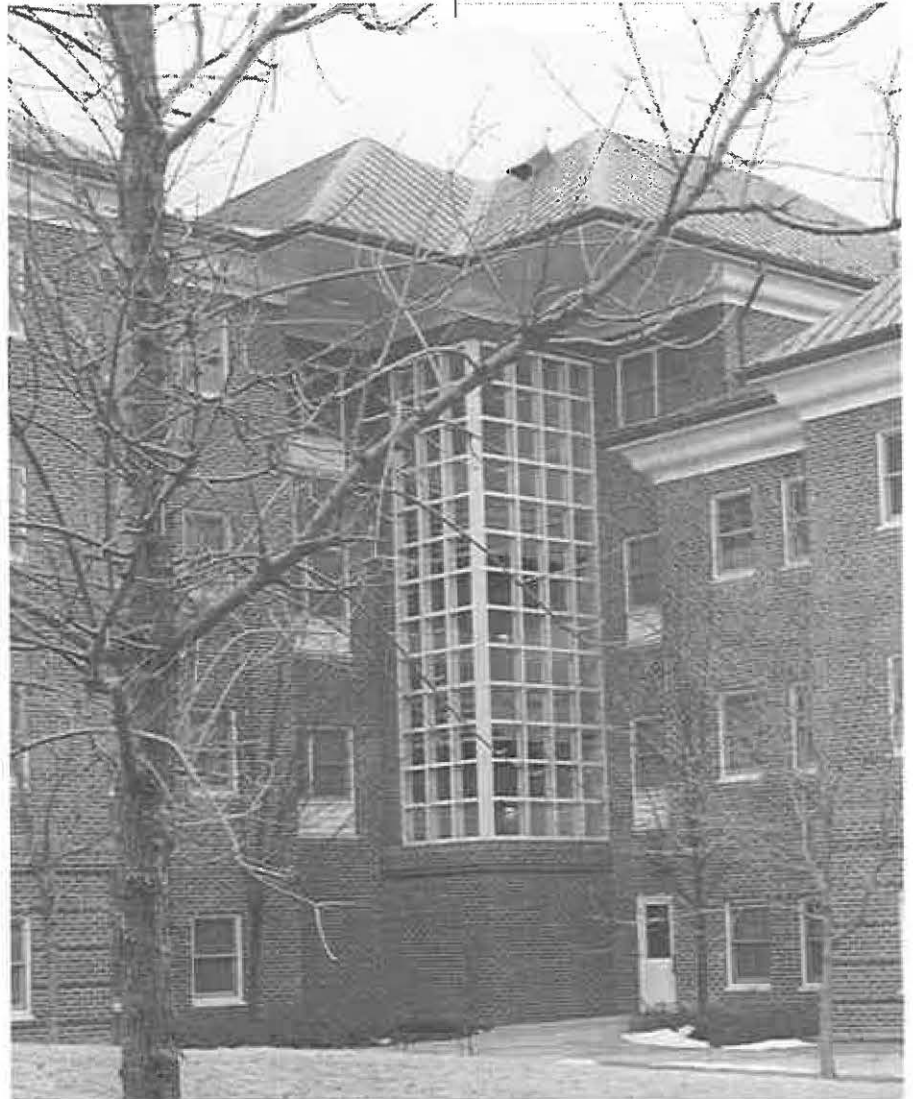
The housing requirement would also disproportionately affect female students. Our fraternity system has an 85% participation rate. Consequently, most sophomore males, except those in a large pledge class, would continue their current housing patterns of living in the fraternity house even with a housing requirement. Sophomore females, on the other hand, would be forced to give up the choice of living in a house with a large room, den, kitchen, etc. in exchange for Gaines and Woods Creek. Is it fair to solve our housing problems by asking our female students to disproportionately bear the burden of failed administrative efforts? The Hill, if it truly made an effort to ascertain student opinion and the reasons behind the off-campus trend, might find that it is precisely the female students who have the greatest incentives to live off-campus. For example, most female students cook for themselves because of the lack of dining facilities which meet their needs

and desires. Thus, they choose to live in a house where they can share a kitchen with 2 or 3 roommates. If they were forced to live in Gaines they would have to share a kitchen with at least a half of people. Most male students, however, choose the option of eating at their fraternity house or cooking for themselves.

The administration enjoyed a good start last year in increasing the number of upperclass students living on campus by encouraging students to defer the housing decision. The new campus housing brochures are also appealing. The administration should continue such efforts to raise the occupancy level in Gaines and Woods Creek. It should, however, avoid establishing requirements which spit in the face of Washington and Lee's strong tradition

of student autonomy on and off campus. The challenge for the administration is to truly understand the needs and wishes of the student body not to make changes because of past administrative failures. The administration should not assume that it has students' support simply because they have not spoken. Only by understanding the students can the university develop a comprehensive housing policy that is acceptable to students and financially feasible. Thus I suggest that Washington Hall put forth a better effort in assessing student opinion, marketing on-campus housing options, and recognizing the unique traditions and developmental patterns of the school.

Unfortunately, the Board of Trustees approved the new housing plan before we went to press.



Student Revolts at W&L, Not Even a Thing of the Past

Every prospective W&L student is indoctrinated with the school's history when he or she first comes to visit the University. This story, however, has probably never been told on any tour given by the school. It is about a time when America was in chaos, and some Washington and Lee students, generally a rather politically apathetic group, spoke out against the Federal government and the policies of the Administration.

Across America, universities were paralyzed by student demonstrations and strikes against the Vietnam War and its prosecution by the Nixon Administration. Events reached a climax on Monday, May 4, 1970, when National Guard units shot dead four students at Kent State while trying to disperse a demonstration. Students across the country organized fervent protests against the establishment that they believed had betrayed them.

Following the shootings at Kent State, Washington and Lee underwent a week and a half of turmoil that threatened to close down the University and soil its proud heritage. Immediately following the shootings in Ohio, many other colleges suspended classes for the remainder of the term as students set out to protest. These students were generally given full credit for the work they completed with a pass/fail grade.

During the evening of Tuesday, May 5, senior Jeff Gingold organized a rally in front of Lee Chapel with the help of several leftist demonstrators from UVA and a few W & L faculty members. They were trying to enlist support from the student body for a strike of classes so that people could attend an anti-war rally at UVA on Wednesday. Speaking at the rally were Jerry Rubin, a member of the infamous Chicago Seven, and the attorney for that organization, William Kunstler. Though an outright strike did

not take place, many students did make the trip up to Charlottesville for the demonstration. Despite Gingold's efforts, the strike never garnered much support at Washington & Lee.

Following the lead of other universities in America, a few Washington & Lee students prepared a proposal

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calling for the cancellation of classes for the rest of the term. On the evening of Thursday, May 7, students held a meeting to draft the resolution. This document was approved by the 1970 and 1971 Executive Committees that Sunday evening. Numerous rallies were held to garner support for the student resolution, which was voted on in a special referendum on Monday, May 11.

The results of the vote were overwhelmingly in favor of the student proposal, gathering an 80.7% approval with 96.5% of the student body voting. The proposal submitted to the faculty called for a "soft-shutdown" (*Ring-Tum Phi* May 8, 1970). This action suspended all classes unless students individually arranged with their professors to continue their work for the rest of the semester. All other students would receive a grade of pass or fail based on the work they had completed up to that time.

President Robert E. R. Huntley called a special faculty meeting to discuss the student proposal. As the meeting began, President Huntley plainly stated that there was no way he would allow the University to close its doors for the rest of the term. With that in mind, he agreed to

hear any proposals from faculty members. After much heated debate, the faculty agreed that students who decline to complete their work could suspend one or more courses until September 30, 1970. All work not completed at the end of the term would be given the grade of "I" until the work was completed. Seniors

who did not take their final exams could return in September to finish their course work and graduate in October.

Though several professors objected to this measure, it seemed the only way to maintain peace on campus and keep the University open. Some

students were greatly upset at the changes the faculty made to their proposal, but student opposition quickly died. In an effort to help educate students on the events in Indochina, the faculty also promised to devote the resources of the university to a series of seminars on the war and that tumultuous region.

While all these events unfolded at Washington & Lee, the United States was in turmoil. Many people believed the dominance of conservatism in American society had ended and that a major social revolution was at hand. Many liberal students and journalists across the country believed that the fundamental ideas and traditions that America was built on were obsolete and a radical change must ensue if America was to survive. At Washington & Lee, more conservative minds hoped to weather the tempest by holding on to the conservative traditions which had guided the University for generations, allowing the commotion to pass. Many radicals preached messianic speeches declaring that the establishment was dead and a new revolution was about to be born. In the long run, the traditions of America and Washington & Lee held firm against

this attack.

During the dramatic speeches and rallies that occurred in the week following the Kent State deaths, many rumors circulated around the campus. These rumors stated that radical socialists from UVA were going to come down to Washington & Lee to destroy the University's most venerated monument, Lee Chapel. The radicals saw the Chapel as a symbol of the establishment and hoped to make a dramatic statement by their wanton destruction.

Professor Henry Sloss of the Washington & Lee English department had become since his arrival a friend to the more radical elements of the Washington & Lee student body. He was a young and wealthy man who had many leftist ideas that did not fit the generally conservative W&L atmosphere. He was, however, now an ally and hero to the liberal counter-culture at Washington and Lee.

Following the Kent State shootings, Professor Sloss was instrumental in persuading the students to use peaceful demonstrations and in encouraging dialogue between the student radicals led by Jeffrey Gingold and the administration. He helped the students organize demonstrations and was very vocal in his support for the cancellation of classes. In the faculty meeting on May 11, Sloss spoke in favor of the petition despite the stipulation set at the beginning of the discussion by President Huntley that the school would not close.

Professor Sloss later changed direction when he heard the rumors about the radicals from UVA coming down to tear up the campus. He promised to defend Lee Chapel against such students and did help moderate a situation one evening when a group of angry people began to circle the chapel. In the long run, the attack never came and no campus property was damaged during that week.

By the time everyone's emotions had settled, the entire event turned out to be quite a fiasco. Many students took

advantage of the extension and left campus. Upon returning in September, they discovered they had a double work load and many suffered academically. Also, many had forgotten the material over the summer and their grades in many cases fell as a result of the delay in

The radicals saw the Chapel as a symbol of the establishment and hoped to make a dramatic statement by their wanton destruction.

testing. One student even told a professor that the only reason he had left was that he wanted a vacation before he had to start business school in June. The student was willing to walk out on Washington & Lee, but not his future graduate school.

The student strikes all across America had almost no impact on the policies of President Nixon, who regarded all the students as spoiled rich kids who did not understand what was really happening in Indochina. President Huntley stood strongly in the face of the liberal attack to defend the reputation and integrity of Washington & Lee. Washington & Lee and Swarthmore College were the only two major colleges in the region to hold out against the student attacks and not shut their doors that spring.

This spring will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Kent State affair and the time

"when W&L stuck one toe into the boiling waters of campus protest." (Dr. J. D. Futch)

The *Spectator* would like to thank Dr. J. D. Futch and Dr. John Evans for their contributions to this article.



An Interview with W&L's New President

The announcement of John William Elrod as Washington and Lee's twenty-second president ended what the Reverend R. David Cox called "the best kept secret in Lexington's history." In his acceptance remarks, Elrod was very complimentary of his predecessor, John Wilson, and was hesitant to get into what he called "what if" discussions. Therefore, it is unlikely that Elrod will announce any major policy changes until after July first when he takes office. Nevertheless, in this candid interview, the W&L community can get a sense of Elrod's direction for the future.

Compare your college experience at Presbyterian College (Clinton, South Carolina)

with Washington and Lee.

There were good, rich student faculty ratios in both places. Both are liberal arts colleges with an emphasis on the arts and the sciences...Division three athletics. There's a fraternity system at Presbyterian. Six fraternities when I was there as opposed to the seventeen here. They were very important on the campus, and I was an active member of Sigma Nu my years at Presbyterian. We had

delayed rush there. It was easy and important to get close to one's professors. I still remember very fondly many of my teachers and especially those that were teaching in the English Department which was the department I majored in. It was mostly an all-male school. It did not become a seriously



coeducational institution until after I left in the early sixties.

Do you feel that your background as a philosopher will help shape your vision for W&L's future?

Oh, I don't think there's a connection between my interest and training in philosophy and my vision for Washington and Lee. My own thinking about the institution has been largely shaped by the institution itself. I am more bound

by the traditions and values and ways of doing things at Washington and Lee. Those are what shape my view of what the institution is and ought to be. Philosophy is good for analytical thinking and for weighing options and giving reasons. I think it helps you think more clearly about things, and in that sense, it's useful to me as an administrator and as a teacher.

From the standpoint of an academician, how do you think that your style of leadership will differ from John Wilson's whose background was as an administrator?

I wouldn't want to compare my style of leadership with John Wilson's because I think that the differences in people's leadership styles are almost as different as the people themselves. The way you lead is so intimately connected with the kind of person you are. My whole thought has been always that institutions'

strengths lie in their people, and in academic institutions, their strengths lie in their teachers and students, principally. What I always try to do is find the strengths and interests in the people that I work with and do everything that I can to allow those interests and strengths to express themselves. That's the type of leadership that I will try to provide.

Several members of the faculty have described you as a "faculty

president." Do you feel that is accurate, and what do you feel that means?

Well, I can see how the faculty would say that because I have been a faculty member all of my life from the time I began teaching in 1971 until the present. I came to a deanship off the faculty, and even as president, I feel on loan from the faculty to the administration. But I really want to be thought also as a "students' president." I want to get to know students well, and I want to know what they think. I want the students to feel that I'm their president as well. And while we're at it, the president also has an alumni constituency to which he is

John William Elrod

Born

January 1940, Griffin, Georgia

Education

Received a B.A. in English from Presbyterian College in Clinton, S. C., 1962; M.A. in 1968 and Ph.D. in 1971, both in philosophy of religion, from Columbia University.

Career

Taught philosophy and was chairman of religious studies program at Iowa State University. Came to W&L in 1984 as dean of the college of arts and sciences and professor of philosophy.

Books

Wrote *Being and Existence in Kierkegaard's Pseudonymous Works* and *Kierkegaard and Christendom*.

Information taken from the
Richmond Times-Dispatch

responsible. I'll do my best to make the alumni sense that I'm a person who is also representing what they take to be important in the institution. But I really want to be more broadly representative than just a "faculty president."

What has your teaching experience been at W&L, and when was the last time that you taught?

I haven't taught as much as I would like to here. When I first got here, I taught a seminar for a couple of years on Hegel, and that was mostly for seniors. Then for the last five or six years, I think it's been that long. I co-taught Philosophy of Religion with Lad Sessions. You know my field of specialization is philosophy of religion, and I started teaching that course with Dean Sessions. I taught that course once a year. In fact, I last taught that with him in fall of this year, but I haven't been able to teach very much.

Do you plan to continue teaching?

No, I will not be able to do that. I think it would be unfair to the students just because I will have a travel schedule that will keep me off campus more than I've been off campus as dean. It's just the kind of job that is going to be too demanding for me to be able to get in the classroom. I'll regret that, but I don't think that it would be fair to the students to try to do that.

Along those lines, John Wilson has been seen as a very successful fund-raiser. With the conclusion of the capital campaign this summer, what fundraising issues still face the school?

Well, we're going to have to fundraise at a fairly high level because we've got to face the fact that tuition is not going to rise at a very rapid rate in the foreseeable future. The enrollment is going to

remain steadystate; we're not going to get larger, but we're still going to develop and grow academically and improve ourselves. In order to do that we've got to have growing revenues, and the main way we're going to get that is by fundraising. So, I really do think that I will be off-campus much more often than I've ever been as dean, going to foundations and corporations and to alumni throughout telling them the W&L story and trying to raise more funds for what we are trying to do here.

Do any specific capital or fundraising projects still remain?

There are a number of things for us to think about, but Wright, I don't want you to get the impression that I'm the person by myself who makes those decisions. We've got to fairly soon, after the first of July, do some planning. I'd like for us to develop a five year plan, and then update it every year. That plan will be carried on by the administration and some members of the faculty as well as the Board of Trustees. We'll have some students involved as well. We've definitely got to make some choices about the bricks and mortar projects. I'll just list them, and there may be some others that I'm not mentioning. The student center is something that was pushed out of the campaign because we had to take all available money for bricks and mortar projects and give it to the science center. Some kind of housing for sororities, but I'm not sure what. Perhaps Reid Hall renovation will also be included. We need to think of getting art or music out of DuPont Hall, and a new building for one of those departments. We need to think about enhancing our athletic facilities. Those are some of the possibilities that need to be thought through by those who will be responsible for the

planning.

Is there any concern that we are going back to the same well too many times? Will there have to be a delay after this campaign before we begin fundraising again?

We won't have another campaign; I don't mean to suggest that anytime soon. It's just that fundraising activity will continue and will be focused on specific kinds of projects, and certainly we need to, I would say in this next year, finish up this campaign even though it will be over the thirtieth of June. There's a lot of cleaning up to take care of. We'll probably need to give a year to that before we move on to new projects.

You stated that you were in a fraternity yourself. How do you assess the status of the fraternity system at W&L and the Fraternity Renaissance Program? What do you think still needs to be changed?

We've come a long way with the fraternities. I think for a while the fraternities were slightly out of sync with the overall mission of the University. Fraternity Renaissance has changed that. The houses are now restored to the elegant condition that they enjoyed when they were first built, and they now accentuate the Lexington landscape rather than not. Getting housemothers into the houses has been a good thing. The party rooms in the basements are good ideas as ways of keeping the

parties confined to a certain part of the houses in order not to have the wear and tear that you normally have when you party all over. I am very interested in trying to strengthen the faculty role in fraternities, and I'd like to see, if possible, the faculty to get more interested in taking an advising role. I've been an advisor at the Sigma Nu house for, well this is my third year. Faculty can be very helpful to

positive aspect of the school?

There is no doubt that the fraternity system has a long history here, and it is that history that gives its strength and its importance on this campus. I am not interested in trying to attenuate that tradition. There are a group of students here who would like to have opportunities other than those provided by fraternities, and I am in favor of trying to make that possible. What we ought to do is

maximize opportunities available to students.

For example, the construction of the student center would be something that would be interesting not only to independents but also to fraternity people as well.

One of the strongest criticisms of John Wilson has been that he let W&L's Southern legacy fade into a bland homogeneity that has swept campuses across the country. Coming from the South, do you feel that you can reassert any of W&L traditions? And, if so, do you want to?

I don't agree with John Wilson's critics, if he's had any along this lines.

The traditions that have distinguished Washington and Lee for decades have been strengthened in John Wilson's presidency, and I am thinking in particular of the Honor System and the code of civility. Both of those are very important. I do not know if those are Southern or what, but they are certainly linchpins in the culture of Washington and Lee. John Wilson has worked very hard to maintain



fraternities if you get the right people who are interested and care about fraternities in an advisory role. Do you feel that there's too much emphasis on fraternities? Do feel that eighty-five percent of all males joining a Greek organization is too much, and do you feel that W&L should strive for a more diverse student body? Do you see the fraternities as a

distinguished Washington and Lee for decades have been strengthened in John Wilson's presidency, and I am thinking in particular of the Honor System and the code of civility. Both of those are very important. I do not know if those are Southern or what, but they are certainly linchpins in the culture of Washington and Lee. John Wilson has worked very hard to maintain

them, and I will certainly do the same.

The Committee to Review Coeducation recommended some rather dramatic changes. How will you use the information that was presented in the report, especially the suggestion of gender-blind admissions?

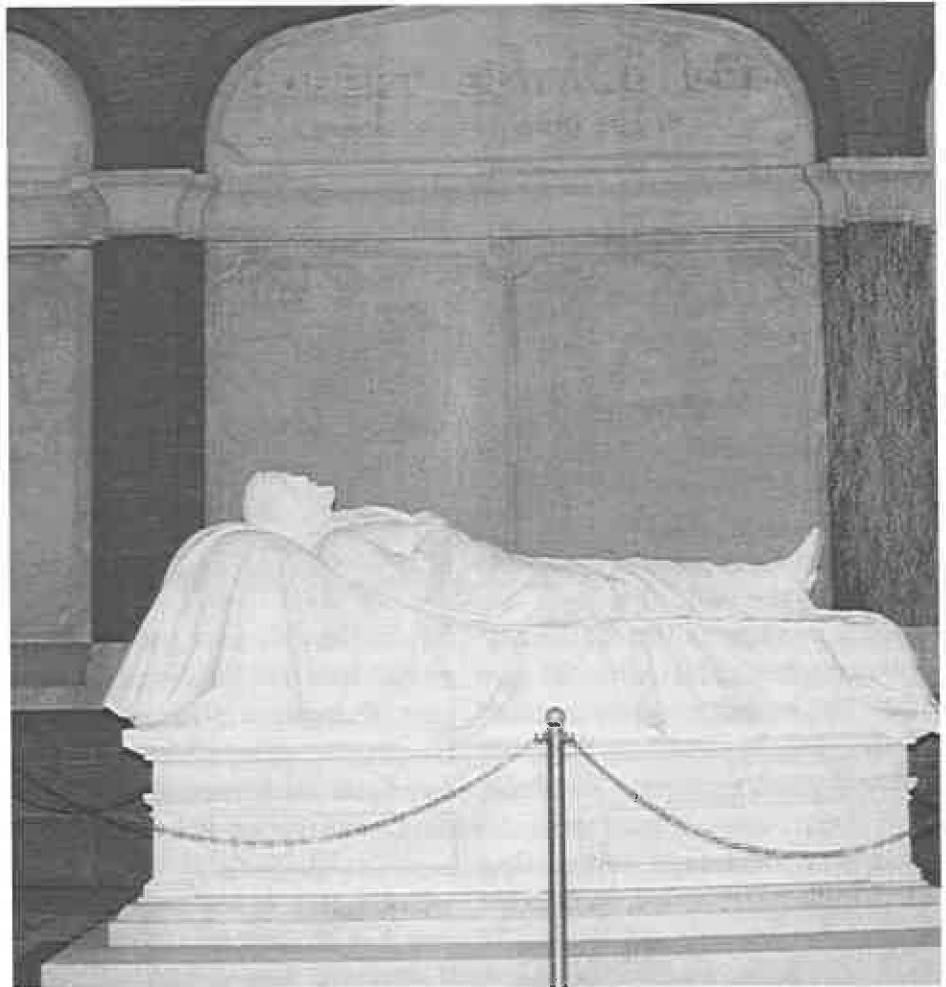
It was a good report. What the report said in general is, having taken the pulse of the University in terms of coeducation, we are in very good shape. If you read it carefully, more often than not, it says let's keep on emphasizing the things that we've been emphasizing. What I plan to do with that report, because it's a valuable and useful one, is to ask the relevant members of the administration to work through the appropriate parts in the report. Then we are going to take that report to the Board of Trustees at its October meeting and go over the main parts of it in the relevant committees of the Board of Trustees. We'll see what, if any, of the recommendations made by the committee will be taken up by the administration of the Board. I don't have anyway of guessing that in advance.

Another issue that I would like to touch on is student autonomy. Many on campus feel that student autonomy is in decline especially concerning such issues as winter rush, sophomore housing, and the student activities coordinator. Do you feel that student autonomy is an important tradition and one that needs to be kept?

What is important is student self-government. That seems to me to be the appropriate phrase, and I am very much behind that. It is a long

standing tradition at Washington and Lee, and I have no interest in seeing that attenuated. I frankly see the hiring of Michelle Richardson as not in any way diminishing student autonomy. As far as I can tell, the programs that she has put forward in this year have been very well attended, and I hear students saying very good things about them. Winter rush, let's wait and see when that comes up. I can see the pros and cons of winter rush and fall rush. In many ways there isn't any answer to this. One thing that is fundamentally important though, is we make sure that the freshmen get off to a good start academically and do not get themselves involved in any kinds of activities that weaken their chances of performing well in their early terms here. I certainly hope that we

can find a way in which to make that value compatible with what is in the best interest of the fraternities as far as rush is concerned. Frankly, I will confess to you that I do not know what the answer is, but I'm glad that there is a broad debate going on. There's been a good bit of student discussion. The faculty is going to meet again this week to discuss it. It was a matter that was discussed in great detail in the Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees this weekend. David Howison is doing the right thing at this point in getting all relevant voices into the discussion. I have enough confidence in this community as a whole to believe that, if we all work together, we can find a solution that we are generally all comfortable with.



The Spectator and other groups in the W&L community have complained that some of W&L's uniqueness and Southern focus is being lost in exchange for a higher ranking in *U.S. News and World Report*. Do you feel that these arguments have any validity? Can Washington and Lee be the standard to which all other schools are compared and not worry about national rankings?

Those who argue that, I'd like to hear what they have to say has been sacrificed in order to gain national ranking. I really don't quite see that. Those constituencies with which our admissions office has been working over a long period of time are still being served by Washington and Lee today. I think of that line on the map that runs from Houston across the Gulf across Florida up the Southeastern states through the mid-Atlantic and to Pennsylvania and New York. It has been for a hundred years our main area from which we draw our students, and it continues to be. Happily, we are drawing students not from the mid-

West and far-West as well. The student body is larger, too. So I don't see that we have given up anything on the student side in order to achieve this national ranking that you're referring to by virtue of increasing student quality. Too, the faculty of the University has for the longest time been about twelve percent alumni and continues to be that way today. As we are successful in attracting really very well-trained young people to come to the faculty, we have been able to maintain about twelve percent representation of alumni on the faculty. I may be saying more than you want to hear, but just to repeat: the Honor System, the fraternity system, a strong commitment to a vigorous intercollegiate athletic program,...all of those things are still in place at a time when we are now the fifteenth ranked college in the country. So I just don't see that much if anything that has been valued in the past has been lost by virtue of this. And Wright, you might want to keep in mind something that is often forgotten when people worry about this ranking. Back in the..don't hold

me to the date now...but somewhere between 1955 and 1962 we were ranked in the top ten liberal arts colleges in the country by a poll that was done then by, I believe it was, the *Chicago Tribune*. So Washington and Lee is not just of late arrived at the national ranking prominence. It enjoyed it back in the earlier days as well.

Which of W&L's past presidents do you admire most and wish to emulate?

I said in my acceptance remarks that it is very humbling to be asked to assume an office that was once held by Robert E. Lee, and I pledged to the Board of Trustees that I was going to do my best to live up to the high standards set by Lee, Gaines, Huntley, and Wilson. I think that's a pretty good group of very strong presidents in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There are others as well, and I mention those in part because they are past presidents of whom I either know or about whom I know something.

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The Hill Continues to Babysit Freshmen

On January ninth the faculty updated the University's policy on hazing. The new policy holds not only Greek organizations but also other student groups and individual members accountable for their actions. Although the faculty did not dramatically alter the existing policies, they did continue their trend towards greater University control of fraternity activities. The faculty must realize that in their increasing attempt to protect fraternity pledges from hazing is destroying and limiting many valuable facets of pledgship programs.

For over a century Washington and Lee fraternities have done an excellent job of bringing together young men of like interests and educating them in Greek traditions. Most past and present fraternity members would agree that they may not have enjoyed every minute of pledgship but that it provided a worthwhile and valuable experience. Pledge education programs provide the opportunity for young men to demonstrate to the fraternity's brothers a desire to become a part of the brotherhood and a willingness to make sacrifices for the organization. The W&L faculty and others should realize the merits of the fraternity's pledgship programs and understand how their continual interference and restrictions are nullifying the positive aspects of pledgship.

The most important factor that the faculty and administration must remember when discussing

hazing is that the pledgship programs are totally volunteer. No one is forced to take part in any organization in which they do not feel comfortable. Young men at Washington and Lee not only ask, but pay large sums of money to take

The most important factor that the faculty and administration must remember when discussing hazing is that the pledgship programs are totally volunteer.

part in fraternity activities. No one is required to join a Greek or any other type of organization at W&L. Students sign up to go through rush and decide for themselves what organization, if any, they will join, and over eighty-five percent of all freshmen males consistently do pledge. If after joining an organization a student decides that he is not comfortable with the group and does not want to participate any more, he may simply quit or depledge.

Each year, approximately ten to fifteen percent of freshmen males do not to join a fraternity or decide to disassociate themselves after pledging. Fraternities are not for everyone, and each individual is allowed to make his own decisions concerning his fraternity involvement. The faculty and administration should realize that they do not need to babysit nineteen year old freshmen. In most cases,

the pledges are not victims but willing participants in a constructive program. If a pledge, or any other member of a fraternity for that matter, is placed in a situation in which he feels uncomfortable, he can simply walk away and chose not to associate with the organization.

Almost everyone agrees that situations that endanger the life or well-being of pledges are unacceptable and should not be tolerated. However, the faculty is not

content with making rules that protect pledges from harm but insists upon bringing fraternities further under its control by dictating how new members should be educated about the fraternity. If a sports team captain or coach were to have their team go on a weekly 6:00 a.m. run, it would be seen as both an acceptable and required part of the team's training program. But, if a fraternity was to have a pledge class go a early morning run, the faculty and administration would see this as hazing and would severely punish the fraternity. Why cannot the same values that are used to instill discipline, commitment, and loyalty in a sports team or the US armed services be applied to a pledge program?

Fraternities are a fundamental part of a great majority of men's lives at Washington and Lee and of the University community as a whole, an influential segment which

Synch, and the Gong Show. Should the Student Activities Board, Superdance, and Kappa Alpha Theta be punished for taking advantage of Greek pledges for the benefit of the entire W & L community? Does the University's "playfair" during freshmen

orientation not help new students get to know each other through embarrassing ground activities? Sounds a bit like hazing doesn't it.

Hazing is not a pressing problem at W&L, and if certain fraternities humiliate or physically endanger their new members to an unacceptable point, then men would cease to join such organizations. The faculty and administration should trust that

students can and will use their own good sense to choose to not be involved in situations that are unacceptable or dangerous. By attempting to protect pledges, the

Should the Student Activities Board, Superdance, and Kappa Alpha Theta be punished for taking advantage of Greek pledges for the benefit of the entire W&L community?

for their new members. Fraternities at W&L have done an excellent job for the past hundred years of educating young men, and it is a mistake to interfere with one of the strongest traditions here at Washington and Lee. Why does the University feel that it must continually change what is already the strongest fraternity system in the nation? If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

new University hazing policy is only hindering fraternities' ability to provide a positive experience

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Keeping the Students in Student Activities

The Campus Life Committee is one of a series of committees of the Board of Trustees. The committee, which focuses on student life, consists of Vaughan Morrisette, the chair, David Howison, Dean of Students, and eight Board members. The chair and the Dean of Students then invite students to comment on the specific issues that are being discussed. According to Howison, the purpose of the committee is to educate the trustees about pertinent campus issues and to get the members' feedback. The Campus Life Committee then reports to the complete Board of Trustees at the full meeting the next day. At the last Board meeting, the issues of winter rush, sophomore housing, and student activities were discussed.

During this meeting, Michelle Richardson, the Student Activities Coordinator, gave a presentation about student activities and distributed materials about her programs. Dean Howison invited Jon van Dyke, Noelle Parrot, and Hollis Leddy to be included in the discussion. Neither Michael Weinfeld nor Wright Marshall, the president and vice-president of the Student Activities Board (SAB), were informed about or invited to this meeting. The SAB is the group that is charged with providing school-wide entertainment and is given the largest budget of any student organization by the Executive Committee. Hollis Leddy, the youngest and only

female member of the Board, was the only one invited to take part in this discussion. This makes one wonder whether Dean Howison wanted the committee to hear a two-sided debate of the issue.

When asked why SAB President, Mike Weinfeld, was not invited to the meeting, Howison responded, "That's a good point...Mike could have been there."

As much as the Hill denies it, the administration wants more control over W&L's

In retrospect, it would have been a good idea. The focus was more on alternative programming, but that's a fair observation." Can the focus of the Student Activities Board not include alternative programming? The SAB is the organization that is given the responsibility of providing entertainment for the entire school, and the success of this year's events is a tribute to the wonderful job that the SAB is doing. The Dean of Students added, "I don't think that they're [Weinfeld, Parrot, and van Dyke] too far apart. They may have differences on a few points."

Then why are the SAB officers not the students who are asked regularly to speak in front of the Campus Life Committee? The SAB Executive Council is the group that the student body chose as its representatives. Moreover, the heads of the Interfraternity Council and Panhellenic were the ones asked to speak on Greek related issues.

Did Howison not want the SAB's opinion to be heard? When asked if he was unhappy about the SAB and the new Student Activities Coordinator, the Dean replied, "Things have gone wonderfully well. In the five years that I've been here, by far these are the most successful, diverse, and student accepted programs I've seen. I think that we have reached another level." Yet Howison and the administration are not happy enough to let the students be in charge of their own social lives. As much as the Hill denies it, the administration wants more control over W&L's

social life.

Michelle Richardson and Alternative Programming

The position of a Student Activities Coordinator was conceived last year by Dean Howison and the 1993-1994 Student Activities Board. The new administrator was to be an additional resource for the SAB, a resource that would allow the board to provide additional activities that the Executive Council did not have time to accomplish itself. There was a good deal of media coverage surrounding the new "Dean of Fun," and the majority of student opinion expressed that this new position was superfluous. This year's SAB knew that the first year would be difficult for Michelle Richardson, but the board was eager to work with her.

However, it became obvious that the programs that Howison and



support the new Student Activities Coordinator and her alternative programming the reason why Mike Weinfeld, a person who has dealt with Richardson very frequently, was not invited to the meeting of the Campus Life Committee?

The Future of the Student Activities Board and Michelle Richardson

If events transpire as Howison hopes, Michelle Richardson will have a larger role in shaping Washington and Lee's student activities, and he has led the Board of Trustees and the newly elected President, John Elrod, into thinking that this is what the student body wants. When asked what the Student Activities Coordinator's role would be in the future, Howison stated, "I see her role as growing. We are going to provide extra resources for her and students to

Richardson wanted to implement were not in line with what the SAB felt it was charged to provide. Consequently, Ms. Richardson felt that her ideas were being ignored by the Board. SAB President, Mike Weinfeld, stated, "I think that Michelle has had a limited advisory role for the SAB this year." The Dean of Students only recently alluded to this point: "I know there is some dynamic tension between Michelle's coming as a new administrator and some of the prerogatives of the Student Activities Board." However, Howison has never hinted that there had been any difficulties between the SAB and Michelle Richardson. This conflict has not been touched on by any of the media coverage of the new administrator, and the SAB

members were hesitant to comment on the conflict for fear of making their relationship more awkward than it already was. Therefore, the entire community has been led to

However, it became obvious that the programs that Howison and Richardson wanted to implement were not in line with what the SAB felt it was charged to provide.

believe that everything was amiable concerning the various groups.

Moreover, the rest of the Hill and the Campus Life Committee of the Board of Trustees have no idea that nearly the entire W&L community does not agree with what Howison and Richardson are doing. Is the SAB's reluctance to

help in alternative programs. Frankly, my vision for the future is to get all of us together and pool our resources, like the Student Activities Board has got an extraordinary budget.

We've [the administration] got a significant budget. I've got one goal in all of this, and that is to provide the best programs for students, that's the goal. Now, how we get to that point, the students and other people are going to need to determine, but I

think this year's overall programs, the quality of the success is by far the best I have ever seen."

Howison's goal would bring all of the groups, the Student Activities Board, Contact, and Michelle Richardson, under one large umbrella with one budget. This is quite a departure from the

traditional way of doing things at W&L, but when asked if he really would prefer to see the SAB's and Michelle Richardson's budgets combined, Howison answered, "I'd like to see that, that would be my goal." Although he has not completed the details of this plan, the Dean of Students has done some thinking about the future of student activities at Washington and Lee.

Howison's plan comes mainly from experiences that he has had prior to coming to Lexington. "I don't know the details of all this, I'll leave the details up to other people. This is the vision that I would have. It just seems to me that if the goal is to serve the students, then centralizing these resources, the money, and looking at the overall plan makes more sense than a plan that perhaps is fragmented as it has been in the past. This year I thought the programs overall have been excellent. Then next five years or so are especially important to this because I do believe there is a critical mass of students emerging who do look for alternative programs. And I don't envision anyway this model replacing traditional social events. There will always be a need for large scale concerts, for chocolate pudding wrestling, and so these things that are successful. So I think we have made great progress. What I would encourage the SAB, Michelle, and other people to do is to continue to work together and talk about the best way to use the resources."

One of the strengths of the current student organizational system at W&L has been that



certain individuals with specific interests could become active leaders in these student organizations. Each of these

It is extremely important for the Student Activities Board to maintain its autonomy and for the officers of the SAB to be selected solely by the Executive Committee.

groups has a specialty and is small enough that the students can play active roles in governing them. It is this student self-governance that has been a cornerstone of the entire W&L community and a large part of the learning experience. Howison's new vision for student activities would destroy student leadership, outside of the Executive Committee,

as we know it.

The present SAB officers have been very disturbed by the recent developments that may jeopardize the group's autonomy. Mike Weinfeld expressed his concern by stating, "The less intervention by the administration the better. It is extremely important for the Student Activities Board to maintain its autonomy and for the officers of the SAB to be selected solely by the Executive Committee. The present size and makeup of the SAB are perfect."

It should be completely up to the students, through the Executive Committee, to decide who is in charge of the Student Activities Board and how student activities fees are spent. No administrator,

including Richardson or Howison, should have any role in selecting the leaders of student organizations. Although Howison claims that this new plan would be left up to the students, past experiences with the sophomore housing requirement and winter rush have proven otherwise. Student autonomy is becoming more and more of a token phrase every year. One must really consider the inconsistency that the University allows students, through the EC, to administer the Honor System, the foundation of Washington and Lee, but does not trust the students with such issues as student activities, winter rush, and off-campus housing. How long until the Executive Committee falls under the administration's control, too?

Possible Solutions for Student Activities

There are solutions for those students who want alternative programs and more diverse activities that would fit into W&L's existing framework. A possible solution would be for those interested students and Michelle Richardson to start new organizations or to improve existing ones. Groups such as the Society for the Arts or the Independent Union would be ideal for such activities and would be consistent with W&L's tradition of student autonomy. Not only could interested students create exactly the type of activities that they want, but also the W&L community would be much more supportive of a group that funded its own activities instead of taking funding away from more mainstream organizations. Everyone should not lose sight of the fact that fraternity members pay thousands of dollars in social

dues that provide the majority of Washington and Lee's social life. Other groups who feel that there social needs are not being met should be willing to pay for these alternative activities themselves.

Alan Schoellkopf, a senior representative on the Executive Committee, commented, "Although the Independent Union has come before the EC twice this year, the IU's membership, status, and purpose remain a mystery. The IU's officers have no idea how many members the group has nor which W&L students are independents. It was difficult for the EC to take their request seriously. If the Independent Union's leaders had taken appropriate steps to organize and plan, the Executive Committee would very likely funded their activities."

Many in the community simply see the IU as a group for those not in Greek organizations. It could be much more than that, and

Michelle Richardson could be a great resource for that group. Mike Weinfeld suggested, "Michelle could do a lot more for organizations that aren't well established. I think that Michelle has worked with a lot of non-Greek and non-mainstream leaders this year, and she could help get them together or start a new group that would represent the needs which they feel are being neglected by the current W&L social environment."

Conclusion

One of the lessons that students should learn is that they must provide for themselves. The Hill should stay out of the business of trying to tell students how to entertain themselves. Michelle Richardson can and should be a valuable resource to the Washington and Lee community, but first and foremost, students should not be taken out of the student activities decisions of W&L.



A Once in a Lifetime Opportunity

Washington and Lee University has recently been presented a once in a lifetime opportunity. Through the efforts of Rodney Mims Cook, Jr. '78, W&L is being considered among many other prestigious schools as a possible candidate for the American branch of the Prince of Wales' Institute of Architecture. The Prince of Wales Institute was established in London in 1992 through the efforts of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

The Prince's desire was to found an architecture school that would promote classical design, an institute that "might become a kind of crucible, where the architecture of the 21st century can be forged." By creating a traditional school of architecture, the Prince of Wales hoped to combat the modern movements of architecture that were creating buildings with no respect for England's natural landscape and glorious architectural heritage.

The Prince of Wales Institute now wishes to expand its focus beyond Europe, courting potential sister schools in the United States. This remarkable opportunity came to the attention of Mr. Cook whose personal experience made him believe that Washington and Lee would be the ideal companion for the Prince's Institute. Rodney Cook, a 1978 graduate of W&L from Atlanta, came to his father's alma mater with a great passion for architecture. As a student at Lovett, Mr. Cook was awarded by the National Trust for Historic Preservation for his efforts in saving the historic Fox Theater, an Atlanta landmark. There was not an architecture program at W&L when Mr. Cook was in school, but he pursued his interest through classes in

art, architectural history, and mechanical drawing. Although not a licensed architect, Rodney Cook has become a prominent designer with commissions all across the nation and work featured in *Architectural Digest*. Mr. Cook knows the struggles of W&L art students.

According to several prominent administrators, the University has decided not to pursue adding a school of architecture. The Hill believes that W&L's mission is to be an undergraduate institution, and by

The traditional nature of the Prince of Wales' Institute would fit perfectly with the culture and heritage

adding another professional school, the University's focus would shift the away from teaching to research. Additionally, there are a number of projects that were eliminated from the capital campaign that still need funding. This new project would take attention away from the school's existing needs.

These are important questions for W&L to ask itself as it enters the twenty-first century. What is the school's mission, and do graduate programs have any place in that mission? According to several faculty members, the University has considered leveraging the success of the Commerce school by creating an MBA program but has declined from doing so for the same reasons that were mentioned earlier. There are, however, two important reasons that make the architecture program unique. There are an increasing number of Washington and Lee students who are majoring in the fine arts. However, many students chose other majors because they feel

that being an art major is impractical, foreseeing no related career tract. Architecture would be the answer for those students who desire a profession in the arts. Additionally, there are no architecture schools left in the United States which promote classical design, and students who wish to pursue classical architecture are left without any options. The traditional nature of the Prince of Wales' Institute would fit perfectly with the culture and heritage of Washington and Lee.

According to Mr. Cook, the new architecture program would finance itself, and Washington and Lee would not be asked to use any of its scarce resources except to provide a site. The Prince of Wales' ability to fundraise is tremendous, and the Institute

already has the amount of money that would be needed to create a school that could compete with the best in the nation.

This is a rare opportunity for Washington and Lee, and one that will probably never happen again. There is already a significant interest in architecture among current students, an interest that would increase with additional opportunities for instruction. The W&L community should be made aware of this possibility and should openly discuss these issues. Every time a person passes by the Leyburn Library he is reminded of the need for architectural planing and consistency. W&L, even with its beautiful colonnade and Lexington's rich architectural history, has not been immune from the modern movements in architecture. Anyone who is interested in such a prospect for Washington and Lee should make his or her interest known. W&L should not be unmindful of the past nor unmindful of the future.

Yale Struggles With Itself Over a Gift From Lee M. Bass for Western Studies Only

On April 17, 1991, Lee M. Bass, the youngest of four billionaire brothers from Forth Worth and a 1979 graduate of Yale, pledged \$20 million to his alma mater to further the study of Western civilization. The agreement stipulated the appointment of eleven professorships in various Western subjects and the implementation of a course that would examine the art, religion, philosophy, literature, and politics of the West. Bass wanted to make sure that the multiculturalism that was laying siege to the study of Western civilization around the country would not do so at Yale. But four years later, only five professors have been hired, \$10 million remains unspent, and no such course has implemented. Currently, campus liberals are trying to use the money for other projects.

Disagreements between donors who wish to control how their money will be spent and school officials who wish to retain control of that spending arise all the time. Peter Buchanan, a former development officer at Columbia University, commented, "If you're on the university side, it seems to me that you try to make sure you don't make commitments or tie people's hands in ways that are going to turn out to be a real problem." One wonders how a gift intended to strengthen something as essential as Western civilization, the core of any good liberal arts

curriculum, should be a problem. But the study of Western civilization in this era of multiculturalism has been a very decisive issue on many campuses today. Yale liberals are

One wonders how a gift intended to strengthen something as essential as Western civilization, the core of any good liberal arts curriculum, should be a problem.

arguing that the school already offers enough courses on the West and that courses such as African philosophy are needed. Irregardless, one *Wall Street Journal* editorialist added, "Whatever new courses emerge at Yale University - under the watchful eye of faculty ideologues, they will clearly bear no resemblance to the kind the remarkable Bass grant was supposed to pay for."

The study of Western civilization is typically well-represented in most college curriculums, and indeed there are many other areas that deserve attention. However, university administrators should present those arguments before gifts are accepted and should not deceive donors by later going back on their words.

The situation at Yale is neither unprecedented nor uncommon. Many conservative benefactors are concerned about the

liberal politics that are controlling America's educational system. These wealthy individuals truly wish to help their alma maters and feel that many academically merited programs are being ignored for more popular politically bases programs.

Fundraising is essential for schools to remain competitive and will continue to become more important. If schools such as Yale (and Washington and Lee) continue to move further toward the politically correct mainstream of that

has swept modern education, potential donors will increasingly put strings on their gifts. Before accepting a gift the Trustees and administrators should argue their needs with the giver up front and should realize that there is probably a strong correlation between the success of their most generous donors and those donors' knowledge of Western civilization.

Information for this article was taken from an article for *The New York Times* on December 12, 1994.

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