

EDITORIAL

Experience

Teaches Responsibility

In the past issues this year, we have used this space to talk about freedom of the press. Now, we should talk about the responsibility that goes with that freedom.

Both the editors and staff of the Reader have learned something about the responsibility of the press as a result of our Feb. 5th racial tension story and the letters to the editor that followed.

Let's get it right out in the open: We made a mistake in printing that story as it was written.

First, and probably most important, we apologize for our inflammatory and incorrect headline: Campus Racial Tension Exposed, McDermott Calls Bigots 'Crackpots.' We'd like to say we knew better. Obviously as deadline approached, we lost our common sense and failed to read the story carefully. We offer this not as an excuse but as an apology to those that were hurt by that headline.

Now, to the story and the three incidents noted in it: We labeled the three as "racial incidents" and gave a description of each. Unfortunately, we failed to attribute the term "racial incidents."

Except for the sign incident, the story, as it appeared in the paper, was not about racial tension. One incident was a roommate disagreement with one of the students being black. The other involved a dispute during a basketball game. Again, one of the students was black. Perhaps, there lies the key for all of us.

Just because two students in two separate incidents were black, can we and should we label them as racial incidents? We think not. If there were any racial overtones to either incident, they didn't appear in the story.

To those students who were directly involved in both incidents, your side of the issue should have been included in the story. We thank you for taking the time to do it in letters to the editor.

As student journalists, we are learning and applying our journalistic skills on the Reader. In this case, we learned--the hard way--about the responsibilities of the press.

Letters Have to Be Signed

The editors and staff of the C.C. Reader welcome letters for publication. Letters must be typed, double-spaced, and must contain the writer's signature and telephone number. Anonymous letters will not be accepted. However, if the writer requests, a pseudonym will be used in publication. The editors reserve the right to edit letters for style, grammar, and good taste.

It's Only Policy

On March 2nd, The Reader received a letter to the editor signed "A concerned Active Student." Our editorial policy prohibits us from publishing anonymous letters.

We will publish this letter, signed as it is, if the writer will contact The Reader editor and identify himself/herself. This information will be kept confidential. We urge the writer to do so.

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Silent Generation Faces New Silence

A disturbing silence has fallen over the American college campuses. Many welcomed it at first as a needed respite from the frenzied activity of the 1960's. It is a respite, however, that may become permanent.

Since the tragedies of Kent State and Jackson State, one can go through an entire academic year on many campuses without witnessing a single major political rally. The generational gap seems to be closing but not in the direction some would have hoped.

In fact, according to a Gallup Poll of December, 1975 our conservative president, Mr. Ford, has more support from the voters under 30 than from those over 50. Students are thinking about education solely in terms of their careers and future jobs. Fraternities and sororities are back with a flourish. Watergate, the "Mayaguez" incident and the Church Committee revelations have come and gone without so much as a whimper from American students.

Are we then back to the 1950's when, as historian William O'Neill explained it, "The decline of politics as a serious enterprise was accompanied by the privatization of everyday life." Is Ford our Eisenhower? TM our substitute for bridge and the PTA? Sex therapy the replacement of the baby boom? Have the 1960s come and gone without even making a dent in our national psyche?

The parallels, while far from simple, can be quite illuminating. We of 1950's generation accepted the world as a given fact and, as Prof. Keith Nielson described our attitude, "It was irrelevant as to whether this was the best or worst of possible worlds-it was the one to be lived in."

Our style was not to pass judgements on what was presented to us. We decided to figure out how to ride first class rather than how to rock the boat. We were more likely out to beat the system rather than change it. Social conventions and inhibitions were not to be flouted but simply to be circumvented.

But more than anything else our generation of the 1950's had no reason to doubt our own or our country's destiny. We blandly assumed that having a college degree would assure us economic security and that being an American would make us immune from the tragedies of history.

The college generation of today operates under no such illusions.

Their generation has not experienced any of the patriotic exhilaration of our victory in World War II nor have they known the moral certainty of the early Cold War years and the struggle against Stalinism.

Today's college sophomore was, in all likelihood, born during the Sputnik crisis and its challenge to America first. His first historical memory may be of Dallas. The Vietnam War was a constant backdrop to his youth. He may have watched



Dr. Robert Brasler

older brothers and sisters drift from protest to rebellion to experimentation and then just watched them drift.

His high school years were filled with talk of Watergate and crimes in high places. He looked with

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a sense of futility at the choice between McGovern's ineptitude and Nixon's corruption. There were no Franklin D. Roosevelts or John F. Kennedys to inspire him to think of public life as a calling and a service.

Added, then, is the greatest economic uncertainty to confront a college generation since the depression. This uncertainty has deprived them of much of their right to make any demands on the world, even if they were so inclined. In

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Letters To The Editor

Another Response To Racism Story

The newspaper article of February 5th on racism did not give the complete story. I am being confronted about the issue, but I am not allowed to reply to charges and accusations which everyone else seems to have overlooked.

Since I was not given the meeting I requested, I found it necessary to put this letter in the paper. Jerry South refused to grant me this meeting to clarify the news article and put everything in its right perspective.

The first thing I would like to do is state I never had any intentions of having this article placed in the paper.

A girl came to the office where I was working and asked why I moved. I never said "My roommates were ganging up on me." I did say "I was not given the same respect in turn that I gave them."

The reason for this statement was not to say my roommates were racist nor was it meant to hurt or injure

any party that was involved. The newspaper classified the article not me.

I do not feel my feelings were wrong about the incidents in my house, but the fact of my personal affairs was not the matter and should not be considered. It is irrelevant and immaterial. The issue here is a interpersonal difference. I feel that there was an ill feeling towards me whether it was my race, or a personal dislike or maybe both. But if someone acts their gestures in dislikeful ways I think one would be able to tell. Perhaps, the slurs made were racial or personal, but they still existed.

The thing I can hardly believe is that Ms. McLeod has been caught in the middle because she cared enough to try and prevent either side from being hurt. I know she always tried to be fair with all students; black, white or other.

Pat Murphy is the one who sent me to see Ms. McLeod, and in trying to be

fair and honest, she sent me to Jerry South to discuss the problem. He then sent me out of there with no solutions to the problem or help. I felt more upset then. So I turned back to Ms. McLeod. She then insisted all my roommates and I should have a meeting, but I refused because I felt I did not want to make a big thing out of it and nothing would be resolved.

All I wanted was some peace of mind so I could get back to my studies, but here I am still haunted with the situation. The only peace of mind I have is when I go to the Village.

This is why Ms. McLeod offered me a place to stay and nothing more. If I had known it would come to this, I would have found somewhere else to stay.

I hope this clears up all the misconceptions about this issue. And I hope the administration can now get back to the real issues here on campus.

Sharon Lee Henry
8th Term