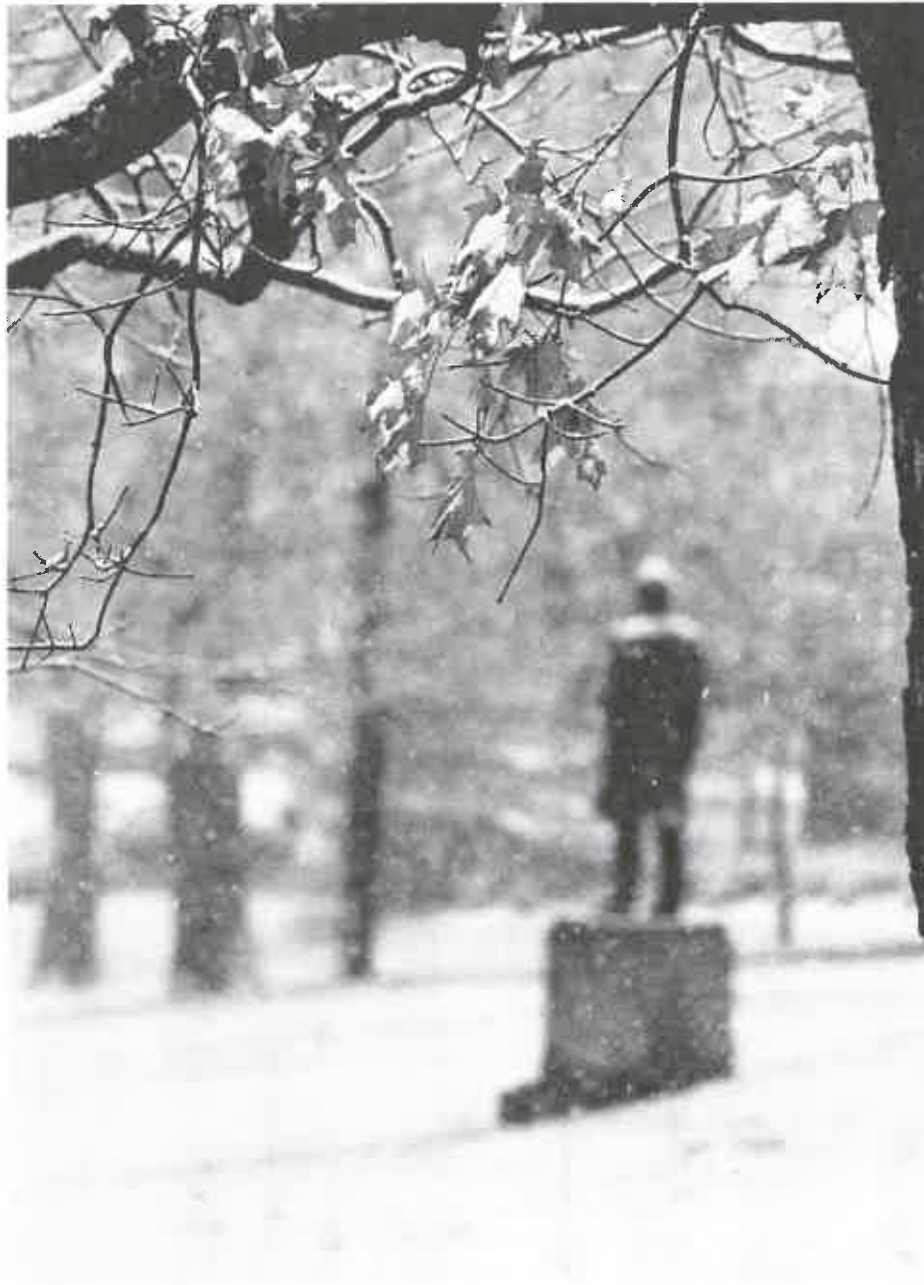


W A S H I N G T O N A N D L E E

SPECTATOR

February 1997

Volume 8, Issue 2



Winter '97 Extravaganza!!!

Over Nineteen Action-Packed Pages . . .

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SPECTATOR

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Welcome to another edition of the Washington and Lee *Spectator*. Contrary to popular belief, this magazine is not devoted to celebrating the virtues of the "extreme-right." In fact, no political agenda is required to become involved with the *Spectator*, just a commitment to W&L and a sense of humor. Our mission concerns the changes that are gradually transforming our beloved school. While a few students eagerly condemn W&L for its tightly held traditions and conservative atmosphere, the majority of students love this university and cherish its character. Out of affection for and duty to Washington and Lee, we have joined together to voice the opinions and concerns of the majority of W&L students - views that are often drowned out or obfuscated by the loud cries of those who do not appreciate the unique ideals embraced by this hallowed university.

The *Spectator* intends to serve the students of W&L by reminding them, at the risk of sounding reactionary, that change simply for the sake of change is never a good thing. Numerous changes have occurred at our university over the past few years, largely without the student body's approval. As champions of student autonomy, we find this trend troubling and will not shy away from defending the concept of student governance, even if that causes us to fall out of favor with the administration. In addition, the lack of serious public debate (aside from the occasional caustic letter to the *Trident*) has troubled the *Spectator* staff, and that is why we are here. We believe that other student-run publications have not effectively addressed the concerns of the majority of students—with the *Spectator* we seek to fill that void. Each issue of the *Spectator* attempts to strike a balance between thoughtful commentary and provocative humor. We pledge to provide our readers with honest, well-written journalism. Sometimes we may be overly blunt; other times we may be overly circuitous. In any case, we do not cater to those readers that are prude or thin-skinned.

We hope you consider and enjoy our slant and style. If not, well, there is always the *Southern Collegian*.

Sincerely,

The Editors of the Washington and Lee *Spectator*

EBONICS, LESSON 1

A number of W&L students have expressed concern over their inability to translate English into Ebonics and vice-a-versa. As watch-dogs of cultural diversity, the staff of *The Spectator* wishes to give you an introductory lesson in Ebonics. In this edition, we've translated The Lord's Prayer into Ebonics. If you find yourself lost in South Central with a gun to your head and unable to communicate with your captor(s), try using the following inspirational words:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven

Hallowed be thy name

Thy Kingdom come

Thy will be done

On earth as it is in heaven

Give us this day our daily bread

And forgive us our trespasses

*As we forgive those who trespass
against us*

And lead us not into temptation

But deliver us from evil

*For thine is the Kingdom, the power
and the glory, forever and ever.*

Amen

BIG DADDY'S RAP

YO, BID DADDY UPSTAIRS,

YOU BE CHILLIN

SO BE YO HOOD

YOU BE SAYIN' IT, I BE DOIN' IT

IN THIS HERE HOOD AND YO'S

GIMME SOME EATS

AND CUT ME SOME SLACK, BLOOD

SOS I BE DOIN' IT TO DEM DAT DISS ME

DON'T BE PUSHING ME INTO NO JIVE

AND KEEP DEM CRIPS AWAY

'CAUSE YOU ALWAYS BE DA MAN

AAA-MEN

General Opinion

HARDSHIPS IN THE DELL

It has come to the *Spectator's* attention that on November 20 a few "socially concious" W&L students decided to focus their attention on homelessness. With the help of the Outing Club, which provided warm sleeping bags and camping gear, students convened in the Dell to heighten awareness about homelessness. The group's aim was to experience the pains of being homeless, and they went to great lengths to be as authentic as possible.

After stepping from their Ford Explorers (with all the options included), they slipped into their tents of sensitivity, and climbed into their goosedown, Gore-Tex™ slumbersacks. The campers should be commended for their success in simulating real homeless conditions. Why, just recently I visited

Times Square and saw many homeless men and womyn in these exact conditions, except they owned Range Rovers.

Real homeless people are subjected to much harsher conditions; prior to bedtime, they don't snack on s'mores and listen to the soothing sounds of someone hummin' and strummin' on the guitar. Moreover, it's not a lonely raccoon that poses a threat to you when you are homeless, it's a 7'5" mugger out looking to rob your shopping cart.

Nonetheless, continuing in the spirit of "awareness," the Environmental Awareness Committee will sponsor next month a "Spend an Afternoon in the Kitchen With Some Screaming Brats!" to simulate what it's like to be an oppressed, downtrodden woman. The AIDS

Awareness Committee will have an "Infect Yourself Extravaganza" to illustrate how it feels to live with AIDS. The Domestic Violence Committee will have a "Today on Campus: Warren Moon, Ike Turner, and Lawrence Phillips (the All-American Running Back from Nebraska)" to give out free beatings. And the Fridays! Committee will organize a "No Classes On Tuesday and Wednesday Week" so you know what a Friday will feel like—on Monday!

The *Spectator* wishes to thank those crusaders who flocked to the Dell to demonstrate what it's like to be a destitute vagabond who sleeps on the streets. Did you consider, however, that it might have been more beneficial to volunteer in a shelter or a soup kitchen?

KILL THE QUOTA—WE NEED MORE CHICKS

Now, we know of a group of folks on campus who favor a gender blind male/female ratio--and on that matter we agree with them. Horsefeathers! Balderdash! Hogwash! you say, but we swear, it's all true. Even the staff of the *Spectator*, allegedly the most insensitive, bigoted and racist people on campus, will agree that there is no way that we can speak about the abolition of racial or gender quotas on a national level when a perfect example of one exists right here on campus. The 60/40 ratio is nothing but a glorified quota set up to protect a tradition that is fundamentally illogical. How can anyone continue to perpetuate the idea of a male dominated campus now that W&L is co-ed?

One of the most important

objectives of co-education is to provide an environment where males and females can compete equally, but how can that be achieved under the current system in which the males have a clear advantage? The present system is simply inept and there is no defense for such an antiquated policy.

This said, however, we want to make a few points clear. There is absolutely no need for a "gender blind admissions task force" to study the issue. There is no need to conduct extensive surveys prepared by the various bureaucratic organizations on campus to find out what "Joe or Juanita W&L" thinks about this issue. And there is no need for a campus-wide discussion attended by "campus leaders" (you know, all those ass-kissers who sit in the front

row of class, who answer every rhetorical question) to ascertain student opinion on this matter. The solution is very obvious and very simple. Just end the quota.

If the 60/40 ratio is eradicated, and a gender blind admission policy is actually implemented, the Panamanian Strongmen in Washington Hall would finally earn some plaudits -- they would finally be able to say that they did something that benefitted the university. Who knows, we might even move up to number eleven in *US News and World Report!*

For those of you who don't agree with our position on this matter, maybe you are the ones who are close-minded and bigoted. Could it be possible that for once the *Spectator* is virtuous?

Campus Issues

Capital Improvements at W&L

JAMES VOLLBRECHT

Every year the *Princeton Review* explains that Washington and Lee's students are some of the happiest in the nation. In general we are satisfied with the social life, academics, and character of our school more than any other. Despite this fact, the administration plans to add a rather unnecessary structure to the campus: a university student center. Whether this structure is warranted in the face of the coming sorority houses and the well-established fraternity system is beyond the scope of this article. I will posit, however, that several more worthy projects exist which would more appropriately fulfill the needs of the university and its community.

1. Parking

The parking at this school, or lack thereof, is a problem that refuses to go away. Every day students and faculty play a game of roulette in which they decide between battling Baner or R.D. Clark for a spot within a fifteen minute walk of school. The city of Lexington has every right to protect its precious parking spots; there are only about twenty in the entire city. The school, on the other hand, has a problem that it can and should deal with, and with the money that is earmarked for the new student center, I'm sure the administration could figure out how to manage the parking problem.

2. The Co-op

Before the administration blows money (and space) on a whole new center, why doesn't it just gut and

rebuild the Co-op. I agree with the proponents of the student center on one issue: the Co-op is appallingly inadequate. Despite the Co-op's recent facelift (which basically resulted in the removal of all edible food and raised prices on everything else), it still fails to provide enough space and service. My proposal is simple, and I doubt it would inconvenience too many students: gut the whole building and try again. If the entire building were devoted to space for students to relax, eat, play pool, etc., then the planned student center would be superfluous. The book store could be moved to the "Bistro-2000" (yet another example of the university's brilliant planning).

3. Computer Facilities

Another common and serious complaint that I hear every day from students is the need for larger, more capable, and more accessible computer facilities. While the computer facilities we have (especially the language lab and the computer science lab) are substantial, the labs in the C-School, Newcomb Hall and the library could certainly use additional computers, space, and printers that actually work on a consistent basis. I know the computer facilities we have are constantly being upgraded, but it never fails that the extraordinary demand created by one class assignment results in some serious inconveniences for students and faculty. It is absurd that a student must use a computer before ten a.m. or after midnight to be guaranteed a virus-free machine that not

only has the right software, but also works without locking up on every other word.

4. Weight Room

The existing weight room is intended for use by students, athletes and faculty, and as anybody who has ever used it knows, it is a joke. Three benches? Two inclines? The weight room in my poor, Catholic high school was three times the size of W&L's, and it served less than 450 students. As a t-shirt on campus notes, one of the biggest lies at W&L is "a Division III School with Division I facilities!!" I'm sure the faculty won't disagree; I see a number of them in the weight room, fighting for space among all the athletes and amateur body-builders. Between the faculty, the undergrads, and the law students, surely the W&L community deserves a little more space to keep pumped up. Ask any athlete here and they will agree: W&L needs to expand its closet-sized weight room to at least two or three times its current size.

While these criticisms may not appear to amount to much individually, as a whole they represent a serious quality-of-life issue that the administration should address before committing money to a new student center. Instead of creating another inadequate facility, it should improve the existing ones. W&L students may be some of the happiest students in the country, but we can certainly be happier. It's time to demand a little more.

Campus Issues

Spring Term

DEMIAN MCGARRY

The recent debates on winter rush and student representation on the SAC Hearing Board have demonstrated that the faculty and administration are playing a greater role in student affairs. In some cases, such as the debate on the hazing guidelines, Dean of Students David Howison expressed his support for a student hearing board, stating in a *Trident* article that "I think the process is a good balance of faculty, administrative, and student involvement." In almost all cases, the faculty and administration have been rather heavy handed, refusing to listen to the rational arguments and opinions of the student body (for example, the winter rush debacle). Lurking subtly beneath the surface of

campus discussions lies what I believe will be the next great debate over the future of our beloved university. Though the subject has remained dormant for the past couple of years, the debate over the existence of spring term will arise again as newer faculty opposed to spring term, in addition to older ones who have opposed spring term in the past, become more vocal in their opposition.

We as a student body must be ready to defend the existence of spring term, and the following paragraphs list only some of the many reasons why spring term should be retained. One of the main arguments in favor of spring term is that it allows students to pursue academic studies that they nor-

mally would not be able to pursue in the course of a regular two semester year. Washington and Lee provides students with the opportunity to study for six weeks in China, Central America, England, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, and Spain. The Economics Department each spring term offers a supervised study abroad in several cities across Europe, focusing on current topics such as European monetary union. How would this trip work out in a dual semester year? Answer: it wouldn't. The unique program that W&L offers its students would probably be abolished and left to fall by the wayside. It would clearly be to the detriment of the students to lose such opportunities.

Another drawback is that politically minded students would lose the opportunity to study and work on Capitol Hill. In addition, spring term gives professors a chance to teach courses that they normally would not have time to teach in a full semester or as oftentimes is the case, courses that are not designed for a full twelve, let alone fifteen weeks. I was extremely fortunate enough to have taken "Race, Intelligence, and Economic Well Being" last spring term. I can truly say that this was the most intellectually stimulating class that I have ever taken. I doubt that this course could have been offered in a regular semester, mainly because of its design and time constraints on professors. One junior faculty member of the Economics department reiterated this point by saying that spring term gives him the opportunity to teach courses he would usually not have time to teach in a regular term or semester. Also, he poignantly noted that in some courses there is simply not enough



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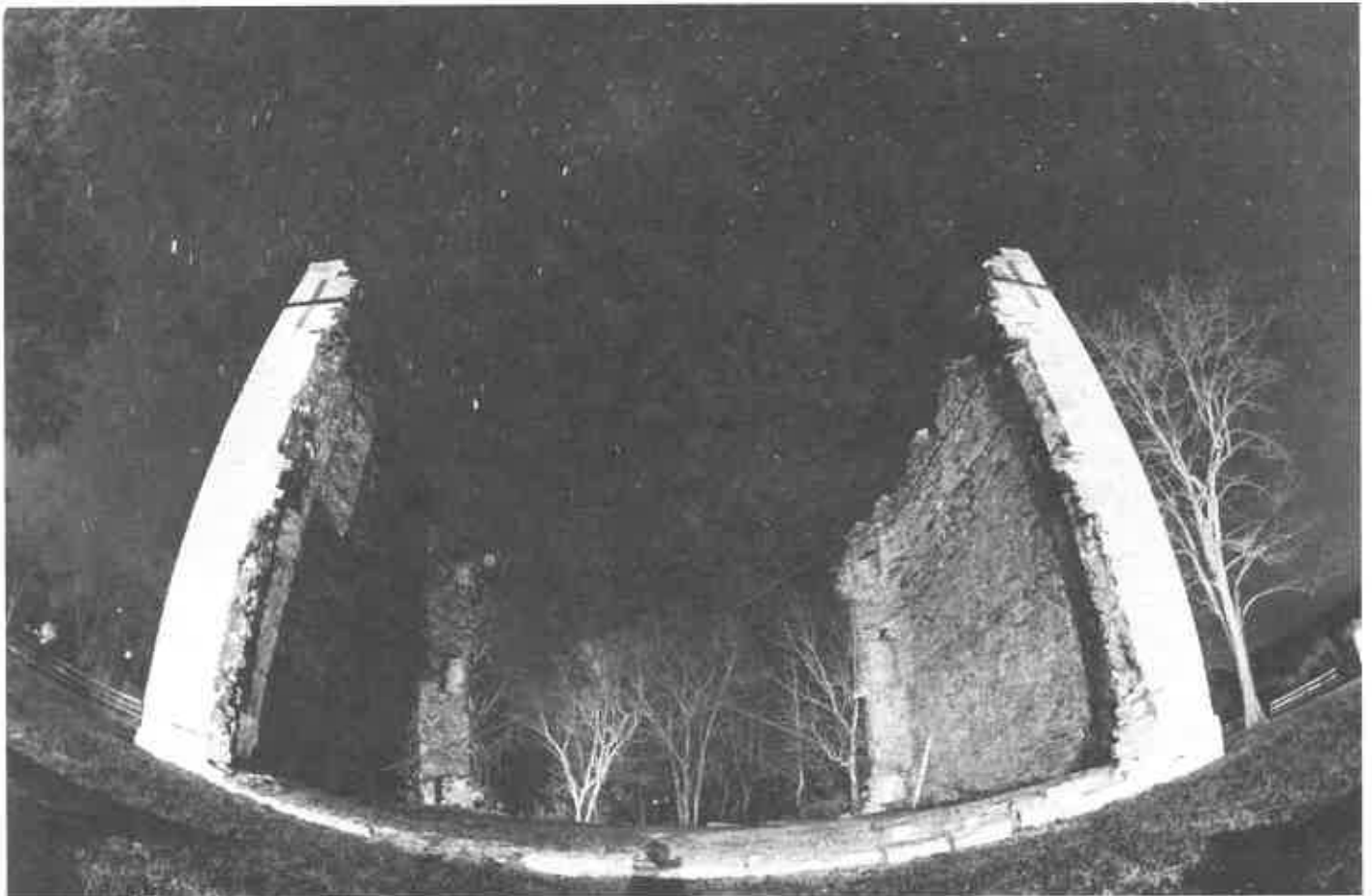
material to cover over the span of twelve but just the right amount to cover in six weeks. Brooke Jarabek, W&L '91, said that "spring term is important because you get to take seminar classes in which you can get involved in discussion that normal lecture classes do not promote. . . there's more growth and interaction in smaller discussion classes " (*Ring Tum Phi* 4/25/91).

Washington and Lee witnessed a debate over the viability of spring term during the 1990-91 school year. In that year, then Dean of the College John Elrod formed a committee to assess spring term in order to accommodate the "chorus of voices raised" that doubted spring term's effectiveness (*The Ring Tum Phi* 9/13/90). President Elrod instructed his newest bureaucracy to look at two key questions: "Does spring term advance our academic purposes? Does spring term enhance our desire

for academic excellence...?" (*The Ring Tum Phi* 9/13/90). I ask truthfully, is our calendar that bad and in need of repair? Fortunately, in April of 1991, President Elrod's spring term review committee, chaired by Professor Ted Williams, thought otherwise. After soliciting input from students and faculty, the committee voted 7-3 to keep spring term. The findings of the committee were contained in a 60 page study issued to Dean of the College Elrod on April 1, 1991. This 60 study listed the persuasive reasons for keeping spring term the way it is currently. I hardly think that in six years, things have become so bad that we need to drastically alter our academic calendar. In addition, the last committee that studied spring term included students in their discussions and surveyed the student body on spring term. Unlike last year's decision on winter rush, I hope that any future spring term review committee

will utilize input from students in its decision. Students, let us not forget, are the ones who would be most affected by changes in the academic calendar and curriculum.

In conclusion, there are many other reasons for keeping spring term and if space permitted, I would have included them, as well as a critique of the potential criticisms of spring term. I have one final question though, that you all should ponder: "Has spring term, for the last twenty-six years, grown so detrimental to our academic well being, that it warrants abolition? I would simply suggest looking at the rankings, which our administration holds so dear, look at the prestigious firms that recruit from our campus, and look at where our alumni are five years from now. Are we suffering?"



Campus Issues

Hazing - Does a Body Good

ANONYMOUS

The *New York Times* has galvanized an anti-hazing campaign here at W&L. A vast majority of this criticism speaks to the truly wicked acts that have sometimes occurred under the guise of "hazing." However, before pledgship is killed by this holy crusade, a distinction must be made. "Hazing" has come to mean anything that a pledge does against his will, and this is somehow equated with being tied to a tree and beaten senseless. For those members of the new faculty/student hazing review board, and especially for all those who decry the savagery of hazing without ever having suffered under it or seen it, please remember this when a fraternity member is brought up on hazing for having a pledge run an errand or do some pushups: all acts of hazing are not equal. Some are legitimate and serve a purpose to both the pledge and the fraternity.

I'm sure anyone that has read this far is gasping and murmuring, "Oh my god! This guy is actually for hazing!" And the girls and administrators are declaring, "What inhumane barbarian could hold such an opinion?" But for those of you who only know of hazing through what you read in the *Phi*, the *Trident*,

and the *New York Times*, please calm your righteous self and learn about something before you condemn it. I agree that real torture, such as that depicted in the *New York Times*, is contemptible and has no place in our fraternity system, on



our campus, or in civilized society. Some actions that occurred under the old system were inane, cruel, and utterly worthless to the fratern-

nity and the pledge. I honestly think the new system will eradicate such barbarism from pledgship, as well it should. BUT, not all hazing is barbaric. In fact, most is not. I do not seek to condone, encourage or facilitate any kind of hazing which physically or mentally abuses pledges. What does this mean? Should pledges be killed, maimed or disfigured? Of course not. Pledges impart a certain trust to the brothers by surrendering some of their rights in pledgship. A violation of that trust would be to expose pledges to truly dangerous situations. But push-ups? Midnight runs? Servitude to the house? Surely none of these pose a legitimate threat to a pledge, and should not be termed "hazing."

The mere word "hazing" has become an emotionally charged campus buzzword, yet it retains little or no meaning. Few have thought to distinguish brutal and cruel hazing from legitimate, constructive hazing. As pledges, young men are forced to earn their way to brotherhood; hazing constitutes a sort of rite of passage. Ultimately, the pledge will benefit from this experience, as many have before him. Without that bond--that commonality--fraternities be-

come simple drinking clubs, and the friendships that develop among pledges from sharing that experience are extinguished. Pledge brothers are not simply those with which you hang out, they are your true friends, people you can count on for help and who count on you to help them. Girls frequently complain that they don't understand male bonding, and I agree. This is male bonding at its best, and it should be preserved.

I mentioned above that a lack of hazing will damage fraternities. If "hazing" in all instances is completely banned, pledgship and fraternities will lose much of their value. If there is no real distinction in the role of the pledge and the brother, why do we need pledgship? Guys don't communicate in the same manner as girls; if we sent our pledges chocolates and candy, fraternities would cease to exist. The fraternity system here has enriched the entire community, and I hardly believe that anyone who cares about this school would wish it gone. But without distinction between pledges and brothers, the advantages and privileges of fraternities will cease to exist, and the University will find less and less students willing to pay its exorbitant fraternity-membership fee.

For those that question the value of hazing, my own opinion may not dissuade you from condemning it. For a more tangible example, let's look at the military system, specifically at V.M.I.'s "adversarial training." Under this system the Rats can be "flamed" at any time. An upperclassman can approach a Rat and demand answers to a host of questions or he can demand servitude. If the Rat does not respond properly he suffers the consequences, from push-ups and verbal abuse to physical discomfort. This "hazing" is legal and encour-

aged at a state-supported institution. It breeds pride and camaraderie that can only be matched in the military academies and boot-camp. They must be doing something right; V.M.I. has the second largest number of alumni in the state of Virginia who are CEOs.

Other benefits of hazing abound. Life is not a walk down easy street. It is tough, competitive, and stressful. Hazing provides training for the realities of the business world which so many W&L students seek to enter. The ability to respond under pressure, to bear down and take responsibility, to act when the risks and consequences are real are all qualities conferred upon those who have undergone an "adversarial" pledgship. To enter the real world without learning to work hard, physically and mentally, is to enter it unprepared. Hazing isn't the only path to this goal, but it can be the most effective in forcing

young men to realize that life isn't easy and that Mom and Dad won't always be there to help.

Some people aren't cut out for the difficulties pledgship necessarily entails, but remember, the pledge can quit at any time. A freshman is neither forced to join nor compelled to stay in a fraternity. Some forms of hazing are legitimate, and fraternity members should not fear expulsion for actions that do not truly threaten the health of a pledge. If the administration is successful in abolishing all hazing it will irrevocably damage institutions that support and enhance our community. To its credit, however, the administration has consistently recognized the merits of a challenging pledgship. Let us hope that it is prepared to draw distinctions between the barbaric and inappropriate forms of hazing and the forms that are benign and constructive.



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Campus Issues

The misnamed Glenn F. Miller vs. Alex Christensen Debate

The staff of The Washington and Lee *Spectator* wishes to commend Glenn Miller for accepting the challenge to debate an unpopular issue, following his convictions, defending the morality of our community, and delivering an exceptional public performance. Mr. Miller diligently examined and effectively articulated his ideology of G&L to his peers. We are grateful to him for his efforts to maintain the integrity of Washington and Lee University.

We would also like to commend Alex Christensen for taking the initiative to publicly confront Glenn instead of passively whining on the pages of campus publications. We were, however, disappointed that he used the debate as a means to solicit a public apology. Additionally, after all of the effort he spent on choosing a time, location, and moderator, his apparent lack of preparation severely restricted his opportunity to help define the role of G&L on our campus.

In order to provide a fair account of the "debate," we have provided a transcription of Alex Christensen's opening statements from a videotape of the January 13, 1997 "debate." Glenn Miller provided us with a copy of both his opening and closing statements. Both are published on the following pages in their unedited form.

Alex Christensen's Opening Statement

My name is Alex Christensen for those of you who don't know me. I'd like to thank ya'll for coming. I hope you don't have too rowdy of expectations for this because Glenn and I are going to try to keep this civilized. All about me: I am a cinema studies major from San Marcos, CA and I am gay. I have been gay ever since I can remember and when I was 17, I came out to my parents and they still love me, so that's good. And when I was 20, Glenn started writing about me in the *Trident*. And he wrote about me once, and next time he had a column he thought that went really well, so he wrote about me again, and he wrote about me again, and again, and again. So I just think that basically I have no problem with humor. I have a sense of humor; you're laughing. And I have no problem with humor columns; I used to write one myself. And that's all great, but it should at least have a point, and when that point is just to be crude, and mean, and to perpetuate stupidity, that's not really funny. So that's about all I have to say. Thanks.

Glenn F. Miller's Opening Statement

I guess I should start off by saying that my name is Glenn Miller, and I'm not gay. And my parents love me also.

I preferred not to approach this as an Alex versus Glenn debate, so my opening statement is a lot longer and a little more serious.

I have been summoned here tonight to consider what role the campus gay and lesbian organization should play at Washington and Lee University. The more salient question that undermines the debate, however, is whether W&L's conservative character is worth protecting, worth preserving, and worth perpetuating. We must choose between duty and apathy. Either we defend the unique character of this university against the intolerant barbarians who are storming the colonnade, or we capitulate to a haughty coterie of homosexuals whose radical activism and toxic nostrums threaten to transform W&L into an ordinary liberal arts school of little appeal and even less repute.

I will admit up front that I am opposed to the institution of homosexuality on ethical and moral grounds. For the purpose of this evening's debate, however, I want to suspend these prejudices and examine the question of G&L's role on this campus apart from my personal moral stance, and simply in light of what the group's practices threaten to do to Washington and Lee's identity. The only bias I will arm myself with is my unwavering loyalty to W&L, my love of this school and what it stands for, and my pride in being a Washington and Lee gentleman, a title I do not feel you automatically lose when you contribute to the "Back Page" of the *Trident*, or serve on the editorial staff of the *Spectator*.

Addressing the question before us, I

must say that while I have a difficult time empathizing with what G&L perceives as the plight of the gay student on this campus, I do understand it is comforting to homosexuals to know an outlet exists for them to discuss any social estrangement they feel. Furthermore, as W&L's mission statement emphasizes, this campus is governed by humility and tolerance. Therefore, I affirm G&L's right to exist to the extent that it would be inappropriate to discriminate against a group solely because its members are a sexual minority. We must realize, however, that to be tolerant of G&L does not require Washington and Lee to carve a special niche for it. Tolerance requires us to acknowledge and respect differences of opinion, but it does not require us to support or advance those differences, it does not require us to efface the distinctions we have drawn between particular lifestyles, and it does not require us to sit on our hands while we watch politically correct groups polarize the Washington and Lee community and alter the W&L paradigm.

Simply put, the problem with the Gay and Lesbian Society is not its orthodoxy, but rather its personality.

On paper, the Gay and Lesbian Society is innocuous. According to its advertisements, home page, and the frequent diatribes written by its president, the group exists mainly as a support group for gay, lesbian, and bisexual students. That appears to be its primary objective and it should be considered praiseworthy. Staffing a confidential hotline and sponsoring a "G&L Safe House" are appropriate means to that end. Its ancillary objectives, however, namely to "address the concerns" of G&L members, to decide on what "goals" are worthy of the group's pursuit, and to "heighten

awareness and concerns about gay, lesbian and bisexual issues on campus" are cause for concern. The open-endedness of those objectives suggest that the group's itinerary may be more ambitious and less antiseptic than it would like us to believe.

For example, what does heightening awareness about gay issues mean? Does it mean trying to integrate gay students by calling attention to the difficulties of being gay on a conservative campus, an objective I suggest is admirable? Or does it mean lobbying the administration or the Executive Committee for mandated gay representation on the Student Recruitment Committee or the Dorm Counselor Board, an ambition I believe has dangerous implications? Unfortunately, G&L's past agenda suggests it is more inclined to follow the latter course of action. Consider the ostentatious coming out ceremony that was held in May. Coming out events are designed to glorify a particular sexual orientation. If the gay and lesbian students on this campus feel the need to celebrate their brand of sexuality, they should go ahead and do it. But they should retreat to their bedrooms or to their "G&L Safe House" and do what they need to do there. It is wrong for G&L or any other group to stage a charade in Lee Chapel and violate its sanctity. This type of activism has no place at Washington and Lee.

Let us assume, for a moment, that G&L's current leadership is not interested in orchestrating grandiose political schemes. Let us assume "coming out" days do not foreshadow more apocalyptic events to come. After all, G&L's current leader appears relatively benign compared to the militant brass that leads the gay minions on other campuses, where radical gay rights demonstrations abound. But the seeds for such political correctness

have been planted, and with every egregious liberty G&L takes, with every concession it gains from those who have no concern for the future of this university, the seeds are watered. The baton will eventually be passed to a new generation of gay leadership on this campus, and there's no reason to believe that eventually we will not witness an all out assault on the conservative political and social atmosphere that this campus enjoys. For if we allow a gay activist group such as G&L, which is a flagship for leftist political organizations, to gain a foothold at Washington and Lee, it will not be long before an influx of other radical groups inject their poison into the W&L mentality. In making such a forecast I am not peddling fantasy. Rather, I am calling attention to a future reality that can be read in the histories of so many other liberal arts universities.

Simply put, the problem with the Gay and Lesbian Society is not its orthodoxy, but rather its personality. G&L should exist as a support group. G&L should be listed in the directory of organizations and it should have a homepage, albeit a less irreverent one. It should try to integrate gay, lesbian, and bisexual students into the W&L community and it should try to quell the concerns of gay students on this campus. The way for G&L to do this, however, is not by assuming a bellicose stance, not by irritating people

by staging events in Lee Chapel, and certainly not by assailing and being intolerant of the campus environment which G&L members voluntarily chose to join. The way to do it is through persuasion and tact. Ours is not a campus of bigots. Most people understand that gay students are no less worthy to be on this campus than anybody else. At the same time, however, gay students must recognize that they are no more worthy than other

And so I conclude my remarks by evoking the words of Supreme Court Justice Powell, an alumnus of this school, who wisely observed: "You won't find anyplace in the world quite like Washington and Lee." Personally, I think it's worth keeping that way.

students and, thus, to arrogate to themselves the right to alter the Washington and Lee character by operating in a radical vein is beyond the proper role of G&L.

In closing I want to acknowledge that this campus is not a utopia and it is certainly not bereft of infirmities. Nonetheless, I have developed a fondness for the very unique and paradoxical amalgamation of virtues and vices that comprise this university's character. Washington and Lee stands for something. Its identity is genuine, derived from time-honored conservative ideals that have been practiced and affirmed for nearly 250 years. Washington and Lee is not capricious;

it does not bend to changing political winds. Washington and Lee's pedigree is pure; it does not sacrifice its heritage to the Gods of the ivory tower and to their academic fetishes and fads. Washington and Lee puts its faith in principle and tradition; it does not look to other schools for direction and guidance. In order to preserve this character, however, we must insist on its preservation. We must challenge the allegation that political correctness is a juggernaut that will sooner or later consume every university.

Robert E. Lee, when he was at the helm of this institution, was not ashamed to march out of step when W&L students used to walk in procession with VMI cadets. In fact, Lee made a point to march out of step, not because he wanted to be difficult, but because he believed regimentation would lead to banality. We must follow Lee's lead today by not allowing W&L to fall in step behind a long line of other liberal arts institutions as they trumpet the politically correct cause along a parade route of mediocrity. And so I conclude my remarks by evoking the words of Supreme Court Justice Powell, an alumnus of this school, who wisely observed: "You won't find anyplace in the world quite like Washington and Lee." Personally, I think it's worth keeping that way.

Glenn F. Miller's Closing Statement (Not Delivered)

Because ours is a campus that rightfully encourages humility and tolerance, we should not discriminate against gay students. Each of us is free to make value judgments about a particular sexual persuasion or about a particular campus group or about a particular political stance, but we must refrain from using those evalua-

tions to make judgments about the worth any particular person. Every man, we must remember, enjoys ultimate equality in the eyes of God. Thus, G&L has the right to exist. However, it does not follow that students on this campus are obligated to embrace G&L or to support it. The Gay and Lesbian Society is not protected from scrutiny and criticism,

satire and jest. G&L deserves no preferential treatment nor should it be guaranteed the privileges and prerogatives of any other campus group.

G&L is a hypocritical organization. It criticizes the student body for being intolerant of its agenda, when in reality, its agenda represents the ultimate form of intolerance, namely a blatant

disrespect for the character of this university and a surreptitious attempt to slowly alter the identity of

W&L by impregnating the campus with a politically correct sentiment. If G&L would only rigidly adhere to its mission statement, namely to serve as a comfort group for homosexual students, than it would hardly be

such a controversial and criticized group. The problem, however, is that G&L is disingenuous; its agenda is more radical and more ambitious than its home page and cute advertisements suggest. The proper role of G&L on this campus is simply to provide an outlet for homosexual students and to try to integrate homosexual students into the W&L community in a way that does not retard that community. Its proper role is not to stage coming out days in Lee Chapel nor is it to paint the pillars affront the colonnade to resemble a rainbow. Again, I say that the problem with G&L is not the heterodoxy that it represents but the obnoxious manner with which it conducts itself.

As members of the W&L community we are all caretakers of a very valuable possession - the identity and character of Washington and Lee University. While nobody will find it written anywhere, I believe we are all governed by a very solemn, implicit contract. As we struggle toward graduation, or tenure, or whatever our immediate horizon may be, it is our duty as students, and professors, and administrators, as it was Lee's self-imposed duty when he was President of this hallowed school, to make sure we arrive at our destination with Washington and Lee's

identity unaltered, its character uncompromised, and its virtues unabated.

As we struggle toward graduation, or tenure, or whatever our immediate horizon may be, it is our duty . . . to make sure we arrive at our destination with Washington and Lee's identity unaltered, its character uncompromised, and its virtues unabated.

The essence of the debate this evening is not what role the Gay and Lesbian Society should play on this campus. To view it as a Glenn versus Alex showdown is trivial

and childish, it is a cheap publicity stunt designed to call attention to a group that would rather be counter-productive and be in the spotlight than be responsive to the exigencies of the gay community and remain in the background.

The real issue that must be reconciled in our minds tonight is whether we, who cherish, and in fact, are proud of the unique conservative character of Washington and Lee, are going to surrender to the political left who preach equality of outcome, moral relativism, and social engineering? Are we who recognize the sanctity of Lee Chapel, not only because it is Lee's final resting place, but also because it is an icon of honor and integrity, going to permit radical groups to congregate there and extol the joys of a particular sexual orientation? Are we who love W&L for what is has always been, a proud institution that values tradition and honor, which values diversity but only to the extent that it does threaten community, a school that is molded by principle and time-honored philosophy not by political whims and popular culture, a university that is not unmindful of changing times but yet does not surrender to them, a school that actively pursues recognition and esteem but does not prostitute itself to obtain it, are we who love

W&L going to let a group of cantankerous and disgruntled students, who voluntarily chose to come here, change the character of Washington and Lee simply because they disagree with an identity that has existed for nearly 250 years? As for me, I consider it my obligation, whether through the "Back Page" of the *Trident* or through more serious mediums to fight any practice that is antithetical to what Washington and Lee stands for, and I will remain "UNASHAMED."

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National Politics

Immigration: People Problems or Governmental Gaffes?

JOSHUA HESLINGA

Few issues in this country cause as much debate as immigration. From California's Proposition 187 to recent congressional attempts to crack down on illegal immigration, this is a problem that won't go away. As I thought about immigration over the past week or so, I tried to relate the problem to the W&L community. I asked myself, "What if Washington and Lee University adopted policies and practices toward prospectives that reflected our country's immigration policy and practices?" What events could we expect to see?

First, we would see admissions officers ignoring or destroying thousands of high school disciplinary records and admitting hundreds of juvenile delinquents. Nationally, the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee opened an investigation in October into reports of widespread mishandling of immigrant application records by Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) officials. This mishandling occurred in their push to grant citizenship to over a million people this year as a part of their "Citizenship USA" program. The committee subpoenaed the records of more than 50,000 people approved for citizenship this year, minus their names to protect their privacy. Staffers then began to check these immigrants' FBI records for criminal convictions. As of November 2nd, they had reviewed the files of 20,377 people. These recently naturalized citizens had collectively been charged with over 29,000 crimes. Among those, investigators found 6,724 convictions, 1,018 of which should have automatically disqualified that person for citizenship.

Second, we would see W&L allowing random outsiders to enroll in classes and enjoy university health benefits just because their parents managed

to set up camp in Lexington. Unless initiatives like California's Proposition 187, which proposed to deny government benefits to illegal immigrants and their children, survive legal challenge, illegal immigrants will be able to continue to take government services.

Third, W&L classes would start to be given in the native languages of foreign students, so that the problem of learning English wouldn't stand in the way of their learning. Thanks to bilingual education nationally, immigrant children can frequently reach middle school or beyond without a firm command of English (but with lots of cultural pride and self-esteem).

And fourth, imagine the following questions being asked in W&L admissions interviews: "What are Washington and Lee's colors?"; "What is the date of Lee's birthday?"; "Who is Dean of the College today?"; "What is the faculty?"; "Who wrote the W&L Swing?"; "Where is the Lee House located?"; "What was the 14th fraternity to come to W&L?"; "What is Lee Chapel?" The INS asks each applicant for citizenship about 12 questions, with the exact number at the discretion of the interviewer. The Washington Post recently printed the list of 100 from which the interview questions are taken. The actual corresponding INS questions to the ones above are: "What are the colors of the flag?"; "What is the date of Independence Day?"; "Who is the Vice-President of the United States?"; "What is the Congress?"; "Who wrote the Star-Spangled Banner?"; "Where is the White House located?"; "What is the 49th state of the Union (United States)?"; "What is the United States Capitol (building)?"

Can anyone seriously pretend that these questions tell you who really understands America and is qualified and dedicated enough to receive the

privilege of citizenship? Several questions, such as "Where does freedom of speech come from?" or "What did the Emancipation Proclamation do?", beg for factoid answers that are only marginally accurate historically. Some are blatantly irrelevant, such as "Which countries were our principal allies during World War II?" and "Name one purpose of the United Nations." A few too many ask for information about the Pilgrims that is suitable for little besides a second-grade classroom.

Some questions just beg for some red-blooded American cynicism. Take "What special group advises the President?" for example. How is any American to decide between lawyers and pollsters? Oops, my bad. It's actually the Cabinet. Or how about, "Who makes the laws in the United States?" I'm really stuck between special interests and the Supreme Court on that one. Like good little bureaucrats, the INS is revising the test (send suggestions to Citizenship USA, 425 I St. NW, Washington, DC 20536). I can't wait to see immigrants asked everything from "Who is Boutros-Boutros Ghali?" to "What are the colors in the Rainbow Coalition's rainbow?"

After all this thinking about immigration, I can't help wonder why some continue to blame the immigrants for the current state of immigration and culture in America. Next year, Congress should revisit not immigration quotas, but the policies and practices of our own governmental institutions. On the other hand, maybe we should keep things the way they are. At least then they'll be someone around who might be able to tell me whether Alaska or Hawaii came first (in Spanish, of course).

Southern History

DEFIANCE

ERIK SAMPSON

When the Confederacy was defeated in 1865, one of the first edicts of the Reconstructionist government was to forbid the flying of the Confederate Battle Flag. Adopted as the official flag of the Confederacy in 1863, the Battle Flag had come to represent the indomitable spirit of the South in its struggle to secure independence. With the election of President Rutherford B. Hayes in 1876, the remaining Federal troops departed the occupied states and Southerners were once again free to fly the symbol of their lost cause.

Today, the Confederate Battle Flag is once again on the verge of being permanently furlled. Across the South, lawsuits, protests and legislative bills circulate, all aimed at prohibiting even the most discrete displays of the Battle Flag. These modern attempts to suppress the Battle Flag ignore the reverence felt by many Southerners towards this proud symbol of their past, and focus in-

stead on the flagrant display of the flag by extremist fringe groups. Indeed, the prominence of the Confederate Battle Flag on the battlefields of Virginia, Georgia and Tennessee, and other states is today but a footnote when compared to the highly publicized conflict to ban it from public display.

If anything, the debate over the display of the Battle Flag has heated up more than ever in recent years and the efforts to ban it and other symbols of the South—such as statues, historical markers and the song “Dixie”—have reached a nearly frenzied level. Perhaps the time has come to discover how such a noble symbol of a fledgling peo-

ple’s struggle for independence could become widely associated with the twisted ideologies of organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan and countless white supremacist groups. Indeed, it may be more important for the very people who feel so offended by the mere display of the Battle Flag to step back and answer this question themselves before they succeed in their endeavor.

Understandably, many people of this country would not be willing to consider this point even for a moment. For many Americans, the only glimpses they catch of the Battle Flag have been on television broadcasts of Klan rallies or in



movies about the civil rights movement of the 1960's. Nevertheless, the suppression of the freedom to fly the Battle Flag, or any flag for that matter, is unmerited by the controversy associated with it alone.

In a biography of Quentin Tarantino, the popular Hollywood film director was asked about the use of a specific, very emotionally charged term in his movies. The author was referring to Tarantino's generous use of the word "nigger" in his films. To many people, this term is as representative of racism and slavery as the Confederate Battle Flag. Tarantino responded that it

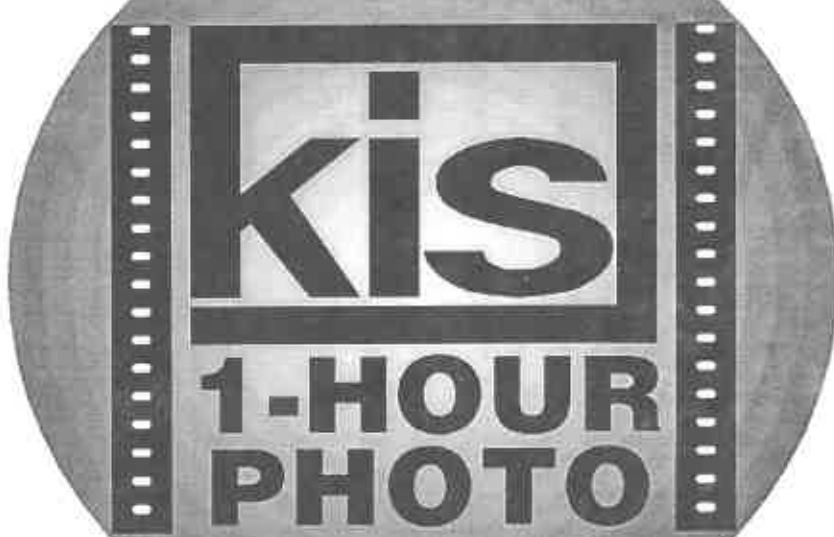
wasn't so much about sensitivity as it was about the fact that the moment a word signifies so much, he believes it should be shouted by everyone from rooftops. While sensitivity is a noble and necessary trait, passionate and emotionally charged rhetoric does not a good argument make. Indeed, before the anti-Battle Flag groups organize for their final onslaught, perhaps they should examine how this one hundred and thirty-five year old symbol can have such a profound effect over them.

Once again, the resentment against the Battle Flag is not completely unreasonable.

After the "War for Southern Independence," the Confederate Battle Flag did become the standard of the KKK, and today this group still enthusiastically displays the flag. The adoption of the Battle Flag by the Klan has indeed tarnished the symbol's proud reputation with the hatred inspired by these bigots' beliefs. In a 1992 edition of the *Southern Partisan*, reputed historian Shelby Foote remarked, "they, [the Confederate Battle Flag and Dixie] have been claimed by these yahoos, they became their symbols, and we lost them." Indeed, it now seems that the Battle Flag is

regarded as little more than a banner of hatred, waved viciously from behind police lines by misguided bigots clothed in pillowcases and bed sheets. It is therefore more important now than ever for people who hold the Battle Flag dear to help others understand that it was stolen, not created, by these extremists. This sacred banner that flew defiantly from Lookout Mountain, Vicksburg, and for a brief moment atop Seminary Ridge, has to be reclaimed now, before it is lost forever.

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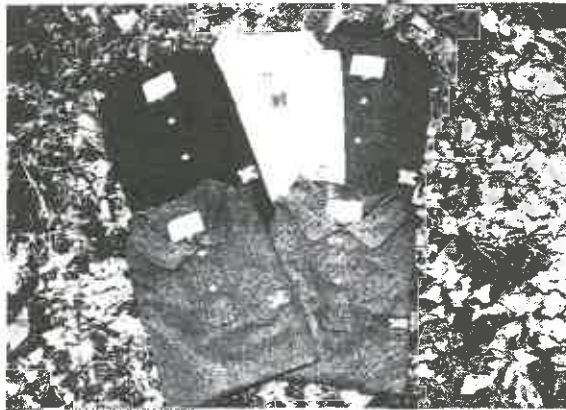
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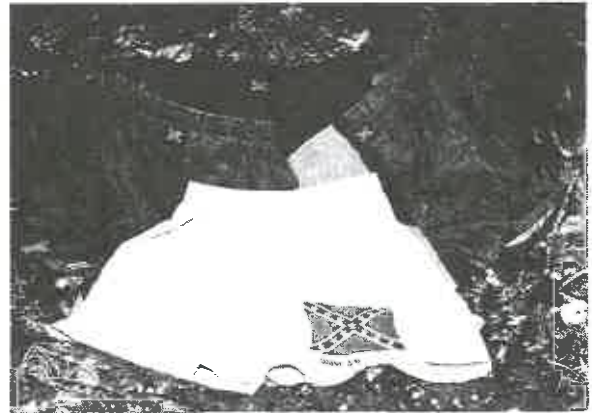
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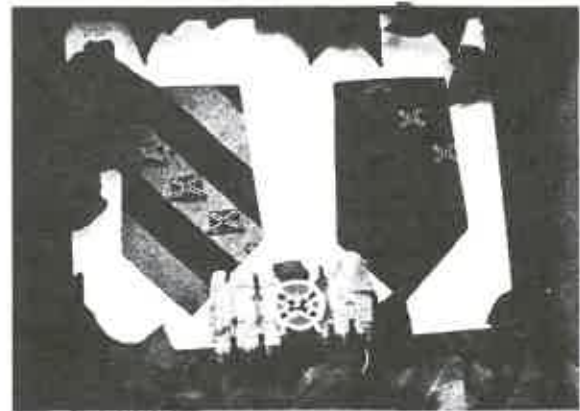
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