

Let's Have Real Campus Store In "Student Union"

Articles by the column inch, conferences by the hour, letters by the dozens, all are ineffective and meaningless it seems.

The subject is the lack of a student or campus store in the new "student union" built last year. We asked for it before the building was built, we suggested changes that would create this desire during the construction of the building and we sought to have it changed after the building was finished.

Conclusion: nothing has been done! No explanation has been made to the students. The operator of the present book store asked for a campus store with certain specifications and yet even she knows no reason why the plans did not call for the requested design.

The students visit the book store during the first of each quarter to buy expensive text books and then only a few stop by to purchase needed materials during the remainder of the quarter. Faculty members have no need to visit the book store except to get materials.

Everything that is sold after the first of the quarter could be handled by the snack bar and faculty supplies could be stored and given out somewhere else during certain hours or days.

Conclusion: no need for the book store unless changes are made to bring it up to date and give it a significant place in the community.

Suggestion: Allow Mrs. Maude Brown, present book store manager, to make the book store into a self-service campus store and to stock it with supplies and materials needed by a college community as well as allow her to stock selected paper back books and modern library series.

The reason for this is simple. No store can sell unless the buyer is allowed to browse and handle and look at items. No store can draw customers unless it has something to offer that will interest the student. Both of these are lacking from our present situation. Both are needed and desired. Both would have much effect on the community.

At least acknowledge our request and give some explanation of why it cannot or should not be done unless, as we suspect, it is just the fact that no one has taken a few minutes to look into the matter and discover that it would not be such a difficult task to accomplish.

Too Many Rival Letters

In past years the "M" Club has seen to it that students are informed about not wearing other school letters on the Mercer campus. For some reason they have failed to take the responsibility for this function during the early part of this quarter.

We hope that the students who have been wearing the letters will realize they are meaningless on the Mercer campus and detract from our own lettermen. It shows little thought or loyalty for the University.

Wars Played Large Role In Rising of the 'Beats'

By Haywood Ellis

What is the reason for the growth of this new cult of beats? Well, let's examine the historical position of the generation in which this concept first appeared.

As we have said, the beats, the first generation of which are still around and kicking, are not the teen-agers, but a generation a little ahead of the Levi's and Dick Clark set. Most of the original recruits into this way of thinking went through the war.



Now wars are notorious for leaving men unstable after-ward, and the Second World War was worse than any other. On the heels of that one came the Korean situation, when many veterans right back into the thick of things, quite often into even worse conditions. This left quite a few of the American male population searching for security and some form of stability when they re-entered civilian life.

They came back, searching for a little peace and quiet and what did they find? A world possibly more insecure than at any other time in its history. After the topsyturvy war life, these veterans re-

turned, expecting to associate with a few sensible people for a change, and found instead a society in which the threat of momentary mass annihilation had resulted in what some would go so far as to term a race of neurotics.

This threat had forced the masses of people away from much serious thinking, except when it concerned a problem not immediate and one in which they could get involved, thus forgetting the problem at hand.

The majority of Americans was living off of the tranquilization of escape mechanisms: television, scrabble, Christmas Clubs, canasta, barbecues, etc. what the veterans stepped into was a group of people who made a lot less sense than those with whom they had associated during the now comparatively normal war.

Many of the returning soldiers soon found that the mass of people had the easiest and, for them, most satisfying means of escaping the world turmoil and they eventually joined with the pack.

Some of them, however, were not able to ignore the situation hanging over their head. When they saw others of their own society retreating into a world of meaningless idols, they became thoroughly disgusted and kept telling themselves that there must be something better than this some-

The Mercer Cluster

MERCER UNIVERSITY, MACON, GEORGIA

DEC. 5, 1958

VOLUME 39, NUMBER 8

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BUDDY HURT

The Honor System?

At what I am sure is great risk, I wish to comment on the Honor System and the present standing thereof.

Let me make it clear at the beginning that I support the Honor System and that I feel that it is one of the finest parts of Mercer.

But when there is a doubt as to the effectiveness of the Honor System, I feel that doubt should be cleared up. I confess that I have such a doubt.

It will be recalled there was a vote in October on an amendment to the Student Constitution. The amendment would have required all students to report academic cheating.

The amendment failed.

Not An Encouraging Vote

It received a majority vote, but the vote was scarcely encouraging. The freshman class voted the amendment down and no class gave it the two-thirds majority necessary for passage.

The Honor System continues at Mercer as though nothing has happened, but my point is that something has happened. The status of the Honor System is not the same as it was prior to the vote. Its status is in doubt.

A Matter of Conjecture

Now I do not pretend to know how much support the Honor System has. It may still be strong enough to be considered effective. It may not. But this much is sure: No one is making any great effort to find out.

There are several ways of arriving at some idea of the strength of the Honor System. Our student government (and it is primarily their responsibility) could ask for a referendum vote on the Honor System itself. It could interview key students to determine their estimation of the Honor System. It could poll the entire student body at a Tuesday chapel meeting.

And this is what we need to know. Just how many students really support the Honor System? How many would be willing to report violations of the Honor System? How many are violently opposed to it?



MARTY LAYFIELD

The Hypocrites

The inability of the two existing groups at Mercer to communicate with each other has reached a critical point. There is no synthesis group at Mercer and as a result the two opposing groups attempt no understanding of each other.

Both thesis and antithesis stand apart and yell hypocrite at each other. Both claim the other is intolerant and as a result, lost!



In defining the two groups we must call the thesis that group of fundamental believers who are willing to remain in the same place their predecessors were ten years ago. They use meaningless terms and insignificant philosophy considering modern man's situation.

The antithesis of this group is that fellowship of critical men who are in reality just as far away from the center as the thesis. They are concerned, but yet they have no definite commitment and as a result they are overly conscious of their position. They tend to be cynical just as the thesis tends to be selfrighteous.

Same Situation Elsewhere

Both of these are general definitions, but you should begin to get the picture. This same situation holds true beyond the limits of the Mercer student body; it extends almost across the board.

Now the problem is the evident lack of a synthesis group at Mercer. Without such a body there can be no meaningful communication, no deeper understanding, no acceptance of the worth of each individual.

As long as the two groups exist without the third, the situation will only become worse. The fundamentalist becomes more convinced in his being superior. The critical liberal becomes more repulsed and his rebellion is strengthened.

What we need is a group of both thinkers who will brave the criticism of traitor and leave their respective groups in order to establish a synthesis. It will require growth on the part of both, even humility.

Locked "Student Union"

One of the most illogical things about this campus is the seeming continuous fear of the high brass that someone will bomb the new "student union" if they leave it unlocked over the weekend.

Is it really necessary to lock this building when it deprives students, parents, campus newspaper staff and probably others from the needed facilities?

The Mercer Cluster feels that this complaint must be registered in hopes that something will be done to eliminate the situation. Really no one wants to bomb the "student union."



"I'll be writing along, beat as you please, when suddenly this irrestible surge of optimism bubbles up inside of me." Drawing by Lorenz (c) 1958 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

where; there must be something that had some meaning. So they began to experiment. Sooner or later, most of them arrived at the philosophical branch of intellec-

some came across, by accident, others of the same genre.

During the war there had been developing, mainly in a section of San Francisco, an intellectual movement.

This group, by the time the Korean conflict was over, had reached a point in their development where they attained a coolly superior attitude and a complete outward disregard of the everyday problems of human pragmatic society.

Somehow, this group, which was so "cool," quiet, and removed that it had gone unnoticed by the greater portion of the outside world, came to the attention of many "socially maladjusted" soldiers home from the war who were more of the intellectual types, as well as a few persons scattered about the country who simply were fed up with the new set of values that had arrived in their society, and were looking for something of greater cosmic value.

After the second generation popularization, with all its associated publicity, people from every walk of life flocked to the bandwagon and immediately labeled themselves "beat."

Whether the basic beats will be able to accomplish anything in the realm of the arts yet remains to be seen. It will all depend on whether the core group will retain their ideals and keep working; or if they become so disgusted at what their movement has evolved into that they will drop the whole thing.