

Petersburg man charged in abduction, rape of VCU student

*Alleged rapist faces
September trials in
Chesterfield and Prince
William counties*

Brian Baer
CT NEWS EDITOR

She's alive.

But a state police official said that's all that separates the alleged abduction and rape of a 22-year-old Virginia Commonwealth University student on Friday, April 30, from his most serious cases.

"The only ones that are more serious are when (victims) don't live to testify," said Bill Littreal, assistant special agent-in-charge of the Virginia State Police's violent crimes investigative unit.

Johnny L. Jones of Petersburg was arrested May 7 by Petersburg Police in connection with the alleged rape. Jones, 34, is charged with one count each of abduction, sodomy and rape in Chesterfield County where he will be arraigned in circuit court August 10. A jury trial is scheduled for Sept. 1.

The student's ordeal began about 1 a.m. April 30, Littreal said, when Jones allegedly strong-armed her into his car as she approached her residence near VCU.

"You have a student walking home at night, and this man abducts her," he said.

From Richmond the woman was driven to a Chesterfield motel off Interstate 95 where Jones allegedly raped her repeatedly throughout the night, Littreal said.

The next morning, she was driven to a wooded area in Caroline County near the junction of I-95 and state Route 207 where Jones allegedly raped her again and tried to kill her, Littreal said, refusing to elaborate on the alleged murder attempt.

The woman was then driven north on I-95 to a rest area in Prince William County where she escaped, he said.

"When (the alleged rapist) wasn't paying much attention," Littreal said, "she managed to get away."

The state police official declined further comment on the alleged crimes except to say that the alleged victim was in restraints at times during the ordeal. More details, he said, will come at the trial.

RAPE/ABDUCTION continued to page 2 ➤



Carla J. Schmitt/Commonwealth Times

THE GUARDIAN — This sculpture on Union Avenue off of Williamsburg Road often is frequented by VCU sculpture students. It is in the Fulton Hill Subdivision.

Trial scheduled for ex-VCU policeman

*Evans allegedly
attempted ticket
tampering*

Scott Bass
CT STAFF WRITER

A former VCU police officer accused of attempting to falsify a report is scheduled to face trial Sept. 16 in Richmond General District (Criminal) Court.

District Court Judge Robert L. Harris continued the case June 22.

Clyde Evans, 26, is charged with obstruction of justice and intent to mislead officials.

Evans stopped a female motorist April 18 and gave her a ticket for DUI. He then allegedly began seeing the motorist socially and later tried to get the ticket revoked, VCU officials said.

"(Evans has) been terminated," said VCU Police Chief Dan Dean. "He's no longer with us."

Harris continued the case after disqualifying Deputy Commonwealth Attorney William H. Parcell from prosecuting the

VCU POLICE continued to page 2 ➤

Athlete receives community service for passing bad checks

Coach says she thinks Chmela left country

Scott Bass
CT STAFF WRITER

Former VCU tennis player Margaret Chmela, who was charged with uttering (passing a bad check) and forgery this past spring, was sentenced June 30 in Henrico General District (Criminal) Court to 100 hours of community service.

Chmela also was accused of stealing two checks from teammate Ivi Moorlat last February to purchase \$685.60 in merchandise from The Limited and \$256.03 in merchandise from Hecht's department store, both in Regency Square.

The uttering charge was recorded in district court as nolle prosequi, which means the prosecutor will no longer pur-

sue the charge.

Judge Buford Parsons Jr. reduced the grand larceny charge to petty larceny, suspending 12 months of imprisonment and sentencing her to 100 hours of Community Diversion Incentives (CDI).

In addition, Parsons ordered Chmela to

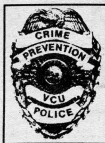
pay \$941.63 in restitution to Hecht's and The Limited.

Chmela is no longer a member of the women's tennis team, which ranks fourth in the region coming into the '93-'94 season, said head Coach Eva Bard.

"The kid's guilty and was found guilty in court. She's violated every team rule she can violate," Bard said, adding that she thinks Chmela has left the country.

New Student Supplement

New students, welcome to VCU. Check out our supplement to discover more about your university and the city of Richmond. Find out where to go, who to call, how to protect yourself and other fascinating fun facts about VCU.



CRIME SHORTS

For emergencies, contact VCU Police at 367-1234 or use ERTS phones (yellow at MCV, blue at VCU).

compiled by Scott Bass
CT STAFF WRITER

5/9/93

• Arrest

Visitor Robert Thomas was arrested at 2:40 p.m. at 700 W. Grace St. for possession of a concealed gun and contributing to the delinquency of a minor. A juvenile also was arrested for possession of crack cocaine with the intent to distribute.

5/12/93

• Assault.

A male VCU student was allegedly struck in the head at 10:25 p.m. by a known person while standing in front of Gladding Residence Center.

5/14/93

• Simple Assault

A female VCU student was allegedly assaulted by a known person on the Laurel Street side of Johnson Hall between 5 p.m. and 5:15 p.m.

6/3/93

• Larceny of a Motor Vehicle

A male VCU employee reported a state-

owned, white 1989 Dodge van stolen from behind 824 Park Ave. between May 27 and June 3 at an unknown time.

6/24/93

• Arrest

Frank A. Lightfoot, a visitor, was arrested at 9:26 a.m. near the Medical Education Building bike racks for possession of burglary tools, possession of cocaine, attempted grand larceny, trespassing, possession of a concealed weapon and possession of marijuana.

6/29/93

• Arrest

David Matheny, a visitor, was arrested at 10:55 p.m. at the corner of Harrison and Grace streets for assaulting a police officer and disorderly conduct.

6/30/93

• Grand Larceny

A male MCV/VCU employee reported an unknown person stole brass and copper materials from the plumbing shop at MCV's West Hospital between 4:45 p.m. on June 29 and 10 a.m. on June 30.
Total value: \$2,500

7/4/93

• Assault

A female patient reported a known person assaulted her on the sixth floor of the North Hospital between 8:51 p.m. and 10:30 p.m.

7/29/93

• Arrest

Visitor Lenny Greenberg was arrested for indecent exposure at 2:28 a.m. at Shafer Court.

VCU police

continued from page 1

case and appointed assistant Chesterfield Commonwealth Attorney Richard K. Cox.

Cox said his appointment to the case was "just a formality," adding that, because of the interaction between the Richmond Police Department and the city's Commonwealth Attorney's Office, Parcell's involvement would present a conflict of interest.

Evans' attorney, John McGardy, declined comment on the upcoming trial

WASTED YOUTH.



ONLY YOU CAN PREVENT FOREST FIRES.

A Public Service of the USDA Forest Service and your State Forester.

Rape/abduction

continued from page 1

Also in connection with the alleged rape on April 30, Jones is charged with one count of forcible sodomy and one count of abduction in Prince William County, where a jury trial is scheduled for September 20. Additional charges, Littreal said, will follow in Caroline County.

Jones also faces robbery and malicious-wounding charges in Petersburg from two violent robberies there on April 27 and April 28. He allegedly used mace on one victim and stabbed another victim in the throat, said Lt. Bill Rohde of Petersburg Police.

At press time, Jones remained in Petersburg jail where he was being held without bond.

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CARRIAGE HOUSE TEXTBOOKS

404 N. Harrison St.
359-2365

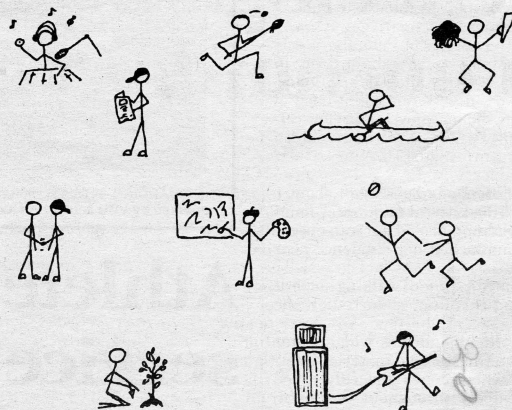
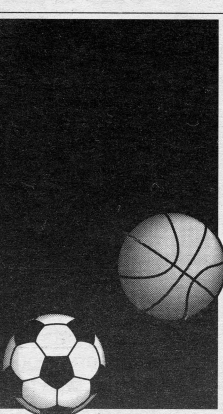
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At VCU there are 165 student organizations, so there's no reason not to get INVOLVED! Come see some of those organizations at the

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COMMONS PLAZA

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Rain date: Thursday, Sept. 16

VCU announces plan to merge health sciences, medical schools in 1994

Merger 'will be vital to our success,' Trani says.

Beatriz Kane
CT STAFF WRITER

In efforts to consolidate the university's financial and organizational resources, VCU has announced it will merge the schools of medicine and basic health sciences July 1, 1994.

"After thorough and careful consideration, I am convinced that this organizational change will provide flexibility and new opportunities for collaboration for our faculty," VCU President Eugene P. Trani said.

The Commission on the Future of the University recommended a study to consider the consolidation of the two schools. As a result, the Internal Study Committee was created, and it weighed the pros and the cons of the merger.

Public hearings were held and written comments were solicited from faculty and administrators.

"As separate schools, basic health sciences and medicine contributed to the

maturation of VCU and the university's preeminence as one of the most comprehensive academic medical centers in the country," Trani said. "We now look forward to a different climate for our health care, and new directions for MCV will be vital to our success in meeting that future."

The Implementation Committee, which was created for this merger, will hear concerns from people involved in the merger.

"A series of groups will be put together to work out the changes," said Dr. John Jones, vice president of the Health Sciences Division at VCU.

These groups will assist the Implementation Committee, which is responsible for making the transition a smooth one, Jones said.

The vice president also said the committees would include deans, chairpersons, faculty members and students.

"There will be multiple opportunities for people to express their concerns about the merger," Jones said.

Dr. William L. Dewey, vice president for research and graduate studies, said more than 120 letters have been written "voicing concerns on both sides of the issue."

According to a letter sent to Trani, one concern is that the merger is motivated by the School of Medicine's desire to acquire the School of Basic Health Sciences larger

"There will be multiple opportunities for people to express their concerns about the merger."

Dr. John Jones, vice president of the Health Sciences Division at VCU

grant overhead.

However, the fundamental reason for the merger, Jones said, was to allow more collaborative research and to enhance the communication between the two schools.

"Collaborative research is university-wide," Jones said.

Dewey said he has met with chairmen of departments in the school and has offered to meet with faculty members.

"People are always worried about change," Dewey said. "However, the merger will increase opportunity for research, distribution of space and interaction among

faculty members. This is supposed to make things better for the students."

According to Dewey, no hierarchical changes have been made. He also said the search for a new dean will be on a national level. Until the merger is final, interim deans have been appointed to both schools.

Dewey will replace Dr. S. Gaylen Bradley as interim dean of the School of Basic Health Sciences. Dr. Hermes Kontos, professor of internal medicine, will serve as interim dean for the medical school. Kontos replaces Dr. Stephen M. Ayres.

Clarification

The six-page ad that ran on the May 3 issue of the Commonwealth Times was not identified as a paid advertisement. It was indeed a paid advertisement. We regret the error.

Archaeologists thrive on uncommon digs

Diana K. Mitchell
CT STAFF WRITER

A prehistoric Indian site in Lee County. A broad sword found at Jordan's Point near Hopewell. The charred remains of bones discovered in Lee County. A slave's house in Prince William County.

Archaeological Research Center
1814 W. Main St.

Archaeological displays are usually open to VCU students, staff and faculty Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Call 367-8822.

valuated by archaeologists from the Virginia Commonwealth University Archaeology Research Center.

The center, part of the VCU community for 15 years, is run by three associate directors, L. Daniel Mouer, Douglas C. McLearn and Robin L. Ryder.

The center, mainly an independent, self-supporting institution receives some funding from the university since it has ties with VCU academia through the school's sociology and anthropol-

ogy department.

There are 18 full-time archaeologists at the center and, in any given year, Ryder said, the center handles 30 to 40 projects with usually four or five projects going on at once.

The center finds most of its work as a contractor hired to conduct environmental-impact surveys to study the archaeological potential of federally-funded construction sites, such as highways.

At the center, Ryder, who will teach an introductory archaeology class at VCU this fall, directs operations such as writing proposals for funding, deciding who will work on which projects and scheduling projects.

Ryder will begin her own project this fall in Prince William County at a house that was once occupied by a male slave.

After the slave who lived in the house was freed, Ryder said, he continued to live there. She was able to determine this information from a deed check of documents in the Prince William County courthouse.

Trained as an anthropologist, Ryder said the archaeologist's work includes viewing court documents, wills, tax records, deeds, old papers of family members and other documents once they have

located a site to research.

Mouer directs the center's educational and public programs. One of his current archaeological projects involves Curles Plantation, located on Curles Neck Farm, east of Varina.

Most of the excavation that Mouer does on the site takes place during the summer with his VCU summer field class.

The Curles Plantation project has been in progress since 1984, and next year, Mouer is planning a 10-year-anniversary, open-house celebration.

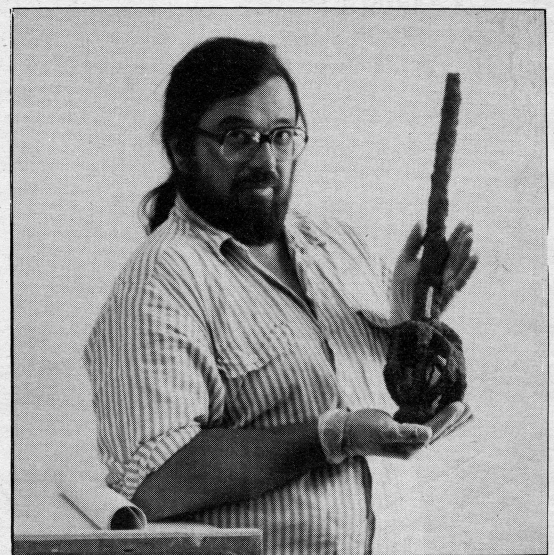
Mouer is also writing a book, with the aid of a VCU grant, about the community of Rocketts, which later became Richmond.

Concerning Rocketts, Mouer said, "Other cities have urban archaeology projects open to the public. I'd like to do something like that."

He's trying to raise money for the project now. Rocketts consisted basically of slaves, free African-Americans, Irishmen, Germans and Scotsmen, Mouer said.

Mouer defines archaeology as "not what you find, but what you find out."

Another VCU Archaeology Research Center site is Jordan's Point, a project that Mouer worked on with McLearn.



Brian Baer/Commonwealth Times

CUTS LIKE A SWORD — VCU archaeologist Taft Kiser holds a basket-hilted broad sword found at Jordan's Point. The sword's blade was originally three feet long.

Jordan's Point was a 1620s Indian village and early colonial settlement. Among the sites it yielded are 20 houses and two forts.

Artifacts from Jordan's Point and Curles Plantation are on display in the Jamestown Settlement museum near Williamsburg on Highway 31.

James E. Cuddihy Jr., developer of the site to be known as

Jordan on the James Condominiums, has worked cooperatively with the VCU Archaeology Research Center to preserve the area's historical value.

Cuddihy said he plans to feature some of the sites when marketing the property.

McLearn is scheduled to teach "The Evolution of Man and Culture" this spring at VCU.

When it comes to AIDS, some people wear these for protection.

Wearing blinders isn't going to protect anyone from AIDS.

Yet there are still people who persist in believing that AIDS can't affect them.

That it's only a concern for certain parts of society.

They are seriously mistaken.

The truth is, AIDS has absolutely no regard to social status, race, age, sex, national origin, religion or sexual preference.

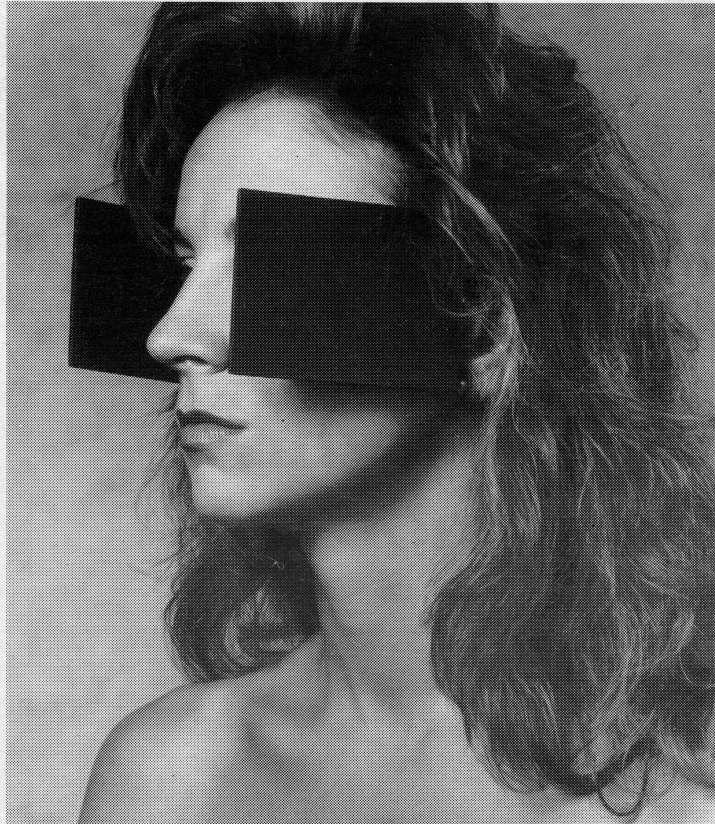
Anyone can be an AIDS victim. Even you.

The number of AIDS cases is also growing rapidly.

Nationally, it is estimated that over one million people are currently carrying the AIDS virus.

In fact, one out of every 250 Americans either has the disease or the virus that causes it.

So please, don't take any



unnecessary chances.

Practice monogamy.

Use condoms.

Or simply don't have sex at all.

Because AIDS is

RAIN

a concern for each and every

one of us. Whether you choose to see it that way or not.

For more information, referrals, or even if you just want to talk, please call us at 358-AIDS.

We're the Richmond AIDS

Information Network.

YOUR FUTURE IS BRIGHT. KEEP IT SHINING!



Don't allow the economic hardships associated with an accident or unexpected illness to dull the finish on your education.

Take a look at the AFFORDABLE benefits of student health insurance provided at VCU by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Virginia.

- LOW rates tailored for a student's budget.
- Access to a network of doctors and hospitals who work with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Virginia to help keep costs even lower.
- When you need to use one of the doctors or hospitals in this "network", you will never receive a "surprise" bill for covered services. After paying your deductible and copayment, your bill is paid in full by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Virginia.
- No hassle with paperwork. Doctors and hospitals in the "network" will usually file all of your claims for you.
- These benefits have been specially designed for VCU and are endorsed by the School to meet the needs of their student body.

DON'T MAKE THE MISTAKE of assuming that you already have health insurance through your family. You **MAY NOT!**

It *costs nothing* to find out about the benefits provided but it can *save a lot...* including your future.

Get all the facts. Visit the Student Health Center or phone toll-free, 800-282-2231.



Protecting Your Potential

Letter from the Editors

The Commonwealth Times will celebrate its 25th anniversary this coming semester.

Twenty-five years of covering the news that shapes VCU: news about the people, events and issues concerning our school and affecting our collegiate lives.

The CT is the mainstream medium that interacts between and among administrators, faculty and students. It also serves as a training ground for prospective journalists, photographers, layout artists and business persons.

Here at the CT we rely on the participation of students in presenting the news.

We ask students to volunteer their time and, in return, students can gain valuable experience. Working at the CT gives students published writing and photography experience, literacy on computers and a chance to work in a deadline-oriented environment — many of the ingredients needed to be successful in any field.

Volunteers at the CT are undeniably the backbone of the newspaper.

The Commonwealth Times also understands its responsibility to the students. But it is not always easy to find stories that need attention.

So we rely on the whole VCU community, especially the students, to let us know what is going on. A simple phone call or letter will lead us on the track to uncovering a story.

Please remember that this is a college newspaper made of students for students. We repeat, the Commonwealth Times is a student publication.

One item we would like to address, however, is the issue of public relations. The Commonwealth Times is not a vehicle for promoting anyone or anything, unless we deem it so. We are not the house organ for the university.

We think it is important to note that the administration has been respectful in this aspect, allowing the CT to express itself as it sees fit.)

We have been accused in the past of not running stories that would be beneficial to VCU. The CT is not in the business of promoting VCU or its population.

We are, however, in the business of safeguarding students' interests because this is a task our editorial board, composed entirely of students, has adopted.

Also, the opinions of our editorial and opinion staff are solely their own. We choose the staff very carefully, but afterward allow the columnists the First Amendment right to express themselves.

The unsigned editorial, however, is the opinion of the editorial board, which generally consists of six people.

It is hard to maintain a consistent stance on certain issues year after year because the turnover rate at the CT is high. But the board attempts to maintain its stance on each recurring issue throughout the academic year.

Finally, we would like to add that we want to provide the best coverage available for students.

We understand there are many interesting students who are committed to more than just academics, professors who work wonders in and out of the classroom and organizations that do amazing things for the community.

We wish we had the resources to find these people and organizations that dedicate themselves to improving the university for all of us, but the fact is, we are lacking in this department.

There is a solution, however, and it is you. If you know an interesting person, or if you are part of an organization, or if you think of a great story idea, please write or call us or send a press release.

Or simply join us here at the Commonwealth Times.

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the Commonwealth Times editorial board.

**"America, thou half-brother of the world;
With something good and something bad of every land."**

— Phillip James Bailey

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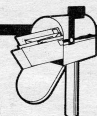
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Letters to the Editor



Women Alienated by Ads

I am commenting on the six-page ad appearing in the May 3 Commonwealth Times for Deja Vu Nude Showgirls. Since I would be regarded as "tasty breasts, thighs and legs" and "scenery," I doubt my opinions will be taken as seriously; nowhere in the advertising is there any indication that women have intellect or emotions.

Considering that a large portion of the CT readers are women, do you consider it responsible behavior to insult and alienate them? Do you imagine that none of the men who read the CT are aware of the cruelty of such attitudes? Since advertisers pay for space in the CT, do you consider that some of them may not want their businesses associated with sexist advertising?

If you are unable to understand the implications of your actions, then I'm wasting my time — if you are lacking social responsibility and compassion, which is the appearance

based upon your actions, then I could hardly hope for an apology or more responsible decisions in the future.

Karen Kennedy

Feminists: Get a Grip

Uh-oh. You've done it now. In the most recent issue, you have chosen to print an advertisement that is neither politically correct nor even nice. And I'm willing to bet my forthcoming diploma there will be, flowing to your office, a veritable river of letters, all declaring war on the CT. That ad will bring out every feminist in the city and beyond, all mad as hopping wet hens.

They'll say the ad demeans women, it's sexist, treats women as objects, etc. Are they not offended by the existence of the club? Why do they not attack places like a certain "family" restaurant named after a lewd term for breast? It seems to me that the very presence of such bawdy, lust-infected places promotes infinitely more sexism than does an ad in a college newspaper. Why attack the paper?

The management of the club can advertise wherever

they wish, as much as some hate to see it. They paid the CT to place the ad, and the paper did.

This fact does not, however, reflect the previously established quality of the paper. I generally find the CT to be a responsible, respectable newspaper with a mature view: I think the reporting is superior to some we see in more "professional" Richmond publications.

Agreed — the ad was tasteless. But I think by now the editors and staff are sorry they ever heard of the club and will probably take enough of a beating from the ever-eager administration, not to mention the letter-writers.

A letter of apology in the next issue and maybe even a policy of not publishing "vice" advertisements in the future should be sufficient. Anyone who is not satisfied with that has a larger axe to grind than just a poor decision on CT ad copy.

It's called freedom of the press. Look into it.

**Lisa Bricker
History**

Christian Boyles

Seeing STARs at VCU

My first taste of "the college experience" was less than tasty. By noon, I found the sack lunch I had packed to be more rewarding.

As a senior in high school, I neglected the ritual of visiting colleges.

My only view of the campus was from catalogs and my car window as I drove up Main Street.

When I enrolled at VCU, I knew very little about finding my way around campus.

I thought it would be a help to sign up for Student Testing and Registration — STAR, for short.

Optimistically, I expected a tour of the campus followed by useful lectures and helpful counseling. Instead, I shuffled from Various Speaker Number One to Various Speaker Number Two and attended several useless lectures.

The events of the day imitated a poorly planned summer camp.

A speech by head counselor Eugene Trani introduced the other counselors (VCU's administrative staff) and stirred enthusiasm as if the audience were attending a pep rally, rather than a university.

STAR offered various activities, but the several I attended were vague or disorganized and helped me none. At one point, STAR guides performed skits (sans marshmallows and campfire).

The skits poked fun at college life, but

offered no insight into what college life entailed.

It was my feeling, and the feelings of those I talked with, that time could be better used to inform students about the school we were attending.

The crowning achievement of STAR was its ability to pair you with a faculty adviser, who — in theory — would help you plan your schedule for the coming semester.

Unfortunately, my adviser was just as unsure about completing a schedule as I was.

As I discovered on the first day of classes, she had registered me for two biology lectures instead of a lecture and a lab.

While STAR failed to ease me along in the transition from high school to college, it provided me with two tools that helped: a campus map and the undergraduate bulletin.

Using these resources, I took a self-guided tour of campus and familiarized myself with the surrounding neighborhood.

My disenchantment with the program motivated me to help myself.

STAR should offer more than a folder full of pamphlets and coupons for pizza joints and amusement parks to its participants.

I urge any freshman unsure about this university to personally confront their confusion and challenge this university to provide a more thorough program.

SMC Production Manager — BETSY STEIDEL

Michael Gorman

A Thought before Leaving the Country

As I prepare, mentally and physically, to leave this institution of higher learning (and indeed, Richmond, Va. and the United States), I can't help but scrawl several words for the opinion page — who knows when anyone will read one of my columns again?

So, here are a few thoughts on recent events, all of them captured nicely in the July 23 edition of the Richmond Times-Dispatch:

- The U.S. Senate, bowing to pressures from the politically correct ideologues who masquerade as human beings capable of rational thought, honored the wishes of Sen. Carol Moseley-Braun, D-Ill., and refused to renew the United Daughters of the Confederacy's design patent on its insignia.

Why? The insignia, it seems, features the confederate flag.

Now doesn't everybody feel the glowing warmth of racial harmony? Probably not.

Just as the flag not being used does nothing to promote feelings of harmony and appreciation, use of the flag does nothing to promote feelings of ill will, unless of course, we consider the ill will that comes of hate-filled attacks, such as that offered by Ms. Moseley-Braun.

The UDC, who until this year had received approval of its patent renewal every 14 years as a matter of course, is a charitable organization that deserves recognition as it battles to keep alive a part of history that revisionists would like to destroy.

And to Ms. Moseley-Braun and the cowardly majority in the Senate: there is a First Amendment right to free speech, but there is no corresponding right to not be offended.

PC-minded folk who revel in the abuse of everyone's freedoms prove every day that, as the Age of Clinton wears on, it will become more and more difficult to even speak of controversial matters, lest a putatively oppressed group become offended.

One can't help but wonder whether the Senate's newfound concern, that offensive things should not be given the formal recognition of the government, will cause it to finally scrap the cultural dungheap that is the National Endowment for the Arts.

After all, the endowment does not just recognize that which offends, it subsidizes it. A photograph of the crucifix immersed in urine offends at least as many people as the Confederate flag.

- Also in the news was a blurb that explained the woe of a youngster whose mother is a smoker. Oh, the horror of it!

The young man's estranged father sued the mother and won for the child the right to live in a smoke-free home.

None of this would be very big news (and

possibly would never have happened) had not the Environmental Protection Agency just released a group of recommendations, supported by scientifically cooked studies, that claim second hand cigarette smoke is a health risk.

The EPA received more than 30 scientific studies that it reviewed before issuing the recommendations from on high. Six of them — *six of them* — found some correlation between second hand smoke and illness. The remainder found no such link.

Would anyone like to guess which six studies the EPA decided to invoke when defending its logically indefensible position?

Here's a hint: they were the ones whose reliability had to be lowered from 95 percent to 90 percent in order to find any significant correlation. And, they were the ones that reached the "right" conclusion.

With science like that, who needs conjecture?

On the other hand, I'm sure we will all sleep a little easier knowing the EPA, that bastion of altruism and goodness, is in Washington making those pesky decisions for us that we used to be able to make for ourselves.

- From the party that brought you the House Bank scandal, Jimmy Carter and Ted Kennedy: that's right, ladies and gentlemen, it's the House Post Office scandal.

Well, if there is one consoling thought in the whole affair it is this: at least we won't have to know the extent of our representatives' corruption just yet.

The House voted on July 22 to keep records of the investigation into the House Post Office confidential. Those darn House members are up to their old pranks. It must be a thrill a minute to inhabit an office in those hallowed halls.

All brevity aside, though, it is truly disturbing to see spending spiral out of control, the public debt rise exponentially, and, as if in reaction to a chaotic world, our government scurrying to cover its own hopelessly depraved tracks.

The voting, by the way, went as follows: 242 Democrats, one independent and one Republican voted to keep the records confidential; every other Republican, along with 11 Democrats, voted to open them.

What do the Democrats so fear in opening the investigation? The official explanation was that the investigation (which has, by the way, been going on for nearly two years) would suffer if it were opened to public scrutiny.

Is it really concern for the investigation being completed that causes the Democrats to keep it under wraps? Perhaps, but one would think that if this were the case, the attorney handling the investigation would have been allowed to complete his job before falling victim to the axe of political patronage (the same fate that befell all other Bush-appointed federal prosecutors).

Is it any wonder that tax increases, rather than spending cuts, are the remedy of choice for a party whose members can't balance a checkbook or buy a stamp without breaking the law?

Perhaps this last release of vitriolic bile will allow me to read the newspaper for at

least some time and just cringe to myself rather than ranting in the student press of which I will no longer be a part.

In any event, all my best wishes go to those who will remain in the United States and weather the storm of classist, racist, sexist and, to be charitable, misguided policies of our new president and his appointees.

My prediction? The best is yet to come.

Michael Gorman

Well, Excuse Me!

Several months ago, the Commonwealth Times committed a foul sin in these days of Orwellian political correctness, the editors mistakenly believing in the ideals of freedom of speech and of the press. The newspaper ran what it believed to be several advertisements for a strip bar.

Admittedly, the ads were imaginative. They consisted of six consecutive pages of phony newspaper copy. Each two-page spread contained a mock advertisement, such as one for a clothing store that stated, "All Ladies Apparel Must Go." On each opposite page, there was a box that contained the word "Ditto" and the name and address of the strip joint. Connecting each set of boxes was a thick black arrow from the "Ditto" box to the double entendre contained opposite.

Well, the long and the short of it was that the Fan Women's Center, or some such organization, tipped off by VCU's esteemed and ever-moderate associate sociology professor Diana Scully, decided to bombard the newspaper with complaints, copies of which were sent to its faculty adviser, to the VCU Student Media Commission — which oversees the newspaper's budget — and to VCU President Eugene P. Trani.

President Trani, it should be noted, is a man who boasts such regard for the First Amendment that he was livid (I mean he was stammering, red-in-the-face puffed) when the CT published an obviously satirical and doctored photo of him on the cover of its April Fool's Day issue.

He's also the man who, upon his arrival at VCU, attempted to establish a strict speech code — a code very similar to one that went into effect at the University of Wisconsin while Trani was there and was struck down in federal court as unconstitutional.

So what's the deal, Dr. Trani? Did you think the Constitution that covers this part of the country is different from that which was violated in Wisconsin? Thankfully, the code was never passed, but his efforts on its behalf do bespeak the man's sense of ethics.

In any event, the point of the matter is that these thin-skinned people (at the Fan whatever-it-is) so value the interplay of competing expressions of viewpoint that they go to great lengths (at the expense of not a few trees) to silence offending voices.

The following, from an op/ed piece by Ted J. Smith III, which appeared in the Richmond Times-Dispatch Aug. 4, 1991, gives some idea as to the moderation with which Ms. Scully and her ilk approach the issue. (The "sponsor" of the course was Diana Scully.)

"... a graduate course entitled *Sociology 660, Seminar in the Sociology of Women*, was submitted for adoption last fall. According to the syllabus, the course uses 'emergent feminist scholarship in sociology to critically examine the theories, methods, ideology and treatment (or exclusion) of women in conventional social thought and research.' In committee discussions, the sponsor readily acknowledged that the course was intended to encourage students to become 'advocates for change,' but denied any political bias by asserting that it presents a range of views, from conservative to radical. Asked to identify the conservative feminists, the sponsor replied that the readings include liberal theorists and that, among feminist scholars, liberals are considered conservative."

Talk about level-headed tolerance! Oh, the howls of whipped-up fury the CT heard as the letters poured in at a steady rate, causing at least one editor to wonder aloud, "Don't these people have anything better to do with their time?"

The answer came as clear as a bell the next week, as the flow had not slowed. It was a resounding "No." (The several phone calls I personally answered were all from women who had not even seen the ads!)

As it turned out, the ads were not real ads at all, but a sort of practice project for several employees of the Martin Agency. So, while the CT relied on the agency's reputation and accepted the ads without having seen them, the ad agency's president was also unaware of the ads and immediately, upon hearing of the controversy, apologized for them.

All of this, however, misses the painfully obvious point that strip clubs generally employ women (the cause of all the offense, one would suppose). These women work as strippers of their own free will and make, as I understand it, a fairly large sum of money doing so.

The "feminist" camp's objection to what these women do lies in the fact that it is not what they themselves would do.

Freedom of choice, anyone?

"The Newtonian principle of gravitation is now more firmly established, on the basis of reason, than it would be were the government to step in, and to make it an article of necessary faith. Reason and experiment have been indulged, and error has fled before them."

— Thomas Jefferson, from Notes on the State of Virginia

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