

The Sou'wester

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SOUTHWESTERN AT MEMPHIS

MAY 23, 1975

AND ON THE THIRD DAY IT ROSE AGAIN

by Katherine Maddox and Jim Vogel
The issues of freedom of the press, obscenity, and student rights resounded through Southwestern this week as a result of President Daughdrill's action of May 16 to impound funds for the printing of The Sou'wester. After a policy statement was adopted and approved on May 21, by the Publications Board, (page 1) Daughdrill released the funds and The Sou'wester was

back in print. Agreement came about as a result of hours of research, an open session of the Pub Board, and consultation between administration and student representatives.
President Daughdrill wrote a letter to Editor Jeff Strack, explaining his objections to the editorial content of the third page of the May 16 issue of the Sou'wester (see letter page 1). He felt that it did not abide by the philosophy of the college or uphold

the ethical standards of Southwestern. His rationale for such a recourse was based on a supposed breach of agreement after an earlier meeting with Strack dealing with complaints from off-campus readers of an article in the April 18 issue. This agreement resulted in stoppage of further mailings of the issue in the subscription campaign and allowance of a later issue to be sent to the remainder of the mailing list.

At 8:30 p.m. the Board opened the door to about fifty interested students and the East Lounge became an open, orderly forum. Some students supported the President's move while many felt he had overstepped his authority and was grossly unfair. Critics of the newspaper voiced disgust at some of the recently published material. This was countered with a staunch defense by various ex-editors of the Sou'wester and staff members. Questions of the legality of Daughdrill's action were raised but according to Dean Williford, no precedent was available concerning private schools. In many such cases in publicly-supported schools, administrations have not been allowed censorship privileges. As far as could be ascertained, President Daughdrill did have the power to cut off funds and stop the paper. Strack ended the session by stating, "I have never failed to print an article because I disagreed with what was said," and encouraged increased participation in putting out the newspaper next year.

cases in the future must be dealt with. The Social Regulations Council will be exploring the case in this light to clarify policy in a general sense. Donnell brought out the point that the entire meeting, including the feedback voiced by students at the open session, seemed adequate in terms of reprimanding Strack for his editorial judgment in printing the third page. It was agreed that the Pub Board should be more thorough-going in its responsibility of already-existing constitutional policy.

Marshall Jones then moved that the Publications Board accept the following policy statement, which was passed. The Publications Board 1) asked for immediate release of funds from President Daughdrill (with the intention to publish a two-page paper this Friday with college funds) 2) made a commitment to work towards editorial standards, and 3) made a commitment to maintain or release an editor according to these standards. The meeting adjourned at 11:30 p.m.

The policy statement (above) was presented to Daughdrill Wednesday morning, and the draft drawn up by Daughdrill and Dowell was reviewed and amended by the Pub Board that afternoon. The Management Team read and approved the policy statement as amended until the October guidelines are finalized.

THE ACTION TAKEN

May 21, 1975

TO: The Southwestern Community
FROM: Michael Dowell, Publications Commissioner
James H. Daughdrill, Jr., President

The following actions have been taken in regard to the President's letter to Editor Jeff Strack on May 16, 1975:

1. After discussion of page 3 of the May 16, 1975, issue of The Sou'wester, the Publications Board adopted the following motion:

"That the Publications Board feels that Jeff Strack exercised poor judgment in the editing of page 3 of the May 16, 1975, issue of The Sou'wester.

2. Funds for The Sou'wester have been released by President Daughdrill, and the Publications Board has authorized Editor Strack to publish a two-page paper this Friday, May 23, 1975, with college funds.

3. The Publications Board will establish proper written standards of editorship and will send copies to the Faculty Community Life Committee and to the college administration by October 15, 1975.

4. The constitution of the Publications Board places responsibility

and authority for student publications with the Publications Board. The college By-Laws also place a measure of responsibility and authority in this area with the administration. However, administrative interference in the affairs of student publications should be undertaken reluctantly and only after the proposed action has been presented to the Publications Board. Most matters can be handled in this way between the Publications Board and the administration. However in the unusual event that the Publications Board and the administration differ, then the student body shall be polled in a referendum conducted by the Elections Commission. A majority vote in this referendum in favor of the Publications Board action would refer the matter to the Publications Board chairman to present to the Board of Trustees for final adjudication. If there is not a referendum majority in favor of the Publications Board action the administrative position will prevail.

5. The Publications Board made a commitment to maintain or release editors according to the standards prescribed by the Constitution of the Publications Board of Southwestern at Memphis.

In our estimation varying viewpoints have been aired, better understanding of the problems have been reached, and constructive steps have been taken to overcome these problems.

FACULTY OPINIONS

These opinions have been solicited by the Editor.

Lanier

I was disappointed by the President's decision to cut off funds for the student newspaper. Abolishing that forum for student opinion is a grave matter, and one that should be undertaken only when all channels of communication have been exhausted. As of Wednesday evening it seems that a reasonable compromise has been reached between the administration and the Pub Board. We should not, however, allow this incident to pass without learning something about the purposes of a student newspaper.

I regard The Sou'wester as a forum for student opinion. Anyone who wants to write for the newspaper should be encouraged to do so. Ideally the paper should reflect a wide range of opinion on all important issues. We should, as an intellectual community, try to maintain a maximum degree of self-expression. It is a mistake to assume that the newspaper, or any particular article in it, reflects on the whole community. Each article simply expresses the views of its author. Those who disagree, or believe that a 'bad' value position has been taken by an individual, should try to counter with their own arguments.

Students at Southwestern are a diverse lot, and rightly so. They are recruited from a culture that no longer has a unified standard for ethical conduct or artistic merit. It should not surprise us then that some individuals express views vastly different from those held by the college's officials. We should emphasize for our supporters in the community that the college does (Continued on Page Two.)

Lacy

The crudity of the language and of the images evoked by the fictitious author of "...best show since Grand Funk" and "Pure Filth!" is such that their appearance in a publication funded by Southwestern requires justification. Perhaps such justification is possible; the burden of proof rests with the editor.

I suggest that at least the following criteria must be met for such publication to be justified:

- 1) the articles must be such that a reasonable case can be made that they could serve a serious moral purpose.
- 2) It must be reasonably clear that the prima facie objectionable features are essential to accomplishing this serious moral purpose.
- 3) It must be reasonably clear from the content of the article and/or from the context that service of the serious moral purpose was in fact the reason for publication.

Do "...best show since Grand Funk" and "Pure Filth!" satisfy these criteria? My best judgment is: it is uncertain whether criterion (1) is satisfied; it is probably that criterion (2) is not satisfied; it is clear that criterion (3) is not satisfied.

Re criterion (1): Perhaps it can be argued that the use of such vivid crudities could reasonably be seen as a way of revealing and hence critiquing attitudes of sexual exploitation.

Re criterion (2): I would think these attitudes of sexual exploitation could be attacked more effectively (Continued on Page Two.)

THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

May 16, 1975

TO: Mr. Jeff Strack, Editor, The Sou'wester
FROM: James H. Daughdrill, Jr.

Liberal education has always placed a high value on values. From its beginning Southwestern has held the importance of values. The Statement of Purpose in the college catalogue states, "The religious and moral dimensions of education at Southwestern have found various expressions over the years... Students and faculty are encouraged to give expression to religious and moral dimensions through concern with social and moral issues, volunteer service projects and through practice of their faith and worship." Still another statement of these values is found in the college's Statement of Philosophy and Purpose in the Ten-Year Master Plan. The concluding paragraph of the section entitled "View of Life" states:

"Southwestern At Memphis exists to nurture life in the full realization of humanness under God. By dealing honestly with society, by developing unashamed maturity, in bringing value judgments to bear on decisions of life, by encouraging leaders who can help to create a more just and humane society, the college seeks to inspire men and women to do what is true."

Southwestern graduates have likewise affirmed the importance of values in their education. Mr. John H. Bryan, Jr. was quoted in last month's Southwestern Today, "I think that probably the direction Southwestern gave me, the kind of education and value system that exists there, was as great an influence on me as any other one thing."

How does a value system exist? In a college community it exists when two things happen: When values are Made Known, and when they are acted upon. High ethical standards and freedom-for-responsibility are made known by such statements as I have quoted. But to have a value system we must act upon these values as well.

Upon what ethical standards should the administration of a church-related college of the liberal arts and science base its actions? With regard to church relationship the standards are those of the Judeo-Christian ethic. With regard to the liberal arts and sciences, the ethic is symbolized in the Greek concept of high mindedness. How are these standards understood today? Here is my interpretation.

Many people over 30 have a different ethic from those under 30. Until the mid 60's ethics were "individual." About 1965 many people switched from an "individual" ethic to a "corporate" ethic, a change expressed in the slogan "Make Love, Not War."

In the '60's our nation developed a generation gap. The over-30's were outraged at the sexual habits and the language of the young. The under 30's were outraged by the war and unjust discrimination perpetuated by the old. The over 30's thought the New Morality was immorality. The under 30's thought the Old Morality was hypocrisy.

If this picture is at all accurate and people do differ, What principles should guide a college administration?

The first principle is that the administrative actions should flow from both a high personal ethic and a high corporate ethic, even though upholding both is unpopular.

Second, private freedom and responsibility are different from public freedom and responsibility. At Southwestern we recognize this principle by having different social regulations for private and for public conduct. A student may drink in his or her room or sorority or fraternity house, but may not drink at football games where his or her conduct comes into contact with those whose views on drinking might differ, and because his or her public conduct reflects on the college.

The same is true of private communication vs. public communication. A person is free to write in private correspondence whatever comes to mind, but in writing for publications that reflect on the whole college there must be different regulations.

Third, I think that the administration should act in accordance with ethical principles and not situational politics. I think the administration has responsibility to interpret the ideals of the college and to see that the college lives according to them, rather than just to react to situations based on who is for it, who is against it, and how long will it take for the controversy to die down.

Fourth, in considering what journalistic and ethical standards all college publications should follow, we cannot use as criteria whether it is personally offensive to me, or to students, or to the editor. Frankly there are few words that shock me unless they are aimed in hostility toward another person, but personal offense is not the standard for public responsibility. It may not

offend the President of the Social Regulations Council if a student drinks in the Library, but that is simply not the standard by which we have regulations or guidelines for public conduct.

Acting on these principles, and interpreting the purpose and ideals of the college to the best of my ability, I concluded that the article entitled "Best Show Since Grand Funk" in the April 18th issue of The Sou'wester was unethical. For that reason I discussed it with you. You agreed not to mail the issue to non-subscribers, and asked for the names of people who had said they were offended, so you could apologize. You were quoted in the May 2nd issue, "Strack also wanted to apologize to those who didn't like the story."

I thought the matter was ended (except for defining standards and responsibility for the future) until The Sou'wester issue of May 16 appeared. It appears from several of the articles in that issue that you did not mean what you said, or that you had been misquoted.

I feel that many of the articles, especially those anonymously written on page 3 of that issue, are unethical. Inaction by the administration seems to me to condone this practice. Therefore I have instructed that college funding for The Sou'wester be stopped immediately.

Authority and responsibility for student publications is unclear I must admit, for responsibility seems to be divided among the editors, the Publications Board, the Student Government Association and the Administration. When in loco parentis was ended several years ago, it seems to me that no pattern of relationship replaced it. Presumably, mature discussion, debate and plan-nigh should replace it. I believe there are three unanswered questions: 1) Who is responsible for what? 2) What process do we follow when two of the responsible groups differ? and 3) What are the ethical and journalistic guidelines for the editor of a student publication?

By copy of this letter, I am asking the Publications Board Commissioner and the President of the Student Government Association to work together to draft a Guideline Statement to answer these questions, and to submit it to me as soon as possible. College funding for The Sou'wester will resume as soon as I (or the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees if you prefer) approve the Guideline Statement and it becomes effective.

Were it left for me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter.

Thomas Jefferson, 1787

EDITORIALS

James Daughdrill should be removed from the presidency of this college. His impounding of the student newspaper funds represents an attitude that is incompatible with and threatening to the principles of a liberal arts college.

Mr. Daughdrill justified his action as an ethical decision. This is a dangerous supposition. The role of a college president is not to make ethical and moral decisions for the college community and then see to it that the college live by these decisions. Mr. Daughdrill has grossly overstepped and misinterpreted his role as president of the college.

At issue is the freedom to exchange ideas. A college should foster an environment that would encourage such an exchange. The stoppage of the student newspaper was a flagrant affront to the rights of students and to the principles of Southwestern.

An examination of Mr. Daughdrill's edict of May 16 is a study of contrasts. Mr. Daughdrill states one thing as his guiding principle and then acts in a completely contradictory manner. Here are a few illustrations:

Mr. Daughdrill states (par. 1) that "we cannot use as a criteria whether it is personally offensive to me."

Yet, it was his personal judgment (par. 16) that prompted his cutting the funds.

Another example is (par. 12) Mr. Daughdrill stating "the administration should act in accordance with ethical principles and not situational politics." Yet, Mr. Daughdrill created a political situation by impounding funds. Dare we say practice what you preach? Dare we not say, nay, demand it?

Mr. Daughdrill's action is indicative of his business rather than academic background. Mr. Daughdrill might be a competent administrator, as his past actions illustrate (ex. Ten Year Plan) but he is not an educator. Southwestern cannot afford to have as president a person whose ethics are opposed to allowing students to express themselves, uncensored, in the student newspaper.

Cecilia Schardt
The Sou'wester Editor, 1973-74

We thought it had all been settled before. The question of responsibility and authority for evaluating the tastefulness of material and the judgement of editors was considered at great length by the Publications Board and the administration four and a half years ago in the wake of the "Southwestern Eats Shit" controversy. President Bowden acted courageously to defend The Sou'wester from blood-thirsty alumni and trustees who were offended by the undoubtedly accurate assessment of the refectory fare and demanded the expulsion of the editors as well as the future prior censorship of the paper by faculty or administration. In a memorandum to the Southwestern community Bowden noted, "I am certain that alumni and friends of Southwestern consider

the college too important to be damaged by hasty acts by the administration to deal with student indiscretions without benefit of due-process and considerations of the humanity involved."

President Daughdrill obviously did not share this conviction of his predecessor. His hasty action of May 16 has clearly damaged the college by shattering the respect of many students which he had cultivated during the first year of his administration. A little research, a few questions on the part of the President would have clearly demonstrated the foolishness of his action, but he failed to take those steps. The questions of authority and responsibility for publications is clearly

spelled out in the Pub Board constitution. The editorial standards are defined by the editor. Judgments regarding the taste or merit of articles can only be made by the editor. Judgments regarding the taste or merit of editors can only be made by the Publications Board.

So the president's action makes no tangible change in the procedures for determining what shall or shall not be included in the Sou'wester. He has succeeded in frightening many students by demonstrating his willingness to unreasonably exercise his power to defend his personal prejudices. He has also succeeded in raising some serious questions about student rights.

Ultimately this means that every student organization on this campus is going to have to explore legal means of protecting its authority and funding from ill-considered and hasty acts by the administration. It is a battle which has been fought at many campuses across the nation, but one which many of us thought would never have to be fought here. We were wrong.

Rhys Scholes
The Sou'wester Editor, 1974



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I didn't find the "Pure Filth" article in the May 16 Sou'wester any more obscene than the crowd at the Rite of Spring festival, any more disgusting than the drunken mass at the Riverboat Dance, nor any more distasteful than the dialog at fraternity intramural softball games.

Which is really worse: the article or the actuality it portrays? Mr. Branham stated that he was "fighting vulgarity with vulgarity." Perhaps he was holding up a mirror to the real Southwestern community, and we don't like our reflection.

Patti Smith

On its surface, President James Daughdrill's decision concerning the immediate suspension of college funding for The Sou'wester attempts an ethical justification for its legitimacy. The ethical analysis is used improperly, however, for what we are dealing with is not merely an issue open to ethical analysis and a program of action based upon that analysis, but an issue which is concerned with the philosophy of a liberal arts education.

To quote our catalogue, liberal arts at Southwestern rests on the assumption that men become and remain free only in so far as they are nourished by and have respect for the truth. Southwestern, it is repeatedly asserted, attempts to free the minds of its men and women students by allowing them to encounter as broad a range of intellectual experience as may be achieved.

As John Stuart Mill has said, the suppression of ideas, be they artistic, philosophical, or scientific

LACY

(Continued from page 1)
by a few paragraphs from Buber's I and Thou.

Re criterion (3): It is not reasonably clear from either the content of the articles or the context that service of a serious moral purpose was in fact the reason for publication. (It is worth noting that across the top of p. 3 of the May 16 issue is printed: No More Mr. Nice Guy Issue: If This Doesn't Get You Nothing Will.")

Therefore I must agree with President Daughdrill that the publication of these articles was unjustified. It seems to me that the President's action was taken after other efforts had failed, that it was reluctantly undertaken, and undertaken without personal animosity. I think the action was justified. The five points of the paper approved by the Publications Commission and the President's Management Team are judicious.

William Larry Lacy

in nature, is alien to the requisite intellectual experience that produces the free minds towards which Southwestern aims. President Daughdrill's ethical analysis is a well-founded addition to this exchange which can and must go on in our community and in the pages of The Sou'wester. However, he has made a grave error when he has set in motion a system that would predetermine the exchange of ideas and attitudes which will go on in our community. Such a predetermination is alien to the concept of an academic community aimed at producing free minds.

Ideas and attitudes, it must be stated, are not dangerous so long as those who disagree with them are free to refute them. This dialogue is of the essence of our academic community of Southwestern at Memphis.

Ike Lee

President Daughdrill,

I am left terribly uneasy by your belief that your role is to interpret the ideals of the college and to make sure that the rest of the community lives by those ideals. I have never heard this claimed, in such a bold manner, by anyone in the Southwestern administration. Are you aware that you have some students here who are not Presbyterians, and who may not leave this college as Christians? Does this upset you? I chose Southwestern over any state-controlled school in hopes that the educated church would grant more academic and intellectual freedom to its schools than would the Tennessee State Legislature. Until this incident, I could believe this was true. But I did not conceive of Southwestern as an academy of Christian Ethics. If this is what you want it to be, then openly announce your intentions and change Southwestern to fit your mold. Warn your prospective students that this is still, in every sense of the word, "A Church School," so there will be no more misunderstandings. If I have developed a more sympathetic understanding of the Protestant viewpoint, it is certainly not because that view of the world has been forced upon me.

It seems necessary that I reiterate a sentiment I have heard from many of my fellow students. I feel you are an honorable man, and I hope I can avoid an attack on you as a person, as an individual. I cannot, however, refrain from vigorously opposing whatever official actions you take which run head-on into my own ideals and principles. There are few evil men, but many who are misinformed, misguided, and hasty.

I have always expected more from a college president--a passionate respect for the free expression of ideas, which is really the only thing absolutely necessary to enable learning to occur. As I leave Southwestern

as a graduate, I hope you will leave too--for I fear that in your sincere desires to strengthen Southwestern's solvency as an institution, you will destroy it as a place of growth, experiment, and learning.

Sincerely,
John McMillin

I address this to the administration and faculty.

Perhaps my perspective is too narrow, but in all the ethical mishmash I've heard, only an occasional student gets to the point concerning President Daughdrill's suspension of funding. It is simply this: while there may have been doubt as to the quality of certain articles, and to Editor Strack's judgement in printing these specific articles no doubt exists that President Daughdrill violated First Amendment principles. The former was a subject for complaint and debate by the publishers of the paper, the students--the latter was implicitly, if not explicitly, illegal, and certainly wrong.

The President's argument was ethical (the power politics, sadly, take care of themselves sans principle), described in terms of a vague, defined "corporate" and "individual" ethic. The Constitution is a document such that, within a few necessary and strict limits of a corporate ethic, individual sanctity (including ethic) is to prosper. The First Amendment is a good example of this--complete freedom of expression was obviously considered a highly important corporate ethic principle (as Justice Douglas often reiterated, "No law means NO LAW"). No individual ethic (or corporate ethic) would supercede freedom of expression. Yet, based on what had to be personal opinion, the President attempted to do just that--re: paragraph 16 of his letter as support.) Strack's decision to print the questionable articles was one of disputed judgement, but the President's decision was wrong, in light of the publishers and intention of the Sou'wester, and his own ethic. It was not his ethical decision to make, and that is the fundamental issue, not to be lost in "practical" measures.

President Daughdrill may have meant well, and meant to be honest, but his action was not, and he roundly deserves condemnation, and should issue a formal apology. Similarly with the faculty, who have said and done nothing, though they are as important (as disseminators of the "truth", probably more so) as the administration. I recognize no ethic which does not protect individuals from other individuals, and promote individual sanctity. Editor Strack's decision threatened neither, and President Daughdrill's at best did just that.

Warren Kearney

Events of this past week involving the publishing of questionable material and impounding of student publication funds sent the campus into a frenzy and concerned quill drivers to their law books. The result: most courts recognize the power of the university to intervene in publication only to prevent "obscene, libelous, or disruptive material". Were these three standards abused? It didn't seem the newspaper presented "disruptive material", in that no person was incited to riot. In the second case, courts contend that "libel of public officials is privileged under the first amendment unless done maliciously in reckless disregard of the truth". (New York Times vs. Sullivan, 376 U.S. 254, 1964) However recklessly untruthful the satirical articles appeared, none were written with malicious intent. So thirdly, were they obscene? Obscenity has been difficult for the courts to establish but some courts have declared that the university does not have the right to curtail funds solely on the criteria of decency. "There is no room to disseminate dual-standards with the society short of pornography".

So lawfully the University can only restrict a publication when it violates one of these guidelines. However, the college may prohibit publication altogether, which is precisely what the President did. This action has been the major point of controversy, an action the President has attempted to rectify by working with the Pub Board on more defined channels of reproach.

It must be understood that the college is not the unfettered master of all it creates; therefore, it can not prohibit an open forum of ideas whether through speakers or student publications. As Ike Lee stated in an open Pub board meeting, "a liberal arts education means participating in an academic atmosphere of open minds, exposing people to the widest number of ideas in these four years." And indeed, an open minded approach to a spectrum of ideas is stifled when the students are denied student publications. However, this dialogue of ideas can also be eliminated when student publications fail to present all facets of this spectrum. In the eyes of many students, the publications present lopsided views of Southwestern and its student body. It has been insisted, and remains true, that the student publications are for the principle benefit of the students. But a lopsided expression of student opinions benefits only a very few. A balance in this dialogue of ideas is essential. It is the responsibility of no one short of the students to determine what they want from their publications. And it is the fault of the editors, pub board, and students if the Southwestern publications fall short of providing this.

Herb Gunn

The Sou'wester

Jeff Strack, editor.

Staff: Mitch Wilds, C.C. Schardt, Rhys Scholes, Joe Cooper, Laurie Key, Karen Shanks, Susan Williford, Mike Dowell, Dan Matics, Herb Gunn, Warren Kearney, Dan Hougland, Amy Nease, Josie.

Opinions presented are those of our contributors and are not necessarily shared by the students or institutions of Southwestern At Memphis.

LANIER

(Continued from page 1)

not endorse anything that appears in the paper; that the newspaper is a symbol of our commitment to the free exchange of ideas, that it is a publication run by students to allow them to communicate with their peers. Can we not expect a student newspaper to criticize, lampoon, and challenge?

The President's memorandum of May 16 did not make clear his specific reasons for impounding funds. One can readily appreciate his difficult position--trying to mediate between some rebellious students and some financial supporters of the college who object to at least the forms of the rebellion. But he did not give a pragmatic justification for his action. If he believes, and can reasonably demonstrate, that flippant humorous satirical pieces about sex and drugs tend to threaten the central educational mission of the college, then I would tend to support him. He does not make such a case; instead he finds many articles to be unethical. In spite of his long foray through the generation gap and Greek high-mindedness, the principles he has applied are not clear. Which are the articles in question? Do they express an immoral point of view? Are they in bad taste? Lacking in literary merit? What standards have been applied in deciding that some of the paper is unethical?

Apparently the Pub Board and the administration will be attempting to establish guidelines for publications in the future. That will not be an easy task, but the dialogue is important. If the administrators have certain ethical standards which they want students to accept, they must enunciate those, argue for them, use their powers of persuasion. Restrictions and censorship will accomplish little in the larger work of transmitting our best values to another generation.

Jim Lanier