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# THE ISLE OF TRANQUILITY IN AN AGE OF TURBULENCE

## Student Life at Wofford in the Sixties and Seventies

By

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Spartanburg, South Carolina

May 15, 1981

# PREFACE

This paper is the product of a year-long honors course under the supervision of Dr. Lewis P. Jones. Course work included independent research, periodic consultations with Dr. Jones, and the writing of a series of articles for the Old Gold and Black.

Background reading material included William O'Neill's Coming Apart, William Leuchtenburg's A Troubled Feast, and articles about student activism in Time and Newsweek. The major sources for the paper were the Wofford student publications--the Journal, the Bohemian, and especially the Old Gold and Black. Specific citations from the Old Gold and Black are listed at the end of the text.

Equally important as sources of information were personal interviews with Dr. Ross Bayard and Dr. Jones at Wofford, Jack Griffeth and Tom Morrison in Spartanburg, Ricky Blum in Marion, Gaines Foster, Robert Martin, and Harry McKown in Chapel Hill, Don Welch in Nashville, and others.

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# I

## STUDENTS AND ADMINISTRATORS

The early and mid-sixties, according to one alumnus, were a time when Wofford College "went on hold." Dr. Charles F. Marsh, President of Wofford from 1958 to 1968, best summed up the mood of that period when he fondly called Wofford "the isle of tranquility." Later that phrase would become an emblem of student frustration, but for the time being, no one objected to it--or anything else, for that matter, excepting perhaps the eternal grievances about cafeteria food or mail service; and even these complaints were always expressed with the reserve and politeness expected of Wofford gentlemen.

In a sense, the mood of the entire nation in the early sixties was one of tranquility. It was a time when energies were focused on enjoying and perpetuating a rapidly expanding standard of living--before the economic crises of the seventies. It was a time when government and its leaders were widely respected--before the consequences of Vietnam were felt, and before the embarassments of Johnson and Nixon. It was a time when Americans felt a patriotic duty obediently to support their nation in the face of the menace of creeping Communism.

At Wofford, this mood of tranquility was intensified by the nature of the students it attracted. Although efforts were made by the administration to "de-Carolinize" the student body, Wofford continued to enroll South Carolinians almost exclusively. And before government-subsidized educational grants became readily available, most students necessarily came from upper-class backgrounds. This regional and social inbreeding tended

to foster a homogeneous, inward-looking student community.

President Marsh himself typified the mood of tranquility almost perfectly. He had been appointed to the office of president in 1958 by a Board of Trustees eager for a return to normalcy after the stormy administration of Pendleton Gaines. He was a kindly, trusting gentleman, an active churchman, and not a particularly dynamic speaker. Throughout his tenure he was thoroughly devoted to Wofford and its students, though towards the end of his presidency he found himself increasingly out of touch with a new generation of students who did not share his concepts of discipline and propriety.

There were few students, though, who were not impressed with Dr. Marsh's integrity and sincerity. During a period when students leaders were not often eulogizing administrators, Old Gold and Black editor Dale Boggs paid a rare tribute to Dr. Marsh, who had retired a year earlier: "There are few of us students left at Wofford who had the chance to really know Dr. Marsh well, and we knew him with a feeling of trust and affection that in a way made up for the frustration of the 'oasis of tranquility.' Wofford has been fortunate in having from the first a series of capable administrators, from 1854 down to the present. Certainly when volume two of the history of the college is written, Dr. Charles Franklin Marsh will not be among the least of these."

If Dr. Marsh symbolized tranquility at Wofford, Dean Frank Logan enforced it. Logan was Dean of Students through most of the sixties, and as far as student life was concerned, he was omnipresent, omnipotent, and irrepressible. He was at almost every meeting of the Inter-Fraternity Council and of the student Senate, met regularly with student officers at his home, and had direct supervision of the student dorm counselors.

Before the institution of the Student Code, providing for a student-run Judicial Commission, Dean Logan constituted a one-man tribunal for most students accused of infractions of college rules. He was a firm believer in the "in loco parentis" approach to educational discipline; a student caught drinking on campus, for example, would be sent to Dean Logan's office to "get straightened out."

Logan was the sort of administrator who lived for crisis; he had four telephones in his office, and it was said his idea of heaven was to have them all ringing at once. His was the kind of personality that inspires unequivocal opinions: most students either admired him worshipfully or detested him utterly.

In the late sixties, however, as old attitudes and mores were challenged on campuses across the nation and--to a somewhat lesser extent--at Wofford, it became apparent that the approach of men like Marsh and Logan to college education would no longer be adequate. By the end of the decade, both had been replaced by administrators vastly different in temperament and in perceptions of their role at Wofford.

Dr. Marsh retired in the summer of 1968, and his successor, Paul Hardin, proved to be a much more visible and controversial figure on campus. Before his arrival at Wofford, Hardin had taught law at Duke University, and he had a lawyer's relish for lively argument; during his short tenure at Wofford, the school's internal politics never enjoyed a dull moment. Of one alumnus' recollections about Hardin, the only thing printable is that he had a knack for "butting heads."

President Hardin's administration instituted important reforms of the curriculum and of campus rules and regulations. The ground-breaking

Student Code of 1969 was his brainchild, and he promoted the liberalization of alcohol rules, significant integration of the student body, and the creation of the Campus Union in 1970 to replace the old Student Government Association. His personal style, though, told as much as his new programs about the mood of the period. In several ways, Hardin behaved more as if he were president of the nation than of a small college. He regularly held what he termed "press conferences" with the student body--often occasions for fiery exchanges and tense confrontation--and he unveiled his plans for the next year at the beginning of each spring semester in a "State of the College" address.

The Old Gold and Black during this period did some very provocative reporting and editorializing (without making much distinction between the two), and fell into step with the highly politicized mood of the times by running, for example, an exclusive interview with Hardin under the headline "The Honeymoon is Over." The paper behaved like a miniature Washington Post, prodding, criticizing, and annoying the administration, defending students' rights, and doing as much muckraking as possible. Reporters gauged reaction to one of Hardin's State of the College addresses in a series of interviews conducted just after the speech with the "student in the street." This comment by an anonymous student typifies the mood of student frustration: "It's abundantly clear that President Hardin is running the whole show at Wofford from top to bottom. All the talk about student responsibility is just that--talk. I think we should go ahead and admit realities here at Hardin College."

Hardin's first months at Wofford, however, had indeed been something of a honeymoon. In the fall of 1968 the new president spoke convincingly at the opening convocation about his intention to be candid with students,

and showed up unexpectedly at various meetings around campus. These gestures made a favorable first impression on students growing increasingly intolerant of officials who secluded themselves in ivory towers.

Within a year, however, most students had lost confidence in the good intentions of their president. After the first chapel service of the 1969 fall semester, the editors of the Old Gold and Black complained that far from sponsoring an "open meeting," as Hardin liked to call it, between students and the president, the administration had used the occasion simply to announce its pre-determined decisions. Many students had come to feel that Hardin's talk about candor and cooperation was meaningless rhetoric.

The students' loss of confidence was due primarily to several traits of character that made Hardin less than perfectly suited for the job he had assumed at Wofford. Some have suggested as a primary source of Hardin's difficulties the fact that he expected Wofford students to be like Duke students. He could not accept the relatively narrow base--socially, geographically, and intellectually--of the Wofford student body, and he had difficulty adjusting his non-stop metabolism to the low-key, ambling rhythm characteristic of life at Wofford even in its most turbulent period. Another of Hardin's difficulties was that for all his emphasis on communication, he did not have a knack for talking effectively with students, either in large groups, as at his "press conferences" and "rap sessions," or on a one-to-one basis. Hardin was always a lawyer at heart, and students who went by to talk with him frequently came out of his office feeling as if they had been cross-examined.

One of Hardin's most evident shortcomings was his short-fused temper. Once, when attending a football game, Hardin heard a group of Wofford

students yelling obscenities and was so enraged that he confronted the students immediately, confiscated their I.D.'s, and threatened to take disciplinary action, which would actually have been beyond his authority under the new Student Code. On another occasion, a group of environmentally-concerned students felt the administration had reneged on prior assurances by cutting down several large trees on campus, and registered their protest by depositing a damp, muddy stump in the president's chair while he was out of the office. Hardin's temper flared white-hot when he came back, and his initial impulse was to find a way to have the students expelled from school.

Perhaps the fundamental problem with Hardin's administration was that Hardin himself was not nearly as devoted to Wofford and its students as were the presidents who preceded and succeeded him. Hardin was an ambitious young man on his way up in the world of academic leadership, and Wofford was a convenient rung in the ladder of his ascent. After four years at Wofford, in fact, Hardin left to assume the presidency of Southern Methodist University.

Despite his failings, President Hardin's leadership exercised a positive impact on Wofford in several ways. His dynamism and progressive ideology were instrumental in propelling a tradition-bound school into the mainstream of the sixties and seventies; and in areas such as student judicial procedure and certain aspects of the curriculum, Wofford even became a model of innovation. Hardin was an excellent booster; he was a clever and polished ambassador for the college with influential alumni and community leaders, and he brought in media consultants to sell Wofford to prospective students with slogans like "Wofford College: Where the Edu-Actions Is."

Reaction to Hardin on campus, however, was largely negative. Many faculty members found him overbearing and arrogant in his dealings with the faculty, and his combative nature caused most students to perceive him as an enemy. President Hardin left as one of his legacies to Wofford a widened gulf between administration and students, and between administration and faculty--a legacy that survived his personality by at least a decade.

Don Welch, Dean of Students during most of Hardin's presidency, was much more successful than Hardin in establishing and maintaining a rapport with students. Hardin had known Welch at Duke, where Welch was Associate Dean of the School of Divinity, and when Dean Logan resigned in early 1969 because of illness, Hardin asked Welch to join him at Wofford as Dean of Students. At about the same time, Welch was contemplating an offer to be the American Protestant Chaplain in Moscow--a choice, he later called it, between two isolations. He chose the nearer seclusion, and did not escape Wofford for ten years.

Unlike Hardin, Welch got along well with students, and gained their confidence easily. And unlike Logan, he was an easy-going administrator who provided for the most lenient possible enforcement of campus rules, interfered as little as practical in the work of the student government, and earned a reputation as the students' friend. A few faculty members, in fact, became disturbed with what they saw as his tendency to back the students in practically any demand, however unfounded, for new rights and privileges.

Dean Welch's major contribution to the spirit of innovation that prevailed in matters of student life and curriculum around 1970 proved, un-

fortunately, to be an unqualified failure. In the fall of 1969, Welch conceived the idea of institutionalizing student activism by making it part of the academic curriculum. His idea for a Resident Hall Education Program (R.H.E.P.) seemed theoretically sound and was certainly original. It provided for all freshmen to be enrolled in a course offering one-hour credit, taught in the dormitories by upperclassmen, and dealing with "relevant social issues"--the kinds of causes, that is, that students on many campuses were marching and protesting about. The novelty of Welch's idea was that it would take student activism out of the demonstrations and riots and put it in the classroom.

Welch's proposal caused "a lot of squealing," in Dr. Lewis P. Jones' words, when it reached the faculty in the spring of 1970. But the active support of Hardin and of academic Dean Joab M. Lesesne, a recent influx of younger, more progressive faculty, and the influence of Dr. Jones combined to ensure passage of the program. Hardin hired Wofford's first black administrator, Bobby Leach, to supervise R.H.E.P., and the program got underway in the fall of 1970.

The problem with R.H.E.P. was not Welch's basic concept, which might have proved workable at another college, nor was it Leach, who was a very effective administrator. Welch, as it turned out, was considerably more radical than most Wofford students. A spirit of serious activism never did more than scratch the intellectually enlightened surface of the Wofford student body, and few students showed any real interest in meeting in their dorms to discuss "relevant issues."

The program had been designed to encourage new acquaintances among students by requiring all those choosing the same R.H.E.P. discussion topic to live together in the dormitories. Friends and fraternity brothers

circumvented this provision by colluding on their choice of topic, so housing patterns remained largely unchanged. Later, R.H.E.P. discussion groups met in Old Main instead of in the dormitories. Some students found the sessions meaningful, but R.H.E.P. was not generally taken very seriously either by the freshmen or the upperclassmen instructors; discussion groups frequently met for five or ten minutes of banter and then disbanded.

When Bobby Leach left Wofford in 1973, R.H.E.P. was allowed to lapse. The same year, Dean Welch, perhaps because of disappointment that the student activist movement had failed to fulfill the promise of its earlier years, resigned as Dean of Students and asked President Lesesne to create for him a position as campus minister and counselor. In that capacity the disillusioned Dean played a much less visible and active role on campus that he had before. As campus minister, however, he was responsible for the chapel program. In the late sixties, chapel services had been held twice a week and all students were required to attend; but ten years later, at services held once every two weeks, Welch lavished his considerable oratorical talents on audiences of thirty or forty students and professors cowering in the vastness of Leonard Auditorium. Dean Welch often lamented in these sermons the passiveness and egocentricism to the new generation of students. The last to leave of the students and administrators who had briefly injected into campus life an element of turbulence, Welch accepted in 1980 the presidency of Scarritt College in Nashville, Tennessee, and left Wofford once again in a state of tranquility.

## II

## THE CHANGING COMPOSITION OF THE STUDENT BODY

Wofford students in the early sixties were a remarkably homogeneous group. They were all white men, nearly all were upper-class South Carolinians, and most had very similar ideas about politics, religion, and what they wanted to do with their lives. Ten years later all this had changed. The admissions office was never deluged with applications from mill-workers' sons, but state and federal tuition grants made it possible for students from a much greater variety of social and economic backgrounds to attend Wofford. Though the college remained essentially a regional institution, the administration's emphasis on "de-Carolinization" produced some notable results. Students like Bec Camber, the iconoclastic Old Gold and Black editor from Massachusetts, and Craig Davis of Washington, D.C., active in civil rights issues, diffused somewhat the characteristic provincialism of the student body. The most momentous change in the composition of the student body, however, was the admission to Wofford of two types of students to be found in large numbers right at home in South Carolina: blacks and women. The admission of both required a major transformation in the attitudes of Wofford men.

The Wofford Journal of October, 1907, included an article on one of the burning issues in the South at that time: "Should the Negro be educated?" The student author of the article, fortunately anonymous, began by pointing out that, according to the best scientific evidence of the day, the weight of the Negro brain was at least ten ounces less than that of the the white man's brain. This fact, according to the article, made it clear

that efforts to educate blacks were a waste of time: "Is it not just as plausible to give the monkey ten ounces of brain through evolution and make him the equal of the Negro, as to give it to the Negro and make him the equal of the white man? . . . The Negro is incapable of any great amount of education. A demand for social equality would not be tolerated by self-respecting Southern white men. The inevitable result would be a bloody race war."

That last point, at least, proved almost prophetic. The integration of southern society was a painful, bitter, often violent experience, and the integration of educational institutions was probably the hardest for conservative whites to accept. Federal troops were required in 1962 to escort the University of Mississippi's first black student to class. But at Wofford integration was accomplished, as most things are, with a minimum of controversy. Wofford's first black student, Albert Gray, arrived in the fall of 1964, and for some time was the only black on campus. His admission caused a few old-timers among the alumni to cut off their support, but otherwise was accomplished uneventfully: Wofford had little difficulty accepting one token black day student.

When President Hardin came to Wofford in 1968 from Duke, where he had been something of a civil rights activist, he decided Wofford needed more than token integration. With a grant from the Ford Foundation, Hardin set up a program called L.E.A.P. to bring a carefully selected group of black students to Wofford from across the state. Ned Sydnor, who managed the program, said it was designed to counter the tendency of many blacks to "go to the North for an education, causing a drain on the leadership of the black community." In the summer of 1969, six blacks were brought to Wofford through this program for a preparatory session, and next fall

Wofford had a record seven black students, several of whom lived on campus.

The new black students did not have to be escorted to class by federal troops, but their reception by the white student body was less than enthusiastic. A mainly conservative, upper-class campus, whose social life was still dominated almost exclusively by close-knit fraternities, was not likely to provide the most comfortable climate for defiant young blacks. The 1969 black freshmen said that only President Hardin gave them more than a lukewarm welcome. The liberal-dominated Old Gold and Black reported that fall that all the new black students "seem to have a defiant attitude in the face of white shobbishness."[1] One of these blacks wrote in a bitter article about his impressions of Wofford, "Wofford has seven tokens; all it needs now is a subway."

A few students on Wofford's liberal fringe, however, like the Old Gold and Black editors, showed real interest and concern in the new black community on campus. Henry Freeman, a white student at Wofford in the late sixties, was an aggressive civil rights campaigner. Freeman spent the 1969 Interim as the only white student at Claflin College; he wanted to increase his understanding and appreciation of black culture. One Saturday the next year, Freeman and Gaines Foster organized games for some of the children from the poor black neighborhood just north of the Wofford campus. This was the beginning of the Happy Saturday program, which continued through the seventies, later under the auspices of the Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity.

An episode indicative of white hesitancy toward full-scale integration occurred in the fall of 1968. Freeman and student government President George Corn took Wofford's two black students to the Capri Lounge, a Spartanburg bar popular with Wofford students, and the blacks were asked

to leave. The owner of the lounge said, "I've got no prejudice against those fellows, but I have a business to run." Freeman organized a boycott of Capri's, and the pressure eventually forced the owner to begin letting in black students.

The boycotters received no support from the fraternity-dominated student Senate, however. At Freeman's request, the Executive Council, composed of the four student government officers, had approved this resolution:

> We, the members of the Wofford College community, feel that certain members of the student body are being discriminated against because of their minority status by the Capri Lounge and the Upstairs. Until these people and other members of their race are admitted, we advocate an active boycott of the facilities mentioned above.

The officers submitted this resolution to the student Senate, which defeated it by a two-thirds vote. Senators explained that they were not opposed to letting Wofford blacks into Capri's, but felt the resolution's wording suggested that all types of blacks should be admitted; it was on these grounds that they opposed the resolution. Henry Freeman later explained that he had intended the boycott to force only the admission of "college-type Negroes" to Capri's; no one, evidently, was advocating equal rights for ordinary, run-of-the-mill Negroes.

Bobby Leach, who came to Wofford in 1970 as Assistant Dean of Students, had as his chief duty the administration of R.H.E.P., but he also served as a liaison between black students and the administration. Leach left Wofford in 1973, but there was a black man in his position throughout the seventies. Black enrollment increased significantly in the seventies, but black students--as a practical matter if not legally--were excluded from the fraternities, and received little representation

in student government. As a result of this exclusion, perhaps, blacks formed their own groups--the Association of Afro-American Students, the Gospel Choir, and a black fraternity and sorority.

Thus, the fundamental institutions of student life--fraternities, some student organizations, cafeteria tables--remained strictly segregated, not by Jim Crow laws now, but by the choices of black and white students. Blacks at Wofford in the late seventies voiced many of the same grievances as those of 1969--poor student government representation, an absence of black faculty, and white apathy toward their activities on campus. It was easy to forget, however, the enormity of the transformation that had occurred in white attitudes since the days when a student wrote that the Negro, because of his small brain, was incapable of any great amount of education.

Coeducation, even more than integration, required a basic rethinking of Wofford's role as a college. It was accomplished, however, with a remarkable absence of controversy. Even those sentimentally opposed to the idea of women at Wofford put up little real resistance; there was a general consensus of opinion that coeducation was an idea whose time had come.

Wofford men had several reasons, nevertheless, for viewing with reluctance the apparently inevitable arrival of women on campus. Perhaps the fundamental reason for opposition was that coeducation threatened the traditional clubishness of the Wofford community; for some students, coeducation "seemed like the end of Wofford as we knew it--the end of a sort of 'easy' atmosphere." There was also a suspicion that the first women to penetrate a nearly all-male campus might be motivated by

something other than intellectual ardor. One student claimed that "girls are looking for husbands in college, not degress." A student senator, in a discussion of coeducation, suggested more tactfully that Wofford women might not be "high-class girls." President Hardin angered many students--a perhaps touched a sensitive nerve--when he implied in an interview that the real basis of some students' opposition was a fear of the academic competition coeds might offer.

A number of students supported coeducation, however. The student Senate, still dominated by fraternity men, defeated a resolution calling for coeducation in the spring of 1969, but an Old Gold and Black poll taken that year showed students about equally divided on the issue. The argument in favor of coeducation was chiefly one of academic necessity. The improving quality of state-supported colleges and universities, combined with the decreasing popularity of all-male institutions, weakened Wofford's position in the market for good students. Some students and faculty wondered how long Wofford could survive as a men's college.

The administration was ambivalent on the issue, but the faculty, most acutely aware of the academic consequences of failing to admit women, overwhelmingly favored coeducation, and lobbied with the Board of Trustees for its approval. The Board was persuaded to admit the first female day students in the spring of 1971, and the first resident coeds five years later. By the end of the decade, women comprised a fourth of the student body.

The integration of women into campus life was not easy, since the structure of social life at Wofford initially made no provision for them. Many coeds claimed they were greeted with coldness--or in some cases with open hostility--from members of fraternities whose relationship with

Converse College women seemed threatened by the presence of women at Wofford. By the late seventies, however, opposition to coeducation was a generally discredited point of view, and women had staked out a place for themselves in campus life. Women out-performed men academically, established sororities, and--unlike black students--were more than proportionately represented in student government.

Thus, the Wofford student body, which had been in the early sixties an association of essentially like-minded fraternity men, splintered in the seventies into factions of blacks, women, fraternity members, intellectually-motivated independents, and other more subtly differentiated groups. Integration had produced more racial separatism than inter-racial unity, and even coeducation had caused some division--chiefly between women and fraternity men opposed to their presence. The student body had lost much of its provincialism, but had also lost some of its former closeness and unity; Wofford had traded homogeneity and conformity for variety--and division.

# III

## THE INSTITUTIONS OF STUDENT LIFE

Social life at Wofford in the early sixties revolved around the institution of the fraternity. Membership in one of the seven fraternities on campus was generally considered a mark of social acceptability and respectability, and most students became brothers during their first year at Wofford. There were independents, of course; they were usually less affluent, from less socially active families, and were themselves less active and visible on campus than the fraternity men.

The Inter-Fraternity Council, which coordinated the fraternities' joint activities, was at least as influential as the student government, and probably the most important student organization at Wofford. It regulated rush, the series of parties which introduced prospective members to the fraternities, and had a virtual monopoly over large-scale social events on campus--almost all major dances and concerts were sponsored by the I.F.C. with participation limited to fraternity members. Dean Logan considered decisions of the I.F.C. important enough to attend almost all its meetings. Fraternities also maintained control of student government. The larger fraternities cooperated in the support of particular candidates in student elections, and throughout the sixties student government presidents were fraternity men, as were most of the student senators.

The most prestigious fraternities in the sixties were the Kappa Sig's, the Pika's, and the SAE's; their members were the most visible, active, influential men on campus. The Sigma Nu's and the Delta Sig's were on the bottom rung of respectability, and their members were looked

down upon by the better fraternities as "trashy," "weird," of at least socially inferior. Various fraternities acquired certain stereotypical images, probably no more than half accurate: the Pika's, for example, were considered a clique of intellectuals and campus politicians; the Kappa Sig's were drinkers and "hell-raisers," intelligent and sometimes arrogant; and the SAE's were "cool," which meant they wore a certain kind of sweater, dated only attractive girls, and usually spoke only to students they considered their social peers.

One of the chief criticisms directed against fraternities concerned first-semester rush, which involved the great majority of freshmen in an exhausting, two-week series of parties right at the inception of their academic career at Wofford. The faculty made recurrent but futile protests about this tradition, which wreaked academic havoc with the first part of each fall semester. In the late sixties, a number of independent students also began to express objections to first-semester rush and push for reform of the system. One Old Gold and Black editorialist complained that I.F.C. rush caused freshmen to "drink the first days of college life into oblivion." The fraternities claimed it would not be economically feasible to abolish first-semester rush, as freshmen dues were needed at the beginning of the new academic year to replace those of seniors who had just graduated. During the seventies, however, the I.F.C. responded to continued complaints by putting strict limits on the duration and frequency of rush parties and even eliminating alcoholic beverages from some of the parties.

Alcohol, however, was an essential part of most fraternity functions. In the sixties, before the Board of Trustees voted to allow alcohol on campus, fraternity men sometimes observed the regulation technically by

stepping off Fraternity Row into the Memorial Auditorium parking lot to drink. The regulations concerning alcohol were flagrantly violated, however, in the fraternity houses as well as in the dormitories. This was particularly true after Frank Logan resigned as Dean of Students; later administration efforts to enforce the alcohol policy were not very vigorous, and the Board's decision in 1971 to allow alcohol on campus was little more than a ratification of existing practice.

In the late sixties, an effort was made to challenge the fraternities' exclusive dominance of organized social life: the Independent Recreation Association, a sort of anti-fraternity, was established to provide social opportunities for independents. The I.R.A. had a fall membership drive corresponding to I.F.C. rush, sponsored a rival Homecoming Dance, and organized intramural athletic teams to compete with the fraternity teams. It was a valiant effort, but the I.R.A. failed to produce much enthusiasm, never played an important role in campus life, and died out in the early seventies.

The student activist movement of the late sixties and early seventies tended to reject the conformity and conservatism of fraternities, and at many campuses throughout the country, fraternities underwent a period of eclipse. At Wofford, where student radicalism took a rather mild form, none of the fraternities disappeared entirely, but each experienced a definite slump in the early seventies, evidenced by a loss of members and influence. This period of decline produced a reshuffling of the fraternities' relative positions on campus. The Pi Kappa Phi's, Delta Sig's, and Kappa Sig's were severely affected by the slump and never fully recovered; they became the smaller, weaker fraternities of the late seventies. The SAE's, KA's, Pika's, and Sigma Nu's weathered

the period without great difficulty and emerged as the larger and more prestigious fraternities.

The decline of fraternities can be attributed in part to the spirit of individualism which the activist movement encouraged. A related factor was the new feeling of independence which made students less dependent on organizations such as fraternities and the I.R.A. to provide for their social needs. In the late sixties, when most students began to own cars and Saturday classes were abolished, it became easier for students to leave town on the weekends, and so the need for a weekend social outlet became less important as a factor in the fraternities' attraction. More mobile students were less interested, for example, in the trips to the beach or mountains which fraternities and the I.R.A. periodically organized. The liberalized alcohol policy also may have had a part in the fraternities' decline, as it made it easier for students to have parties in their dormitory rooms. Finally, the introduction into the student body of blacks, women, and larger numbers of lower- and middle-class students diluted the fraternities' traditional base of support.

The student activists' disenchantment with the fraternities, which they associated with the establishment, produced an uneasy polarity on campus which had not been entirely dispelled even by the end of the seventies. Some of the more liberal students, who placed great importance on individualism, denounced the fraternities as breeders of conformity and ridiculed "frat boys" as shallow, conventional, and academically uncommitted. Fraternity men responded with epithets of their own for the independents, and many continued to use fraternity membership as a yardstick of social acceptability.

The decline in the fraternities' membership and respect effectively

ended their leadership role on campus. Jack Griffeth, elected Campus Union president in 1971, became the first independent president of the student government in years. During the last half of the seventies, fraternity members found it impossible to be elected to the Campus Union presidency, and fraternities were substantially under-respresented on the C.U. Assembly. The student-run Social Affairs Committee, part of the Campus Union system instituted in 1970, began to sponsor dances and concerts for all students at Wofford, and in the early seventies supplanted both the I.F.C. and the I.R.A. in providing a series of social events on campus. The I.F.C. remained to organize Greek Weekend activities and regulate rush, but ceased to be a major force in student life.

The fraternity slump bottomed out about 1973 with the end of the period of activism, and during the rest of the decade most fraternities experienced fairly steady gains in membership. The seven original fraternities were joined by a black fraternity and three sororities--one black and two white. Fraternity membership in the seventies never included a majority of the student body, however, and the fraternities failed to regain the dominance of social life they had enjoyed in the sixties.

Student government at Wofford, as on most college campuses, has always been something of an anomaly. The fact that it calls itself a government creates great expectations among the student body and student leaders; but the fact that the organizational and administrative structure of campus life leaves it nothing to govern causes disappointment and frustration. The late sixties were a time when students were calling into question discrepancies between theory and practice, between ideal and reality. The Student Government Association at Wofford was not fulfilling

students' expectations of what such an organization should accomplish, and its inadequacy became a major object of student protests.

The S.G.A. included four executive officers, a Senate, and several committees. The first genuine student activist at Wofford to become S.G.A. president was George Corn, who called an S.G.A.-sponsored student rally on the steps of Old Main shortly after his election in the spring of 1968. At that rally Corn announced, "I am anti-administration in that I am pro-student," serving notice that the days of docile student leaders were ended, and that the student leadership could no longer be counted on to reinforce campus tranquility. His S.G.A. office allowed Corn to receive wide exposure on campus for his ideas for change, but he found it impossible to accomplish anything of importance by working through the machinery of student government. While still S.G.A. president, Corn became aware of the contradictions inherent in the existence of a student government, and advocated abolition of the S.G.A. "The S.G.A. is a lie in itself," he said; "its title and constitution imply a sovereign government which cannot and does not exist."

Other students were beginning to express dissatisfaction with the S.G.A.--particularly with its legislative body, the Senate. All bills passed by the Senate had to be approved by the faculty or administration, which discouraged senators from making decisions not likely to receive approval. The Senate's actions became fairly predictable--approval of routine budgets, for example, and occasional requests for liberalization of the alcohol policy. Its members wore coats and ties to their weekly meetings in the Board Room and were expected to address one another as "senator" so-and-so.

Many students in the late sixties believed that the small, frater-

nity-dominated Senate was not truly representative and that it was out of touch with student opinion; and there was a widely-held belief that some sort of radical change was needed in student government. In the 1969 S.G.A. elections, the candidates' platforms received less attention than the vocal objections of those who believed the entire student government system was a failure; one student, Tommy Lenz, began a campaign to "abolish our Micky-Mouse S.G.A."

The response to the clamor for change came in February, 1970, when the Blue Key Honor Fraternity, during a weekend at the Lake Junaluska Methodist retreat, created for Wofford an entirely new system of campus government. The Lake Junaluska Constitutional Convention developed a bold, original idea: instead of a student government there would be a Campus Union, a united government of the entire campus community. Unfortunately, the Blue Key members had only enough time during the weekend (part of which was spent in an extended party) to formulate this idea; they were unable to devise a workable mechanism by which the various campus constituencies--faculty, students, administrators--would share power in a single governmental organization. The product of the weekend's efforts was the "Constitution of the Campus Union," a document which began by defining the Campus Union as all those associated with Wofford--from the janitors to the Board of Trustees--then went on to ordain and establish a government of this variegated group of people, vested in four officers and a representative Assembly.

The Campus Union Constitution was adopted quickly and without a great deal of discussion in the early spring of 1970, and the S.G.A. was abolished. The Campus Union never materialized in the sense the founding fathers of Lake Junaluska had envisaged it. Instead, it became essential-

ly another student government: the Campus Union officers were in reality the officers of the student body, the Campus Union Assembly took the place of the Senate, and the phrase "Campus Union" in the seventies came to mean student government. As a student government, however, the Campus Union proved more effective and responsive than the S.G.A. had been; the Assembly was larger, more representative, and less susceptible to domination by the larger fraternities than the old Senate.

Tom Leclair became the first president of the Campus Union in the spring of 1970. Leclair had been one of the activist editors of the Old Gold and Black, and like George Corn, he was a maverick in student government. At a candidates' forum just before he was elected, Leclair began his speech by popping open a beer can and taking a swig--in open defiance of the rule prohibiting alcohol on campus. Like Corn, however, Leclair found his office more useful for the expression than the implementation of his ideas for change.

Leclair resigned his membership in the Delta Sigma fraternity when he became a senior, but the next Campus Union president, Jack Griffeth, was the first president elected as an independent. Griffeth's opponent in the election, Tam Boggs, was a KA who argued that Wofford students should show more respect for ROTC--a point of view that did not win the support of students sympathetic to the anti-war movement. As the activist movement subsided and students returned to a state of passiveness and tranquility, the Campus Union became increasingly absorbed in routine matters--approval of budgets, quibbling over procedure. Occasionally student leaders sought input into serious decisions about campus life and attempted to give the student government a more significant role; but student government and campus union remained at Wofford little more than a name and an ideal.

IV

# THE SPIRIT OF STUDENT ACTIVISM

In the fall of 1964, the University of California at Berkely erupted in a series of demonstrations and riots by students demanding free speech and fewer campus rules. The Berkely uprising triggered a wave of campus unrest that swept the nation for the rest of the decade, toppling university administrations and reshaping American college life. Students at Columbia University occupied administration buildings and were busy converting them into "revolutionary communes" when a bout with police left 150 injured and 700 in jail. At Chapel Hill and at Harvard, classes were disrupted. Students across the nation were turning their backs on traditional ideas about patriotism and morality in loud, angry, often violent defiance.

At Wofford the student revolution was more like a coup d'etat. In the late sixties, a handful of students with mildly radical tendencies gained control of the student government and the school newspaper, and tried, with only limited success, to awaken in their fellow students a little revolutionary fervor. Wofford's closest approximations of the full-fledged student radical were probably George Corn and Bec Camber. In the 1969 Bohemian, only two seniors are not clean-shaven--Corn and Camber. The mustachioed Corn was the 1968 S.G.A. president who proclaimed himself pro-student and therefore anti-administration. Camber, a sinister-looking beatnik with a Leninist goatee, came to Wofford from Wilmington, Massachusetts, and during his 1968 editorship of the Old Gold and Black proved that the student press at Wofford could be a potent too. Until

that time, the newspaper's most notable features were innocuous write-ups on recent Blue Key or Phi Beta Kappa initiates, and it rarely printed anything more provocative than pictures of the monthly "O G & B Playmates"--smiling coeds in one-piece bathing suits. Camber, however, immediately began enlivening the paper with denunciations of free enterprise, the American Constitution, the Hardin administration, and Wofford's atmosphere of "academic Stalinism." Camber's newspaper shocked and infuriated both students and administrators; it also helped dispel some of the campus tranquility Dr. Marsh had been so proud of, and was instrumental in launching Wofford's short-lived and relatively moderate activist movement.

A significant contingent of the student body, however, remained unshaken by the winds of change. A number of Wofford men managed to make it through the sixties in a sort of magnolia-shaded, beer-blurred oblivion to the upheavals that were going on around them. Richard Ruthven, a writer on Camber's Old Gold and Black staff, groused that most students would rather "drink, dance, and gossip than picket, protest, and petition."

Wofford men around 1970 still close-cropped hair and wore coats and ties on dates with Converse girls; blue jeans were almost never seen on campus. Most students were enrolled in ROTC and took part in Monday afternoon drill. In their political and social opinions, Wofford students remained overwhelmingly conservative. A poll taken in 1968, when Wofford still had only two black students, showed nearly half the student body opposed to more than token integration. In the fall of the same year, while campuses across the nation were rallying behind the presidential candidacy of Eugene McCarthy, Richard Nixon polled 80% in a mock election at Wofford. Some attributed Nixon's landslide to the

attractive election assistants brought in by the College Republicans.

Later in the fall of 1968, a representative of the Southern Student Organizing Committee, a moderately radical group of student activists, spoke to an audience of about 150 at Wofford on students' right to make their own decisions about campus social life. At the end of the speech, day student Dickie Day, a former Marine, received sustained applause for his conservative rebuttal to the activist's remarks. The conservative tendencies of many Wofford students were a continual source of frustration to liberals trying to infuse the campus with a spirit of radicalism. Craig Davis, a civil rights advocate and assistant editor of the Old Gold and Black, wrote in 1968, "While on other campuses students are trying to drag the faculty and administration into the twentieth century, at Wofford the faculty and administration are trying to drag the students into the nineteenth century." Davis concluded that "in a year when students have shouted down the President, have rebelled at Columbia and Berkley, have universally shown genuine compassion for injustice, hatred, equality, brotherhood, and better methods of education, Wofford has shown only an unprecedented propensity to just not care."

The national student movement may not have infected the entire student body, but its impact on Wofford was not negligible. The seventies opened with a riot at Wofford, in fact--a food riot in the cafeteria. While student radicals at Berkley and Columbia pelted police with bricks and bottles and dodged tear gas grenades, Wofford revolutionaries, one February evening in 1970, leveled at one another barrage after barrage of stale biscuits and mashed potatoes. Danny Iseman, the S.G.A. president who succeeded George Corn, was so upset by the incident that he went to the student Senate to ask that the administration be reimbursed $348

to help clean up the mess in the brand-new Burwell cafeteria. Senators replied hotly that the administration deserved what it got, and attributed the food fight to bottled-up student frustration over Wofford's out-dated rules and its unresponsive administration.

Senator Buck Lattimore was more specific--he blamed the unrest that caused the fight on "our two-faced president"--Paul Hardin. The students involved were probably just fed up with cafeteria fare and overcome by a fit of premature spring fever. But the fact that the senators saw in the fight deeper motivations indicates that among students leaders at least, the national mood of anger and defiance was having an impact.

The spirit of student radicalism manifested itself most visibly at Wofford in opposition to the Vietnam War and in the use of drugs. The endless war in Vietnam and the threat of being drafted were a constant, inescapable source of anxiety for every student. Exemption from the draft depended on maintaining good grades, so students felt an unusual amount of academic pressure. The faculty felt the pressure too--some students were not above letting a professor know that a C in his course might lead to a death in Vietnam. Many students--especially those with poor grades and those not planning to enter graduate school--enrolled in ROTC to be guaranteed officer's status in case of being drafted. The ever-present war created an ever-present sense of uneasiness at Wofford.

Many of the issues of the student radical movement seemed vague and remote to most Wofford students; but the war in Vietnam was an immediate, personal concern to anyone of draft age. Anti-war sentiment was widespread on campus, even among students who otherwise fit the stereotype of the conservative Wofford gentleman. One morning in the fall of 1968, students in Wightman hung from the fifth floor of that dormitory a thirty-

foot-long banner proclaiming "You Celebrate War." It was intended to greet General William Westmoreland, who was about to be honored by a Veterans' Day parade down Church Street. Dean Logan, however, came by before the parade began with a note from President Hardin ordering the sign to be taken down.

Student anti-war groups across the nation declared October 15, 1969, Moratorium Day, to be observed with class boycotts and anti-war rallies. Students at Wofford, under the leadership of Gaines Foster and Tom Leclair, participated by sponsoring on that day an open forum on the war. Dean Welch supported the event, the student government officers and Student Christian Council passed resolutions in favor of it, and a student petition was taken to the faculty asking that classes be cancelled at 1pm on October 15. The faculty refused to call off classes, but compromised by allowing students attending the forum to be excused. The Old Gold and Black reported that some students felt the faculty's action "bordered on sarcasm and unresponsiveness." About 400 students attended the forum, listening to speakers on both sides of the issue--from anti-war leaders to a hawkish former Marine.

Shortly after the Kent State shootings in May, 1970, there was an all-night vigil on the steps of Old Main. Soon afterwards the anti-war movement virtually disappeared at Wofford, as on other campuses, as American forces were withdrawn from Vietnam. It was opposition to the war, more than anything else, that had mobilized students for rallies and demonstrations, that had turned clean-cut adolescents into long-haired radicals; and when the war ceased to be an issue, the student activist movement lost much of its strength.

One legacy of the student revolution of the sixties did not disappear, however--the widespread use of drugs. Marijuana was first noticed at Wofford in the freshmen dormitories during the 1967-68 school year. Within two years, the use of marijuana and of various types of pills--"bennies," "goofballs," "green monsters," and others--had become widespread on campus. Marijuana was grown in dormitory rooms, and pills were distributed through the campus mail. But there was very little use of hard drugs such as LSD, heroin, and cocaine at Wofford.

By 1969, the Spartanburg police had organized a narcotics squad, and from time to time narcotics agents made searches of the Wofford dormitories. A few students heard about one such search in time to put a coded warning in the campus bulletin. Narcotics agents also tried to infiltrate Wofford social functions, infuriating many students and irritating the administration. The most serious confrontation between students and police occurred in the spring of 1970. On a warm Sunday evening, several "narcs," or narcotics agents, arrived on campus to make a "bust," and were recognized by students, who began yelling "pigs" and throwing bottles at the officers. One young officer, frightened by the reception, pulled out a gun and began waving it at students. Three students were arrested in the incident, but were later acquitted--mainly because of the young officer's behavior. After that episode, local police officials gradually gave up the idea of clearing Wofford of drugs. The administration never made a serious attempt to prevent students from using drugs in private dormitory rooms; and though pill-popping proved to be a short-lived fad, the use of marijuana continued to be prevalent on campus throughout the seventies.

The period of student activism at Wofford corresponded roughly to

President Hardin's term of office. Hardin was replaced in 1972 by Dr. Joab Lesesne, an easy-going, behind-the-scenes kind of administrator; and Don Welch found he no longer enjoyed being Dean of Students when the student activists disappeared and Wofford became again an isle of tranquility. Wofford students had become activists because of issues that affected them directly: they had demanded the freedom to drink on campus, and they had demanded freedom from the fear of dying in Vietnam or being caught smoking marijuana in their rooms. When these demands were met, there was no longer a need for activism.

The economic disruptions of the seventies focused students' attentions on their own efforts to achieve material success. The academic quality of the student body improved in the seventies, and more blacks and women became Wofford students. Fraternities regained strength, the Glee Club experienced a renaissance after a long period of decline, and the new Theater Workshop acquired an excellent reputation for its productions. The bitterness and negativism of the activist period were replaced by confidence and pride; and the tendency to question and to challenge authority was replaced by an atmosphere of complacency and tranquility.

The eruption that had occurred on the isle of tranquility had reshaped it. The climate at Wofford in the seventies was freer and probably healthier than in the early sixties; rules were fewer and more fairly enforced. Students were more independent and therefore less committed to the college and to one another. The campus community had gained variety, freedom, and openness, but it had lost a sense of closeness and community--it had lost some essential ingredient that once made all its students a single unit, an entity. And beneath the veneer of tranquility there remained from the period of turbulence a residue of uncertainty and uneasiness.

CITATIONS FROM THE OLD GOLD AND BLACK

p. 4 Quote by Dale Boggs: October 3, 1969.

6 Quote by the "student on the street": February 20, 1970.

7 Editorial response to Hardin's opening chapel: September 12, 1969.

15 Resolution on discrimination by Capri's Lounge: Ocotober 25, 1968.

17 Student comments on coeduction: February 14, 1969.

Poll on coeducation: February 14, 1969.

20 Editorial against first-semester rush: September 20, 1969.

24 George Corn advocates abolition of the S.G.A.: November 15, 1968.

25 Tommy Lenz advocates abolition of the S.G.A.: May 9, 1969.

28 Camber denounces "academic Satlinism": September 20, 1968.

Richard Ruthven's complaint about Wofford students: September 27, 1968.

Poll on integration: September 20, 1968.

Mock presidential election results: November 11, 1968.

29 Craig Davis bemoans student conservatism: November 8, 1968.

30 Senate discussion on the food fight: March 6, 1970.

31 Criticism of faculty response to the Moratorium Day petition: October 17, 1969.