solution to a G ap

Since the time of the first Russian sputnik in orbit late in the 1950's, the American press and public have succeeded in creating a number of those startling abstractions, popularly labeled "gaps."

First, we had the education gap—poor Johnny lagged sadly behind proud Ivan in his studies of science and related fields until a frantic effort supposedly equated the two systems. Did Ivan really know more than Johnny, or did the press present the case a bit too free-handedly?

Somehow, after the education gap disappeared, the public didn't feel right without lagging in something, so the communications industry came up with a communications gap. In this case, the invention did have some credibility, and still does today. While there may be 200 million radios in the United States, there is no guarantee that citizens listen to those radios—or even watch Huntley and Brinkley over their dinners. At any rate, the solution quickly found itself in the hands of those capable newsmen who remedied the situation with expanded coverage, deeper investigation and greater insight.

The war in Vietnam touched off a flurry of type, film and related means of communication—the situation with respect to the position of the United States was examined, re-examined and examined over again to the point of over-kill.

But then, newsmen and television journalists noticed what was immediately tagged the "credibility gap"—a type of game which utilized the concept of "let's lie but not tell about it." The press was outraged, as was the public, naturally. Everyone immediately brought the Pentagon and American field commanders in Vietnam to task, and the situation was soon remedied—now no one really knows what the truth is.

Our latest bit of ingenuity is the "generation gap." American mothers and fathers now feel insecure as to their contact with sons and daughters. The media have again analyzed the problem from every possible angle. Everyone yells about the situation, little is done.

Generation gap? Yes, perhaps there is a gap of sorts, a lack of communication—but it does not take place merely between the older set and the new generation. There is a lack of communication, in some cases, no communication, on college campuses.

Recently, more attempts have been made to establish open dialogue between instructors and students. In an indirect way, COLLAGE is among those efforts. While the newspaper is capable of much more frequent attempts at this type of dialogue, it is my opinion that COLLAGE can deal more directly with the important problems, establishing that vital sounding board of constructive dialogue.

The first issue of COLLAGE does not meet these needs; while this issue is a fine sampler of student and faculty writing, it is no more than a literary magazine, a form which will disappear in later issues as dialogue begins, ideas are exchanged, and constructive criticism through our columns occurs.

This magazine has yet to realize its full potential—while it can and must serve as a medium of entertainment to the student body, it can and must fulfill its obligations to work for a stronger school, a more informed student body and campus.

Yes, the poetry, essays and short stories will continue to be an important and vital part of our publication, but the format changes, as does our awareness.
Perhaps the off-campus spot may best be identified by the people who go to speak and listen, or sing and sing-along. Among the notables have been MTSU President Scarlett, Col. Vern Reaugh, military science professor for the school, Dr. William Parker, Dr. “Skinny” Martin, who needs no identification, Joe C. Tempenny, business instructor, and Douglas Vernier, speech and radio instructor.

The coffee house idea on the MTSU campus was the brainchild of Victor Mac Cauley, president of the Wesley Foundation. However, several people were convinced of the need for a place where students and faculty could, in an informal manner, exchange thoughts and enjoy the atmosphere.

Under the direction of Rev. Richard Shriver, the donation of Wesley’s basement and willingness to bear the resultant expenses for remodeling and reviving the area came about. Remodeling was a collective effort, and the visitor there would often become a carpenter, painter, or electrician. At any rate, with the opening the name was produced by process of evolution—everyone expects a coffee house to be a place where coffee is served and drunk in copious quantities. At Paradox, it isn’t. What else do you call a coffee house whose speciality is fourteen different teas?
A paradox—a thing that is but cannot be.

fourteen kinds of tea

by steve taylor
And the hours melted and the notes of bell chimes floated to him across the stillness. The alarm clock on his bureau ticked impatiently, racing toward dawn. Five minutes before the clock went off he fell from his bed and slid into the smooth routine of the morning: down the stairs to the kitchen to start the coffee up again to wash and shave and dress, down again to make the toast, fry bacon, and scramble eggs.

At seven he snapped off the light and left his dark and sleeping house for the dark and sleeping early morning. When he reached the street light at the corner, he saw the snow shifting thinly out of the blackness and he heard it whispering among the twigs of the trees. He felt extraordinarily alive. Today would be a fruitful day, he thought.

by Theo Wilson

He whistled as he trudged through the snow and inhaled deeply when he pushed the door open and stepped across the carpet to the receptionist who sat behind her desk. Her face continued to look at him blankly as the others had and in a monotone she said, "Sorry, nothing doing; no, we were looking for someone with experience -- I'm afraid you aren't the type we had in mind."

Presently he forgot about the office jobs and made the rounds of the big plants and now there was no pretense at politeness. For a man who'd never worked with his hands, had no skills, had not worked in six months, for such a man to seek a job amounted to a seditious act.

He forgot the factories too and looked for work in restaurants. He answered advertisements for janitors in shabby apartment houses, but men who had stoked furnaces and tinkered with plumbing and emptied garbage cans for years were always ahead of him.

Each blank face that glanced at him as if he were a shadow, each flat tired voice that rose in anger because he had the gall to draw breath, shoved him further out of the world of the living, into the half-world of the drifters, the floaters, and the derelicts. When he began to see himself like this, something failed inside him, and he stopped trying to find a job.
learning to live
Barbara Deal

In a box
tiny box
full of confusion
and darting thoughts
that crowd me out
and box me in.

It's so very dark
And so little room
For so many things
Push and Shove
and squeeze me in
Let me out.

'Fight and cry,
Little one,
Kill your emotion
Just learn to Hate
like we all do'
let me out...
let me out...
FAULT
Sad—You used to be a man in my eyes
Now I see only a mirage,
A mirage.
The form is there but there's nothing inside.
And to think I used to love you,
Loved so much that I may never love again.
Blame it on the wind blowing in my hair.
Freedom
Blame it on the bubbles and advice and time
and waiting
I don't blame you.
Don't you blame me.

Gay Garner

arc lamps glow green

L. LUDWIG

Arc lamps glow green
As I think
Through stained windows
Past dark still-lives
On the night bus
To nowhere
FYL

In solitude of silent night
I think of you, and feel my heart
Reach out to wrap you in its love
For my hunger for you is insatiable.
When the black ceiling of night sky
Turns on its lights, I whisper your name
To the quicksilver moon.
My heaven is in your closeness;
The abyss between us is my hell.
A midnight wind moans in passion,
And I feel the cold hands of society's world
Grab greedily in envy at what we have.
The human world is closing in on me,
And you are the only door...”
Don't shut me back into their world;
Now that I have shared yours, I can never
Be content in theirs again.

G. DELLMEIR
The afternoon sun filtered through the glass and spread across our table in the grill as music oozed from the overhead speakers. Eldean Aune, the graduate assistant, and Randy Guess, the student, sat rather calmly displaying only now and then a twinge of nervousness. Both had been arrested and charged with possession of marijuana over the weekend.

Could it really have happened here? While preparing for the talk ahead, the statement made by Murfreesboro Police Chief William Chambliss echoed over the noise in the grill—"Nothing for the MTSU students to be alarmed about... there is only a small amount of marijuana in Murfreesboro."

Eldean, with blue crystal gaze and neatly trimmed moustache seemed to convey the same feeling. Still, marijuana—grass—was on campus. The thing that could not happen had happened—only the recollection of arrests and arraignments, or philosophies remembered and thoughts in disjointed conversation could make it believable.

Randy spoke first, his vivid narration punctuated with an equally vivid inhalation of a garnished hot dog:

"I had just returned on Sunday from a weekend when I heard of Eldean’s warrant so I was nervous that night and I didn’t get much sleep—I slept late the next morning, until about 10:30. I had just gotten dressed, and was headed to town to pay the rent when two FBI agents, Fred Gregory and Joe Price, and a commissioner, entered the house without even knocking."

The narration broke for a moment as Randy paused for another mouthful of hot dog. Rhea Cole, Collage art editor, broke the calm in prelminaries to Eldean.

Randy continued to recount the moments of his arrest: "Randy, we have some bad news for you. You’re under arrest for transporting marijuana. Up against the wall with your hands over your head."

As Guess explained the handcuffing, the warrant, the ride to Nashville and his stay in a cell at the Federal Building, Eldean finished a glass of milk, half listening to Randy’s narration, half engaged in his own with Rhea and a few others.
"I stayed in the cell about 45 minutes to an hour, and then I was taken to the courthouse for arraignment and released on OR, or on recognizance bond, for $2000."

Eldean nodded slightly as if Randy's account matched his own. "There was no violence," he stated.

"Right, no violence at all," Randy echoed. "But it's ironical to see someone posing as someone else advocating and trying to buy marijuana—it's like being betrayed.Both agents were dressed like students—Fred Gregory was of medium height with moderately long dark hair and a neatly trimmed moustache. He seemed semi-intelligent when I talked to him. Joe Price was shorter and chubby looking, with straight long hair, a neat moustache and a blanched complexion."

Meanwhile, Eldean had been listening and composing his own type of statement concerning what had happened. Rhea's sketching had gone through a third sheet of the pad; the scratching of the pencil filtered through the conversation:

"Actually I have no hatred for these men," Randy stated glancing at Aune, "they do their thing and I do mine."

"No hatred or bad feelings," Eldean said.

Somehow there was no hatred in either Eldean or Randy—only the sense of betrayal.

Finally, it was time for the obvious question, the one both knew was coming; the one both expected—Why marijuana?

Eldean continued with his comment—Randy paused.

"My body is my own. Everyone believes what he wants to believe, anyway. From what I've read about marijuana, it is not habit-forming and doesn't lead to hard drugs—as a matter of fact, it's much safer on the body than other things."

The pause came again. Then he continued:

"It's not the feeling that you can describe—one gets a relaxed feeling he's never had before. It's almost a sacred thing with creative feelings—you become susceptible to the feelings around you. The feeling flows. Poetry flows and music flows—you can look at a cup of water and start laughing at it or pray and feel every word of it. No. You don't feel that way every time—it all depends on your reference. It's a personal thing."

Eldean, still scribbling, had turned away to talk to friends. His comments came on the reaction of students and faculty toward the arrest.

"No one has treated me any differently. Most teachers seem to be with me, especially in the English department."

"Nobody has treated me like a social deviant. It's hard to say what the students are thinking, but they're still friendly."

Written statements by Eldean and Randy came across the table—it was about time to go, and the interview would be closing now. Guess stated that his arrest came on a charge which states that he illegally transported approximately 3.8 grams of marijuana without a federal order (granted for research) on October 22, 1968. Eldean's charge was for possession of marijuana.

Eldean glanced about the table anxiously—it was late afternoon and both were going to see their lawyer.

"Can we make it to Nashville in an hour?" he asked.

Randy replied "Yeah, about that."

Somehow, it was one of those things that is ironical only for a moment—but would a speeding ticket really make any difference? Both Aune and Guess are still students in good standing at MTSU after a conference with Dean Hess. The future? It was a grim note on which to leave, but Nashville and the services of lawyers called.

"S'long. Good luck," we called.

"Same to you." Both men walked quickly from the grill. An orange sun filtered over the table by the window.

by Bill Peters
Sir

I direct this to COLLAGE rather than to the SIDELINES because I expect COLLAGE to be a haven of the reflective and this letter is designed to be a change in translating and recording instructor’s grades. So I have examined my own grading procedures. My unhappy conclusion is that the present system is pretty fair (many of us usually assume that any present system of anything usually isn’t). This is my reasoning. I presently turn in one of five grades A through F in descending order omitting E and these are translated into one of five quality points, through 0 in descending order. A is 4, B is 3, C is 2, D is 1, and F is 0. Now, I arrive at an A, B, C, D, or F by assigning a variety of tests, reading assignments, and other requirements to be averaged in an announced ratio on a scale of 100 in which A is 95 (or 99-90), B is 85 (89-80), C is 75 (79-70), D is 65 (69-60), and F is below 60. Assuming that when the letter A is unadorned with a plus or minus it means a middle A rather than a minimum A minus, then when I convert a scale of 4 I find the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>99-4.4</td>
<td>89.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98-4.3</td>
<td>88.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97-4.2</td>
<td>87.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96-4.1</td>
<td>86.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95-4.0</td>
<td>85.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94-3.9</td>
<td>84.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93-3.8</td>
<td>83.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92-3.7</td>
<td>82.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91-3.6</td>
<td>81.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-3.5</td>
<td>80.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And so on down.

Since I can not now report a 3 point anything I must round off the decimal. So a 4.3 (98, A plus) becomes a 4, a 3.7 (92, A minus) becomes a 4, a 3.3 (88) becomes a 3, a 2.7 (82) becomes a 3 and so on. I have examined my grade books over the past four years and I have discovered that I have given far more minus grades (which were rounded up) than plus grades (which were rounded down). Therefore I conclude that a change is more likely to hurt more of my students than it will help. If any one can point out the error of my reasoning in the next issue of COLLAGE, I am.

Sincerely yours,

Frederic M. Crawford, Jr.
Assistant Professor
Department of History
Haiiku IX

Snowflakes cavort down
Like crystal moments of life,
Frozen in beauty.

Gisela Deunier

search

Over the flowering blues of sea,
I saw my eyes in front of me:

With my tale in front and my dead behind,
I sought for my shelf to bind;
Over the blowing flues of glee.

RITA KRONZ

Yes
My lady
Your hands I know
Whose hands I love
My heart is there
To think it queer
To understand
I tell you
Your lips I think

My heart is gone
Whose lips touch
When touch is feel
And all the question
Of heart is gone
But heart you are
The heart I love
Most bravely
Now

E. AUNE
Open Letter to MTSU

by Bill Lord

This letter, it could hardly be called an essay, has been written to the students of this college; my friends, colleagues, intimates, and acquaintances. But it is concerned with not those ordinary and extra-special "few", this letter is concerned with the vast majority of college students who do not know me or my particular problems and would rather keep it that way. This letter concerns you, the faceless numbers of a world so calloused and scar-covered as to be unidentifiable with the world of our forefathers. This is for you, who impassionately hold onto bigoted idolatries; who only look for an easy lay; who can only see the world as your ivory-covered little hideaway; you who accentuate the negative in every situation; you who are so abysmally ignorant and thwarted in your own minds as to be dangerous; you who don't really belong anywhere at all, but are just searching for a painless path through life; you who are so shallow in compassion as to never comfort your brothers. This is for you.

This is to be my swan song at this university. Either I will fall out or drop out. "Why?" not many of you will ask. "It's the only way, I will answer. "The only way I am to maintain some semblance of sanity in my addled brain." Addled by unenlightened professors in a darkened atmosphere of learning, addled by the constant pettiness and divisiveness that corrodes and decays my inner, addled by small minds who only care for their own selfish desires. Isn't there more to life than this?

You will say that I am bitter. Yes, I am bitter. Life is bitter. There is sweetness to offset the bitterness, but there is bitterness everywhere. I am embittered, saddened, and frustrated in one, for I see American people and the college product of today collectively going to hell. We have been torn asunder by war, spoiled by luxurious living, morally rotted, mentally sickened, spiritually weakened. I will be the first to tell you that I am not religious. That is not the bent of this article, for I am an agnostic, which here on the buckle of the Bible belt, should infuriate half the readers that have read up to this point; that is, saying there are any. An agnostic, for the un-educated, is a person who has the facilities for jumping in either direction: toward the hell, fire, and brimstone "gospel is the word of God" footwashing Fundamentalist, whose blind faith will get them a happy grave, or toward the non-conformist atheist who doesn't believe in a damn thing and who will die an unknown death many times.

I see Americans, black, brown, white; first class humans but second class citizens. If you can get out from under your bubbles for awhile, go for a drive through North Nashville, or, if that's too far, you can walk the eight or ten blocks to the Murfreesboro slum and view the world as it really is. Please walk through the area; a drive just doesn't convey the message. Smell the smell, listen to the noises, see the sights, and feel the feelings that emanate from this area. For some of you, it might be a surprise to you to find that one of your colored friends lives in the corner hovel. It's difficult to visualize what takes place in such a ramshackle house, but I imagine almost the same things occur there as in your home. Strange, isn't it, to find out that black people are people, humans, such as we are, with the same feelings, the same passions, the same desires as us "privileged folk." Color is not an indicator as to poverty. White people, your "white trash", and the Indians also have this marked propensity. Everywhere there are problems but here in the United States we tend to overlook our own people in the vain hope that, like the boogie man, if we don't think about it, it will fade away.

I have attended this overgrown high school for three semesters, hardly enough time to be a critic. All the time while attending classes, and for awhile in not attending them, I have discovered that I want more than this, I want to get off my middle class ass and start to help other people get a better grasp, to get a foothold, a toehold into the American Dream. Everyone needs and deserves at least one chance. I hope to offer a chance to someone else.

I am being realistic when I say it will be all the way uphill, that my chances are nil and that it is a waste of time. I will counter with these two questions: have you ever talked with someone and seen the desire for knowledge in his eyes? Have you ever attempted to teach someone something and have them look at you and say, "yes, I know understand." I have. It's exhilarating to know that some person has partaken of your knowledge. You both are better people for it.

This letter is not for freshmen, who are bewildered at first by college and its complexities. They say that ignorance is bliss. Wait a year. But for you upperclassmen who are befuddled, confused, and frustrated because your life has no evident value, I make an impassioned plea to know yourself and be all you can be. Do your particular thing and be happy. Find your field and be the best you can be. That's primarily for the men, but the women on campus should heed the advice. For those that came to find a husband, I offer you my sympathy. College is no place for the high school intellect. You are at college to learn to be someone and to make something out of your lives. If you find someone that you are compatible with, then good, but don't make husband-hunting a credit-bearing course.

For those of you that are still plagued with doubt, my suggestion is to drop out a semester or two. It won't kill you and whether you work, join the army, or VISTA, or the Peace Corps, you'll be doing something worthwhile with your life and maybe even bring some light into someone else's life. That is it. Take it as it is. It wasn't much and it probably got some of you hot under the collar. But it's free advice, the easiest thing to give and the hardest to take.
I have always been nonplussed by logarithms, female psychology, racial prejudice, and a host of other odd and murky mysteries. In a class by itself, however, is that of table etiquette, which has perplexed and bothered me ever since my mother first told me that it was improper to eat pie before spinach.

Let there be no mistake—I have absolutely nothing against good manners and courtesy; on the contrary, I strongly recommend them. I shrink from thoughts of lip-smacking, slurping, telling nauseating jokes at mealtime, etc. Still, there remains the peculiar feeling that our customs have been infiltrated and corrupted across the centuries by outside agencies, or something.

This has been especially easy for me to notice since I have a tendency to be original. The habit of eating certain foods with a utensil other than the commonly accepted one, for example, has involved me in more trouble....

I grew up eating applesauce with a spoon, assuming naturally that applesauce would drip between the tines of a fork. Imagine my shock upon arriving at a military academy and learning that if I didn't eat it with a fork, I would be treated like a leper! (Interestingly enough, applesauce does not drip through the fork. Probably it has something to do with the molecular structure of apples.)

Assuming that it is indeed possible to eat applesauce with a fork, why should one not be allowed to use a spoon if he so chooses? Who makes such laws, anyway?

Someone has suggested that it was the author of a nationally-syndicated column on etiquette, who, as a child, became fascinated by the fact that applesauce does not drip through the fork. King Arthur seems much more likely, though, as has been pointed out, they did not have forks in his time. Instead, he probably was fascinated by the fact that the applesauce didn't drip through his fingers. But come to think of it, they didn't have applesauce in his day, either...

Whoever may be responsible for such a zany law will still have a hard time explaining why anyone who eats pancakes with a spoon instead of a fork is a pariah. I know from sad experience that there is nothing in the molecular structure of maple syrup to keep it from dripping through a fork. And still the mindless multitudes continue to lose rivers of yummy syrup rather than scoop it up with a spoon.

I am not allergic to forks, however. I use a fork to eat fried chicken. Time after time I am challenged to explain why I don't use my fingers. There is no explanation; everyone knows that chicken is more easily eaten with fingers. I just like to leave the well-trodden paths of fried chickendom and escape the culture which stifles creativity.

A friend once asked me why it is considered impolite to eat with elbows upon the table.

Given favorable conditions and sufficient space, it seems to be a rather convenient practice. There is nothing ungraceful or undignified about it; it is not annoying or offensive. Of course, it is frequently protested that in crowded quarters it is impossible to eat with elbows on the table; but if it is impossible, why make a legal case of it?

"Perhaps" I thought, "if I knew exactly what courtesy means I could understand such weighty matters." Turning to a widely-used dictionary, I found that "courtesy" means "formal politeness." That was a lot of help.

"Politeness" was defined as "the act of being courteous." Acting on suspicion, I investigated further, only to find that the whole dictionary was a merry-go-round of circular definitions: "truth" was defined as "reality," and "reality" as "truth"; "existence" means "the state of being" and "being" means "existence."

With that I gave up trying to comprehend our archaic and confusing table manners. Like other major social problems, such as crime, divorce, nuclear warfare, racial injustice, political corruption, economic chaos, and international tension maybe if I simply ignore it, it will go away.
The Fine Arts . . .

a matter of taste?

by duane sawyer

Did you ever wonder why English teachers rave about Shakespeare or Dickens? Not because they’re paid to— they could all make better money doing something else. When did you last consider the fact that Tchaikovsky, Beethoven and Bach had as many fans as either the Beatles or James Brown?

And isn’t it strange how some people spend fortunes to get one painting—sometimes one without even a nude woman? Worst of all, how can two college students manage an argument as to whether Stravinsky was any good as a composer when the Super Bowl is less than a week away?

“There’s no accounting for taste.” That’s the easy answer to all these questions. Strangely enough it is also the right answer. The nice thing about taste is that there is no need to account for it. If someone claims you have bad taste, you have every right to say the same of him.

Taste—like or dislike of something— is not a moral issue to be judged good or bad. It is a personal thing. Your taste is your own. Any man may judge it but the judgement is his own and need not affect yours. Feel free to like what you like because you like it.

But back to the issue. (Remember the issue?) There must be something in the music that makes some people prefer a symphony to soul or the reverse. If you don’t know what, it isn’t your own fault; Beethoven hasn’t been used as radio material in years. Dickens is usually required reading, and who can enjoy a book with a report hanging albatross-like* around his neck?

It is entirely possible that you discover you like Stravinsky better than the Supremes. (I can’t imagine why, but there’s no accounting for taste.) You may have found Carmen infinitely preferable to Hair. Then again you might not have.

Perhaps you do not know whether you liked Carmen or not, or have not decided which you prefer, live theatre or television. There will be many opportunities for finding out what you like in the next few days, during the MTSU Festival of the Arts.

Just in the field of music, you can hear, besides Carmen, three concerts: Phi Mu Alpha Stage Band Concert, Sacred Harp Singers Folk Concert and a Musical Potpourri presented by members of the MTSU Music Faculty. The Speech and Theatre department, in addition to helping with Carmen, is presenting two plays, The Bald Soprano and The Thurber Carnival; a couple of films, Lucky Jim and The Face on the Barroom Floor, and a film-narration, Ideas on the Theatre.

The Art department is presenting numerous demonstrations and workshops and is scattering art shows and sales all over the campus.

If you’re curious about how a string quartet sounds or what a well-done play is like, come to something and find out. You might even hear a renowned actor present a lecture on art appreciation.

Everything is free for MTSU students, and you might find something you really like.

If you should find a new love, you need not renounce the old favorites. The arts are not jealous mistresses: one can have a veritable harem of interests ranging from the classical to the contemporary without bickering. A librarian might give you a funny look while stamping a volume by Tolstoy and a Heinlein science fiction novel, but it’s a toss-up which book she can’t understand.

*From “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.” I didn’t like it but maybe you will.
DO YOU WRITE---
short stories--
essays -- poetry--
features
or other material?

TRY OUR MARKET!
Collage

Room 218 Cope Administration Bldg.

Staff
Bill Peters  Gary Matthews
Rhea Cole  Vicki Hill
John Blockley  Doris Pilkinton
Larry Ludwig  Sheila Alford
Al Notgrass  Barbara Deal