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The Moral Life

Merrimack College

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The Moral Life

Augustine and the 'authority of truth'
You're only human

(The following is excerpted from President Richard J. Santagati's charge to the graduating class of 1996.)

My fellow alumni,

You have just completed an important and significant, and I hope pleasurable, passage in your life's journey.

Somewhere you'll look back on your time at Merrimack and be amazed at how it sped by. You'll forget all those times you felt your sophomore or junior years would never end and that your "real" life would never begin.

Well, you made it.

But if you think that Commencement means closing the book on Merrimack, if you think, "Well, that's over; now it's time to get on with the business of living," you'll be making a mistake.

Because the lessons you have learned here and the friendships you have made here will be part of your memories and your substance forever.

You may forget some of the dates in history class, experiments in science or business cases you analyzed. But never forget to question and challenge everything you read and hear. Never forget that you're NOT the center of the universe but a part of it - a responsible part of it. Never forget that you have a spiritual life and that your spiritual health is as important as your physical well-being and intellectual growth.

If you do not forget these things - if every day you practice questioning, examining and being yourself as you have been today at Merrimack - your lives will become easier as you confront the thousands of choices that confront everyone.

Your teachers and mentors at Merrimack have tried to give you the tools you need to become - the kind of person I want to emulate - the kind of person 1 want to emulate. I want you to say: "This is the kind of person I want to become." A person who doesn't make the "not-so-good" choice at all.

Call it your final lesson at Merrimack College.

Unfortunately, there are other lessons today. It has become fashionable to blame others for our own shortcomings and transgressions, even our sins. Today we hear over and over, "It wasn't my fault. It was my unhappy childhood, or the teacher who was mean to me." An industry has grown up dedicated to reassuring us that it is never our fault when we act badly, when we choose the "not-so-good." In her book, "How Could You DO That?" Dr. Laura Schlessinger suggests that people are responsible for their own actions. Is this a revolutionary thought? I hope not. You may have had a difficult life or been victimized, but having been a victim does not absolve you from taking responsibility for your response to victimization.

A pet peeve of Dr. Schlessinger's is that people excuse bad behavior by saying "I'm only human." Why do our expectations of human behavior sink so low? Why don't we espouse being "human" with being courageous and selfless, with being inspired?

So, members of the class of 1996, I charge you to be human - nothing more, certainly nothing less. Be human. Seek inspiration. Choose the good. Rose above your prejudices or preconceptions in yourself. Exercise your powers of choice. Practice choosing the good. Until you've done that, you've been choosing the good easily and naturally.

And then, you will discover, the good will choose you.

Society is swash with cultural critics decrying the values of young people. But all dogmas aside, are today's young adults really in such bad moral shape? If so, what can be done about it, and how? In this issue of Merrimack magazine, we look at issues of morality, and especially of moral development as it is nourished by higher education. Methods of addressing moral issues vary, but as you see, much of academia remains undecided on which, if any, is best. Andy Harris '81 writes of his recent UN-related trip to Rwanda, a trip that was supposed to turn him into an expert on the country but instead brought him face to face with the surreal quality of life there. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the college's founding, and in our Merrimack News section we celebrate a year-long agenda of events celebrating it. The Oct. 4 kickoff weekend begins with Founders' Day festivities and includes the first annual Fall Homecoming and football game. It's the team's premiere season, and inside you'll find the story of the program and the man who built it from scratch. We hope you enjoy this issue of Merrimack. Write or call to let us know what you think.

Melanie Wilson
Editor
Those unavoidable 0’s

T he year 2000 may be advancing slowly, but its arrival is certain. As is the arrival of this year’s freshman class. Combined, the two have already caused more than their share of commotion.

The fact is that this year’s incoming freshmen—all freshmen, everywhere—are going to take up more space in computer date bases than any preceding class in history, and all because of their unique place on the historical timeline. Thus, after all, the Class of 2000, and they’re a big deal in more ways than one.

If you think about it, the statistical problem they pose was really quite predictable. Most college computer systems were designed at least at three decades ago. To minimize disk space, programmers allocated only two digits to describe years—a student’s year of birth, say, or year of graduation. Programmers didn’t allow extra space for the “19” prefix, because it was only mid-century and they assumed now extra-digit programming would replace the old long before it was actually needed.

Well, they were wrong. Programs didn’t change, and now colleges and universities are hustling to prepare for the first four-digit students in computer history.

Merrimack’s Information Technology Center has been working on the problem since last year, and with 95 percent of campus administrative software upgraded and every procedure on campus reviewed, they say they’re confident that nothing unpleasant will happen come fall registration.

Considering the way campuses use class-year dates, that’s a very good thing indeed. Academic and social life revolve around those numbers—they’re needed to fix a specific year’s degree requirements to the corresponding-year class, to notify groups of alumni about events like Reunion and Homecoming, and to make sure the right groups of students get the right literature in the mail (in a properly computerized world, sophomores, for instance, shouldn’t be getting class-ring order forms, nor seniors offers from fraternalities.)

Without changes to accommodate the entire four digits of “2000,” freshmen will actually become the “19” prefix, because it was only mid-century and they assumed extra-digit programming would replace the old long before it was actually needed.

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The Augustinians: 200 years in the United States

If you haven't had a chance to see them yet, the red and gold banners hanging on buildings around campus are designed to commemorate the bicentennial anniversary of the Augustinians in America. The banners display the combined symbols of hearts, cross, book and flame, a pictorial presentation of the bicentennial's theme, Sharing the Fire.

The story of the Augustinians in America is as dramatic as such stories come - and most dramatic of all for the fact that the order nearly died before finally taking hold. Augustinians were, in fact, a long time coming to the United States; though it didn't set foot on American soil until twenty years after the American Revolution. His name was Matthew Cavan, and he came to Philadelphia at the beginning of the century; it was burned to the ground by a Nativist mob in 1844, but rebuilt on the same site just four years later.

Still, the order was putting down roots. St. Augustine's Church - the only surviving member of the original founders, at times struggling singlehanded to keep the mission alive. By 1844 there were still only two Augustinian houses and 12 priests in the country. Today there are about 30 priests and 14 churches in four states. Today there are about 30 priests and 14 churches in four states. Today there are about 30 priests and 14 churches in four states. Today there are about 30 priests and 14 churches in four states. Today there are about 30 priests and 14 churches in four states. Today there are about 30 priests and 14 churches in four states.

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By now settled into the center's bright third floor office in Austin Hall - an office full of books and memorabilia, yet somehow dominated by a stylized lilac blossoming in the top left corner of the room. The center, Goldman says, has three distinct goals: to augment the college curriculum with courses on diverse Jewish issues; to provide ongoing lecture series featuring leading scholars in Jewish studies and Jewish-Christian relations. The lecturers will be free and open to the public and the college community.

Promoting an understanding of 'the Other'

President's Cup: Big winners, bigger bucks

One hundred forty golfers teed off April 13 at the Indian Ridge Country Club in Andover, Mass., in support of the 15th annual President's Cup Golf Tournament. The event added $40,000 to the President's Cup Golf Tournament Scholarship Endowment Fund, which now totals $665,000. Throughout its history the tournament has raised a total of $942,665 and provided substantial assistance to 134 students.

Big winners were Patrick Annese in the "longest drive" contest and the Hon. Michael Stella '65 in the "closest to the pin" contest. St. Augustine's Church - the only surviving member of the original founders, at times struggling singlehanded to keep the mission alive. By 1844 there were still only two Augustinian houses and 12 priests in the country.

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programming - but this is the only one fully integrated into the academic framework of the college community itself."
Nightly News” and “Today,” was joined onstage by Aaron Feuerstein, president and CEO of Malden Mills in Lawrence, and James Q. Wilson, an author and sociologist. All three received honorary degrees. Lauding the staying-power of the lesson he learned from his truck driver father, Russert promised the members of the Class of ’96 that if they worked hard and played fairly, “things really would turn out all right.” He also reminded the graduates that personal values have social implications, citing a stream of discouraging statistics about the poverty almost inevitably faced by young unwed mothers and their children. He exhorted the graduates to help reverse the trend. “The central mission of society,” he told them, “is to make sure our children to finish school, learn a skill, get married and have babies. In that order.” He also urged graduates to respond to others in need. “No matter what your political philosophy, reach down the ladder and see if there is some child you can pull up a rung or two. Give them a hand. Give them a chance. Give them dignity.”

A total of 434 students received diplomas at the ceremony. Brian Poulliot was elected valedictorian and was also winner of the Edward J. Burns Medal for the first-ranking student in business administration. He was also awarded the Merrimack Medal for outstanding service to the Merrimack College Community. (See sidebar.)

Other medal and cash award recipients were: Aura A. Fluet, the Bishop C. Roddy, Jr. Outstanding Professor in the college’s religious studies division; Laurence J. Welch, Jr., the Very Rev. Mortimer A. Sullivan, O.S.A. Medal for the first-ranking student in science and engineering; Connie Correia, the Cardinal Cushing Medal for the first-ranking student in social sciences; and Janice Elaine Valliere, the Victor J. Mill Medal for the first-ranking student in continuing education.

The winner of the Edward G. Roddy, Jr. Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award was Dr. Warren Kay, an associate professor in the college’s religious studies department. (See article, page 20.)

Weather (barely) permitting, Warriors make it back to NCAA action

In Short After a winter that left New Englanders wondering if spring would ever come, the team indeed found its way to the NCAA Regional Championship tournament. The team ended its season in New Haven in the NCAA Northeast Regional Championship game against Adelphi University of New York. Merrimack needed to defeat the Panthers twice to advance to the National Championship. In Montgomery, Ala., Merrimack defeated the University of New Haven, 2-1, but a 9-2 loss to Adelphi in the championship game drowned Merrimack’s visions of a national championship.

The Warriors returned from Florida after a 2-6 start and established a winning way when the weather in New England finally allowed area teams to play. Merrimack’s record since March 30 was an impressive 23-4 (regular season, 37-3 mark in Northeast-10 play). The Warriors were by far the best in the conference. Wins over the University of New Haven and two over UMass Lowell solidified the Warriors’ standings in the New England polls as well. Merrimack’s best defense was its potent offense all season long.

Impressive offensive numbers, like a .307 team batting average and 34 home runs, were only part of the story when the Warriors came to bat: a total of 158 extra base hits were also part of the arsenal. Those numbers translated into 762 total bases and 392 runs for the season (11.9 runs per game). Leading the hit parade was All-America shortstop Garrett Larkin, who hit .435, 23 home runs and 47 RBIs. Centerfielder Dave Melchionda also hit well for the Warriors, compiling a .417 average and 411 av- erages respectively.

While those numbers were impressive by them- selves, other players like Joe Jupin, who hit .400 and had a .352 average, and Brendan Reen, with a .359 average, six home runs and 34 RBIs, added to a potent lineup.

Though Merrimack’s pitching staff started out cold down south, they warmed up upon their return home. With the offensive support noted already, the Warriors’ pitching staff responded by keeping runs off the board as best they could when pitching with such big leads. Jeff Arnold, Cory Spencer and John Guiltner all pitched 4-1 records for the Merrimack nine. Angelo Amico also proved tough in stretches of the season in which Merrimack was forced to play 11 games in nine days.

Inclement weather plagued all of New England but Barry Ross’ Warriors rose to the occasion by fashioning two seven-game winning streaks and never losing back-to-back games north of the Mason-Dixon line. The Warriors captured the NE-10 Conference regular season crown and tournament championship. Merrimack also broke into the national polls.

Lady Warriors’ NCAA bid ends at Regionals

In Short The Merrimack Lady Warriors’ softball team entered the 1996 season ranked fourth in the country in Women’s Division II play. Having already tasted the fruit of an NCAA Championship in 1994, a return trip to the Kansas prairies was what the Lady Warriors had in mind.

The team ended its season with a 33-9 mark, including two consecutive defeats in the NCAA Northeast Regionals - 2-1 loss to American International College and a 5-2 loss to the University of New Haven. That quashed the team’s hope of recapturing the title and sent the Lady Warriors home.

The Lady Warriors opened the season with a doubleheader sweep over the University of Tampa. Kerri Lyman’s no-hitter in the third game of the season against St. Leo’s College was the first highlight of a season that featured its share. St. Leo’s College was the first highlight of a season that featured its share. Kerri Lyman’s no-hitter in the third game of the season against St. Leo’s College was the first highlight of a season that featured its share.

The Paparos weren’t the only players honored during the 1996 season. Although Daniela Bianchini picked up Player of the Week honors and was named All NE-10 first team, All-ECAC and All-America. Daniela was named to the second team.

The Lady Warriors dropped four games in the season, with Raffaella named first-team All-NE-10, All-ECAC and All-America. Daniela was named to the second team.

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The Lady Warriors closed out their regular-season campaign with a .485 record, the fourth time in as many years that head coach Michele Mydlinski had guided her team to at least that number of wins.
Rwanda: The bloodshed may be over, but the struggle goes on

By Andy Harris '81

Last November Andy Harris '81, who works for ANSIER, a non-profit public service research institute in Arlington, Va., joined a fact-finding delegation that visited two peacekeeping operations in Africa. Below is an excerpt of an article he wrote about his trip to Rwanda.

I was a member of a fact-finding mission sponsored by the United Nations Association of the USA, a non-profit organization that works to promote the interests of the UN in the United States. I was embarking on a ten-day trip to review the operations of two peacekeeping missions, one in Rwanda and one in Angola. We would spend four days in each.

The UN had arranged for us to be flown out to one of the refugee transit camps on the Rwanda-Zairian border. ANSIER had been working on a project for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and here was my chance to really see a camp up close.

I had seen the pictures on CNN of hordes of refugees in the big Goma camp - a site located within 300 yards of the transit camp we were visiting.

and I thought I knew what to expect: a big dusty place with about a million people walking around with plastic jugs and living under plastic tarps.

First we met the local UN Military Observer mission for a briefing on their operations. The group's leader turned out to be a Russian lieutenant colonel who had spent most of his career (when he wasn't in Afghanistan) working in Africa. His name was Col. Belcki, and he told me that he and his staff of 24 were responsible for patrolling over 2,000 square kilometers of territory and visiting more than 48 villages twice a week. To manage the traveling the mission used 12 four-wheel drive trucks - necessary because the area was lush, dense jungle.

The jungle is very hard on vehicles, and Col. Belcki and his staff spent most of their time trying to fix the trucks so they could make their appointed rounds - which they did unarmed, by the way. This would be fine, except that a big chunk of the former army of Rwanda - which was routed from the country after aiding and abetting the genocide in April 1994 - had moved across the border into the camp at Goma, which was 400 yards to the right of where I was sitting. Though he informed us he was packing less firepower than a D.C. policeman, Col. Belcki told us not to worry; the insurgents only come out at night. Mainly they blow up power lines and kill people trying to return to their homes in Rwanda; by such methods they have turned the former refugee camp into a veritable killing machine, mostly Hutus like them, from doing the same.

Since it was Sunday, there weren't many refugees at the Gisenyi transit camp, only 200 or so. This place was the Rwandan UN equivalent of Ellis Island, and there were many tents to delouse people, check their papers, give them shots, give them food, and make sure they hadn't been part of the genocide. The camp's goal was to help Rwandan refugees, most of whom had been crowded into camps across the border, get back home. But they didn't process many people on Sunday, apparently. After some questioning, it became evident that they didn't process many people during the rest of the week, either.

There were two main reasons, one having to do with food, the other with fear. It turns out that prior to the genocide, Rwanda was the most densely populated country in Africa, and its farms only produced half the food that the population needed. In a good year, most people could manage, but this hadn't been a good year. Furthermore, a lot of the land has been deforested.

By Andy Harris '81

The picture became even more convoluted when we met with Gen. Paul Kagame, vice-president and military leader of Rwanda's newly formed government. He was referred to in the Western media as a "strongman," but looks far from it. According to Gen. Kagame about the situation with the insurgents, the Rwandan Army was conducting an operation that left between 200 and 300 of the former army dead on an island in the middle of Lake Kivu. Maybe that explained Kagame's willingness to meet with us; he was trying to send a message to the US and the American government. Or maybe he just liked Americans. Who knows?

I was a member of a fact-finding delegation that visited two peacekeeping operations in Africa. My trip to Rwanda was one of the most beautiful and scenic I've ever been to. It didn't look like a war zone.

Neighbors armed with machetes and axes were killing each other. There were few rivals in modern times.

Neighbors armed with machetes and axes were killing each other. There were few rivals in modern times. The UNA had arranged for us to be flown out to one of the refugee transit camps on the Rwanda-Zairian border. "We are taking firm steps," he said. "We know how to deal with the bandits."

In the hotel in Luanda that evening, some ten hours after our meeting with Kagame and following a six-hour flight across the heart of Africa in a ten-seat turbo-prop aircraft, I happened to notice a piece on Rwanda on CNN. It turned out that while we were having a nice amicable chat with Gen. Kagame about the situation with the insurgents, the Rwandan Army was conducting an operation that left between 200 and 300 of the former army dead on an island in the middle of Lake Kivu. Maybe that explained Kagame's willingness to meet with us; he was trying to send a message to the US and the American government. Or maybe he just liked Americans. Who knows?

Harris, who has a Ph.D. in international affairs from the University of Maryland, recently made another trip to Africa after this summer. His pursu...
When Tom Caito looked them in the eye, he wanted them to look back. That was the first thing. And when he asked them how interested they were in Merrimack, he expected them to answer that they were highly interested in Merrimack. If they didn’t, there was going to be a problem, and make no mistake about it, the problem was going to be theirs.

When he began recruiting players for Merrimack’s new football program, Caito, for more than 30 years a winning high school coach, knew he’d be starting from scratch. So when the high school seniors began pouring onto campus late last fall — about 175 came over five months’ time — he relied on his no-fail, tried-and-true, one-size-fits-all approach, one that may owe something to Knute Rockne and Father Flanagan in its particulars, but that in terms of life theory is all his own: He simply sized up their characters, then decided. Caito shrugs. “I’m an old-fashioned guy,” he admits. “I have old-fashioned values. The day they make me change, I’ll quit.” It’s not likely, though, that anyone’s going to make him change. Gruff and fatherly and tough as nails, he knows the game and kids who play it as well as anyone on earth, and he’d do anything — anything at all — to help a kid out. That’s including holding any who aspire to play on his team to a rigid code of conduct. You could call it the Caito Code. “I tell them how I expect them to dress, how I expect them to talk to people, how I expect them to act outside, and then if they do it, fine. If they don’t, the door’s not going to swing fast enough.’ And he’s anything but apologetic about it. “Football’s the last frontier of discipline,” he says lustily. “That’s why I love it so much.”

Whether love or tough love, his approach has plenty of spiritual backbone. Sure he believes in strategy, training and studying the tapes — “football is exactly like chess,” he intones — but, as a devout Catholic, he also believes in a whole lot of other things, like respectful treatment of ladies, prayers before games and good citizenship. Say what you will — and Caito has found most parents say ‘hallelujah’ — it’s a mix that works.

Something of a legend at Chelmsford (Mass.) High, the program he left to come to Merrimack, Caito is one of the most successful high school football coaches in the state. In 32 years he’s won seven state championships and 15 league championships, and also been selected Coach of the Year by half a dozen newspapers, including The Boston Globe and Boston Herald. He’s coached in Florida, New Jersey and Rhode Island as well, and as coach for Central High in Providence watched Bobby Thompson, his best player ever, go on to Oklahoma and then the Detroit Lions.

As any coach would say, it’s the results that count, and no matter how you slice it, Caito’s results are good: at the end of his high school coaching career he’d won 80 percent of his games. That makes him 25 to 30 percent more effective than most coaches, and also explains why he comes to Merrimack’s football program with abundant confidence. “I know how to motivate kids, I’ve got knowledge of the game, I’ve got a great staff,” he says simply. “I’ve been a winner all my life.”

Which doesn’t mean he doesn’t sweat the details. In the 10 months he’s been at Merrimack, he’s spent seven days a week at the Volpe Center, often staying late into the night strategizing with one or more of his seven assistant coaches. One day in early summer, with the pads and uniforms still on their way and most of his players just gearing up for high school graduation, he took a walk into the green playing fields outside Volpe. His gait is a little stiff — as a nose guard for Boston University in the early 1960s, he got hit hard in a BU-Penn State matchup and recently had hip replacement surgery — but, like everything else about him, determined. The new football field was being prepared in the distance, and he pointed to the orange trucks crawling along the edge of a far-off stand of trees. There wasn’t much to look at yet, but...
This poster promoting Merrimack's new football program was sent to every high school in New England.


College president Richard Santagati says the football program was launched in response to requests from both students and staff for a varsity team, and hopes that, as it becomes established, the program will be able to offer a big draw for alumni as well as on campus. But both he and Caito agree that, as fun as all the pre-game hoopla surrounding football won't be the kind of dead-on serious business that it is at bigger schools. The college doesn't offer football scholarships, and students who come to play are also coming to learn. Period. "If football becomes all-important, it's easy to lose sight of why you're on campus, or even why you're on earth," Santagati says. "The point is that this isn't just a game. It's spiritually, ethically, morally and physically.

And Caito himself has no desire to work in the kind of pressure-cooker environment he's seen elsewhere. Among the jobs he's turned down is one in Ohio where angry fans hanged a coach's dog from a tree (the coach was only 7-4, Caito notes), and another in Florida where fans - also angry, apparently - parked a moving van in front of the coach's house for a year. And the schools can be just as bad, Caito says, playing for more gifts, a great salary, a new car, but making it all too clear he'd better win, and fast. And this is just in high school. College can be even worse, and on the pro level - well, don't get Caito started on the pros. "The egos, he calls them collectively, as though not just because there'll suddenly be more men around, but because of the new look they expect to bring to campus. Frankly, it's an issue of style. The football guys, she feels, are going to be athletes of the campus in a way other teams haven't. She's made something of a study of the matter. "The hockey teams walk the halls so cool, bow-legged, and the basketball players wear baggy clothes, and the majority of tennis players are preppy guys. The soccer team guys are clean-cut, too - I'm not saying they are clean cut, they just look that way." The football team, she says, will sport a new look altogether. Frankly, the team and their games will be a morale booster, the sort of thing that will spawn parties and rallies and bonfires-without-the-actual-fire, necessary, she says, to cause real fires aren't allowed on campus.

And others are equally enthusiastic. Stephanie Langin, a Theta Phi Alpha sorority member, agrees that the team will be a huge hit. "We're excited to have a football team," she says. "Adding the new football program may even give her the chance to continue her high school cheerleading career. So far, plans for a squad are uncertain, but she's working on it. "A friend and I are trying to get something organized," she says. "In any case, there should be no shortage of football-related festivities. The Homecoming game, set for Oct. 5, will be preceded by a barbecue, which may itself be preceded by a parade. Paraphernalia of all sorts - T-shirts, pennants and the like - will doubtlessly be available at the campus bookstore and from student groups. (A pep club is in the offing as well.) Food's going to be an issue, too. When Coach Tom Caito created a group of prospective players to break fast on campus one morning, they ran the cafeteria out of eggs. "These guys can put away quite a bit," acknowledges Keith Mead, production manager of the campus' food service. Fortunately for the budget, he says, they tend to go for the pasta, the breads - carbohydrates that give them energy without slowing them down. Because of their practice and game schedules, they'll be eating at odd times, and when they're not with the general student population the cafeteria will cater to their special needs. Meal already exists what they be serving the end of August, when the players arrive before everyone else. "We have pasta meals," he says. "Lasagne, manicotti, ravioli."

And what about the beds, the chairs? Can players who are 6'4" tall and weigh close to 300 pounds fit into the available furniture? Brian Gant, director of the college's dormitories, says "It all depends. The dorms are in use during the day, and even if you think they'll be arriving before everyone else, we've got empty beds," he says. "Laguna, manicotti, ravioli."

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"It's going to be awesome"
VER THE YEARS, Warren Kay, an associate professor of religious studies at Merrimack, has taken to using a simple analogy to introduce students to the concept of absolute values. Stepping up to the blackboard, he begins drawing a picture of a building. He draws this, he draws that, but the problem is, nothing much emerges. It turns out that he's drawn his building without first drawing a horizon line. And so it's a child's picture he ends up with, a fun-house image lacking perspective and a sense of reality. "And that," he tells his students, "is the way many Christians view morality as well."

He goes on to tell them that opinions about morality - about whether the death penalty is right or wrong, or whether couples should or shouldn't live together before marriage - are just that: opinions. But absolute morality, he said, transcends opinion. Anybody's opinion, even his. Without the horizon line - a tool of ultimate reference provided in this case by religion - morally correct decisions are about as hard to construct as that freehand-drawn building.

Merrimack student Marialana D'Agata knows it all too well. A conservative child of liberal parents, she says her own generation has lacked firm moral guidance and as a consequence thinks that anything goes, including lying, cheating and shirking responsibility. For them, she said, morality isn't a set of rules, it's an infinitely stretchable garment that can be made to conceal any wrongdoing. "They justify everything by saying, 'Well, if you were in my shoes, you'd do it too.'" It's an attitude that D'Agata, who considers herself only moderately religious, can't fathom. "A lot of people say there aren't right or wrong answers, but I think there are," she said. "I don't necessarily know what they are, but there is a correct way to live and an incorrect way to live."

Kimberly Arakelian, a Merrimack transfer student, says that she too is often disappointed in her contemporaries - disappointed in their opinions on social issues, in the way they act, even in the way they dress. "I'd say that half of my generation can definitely determine right from wrong," she said. "The rest don't have the faintest clue."

In an age in which questions of morality drift around the political and social landscape like a luminescent fog, both obscuring and highlighting ethical issues from physician-assisted suicide to double-parking, the only thing everyone seems to agree on is that American society has somehow slipped from its moral pillars and is in imminent danger of crashing down. Statistics reveal the national unease: Three out of four adults responding to a 1994 Newsweek poll said they believe the nation is in moral and spiritual decline. And the anxiety is hardly restricted to conservatives. "The fraying of America's social fabric - once considered the crotchety preoccupation of the cultural right - has become a national (even a liberal) obsession," the magazine concluded.

Even so, the widespread angst is responsible for the recent rightward shift of the American electorate and for the creation of a veritable virtue industry whose products, like The Book of Virtues or the Contract with America, frequently carry a back-to-basics conservative message. Catholics themselves, traditionally liberal on most social issues, have moved right as well - enough, in fact, to help elect the new conservative Congress in 1992. It was an unlikely enough phenomenon to draw the attention of the Christian Coalition, which promptly stepped up its efforts to recruit Catholics.

In the current downbeat climate, it is young people who most often find themselves the target of criticism. Drug use, premarital sex and single parenthood have become increasingly troubling political issues, ones blamed for a plethora of problems affecting the health of society at large. As grammar and secondary schools respond with programs teaching personal responsibility, colleges too are beginning - though some say just barely beginning - to take inventory of their own curricula. So far, progress has been uneven.
Taking religion seriously

Warren Kay has noticed some interesting facts about religion. For instance, he's been studying it for a long time, and he's devoted much of his life to its study. He even took a course on the Gnostic gospels in Egypt in 1945. In his tenure at Merrimack, Kay, who was an ordained Baptist minister and the only Baptist in the school of religion, has developed a number of religious studies courses, among them a popular summer seminar during which students travel to distant sites of religious significance. This summer's class went to Germany, Switzerland and Austria to study Martin Luther and the Protestant and Catholic reformation. The trips attempt to put the religious sites into social, historical and geographical context - and, in the process, to make the story of Christianity more physically real. In fact, Kay's primary interest as a teacher is getting students to understand that Christianity itself is realizable, that there is considerable evidence for the claims it makes - evidence that has roots in science and history as well as in common human experience.

The point he wants to make to them is that religion is more than what they've learned in Sunday school or at home. Religion is just people being good to each other and following the Golden Rule. If you just do that, everybody will be okay, and that's what religion is all about. "The theology professor thinks of a moment, then says, "You know, to me, astronomy is ‘Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.'"

Kay would know. An ordained Baptist minister and the only Baptist in the college's religious studies department, he's devoted much of his life to studying religion. After graduating from Yale and Edinburgh, he entered the well-respected Baptist theological seminary in Zurich. It took him almost nine years in order to study theology since the discovery of the Gnostic gospels. It took him almost nine years in order to study theology since the discovery of the Gnostic gospels. It took him almost nine years in order to study theology since the discovery of the Gnostic gospels. It took him almost nine years in order to study theology since the discovery of the Gnostic gospels.
"The religious right is quite constantly talking about the failure of education to help people know what morality is...I think that at a certain level, what they're saying is right."

"Like all of us, students are bringing this cultural debate into themselves and are just un-decided," said Healey. "One of my mentors used the term bullsh-t, or cultural struggle, where the fate of our civilization is not clear; it's being worked out. It's being worked out within our own minds, which is why so many of us are mad. There's too much going on, it's not coherent enough."

Through many professors say the claims against young adults have been overstated, they also know that as a generation, today's youth are not without their particular moral flaws. Healey and others point to the cynical and even despairing attitudes some young adults feel about society - feelings that can lead them to withdraw from the outer world into their own self-styled cocoons. They've developed what sociologist Robert Bellah calls a "lifestyle enclave," said Healey, "gathering friends or family around them and ignoring the larger questions - questions of politics, the economy. I think that's morally problematic, even though it's a defense from not knowing what to think about any of those things."

Joseph Kelley is generally optimistic about today's young people - unlike their counterparts in the '60s and subsequent decades, he says, they are more collaborative than individualistic. He sees a growing appreciation for the common good. Kelley believes that today's youth have wrestled with the great moral issues - exposure he hopes they will get in college.

"They can be very thoughtful, they need, he said, is exposure to thinkers who have wrestled with the great moral issues - prejudices against women - and asks them to find the fallacy in the opposite position. If they can't, they'll have to revise their thinking."

"It's just this kind of work - the challenging of previously held notions of right and wrong, the sometimes painful self-reflection and correction - that is at the heart of morality education, and not every college student thinks the effort is worthwhile. In some sense," Healey said, "making the apologetic argument that this is very important is like the teacher in sixth grade saying that some day you will need to know algebra. People were always somehow unconvinced by that, but it's probably true: knowing algebra is good. Well, so too with moral thinking. One is better off if one can do it."

Whether courses in religious ethics can legitimately seek conversion from students is another question. Healey looks back to his own conversion in college - one made up of the small transforming events embedded in learning itself. "In college I read quite a bit of Henrik Ibsen. I came from a small town in Pennsylvania, and I had a definite sexist view, which wasn't very modern, but it was real for me. Ibsen presented for me the possibility of fundamentally rethinking what a person was and what a woman was, and who I was in relation to women, I did, and that was a conversion for me."

The same transformation should occur, he believes, every time a student takes - even ones, he said, in religious morality.

Whether students always understand the material presented in such classes - and no one assumes they do - is almost beside the point. That fact that some leave college better equipped for coping with moral problems is enough. "I think our mission at Merrimack is to give young adults a chance to change their minds, to rethink what they've been taught," said Healey. "We have an impact. How direct that impact is or how pervasive it will be - that's going to need an empirical study. We can hope the impact is fairly profound."

"The religious right is quite constantly talking about the failure of education to help people know what morality is...I think that at a certain level, what they're saying is right."
Michael Ohanian has been elected vice president of Western Atlas Inc. in Beverly Hills, Calif. He joined the company in 1998 as vice president of strategy and government programs. He and his wife Sonia have a daughter, Debra.

Dennis Hunt was recently pro- fessed in the Westminster, Mass., Community Novitiate. He is the co-founder of Hunt's Mobil Gas Station and convenience store, repair garage in Marblehead. What's his job like? To hear him tell it, his job is to make the customers feel welcome in his store. He has four children. Dennis recently moved from his own station in Methuen, Mass. to the job in Marblehead, Mass.

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Calling all jobs

The Career Services and Cooperative Education office at Merrimack is on the lookout for job opportu-
nities for students in all majors. Career-related jobs for students in the sciences and in sports medicine are particularly needed. If you have a job you’d like to offer a Merrimack co-op student or graduate, call (508) 837-5184 or fill out and return the form below to the Career Services office, attn: Gail Doyle. The fax line number is (508) 837-5004.

JOB OPENING

Position Title:  
Name of Organization:  
Address:  
Phone:  
Fax:  
Job Description:  
Salary:  
Benefits:  
Qualifications:  
Submitted by:  
Date:  
Phone:  

Friends of Sandy McCue to hold fundraiser Sept. 7

On June 3, 1995, Jeff McCue, 34-year-old husband of Sandy McCue, the National Catholic Educational Association’s first and only president, died in a car accident. Coach McCue was also a dedicated community leader, working tirelessly to support local youth programs and organizations.

With the loss of Coach McCue, Sandy McCue was left to raise four children, ranging in age from 9 to 17. She continued to work at Friends of Sandy McCue, an organization dedicated to raising funds for The Cam Neely Foundation.

The foundation, a non-profit charitable group, is currently building “Neely House,” a temporary home for the families of patients undergoing treatment at the New England Medical Center and the Floating Hospital for Children. It will be located in renovated space on Harrison Avenue in Boston; in addition to providing housing, it will also offer cancer support services.

To help finance the group’s effort, Friends of Sandy McCue is sponsoring a major fundraiser at Freepoint Hall in Boston on September 7.

For information about tickets to the fundraiser or corporate sponsorship opportunities, call Jeff at (617) 331-2775.
Dr. Royal, longtime math professor and sports enthusiast, dies at 68

Dr. Royal was a member of St. Augustine Church in Andover, and his wife said that his strong faith gave him the courage to face the recurring bouts of his illness. At his funeral, Richard J. Santagati, president of Merrimack, recalled that Dr. Royal had been kind to him as a math student in the 1960s. In fact, he said, Dr. Royal had been участникly generous with all his students, and had made guiding and teaching as his lifelong mission.

In 1999, Doc Royal decided to retire and to turn his attention to coaching or coming to Merrimack - a young, but growing university. He is a known figure on campus. He chose Merrimack over the University of California - Los Angeles in memory of their daughter Deborah '86, who died at the age of 20 in December 1995. Georgia Sekranis '85, Deborah's sister, is a co-sponsor of the gift. The YMCA will use the money to offer scholarships to needy local children. The Sekranis' have established this scholarship for high school students through their endowed gift.

The Rev. David Dismas has been appointed pastor of the Mission Parish of St. Michael and St. Andrews in Lawrence, Mass. The parish was formed last spring by the Philippine Independent Church, and the Sekranis' have established a scholarship in a modern version of the ancient Gallican rite.

Michael T. Dube has been appointed principal of the Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church in Lowell and is working at developing additional scholarships at elementary schools in the area. Last year the family established a scholarship in memory of his cousin, Maryanna Sekranis, who passed away in December 1995. Donations can be made to Merrimack College, OIA Box A-8, North Andover, MA 01845.

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ALUMNI CAREER EXPO '96

Sponsored by the Catholic College Consortium of New England for graduates of

Anna Maria, Merrimack, Providence, Regis, Salve Regina, St. Anselm, St. Michael's, and St. Anselm's

Top Six Reasons for Attending

1. All your friends are working and you are working, too.
2. September is coming and you're not going to school.
3. You need a new car, new clothes and a haircut.
4. You haven't received anything from your room.
5. The Loan Police are after you.
6. You didn't win the lottery.

BRIAN P. BURTON has been named assistant vice president of the commercial real estate firm Meredith & Crow/ONECOR International in Boston. He lives in Merrimack with his wife Sheila and daughter, Haligh Anne... Diane C. Campbell has been appointed as a loan officer at East Boston Savings Bank. She lives in Newburyport... George and Arena Skrekas of Merrimack have pledged a donation to the Andover-North Merrimack YMCA in memory of their daughter Deborah '86, who died at the age of 20 in December 1995.

The Rev. David Dismas has been appointed pastor of the Mission Parish of St. Michael and St. Andrews in Lawrence, Mass. The parish was formed last spring by the Philippine Independent Church, and donations are celebrated according to a modern version of the ancient Gallican rite. Michael T. Dube has been appointed principal of the Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church in Lowell and is working at developing additional scholarships at elementary schools in the area. Last year the family established a scholarship in memory of his cousin, Maryanna Sekranis, who passed away in December 1995. Donations can be made to Merrimack College, OIA Box A-8, North Andover, MA 01845.

Patricia Kelley received jurisdic- tional and academic degrees from the Florence (Mass.) Division of the District Court Department. After leaving Merrimack, she earned a master's degree in criminal justice at North Central College, Lombard, Ill. Dr. Peter W. McManus has opened a chiropractic office in Centennial, Colo. He plans to take advanced courses in neurology, and says he's interested in doing community-based charity work and in lecturing on health. He lives in Lyons... Stephen Olivier! has been appointed pastor of the Mission Parish of St. Michael and St. Andrews in Lawrence, Mass. One of the youngest coaches in eastern college golf, Kelley received his degrees from Merrimack College, OIA Box A-8, North Andover, MA 01845.

In February, Brian J. Courtemanche was named head of circulation at McQuade Library. Brian and his wife, Kelly (Tapalski) '90, live in Lowell.

Kevin Bateman, former infielder at Merrimack, is taking his talent back to Central Catholic High in Lawrence, Mass. As key assistant to baseball coach Marc Pelletier, Becoming a Maroon... Kevin has been a key player on the Central team... Beth Brown has two pieces of her art on display at the New British, N.H., to Bloomington, Ind., in September, and two, show on the CPA exam. She's now working at Deloitte & Touche LLP in Minneapolis... Shaeve M. Lynch has finished her first year at Villanova, where he's studying for a master's degree in American history. He did so well the first semester he was chosen to be a teaching assistant, the second assistant, the third assistant, and the fourth assistant at Merrimack College, OIA Box A-8, North Andover, MA 01845.
Anthony Boschetti '78 and Silva
Baez Lozada at St. William's
Episcopal Church in Terrick, Mass.
Edward Wolfe '77 and Eve Wint
John Byrne Carroll '81 and
Margaret Bragagni at St. Augustine
Church, Andover, Mass., Feb. 17.
Paul Timan '83 and Patricia
McCann at St. Mary's Church
Laurie Pangione '86 and Joseph
Massinetti at St. Michael's Church
in North Andover, Mass.
Arthur Daniel Powell '86 and
Shelley Ann Parisella at St. Mary's Church,
Pamela Alice Greer '87 and
Steven Ashe at Merrimack College,
Elena Ritoli '87 and Richard
Bevacqua at the Church of St.
Patrick in Farmington, Conn., July 8,
1995.
Lynne Winer '88 and John Rogers,
Jr., at St. Joseph Church in
Amesbury, Mass., Nov. 25.
Brad Atol '95 and Maria
Hess in Bloomington, Minn., Feb. 9.
Brian Cole '98 and Blair
Beaumont at St. Mary's Episcopal
Church in High Point, N.C., April 15.
Judy Beth Anderson '80 and
Kevin O'Brien, Jr., at Holy
Spirit Church in Newington,
Stephen Cardinal '91 and
Helen Sande at St. Anne's
Church in Shrewsbury, Mass.
William Gallant II '91 and
Rebecca Zahnarsky at St.
Joseph's Church in North Andover,
Mass.
Kevin Johnson '91 and
Michael Gray at St. Anne's
Church in Litchfield, Conn., Aug.
Mark Oliveira '91 and Christo-
pher Freitas at St. Catherine of Genoa
Church in Somerville, Mass.
Karen Bobbiell '91 and
Lois Corson at Merrimack College,

Paul Zahorsky '91 and Cynthia
Cox '93 at St. John's Episcopal Church
in Saugus, Mass.

David Abbott '92 and
Nancy Lee Worrell at St.
Theresa Parish in Rye,

Stephen Delkova '92 and
Keri Fadden at Christ Church
United in Dracut, Mass.

Paula A. Pietroinne '92
and Patrick Higgins at Merrimack College,

Carolyn M. Widgren '92
and Christopher P. Jor-
dan '94 at Merrimack Col-

Christopher Fazzio '93
and Andrea Lima at
Merrimack College,

Tracy Quinlan '91 and
Shawn Carroll '96 at Merrimack College,

Thomas Hanson '94 and Jennifer
Laud at the Center Country Meth-
odist Church in Country Club, N.Y.,

Keith Harum '93 and Celeste
Cagney '96 at Merrimack College,
Jan. 6.

Sarah Pearon '95 and Christopher
Bowers at Immaculate Conception
Church in Newburyport, Mass.,

Gary Deschesnes '96 and
Marie-Claude Gaudet at St. Paul's
Church.

Keith Ivanicki '96 and Elisa
Boogard at St. Mark's
Church in Lakeville, Mass.,

Jonathan Miller '96 and Mary
Lambert at St. John's Church in
the Georgetown section of Wash-
ington, D.C., Dec. 30.
Deaths

Milton E. Prevot '32 died Jan. 30 at his home in Towson, N.C. He was 86.

Mr. Prevot was born in Hudson Falls, N.Y. He lived in Boston from 1934 to 1960 and in Andover from 1963 to 1973.

He worked as an investment banker, and was former chairman of the Boston Stock Exchange. He was also the first lay chairman of the board at Merrimack.

He is survived by his wife; Jean; daughters Laine and Lisa; both of Napels, Fla.; and Kim of Columbus, N.C.; a son, Scott, of Hubbard, Texas; his mother, Henrietta Prevot; of Towson; and five grandchildren.

W. Edward Magazine '57 of Merrimack, Mass., died April 4 at his home. He was 68. He was a well-employed sales and marketing representative for Doolittle Inc., of Manchester, N.H.; a member of the Tryon-Lakean Co., of Redmond, Wash., and Tolland Union of New Jersey.

He served in the Army Reserve for two years. He was a member of the Amesbury Council Knights of Columbus and a member of the Merrimack Democratic Town Committee.

He was an avid fisherman and skier and was a sports fan. He is survived by his wife, Claire (Johnson); a son, Timothy; two daughters, M. Courtenay and E. Brome; three grandchildren, Meghan, Matthew and Molly; a brother Jule; and two sisters, Anne Jabroeski and Madeleine Magazine.

Salvatore (Sal) LoPiano '60 of Beverly, Mass., died Feb. 29 at the Lahey Clinic in Burlington. He was 64. While a student at Beverly High School in the late 40s, he played on the basketball team that won the county championship.

He served in the Coast Guard during the Korean War and was a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. He was a sales admin for capital Distributors of Dracut, Mass.

He is survived by his wife, Margrit (Kennedy); a son, Kenneth; and two grandchildren, Brenna; three grandchildren, Matthew and Julie; and two brothers, Raymond and Bobby; four grandchil-

James M. Shaw '40 died at his home in Salisbury, Mass., on Feb. 8. He was 83. A veteran of the Korean War, he had served with the United States Army Signal Corp. He worked for Western Electric for 30 years, retiring in 1983. After his retirement he worked for the Data Doc Corporation. He was actively involved with the Salisbury Club, scouts and was Cub Master for fifteen years. He was also chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Salisbury Public Library. He was a well-known ham radio operator, member of the Plum Island Surfcasters Club and an avid fisherman. In addition to his wife, Marion; two sons, James, Ronald and Jeff; a granddaughter, Morgan; and a sister, Dorothy, he is survived by his mother, Evelyn; three grandchildren, Karon; three sons, Ronald; and his wife, Ruth (Girgus); he was married to Stomliam f air Housing for more than 35 years; and a sailing enthusiast and avid fisherman.

James Machakos '63 of Manchester, N.H. died Feb. 9 at his home following a long illness. He was 54. He worked for the United States General Accounting Office and the Internal Revenue Service from 1963 to 1969. He went on to serve as a lay missionary in Guadalajara, Mexico, for several years. After returning to New Hampshire, he worked for Southern New Hampshire Services until 1997. During that time, he received his master's degree in business administration from New Hampshire College. He later was admitted to the University of New Hampshire College, retiring in 1969. In addition to his wife, Kim; his daughter, Karon; three sons, Ronald; and his wife, Ruth (Girgus); he was married to Stomliam f air Housing for more than 35 years; and a sailing enthusiast and avid fisherman.

Frederick Haddad '66 of Windham, Conn., died Feb. 22. He was 51. He served at the University of Connecticut in the insurance industry in the late 60s. He went on to serve as a lay missionary in Guadalajara, Mexico, for several years. After returning to New Hampshire, he worked for Southern New Hampshire Services until 1997. During that time, he received his master's degree in business administration from New Hampshire College.

He was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Salisbury Public Library. He was a well-known ham radio operator, member of the Plum Island Surfcasters Club and an avid fisherman. In addition to his wife, Marion; two sons, James, Ronald and Jeff; a granddaughter, Morgan; and a sister, Dorothy, he is survived by his mother, Evelyn; three grandchildren, Karon; three sons, Ronald; and his wife, Ruth (Girgus); he was married to Stomliam f air Housing for more than 35 years; and a sailing enthusiast and avid fisherman.

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Fulfilling the Promise
The Merrimack College Annual Fund:
Meeting the Challenge of the Next Fifty Years

I AM HONORED to serve as the 1997 Chairman of Merrimack's Annual Fund. Voluntary annual support of Merrimack College is a direct reflection of the pride which alumni, parents and friends have in the college, and I share in that pride.

MERRIMACK'S FOUNDING in 1947 represented a major commitment to fulfilling the dreams of those in the Merrimack Valley and beyond — people for whom a college education was an opportunity to participate in the American dream. That commitment has been renewed in every generation since. In this respect Merrimack has fulfilled the promise of its founding. It was my parents' dream to provide me with an outstanding college education. I am profoundly grateful to them and Merrimack College, and I welcome the opportunity to help current and future students fulfill their dreams and educational aspirations.

YOUR ANNUAL GIFT to Merrimack College builds on a tradition of support that goes back to its founding years. The tangible impact on the quality of life on the campus and the ability of students to fulfill their educational dreams is no less important today than it was half a century ago.

AS MERRIMACK ENTERS its fiftieth year of service, I want to express a hearty thanks to over 4,000 alumni, parents and friends who supported the College in Fund Year '96 and extend an invitation to everyone to participate in fulfilling the promise!

Greg Burwell '80
Chair, 1997 Annual Fund

In 1996 Annual Fund support of Merrimack College made possible direct scholarship assistance to 70 percent of our students - students who would otherwise be unable to attend Merrimack. It also provided substantial funding for program and classroom enhancement and important unrestricted funds, all totalling more than $1 million. Let's make '97 our best year yet!