



THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF GRINNELL COLLEGE
GRINNELL, IOWA

March 12, 1969

Dear Class Agents,

Because some of you have asked for guidance in the matter of replying to classmates who have written concerned letters about the recent publicity the college has had over the so-called "nude-in" and who are irate over the incident, I enclose a statement prepared by the Information Service.

Use it in your class letter or however else you see fit. It, at least, presents the facts as they are and it may help to counteract some of the distorted and false accounts given in the press.

I might add a personal opinion on the subject of student conduct. All things being relative, we must keep in mind the fact that Grinnell has had no riots, no disrupted classes, no sit-ins or damage to property. To be sure, we have demonstrations on the part of a few students and we have dissatisfaction with the status quo on the part of many others. But generally speaking, the students have a thoughtful and extremely serious attitude toward the frustrations that assail them, and their social consciousness is much further advanced than it was in my day, for instance, or, for that matter, in decades as late as the fifties.

In connection with the recent demonstration, I think you might be interested in student attitude as I have discovered it. From conversations with a number of them, I find that all of them sympathize with the idea that prompted the protest but none of them accept the implementation used by the protesters. To quote a few of their remarks:

"It was a childish thing to do."

"Had they not taken their clothes off, the speaker (from Playboy) would have been laughed off the campus."

"They were sincere in their protest, but they destroyed the point they wanted to prove."

"They are primarily exhibitionists who feel that a 'shocker' is the most effective means of getting their ideas across."

"They were demonstrating against something that was not campus oriented."

"There was nothing wrong with having the Playboy representative on campus. We should be exposed to all facets of anything that involves society. We aren't gullible and, I think, we don't have to be 'protected' from ideas that deviate from the norm or speakers who expound them."

Last Sunday evening I attended a meeting of the Des Moines Alumnae club to which they had invited their husbands and three students from the college. After some discussion of campus living arrangements, the athletic program and the involvement of students in the EPC (Educational Policy Committee) the subject turned to the demonstration. After the students had presented their views, and the alumni theirs (some rather violent), a woman rose to her feet and said in essence something like this:

"I didn't attend Grinnell, but I have a daughter there and I want to say this to you Grinnellians: my confidence in Grinnell as a great college certainly hasn't been shaken by the thoughtless and shocking behavior of ten students. I think that it behooves all Grinnellians to stand behind their college during these trying times that certainly aren't typical of Grinnell alone. I hope you continue to support Grinnell in every way that you can."

Such was the attitude of a mother who has her most cherished possession on the Grinnell campus. It seems to me that all Grinnellians should heed her opinion and her advice.

Sincerely,

Mary G.

Mary G. Jones, '28
Alumni Secretary

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