Henderson cites Coe’s ‘air of mediocrity’

By KEVIN KANE
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Coe has one really outstanding characteristic, which is never advertised, and that is of its “mediocrity.”

Retiring Student Council president Gene Henderson, shortly before he was named the Class of 1968’s “Outstanding Senior” of the Oak Triton, used these words to take a realistic look at Coe before ending his Oak Oration in a hopeful note.

“THIS AIR of mediocrity pervades the campus like the aroma from Quaker Oats permeates the Cedar Rapids area,” Henderson continued.

“It is inherent in almost everything that is done and it will continue to survive and spread until the faculty and administration, and especially the students, permit it no longer.”

Henderson listed specific criticisms at the present operation under the 3:3 academic system, the college’s declining athletic program, “blobulent” social restrictions, inefficient faculty members, and both student apathy and petty squabbles.

“IT SEEMS to me that Coe College spends more time and energy going through the motions of trying to improve than it does in actually improving the system,” he stated. “As long as everything looks good, serenity prevails.”

However, Henderson constantly returned to the theme he began, with openings the reading of Robert Frost’s famous poem “The Road Not Taken,” as he emphasized that each student, faculty member, and administrator was able, through individual effort, to change the present image of mediocrity.

“INHERENTLY a saturation point must and will be reached, when the people involved will no longer accept the superficial,” he stressed. “I sincerely hope the time is approaching at Coe.”

The retiring President then cited various aspects of the college’s program which might need to be reached the “saturation point” in their mediocrity.

THE 3-3 SYSTEM — “The system is a beautiful idea… but the 3-3 system at Coe is not living up to expectations. It has been declining because there has been very little to follow up to its initiation.”

ATHLETICS — “Not only do our athletic teams fail to achieve a level of superiority, but they periodically cannot find enough to participate. It seems highly ironic to me that a college can spend $30,000 of its money on an advisor track that will be used competitively by about one hundred of its student population.

“Unless I knew otherwise, I would almost believe that some unknown force is purposely trying to curb the quality of those athletic teams… there is something violently wrong with the system because there must have been very little to follow up to its inception.”

SOCIAL RESTRICTIONS — “There also is society is a man, old enough to vote, drink, and fight not allowed the privilege of choosing his own living facilities…”

FACULTY — “It is not enough for a faculty member on a campus of this size to appear for class and keep office hours. He must go beyond. He must go out of his way to reach the individual student and to form lasting relationships.”

STUDENTS — “But students, we have no one to blame but ourselves. We have become so

This is a notable and very educational article on Coe College's mediocrity. It critiques the college's academic system, athletic program, social restrictions, and student behavior. The author, Gene Henderson, former Student Council President, uses personal experience and critical observations to highlight the mediocrity of Coe College.