

Issues discussed at WPCC

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"To censor thought is to censor social and political change or criticism," said Paul Wardzinski, an instructor at Western Piedmont Community College.

"Perhaps (Thomas) Jefferson realized this when he included in the First Amendment 'the right to petition the government for a redress of grievances.' With censorship, there is no protest, no Henry David Thoreau, no Ghandi, no Martin Luther King, no Vietnam protesters."

Wardzinski was one of seven instructors at the college who expressed their opinions on issues in the 1990s Wednesday at Moore Auditorium.

Sponsored by Phi Theta Kappa, the campus honor society, the "Faculty Debate" allowed instructors to address topics such as Communism, the economy, censorship and the environment.

Ruby Pharr spoke about the environment and the damage that is done to it daily by corporations and by people.

"Three basic points of view exist," she said. "You can fall in group number one, developmental ethics where the earth exists for your benefit only. You can fall in the prevention ethics group, on the other end of the spectrum, where you have a religious guard for nature. Or you can fall into group three, conservation ethics. This group works toward a balance of total development, recognizing the value of living conditions without damaging the environment."

North Carolina is among the top 10 states in the U.S. in

environmental pollutants, Pharr said. "Caldwell County is number one in pollutants in the state. We think that this happens in other places but it is happening in our own backyard. What we turn loose in the air does not stay in the same place. This problem becomes global."

At times the debate became heated as WPCC staff member Roy McGalliard expressed strong ideas about the end of the cold war.

"The media frequently makes decisions that have no grounds in reality," McGalliard said. "The press wants the war over to create an environment so that liberal Democrats can create programs to waste funds."

"We are wasting money on social programs. For example, scientists tell us that there is no cure for AIDS, but each year we spend millions on AIDS research. We are wasting money on emotional issues."

Mary Charlotte Safford spoke about women and equal partnerships in the '90s during the debate, calling the 1992 election year a "pivotal one for women."

"More women are running for congress than ever before," she said. "I think, hope that more women will be elected. Women politicians are not necessarily going to be better than men. They have the potential to be great leaders or sleazy politicians. Women are not asking for special treatment; they just want the barriers in their way removed."

Safford also spoke about the family leave bill that was vetoed by President Bush last year.

"The rules have got to change," said Safford. "Both men and women need some sort of protected family leave."

Ron Caplette spoke about the economy and what changes need to be brought about to begin to work through the problem.

"We need to create a more competent method of financial accountability," he said. "Governmental spending of money is not properly monitored. We can't pay exorbitant prices for things, but we can't regulate spending too tightly or we will end up with a depression situation."

Other guest faculty members included: Gary Sudreth and Leslie Stevens. Carolyn West served as moderator for the event.