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## Haverford and Bryn Mawr students and professors Walk Out for Peace in Response to U.S. Attacks on Afghanistan

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After the United States took military action against Afghanistan on Oct. 7, students on the other side of the globe responded in their own way the next day. From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. students from Bryn Mawr and Haverford gathered on either Founders or Merion greens in two separate walkouts entitled "Walk Out of Life as Usual." The title of the walk out signified students' objection to military action and accented the fact that by walking out of their usual everyday routines, they were willing to take a stand against the use of force.

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Haverford sophomores Laura Smoot and Jake Chu were the main organizers of the peaceful protests. Planning had begun a few days earlier with a small group of students from both schools in response to the U.S. military action that seemed inevitable. While many people at the meeting felt that some military action against terrorism was necessary, they felt that not all peaceful options had been fully explored before resorting to combat.

Many students attending the meeting also expressed concern that war would likely exacerbate terrorism at home. They felt that diplomatic means would be a better way to end the violence in both Afghanistan and the U.S.

Students walked out for a variety of reasons; some disagreed wholly with U.S. actions taken in Afghanistan, while others participated because they felt the U.S. could have taken more diplomatic action before resorting to violence. Some simply wanted to mark the momentous day.

While both groups started small, at peak participation there were about 100 students at each walk out. There were also a considerable number of professors in attendance. Organizers believe that many more people stopped by briefly on their way to and from classes throughout the day.

At each walkout there was an open microphone where people could express any thoughts. At Haverford, many people used the microphone to convey their emotions or to read some relevant text. One person read "America" by Allen Ginsberg, while another student spoke about the theory of a "Just War" and how no modern wars have qualified as such. At Bryn Mawr, many people chose to use the forum to express why they chose to attend. "As a Quaker I traditionally consider myself a pacifist. I don't know the answer. I don't think anyone does, but I came to find another answer," said Carly Frintner '05.

The walkouts were not limited to spoken words, there were many activities in which students could participate. Bryn Mawr had a letter writing campaign to congressmen along with a poster that people signed in support of peace. At Haverford, there was a campaign to make 1,000 paper cranes for symbolic healing. Many people participated in the effort and they were successful in constructing about 600 cranes.

The Bryn Mawr walkout ended with a large group discussion as to what students were feeling and what they thought should happen in the future. At Haverford the last speech came from a person conducting a counter protest on the roof of Founders. When not in classes, he spent the day on the roof with signs that read "GO USA" and "Fuck Peace." Several of the walkout protesters went up on the roof throughout the day to talk to him and find out his point of view. In his statement at the end of the walk out, he said that he wasn't against peace, but that he didn't think we should give up our education as a response and that the American soldiers need our support.

On the whole, the protests became forums where people expressed their views, held discussions, and actively thought about current events. The day of peaceful protest wrapped up that night, at 9 p.m. with a bi-college candlelight vigil. The vigil began on both Haverford's and Bryn Mawr's campuses and both groups proceeded to walk along Lancaster Avenue until they came together as one group.

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