

Perspectives

Age three to seven: a young political audience?



Kay Alton
columnist

Neither Vice President Al Gore nor Governor George W. Bush will be appearing on the UNCA campus during their current presidential campaign. We are more likely to see a snake ride a bicycle up and down the stairs to the library than we are to entice these candidates to our campus.

You may ask how I know this. Every time I see these two men appear in television news broadcasts or in newspaper photographs, they are in the company of infants or kindergartens and elementary school children.

Certainly UNCA voting adults are too tall and too old to fit into this target group.

I keep asking myself one question: Why are they speaking to an audi-

ence of little children who can't even vote? Now I know.

Spin doctors who are working in the campaigns are aware of the lack of respect their candidates are receiving from college students and voting adults. They study the town meetings in the Iowa and New Hampshire primaries in order to plan the steps for each candidate.

Gore seems to prefer the focus group of little children, who ask no questions. One particular event makes this clear.

During a televised town meeting, a woman asked Gore to tell her why he does not speak out against the immoral activities taking place inside the Oval Office.

Suddenly, this woman reminded the viewing audience that not all of

us appreciate the president's passions for using women. Nor do all voters believe in his creation of very big whoppers to conceal what should remain covered in the work place.

Gore blushes as his mouth drops open. He stumbles for words while looking to the left, then to the right for help. Finally, he tells her to stand up so that he can look into her eyes while he answers her question.

Height and eye contact seem to be a recurring problem for him when campaigning.

While they stand eye to eye, this N.H. woman receives a lecture delivered by the candidate, along with his wagging finger for emphasis. Gore furrows his brow and drops his voice, assuming his new aggressive public image.

Completely ducking her question, Gore condemns her by saying that she should be ashamed. He scolds her by saying that she should support her president just as he does. He asks no questions and neither should dumb voters.

Gore continues to use this lecturing style, but his preferred audiences are non-voting children. Children do not ask politically incorrect questions. Consider this brilliant

strategy.

On March 21, the *New York Times* published a picture of Gore discussing his ideas on the 2000 Census with a class of three- and four-year-old students in Manhattan.

One of the audience members pictured sucks his thumb while intently listening to the candidate, who sits in a toddler chair facing his audience.

The caption of the *Times* photograph read that while Gore discussed his views on this point, the children were drawing pictures of their families. How sweet.

Then, there was the very controversial incident at a university in South Carolina. Governor Bush stepped into the clutches of the opposition simply by being in the wrong place. How was he to know that the free speech police were watching? He should stick to the children-tested locations.

After giving his speech to the voters on the campus of Bob Jones University, Bush confessed his sin of commission to a Roman Catholic priest in New York. He spoke to the voters on this campus whose founders do not appreciate the Roman Catholic denomination. The wrath of the unbelieving demo-

cratic campaign strategists hits him broadside.

Bush now limits his speaking venue to the classrooms of kindergarten through second grade.

With pencils and pads in hand, Republican and Democratic spin doctors carefully study these squirming and yawning audiences of little people. Yep, those debates and stump speeches, geared to voters, must pass this non-voting short group first.

Bush now appears in pictures sitting beside computer kids, and we imagine the conversation between the two.

"Son, you are in the second grade and you use computers a lot, what do you think we should say about the Internet traffic when I speak to voters?" Or "Kid, have you thought about whether we should tax toys bought online or not?"

There may be an outside chance of enticing these two remaining contenders to our campus. It will take a smooth strategy and a lot of humility on our part.

First, we will have to acknowledge that we are not diverse. How many people under the age of eight and height of four feet are involved in the life of this campus? We have big

problems. We are looking for diversity in all the politically wrong places.

A two-pronged plan may work. We will have to act quickly. We can take pictures with people walking around campus on their knees. Thereby, we give an illusion of not having any intelligence to ask questions that a voting adult would consider important.

Another plan would involve quickly implementing the proposed child care facilities for UNCA. A hasty erection of a decent center with a lot of colorful toys, sleeping mats, cribs, juice stations, and potties built low to the floor will do. Add a wing to this center, housing computer stations that are big enough for candidates to visualize themselves in media appearances while talking with the three-year-old users. Next, we work up an offer using photographs and a video of this. We then invite Gore and Bush to appear on campus in our bright, shiny, new little-people building.

Gore and Bush just better hope that the obso-cute toddlers don't wake up and revolt against the candidates' use of child-labor tactics, for political purposes.

Letters to the Editor

Double standards of advertising

Dear Editor,

This is in response to the editor's comment to the letter written about the drinking ads (*March 30*). If the ads are not the expressed views of *The Banner*, then what would be the *Banner's* policy on a cigarette ad being placed in the *Banner*?

It seems that the law posed a sound question and *The Banner* lodged it with this "We don't care what the ads say. Someone is paying us to put them in, and who are we to choose which ones should stay and which ones should go?" attitude.

Face it, *The Banner* has a double standard when it comes to alcohol and tobacco as does the rest of this nation. The lady has a point. Which is more destructive, alcohol or tobacco?

I think the majority of sound-thinking people would agree that alcohol is more destructive. Both will kill, only one incites violence.

Maybe the university should be a little less concerned about who is smoking and focus on who is developing addictions to ethanol in the early stages of their life all in the name of the college experience or just leave them both alone. You cannot choose to demonize one and not the other.

Nate Peaty
Senior, chemistry

Distinguishing the issues at hand

Dear Editor,

My heart sincerely goes out to Jacqui Justice and all of those who have experienced heartache and hardships due to alcohol abuse.

However, I think the key word here is abuse. When will we escape this notion of hasty generalizations as a way for logical reasoning?

It is my understanding that publications such as *UNCA's Banner* need advertisements as a means of economical support. To my knowledge, *The Banner* has never condoned alcohol use or abuse, and I believe it is illogical to assume that its printing of an advertisement listing alcoholic beverages portends its opinion that "it is cool to drink."

While it may be the personal opinions of many readers that drinking alcohol is bad, I believe it is important to mention that many law-abiding people, including many respected students and staff at this university, do consume alcoholic beverages and have never, as a result, driven drunk, destroyed a marriage or family, or physically abused a spouse or family member. Alcohol can be used in moderation.

I think the major fallacy in Justice's argument lies in the fact that she presents the misguided notion that everyone who enjoys the bargain of a \$1 beer or \$2 mixed drink is ultimately going to get behind the wheel and kill someone or go home and beat their spouse. Justice rules out the concept of consuming alcohol in moderation, and leaves us with the irresponsible contention that alcohol is to blame for humanity's sloppy judgment.

What happened to responsibility? Why do we blame alcohol when our spouse physically abuses us or a family is unable to stay together? When will we own up to our own human weaknesses and come to the realization that we as individuals are accountable for our own actions, that we are not just puppets of this society?

Kristen Waldman
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The Banner reserves the right to reject any advertisement on the basis of content or space availability. Advertisements represent only the interests of the paying contributors.

The Banner welcomes submissions of letters and articles for publication. All submissions are subject to editing for clarity, content and length, and are considered on the basis of interest, space, taste and timeliness.

Letters should be typed, single-spaced, and should not exceed 300 words. Letters for publication should also contain the author's signature, classification, major or other relationship with UNCA. The deadline for letters is noon on Tuesday. If you have a submission, you can send it to *The Banner*, 208A Carmichael Hall, One University Heights, Asheville N.C. 28804.

The deadline for display ads and the FYI calendar is Monday at 2 p.m. Classified ads are due at 5 p.m. on Monday.

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