

# Opinion

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Gaining loyalty requires improvement

I was thoroughly befuddled by the Opinion page in the first *Blue Banner* of this semester. Editor-In-Chief Kristen Ruggeri and UNCA alumnus Stuart Gaines offer elaborate arguments concerning the paper's recent criticism and "abandonment" by many in the UNCA community. That's fair. *The Blue Banner* staff works very hard and have a right to be miffed about the competition from the *Daily Planet*. But one needs only to continue reading that page of the *Banner* in order to understand why readers are dissatisfied.

Firstly, Ruggeri, who has previously proved herself to be a reasonable, insightful commentator on political issues (even if I usually disagree with her), made the curious decision to use her considerable skills to criticize Ashlee Simpson's "lip-synching ethics" (or something, to be perfectly honest, I didn't read the whole thing out of utter indifference). Now, I'm not saying that Ashlee Simpson's performance on Saturday Night Live isn't the most compelling piece of news to surface since the last *Blue Banner* (that tsunami thing and those elections in Iraq were pretty minor), but it's moronic to extol your paper's virtues and then write a fluff piece about an untalented, bubble-gum pop princess on the same page.

Despite my disdain for her subject matter, Ruggeri's column at least manages to be articulate. The same cannot be said for the coun-

ty by Jonathon Czarny appearing (believe it or not) on the same page. Czarny is apparently upset that over-privileged, white conservative students on campus are complaining about some things they don't like about UNCA. Of course, we don't know exactly what they're complaining about, because these minor details are never provided.

In this column, Czarny offers the bizarre claim that "Grade point average (GPA) has little to do with the ability to think." Does the author really believe that most of the students on the Dean's List can't really think, and are there solely as the result of their ability to "manipulate an obsolete merit system?" For that matter, does Czarny even know what the word "obsolete" means? GPA is the system used to measure academic performance at nearly every post-secondary institution in the United States. It's not exactly going out of style.

In fact, the entire column serves as little more than a vague, rambling complaint from an obviously liberal perspective. As a full-blooded liberal, I would like to request that Mr. Czarny either stop writing columns or go back to Language 120 and learn how to make a coherent argument, because he's not helping our cause. Claiming all conservatives on campus have "nothing resembling reason" is neither constructive nor demonstrative of the open-mindedness we liberals are supposed to embrace. The fact that the article is entitled "Take Advantage of the Freedom to Choose"

demonstrates that no one on *The Blue Banner* staff could figure out what the ranting was all about.

Obviously, I read the *Blue Banner* and will continue to do so, because it gives me an opportunity to learn what my fellow students have to say about the world and their university. I know many of the members of *The Blue Banner* staff, and I am sure that they have more significant and coherent insights than the columns I just mentioned. I'd really like to read some of them. That's how you increase interest in your paper.

Joseph Telegen  
senior creative writing student

### Abortion anniversary is nothing to celebrate

Jan. 22 marked the 32nd anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade decision. Many in our country do not even know what that decision was about. Many live their lives each day ambivalent about the slaughter of the innocent in our nation's abortion mills.

What can we say about 32 years of abortion on demand? Is there any regret for the 45 million aborted children? How many potential scientists, doctors, and leaders were aborted?

I want our leaders to know that legalized abortion is unacceptable to a nation founded on certain inalienable rights: LIFE, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. For those who have never spoken out against abortion, I ask that they begin to attend pro-life events and support pro-life groups. All it takes for evil to succeed is for the good to say nothing.

Will our nation endure another

32 years of slaughtering children? I pray that it will not.

How can we continue to sleep at night with 4,000 children dying every day? Many say that abortion is no longer a relevant issue. Abortion is a new tragedy today because the babies who die today never died before.

Thomas Messe, M.D.  
Online Reader  
Groton, CT

### Are freshmen seriously complaining?

I had hoped when I first read your article that I was sorely mistaken. But today's reading only confirms my initial thoughts. Specifically, and I quote, "Too many times I have walked in two-inch heels, in the cold, up the steps and through the woods. All of this, just to get to my room. After a long day of classes and homework, all I want is just to relax."

Did I read that right? Let me get this straight. You walked from South Ridge or West Ridge in the morning to your car, drove it from the West Ridge parking deck all the way around and back on campus, where, presumably, you parked in a residential parking spot. If my memory serves me right, these spots are on the upper level of a parking deck near Zaiger Hall, behind the Dining Hall, and around Founders Hall in addition to the West Ridge parking deck. You then walked from your car to your classes, and, after classes, walked back to your car, drove back to West Ridge parking deck and back to your dorm?

Am I the only one who thinks you'd get to and from your classes

faster by walking straight from your dorm?

I have only two more things to say:

1. The parking deck is closed to freshmen. According to your article, you're a freshman. Do you really want Campus Police checking the cars in the parking deck more closely?

2. I don't suppose you could be convinced to save the cost of two tanks of gas to buy a comfortable pair of walking/running shoes to make it a little easier to get up and down that hill. Might I suggest UNC-Wilmington, College of Charleston or University of Florida? Hint: they're short on hills.

I respectfully hope I have entirely misinterpreted your article and welcome an opportunity to clear this issue up.

Jason Crawford  
undeclared junior

### In response to Czarny's last column...

Jonathon Czarny, in his opinion column for last week's *Banner*, makes very good comments regarding those who criticize the university and the need to address bigotry. However, I must respectfully disagree with his comments regarding the role of sporting events and school spirit in the grand scheme of college academics. Since when is college exclusively about academics? Did I miss a bulletin from the administration while I was on winter vacation? "Notice: from here on out, UNCA students will not be allowed to have fun in any way, shape or form. You are here to

"Since when is college exclusively about academics?"

Jason Crawford  
undeclared junior

learn, not play. For the next 15 weeks, your professors are to have your undivided attention." I guess I did miss this.

My firm belief, shared by many others, from students, professors, and alumni, is that college is about life. Those of us who go to college straight out of high school are legally adults at 18 years old, but it is in college that we learn the life skills necessary to survive on our own.

We come here boys and girls and leave mature men and women (at least in theory). In my opinion, one of the most critical life skills we learn, or should learn, is that of time management. Hand-in-glove with this skill is the ability to have fun. I'm not advocating that Czarny, and others of like mind, necessarily have to go to athletic events in order to find their bit of fun. Nevertheless, I strongly suspect they have their own avenues for pleasure, and they're more than welcome to them.

Why knock those of us who do like going to athletic events and proudly wear UNCA logos and colors? We're just having our fun and being well-rounded college students, too.

Jason Crawford  
undeclared junior

## Meet the *Banner* staff:

The *Banner's* newest additions, Maribeth Kiser and Sean Robinson share all

What kind of music do you like?

**Maribeth:** I like every kind of music...well, everything but Christian music.

**Sean:** I listen to everything from Al DiMeola to Radiohead and everything in between. Country Western and Contemporary Christian are gross exceptions.

Where are you from?

**Maribeth:** Lincolnton

**Sean:** Winston-Salem, but don't tell nobody.

What's your favorite TV show?

**Maribeth:** "CSI" and "Sex in the City."

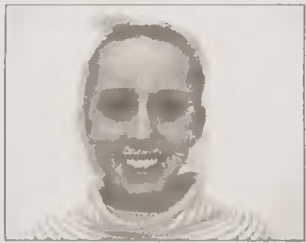
**Sean:** Pretty much anything on Comedy Central, especially *Chappelle's Show*.

What's the best class you ever took at UNCA?

**Maribeth:** I like my public-affairs class, which I'm in now.

**Sean:** Mass Communication Politics with Mark West. He hates Bush just as much as I do.

What's your favorite food?



Maribeth Kiser  
News Editor

**Maribeth:** I like mozzarella salad from Circle in the Square

**Sean:** Sushi. More specifically, rare tuna sashimi with lots of wasabi.

What are your post UNCA plans?

**Maribeth:** I'll probably get a job at a newspaper.

**Sean:** To be president of the United States of America. Or, maybe, an assassin. They're pretty similar occupations.

What's the last book you read?

**Maribeth:** "The Devil Wears Prada," by Lauren Weisberger.

**Sean:** "The Unbearable Lightness of Being," by Milan Kundera.

What's your dream job?



Sean Robinson  
Campus Editor

**Maribeth:** A personal shopper, if there is such a thing.

**Sean:** You mean besides being president or an assassin? How about a professional food taster.

If you got a tattoo today, what would it be and where?

**Maribeth:** I wouldn't get a tattoo because I change too much, and I'd probably want to change it immediately.

**Sean:** It would be across my lower back and it would say, "The kingdom of God is inside you" in Aramaic.

What's something not a lot of people know about you?

**Maribeth:** I like to watch Entertainment News...I don't think anybody really knows that.

**Sean:** I once hustled pool for three months straight to pay my rent. I didn't even have a day job.

What's the best advice you've ever received?

**Maribeth:** To be myself.

**Sean:** It's from my grandfather. He always says, "Son, there are two things in life that are extremely overrated: a ton of money and a strange piece of ass."

If you could go back in time, when and where would you go?

**Maribeth:** Well, I wouldn't go back too far because I enjoy indoor plumbing.

**Sean:** I would go back and meet Leonardo DaVinci.

If you could be any cartoon character, who would you be?

**Maribeth:** This guy in high school used to call me Patti Mayonnaise, so I guess that's me.

**Sean:** I'd be Donald Duck, so that I could insult anyone, and no one would be able to understand me. Or I'd be Voltron, so I could take myself apart and be in five places at once.

## The College Republicans gain large following on a traditionally liberal campus

by Jeremy Abee  
Columnist

You have probably heard that those darn ol' Republicans have started a club right here at UNCA.

With all the election events, recruitment signs and television blurbs, you would have had to be in one heck of a drug-induced stupor to have not recognized that the conservatives crashed the party.

But what could a club like this be doing here at UNCA?

I mean, don't they screen these club registration forms to make sure that things like this don't happen?

Well, it's true folks. The College Republicans (CRs) are here to stay.

My best estimates on membership would have been 10 to 15 when this club came into being.

But, by the end of last semester, the CRs have a membership of 46 people, and the plans for the spring semester lead me to believe that we will break 50 in the near future.

With numerous conventions and conferences that we will be attending, the chance to learn more about the political structure of our government will be readily available.

There is also the National and State Conferences of the College Republicans, where students can meet with and share insight with their peers from around the country or those in their own backyard.

Here on the home front, the CRs will become more involved with the school and our fellow classmates.

We plan on having a speaker and demonstration on gun safety.

And, we would like to sponsor a day where interested students can come out to the shooting range with us and see who has the "bullseye" among the school.

We also plan on having a ski retreat, where we hook up with other CRs from Western Carolina, ASU,

Mars Hill and Montreat College to have some fun in the snow and fellowship with our friends.

Don't you want to be there?

I can't say that I have seen another club on campus that can fairly compare, but I would be willing to bet that the CRs have them all beat in terms of brotherhood, responsibility and friendship.

I have had the pleasure of meeting some really terrific young men and women through this club, and I am eternally thankful for them.

Without their hard work, I would have dyed my hair blue, gotten a tattoo of John Kerry on my rear, and been hauled off to the looney farm for trying to brand myself with a hot-iron "W."

To my fellow CRs, thank you for all the hard work and good times.

We survived season number one, and I think we are stronger now than we were before.

We have much to be proud of, but let that show you what can be accomplished, even in the worst of situations, when we all pull together as a team.

Thank you for entrusting me with the leadership of this organization, and for the chance to share with you the joys of winning.

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The Blue Banner

## Get Published!

The *Blue Banner* seeks political cartoons for its opinion pages. Mail to: *The Blue Banner*, Highsmith University Union 251, One University Heights, CPO #1256, Asheville, NC 28804. Or, you can just leave work in the folder outside of the office door.

The *Banner* accepts letters and columns from any student or community member. Start submitting!!!