

MEDIA ISSUES: Incomplete Reporting Ruins Admirable Effort

Editor's Note: The Media Issues committee is a sub-committee of Carolina Association of Black Journalists (CABJ). The purpose of the committee is to probe the media for accurate and fair coverage of minority issues. The committee promises to look for and examine both good and bad aspects of Triangle-area newspaper coverage.

This year, The Daily Tar Heel has reflected a great effort to explore topics relating to the experiences of minorities. Their Oct. 16 article "Interracial Relationships Weather Slurs, Survive Despite Criticism from Both Sides," addressed an issue that has long deserved attention. Unfortunately, the

coverage of this topic was unbalanced, and neglected essential facts.

The image of black women portrayed in the article presented a major problem. The lead stated, "Some little stringy-haired, pale, skinny, jeans-wearing, T-shirt raggedy — why would you prefer her to a beautiful black sister? I shouldn't have to compete with a

white woman for my black man."

This inflammatory lead was attributed to no one. The fact that the reporter, Mara Lee, did not attribute it to anyone suggested that all black women feel this way. In a telephone interview, Lee explained that she heard the remark during a class discussion on interracial dating. Even though many black women do

voice similar opinions to the one expressed in Lee's lead paragraph, we wonder if the reporter could not have located white females who are also opposed to interracial dating.

The reporter, responding to these concerns, explained that a lot of people refused to explicitly say they

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The Readers Write In

DTH, Black Ink Stir Racial Tension

Editor's note: The authors, Anthony Doll and Tracy Kirincich, are president and vice president respectively of the Carolina Athletic Association.

To the editor:

In his letter to the editor ("Columnists' writing promotes white-bashing" on Oct. 31), Gus Keane clearly states that discrimination goes both ways. He points out that "white bashing is acceptable these days, but it gets old, real quick." Well, it's a little old guys!

Myron Pitts clearly spurred racial tension in his editorial "Trying to Stop an African Queen?" in *Black Ink* on Oct. 28, 1991. His failure to get all of the facts has started the typical chain reaction. Yes, it is unfortunate that a very capable and sincere person, Cherie Smith, was initially cut from the Homecoming interviews. But, as correctly noted in the *DTH* editorial "Wielding Race as a Weapon" on Nov. 1, 1991, the criteria for advancement is based on academic record, extra-curricular activities, honors and essay. If Ms. Smith could not correctly sell herself and her activities to the committee, then it is not the job of the Carolina Athletic Association to be aware of every office that every person holds. Plain fact: Ms. Smith's application was not pre-

sented to correctly describe the significance of her activities.

We feel sorry for those of you who misquoted sources or failed to get the facts. A sincere apology is owed directly to Cherie, who unfortunately got her name dragged into this mess. I (Tracy) met Cherie and felt a need to apologize to her for the sensationalism that student newspapers felt the need to create. Hopefully, the rest of the campus is not as insincere as the *DTH* and *Black Ink* have been. We do not know if Cherie felt as if her chances to win Homecoming Queen were reduced because of the past two queens which happen to be black, but I (Tracy) highly doubt it after talking with her after her crowning.

I (Tracy) have likewise met Laura Anderson, last year's queen, and can honestly say that she, like Cherie, was qualified. Both of these women, prior to their crowning, had to be directly exposed to ignorant people who only saw skin color or an opportunity to write a fiery article. The *DTH* editorial was correct to recognize the potency of the label "racist," but it does nothing to decrease the amount of tension; instead they increase it through poor journalism.

Finally, we feel the *DTH* and *Black Ink* should reconsider their information-gathering methods before pointing the finger at other organizations. Look at the positive aspects of the CAA and know the facts before calling the CAA "spineless" (*DTH*, Nov. 1). Reevaluate the CAA: we sponsored cross cultural night, co-sponsored the step

show with the Black Greek Council for which all of the profits went to the Sonja H. Stone Black Cultural Center, and have made a genuine effort to incorporate all minority groups in Homecoming. Having worked with Arnie Epps, Black Student Movement president, to prepare events during the NCAA basketball tournament, we can clearly state that there was sincerity and cooperation between Arnie and the CAA to benefit the University. Nothing has changed since then.

Our only hope for the future is that in the attempt to fill the pages of the paper, you do not hurt and malign innocent people and organizations.

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Wonderboy Needs an Opposing Viewpoint

To the editor:

I'm flipping through my very own, greatly-appreciated, copy of *Black Ink*, when, on the back page (Thank God), I spy that goofy-looking black (?) comic book character with the flat top/EMS combo (That's Eddie Munster Special, if you really want to know). Once again, I

have the pleasure of reading about how shallow and stereotypical all we "sista's" are, according to Wonderboy, the columnist from Hell. Adorning the top of the page, such catchy (and I use the term loosely) titles like, "Hmm...Yes, He Looks Good, but Can He Act?," or, my personal favorite, "Hmm...Do Dope Cars Denote Dollars?" can be found. Okay people, where in the world of science fiction do you get this boy? Or better yet, "Hmm...Yes, he's in print, but can he write?"

I don't mean to sound like a product of the establishment, but first of all, the boy's grammar has got to go! I mean really, I know he's trying to sound all straight out the hood and what not, but it sounds fake. And what's worse, I know where he (his alter-ego John McCann) comes from, and it's a far cry from Compton. Notwithstanding the fact that the brother is simply trying too hard, let's take a look at his major concerns.

In his first effort, "...Do Dope Cars Denote Dollars?" he speaks of the shallow mentality of all black women in their concerted effort to find a man who will pay them for their time and chauffeur them around in nice cars. Yeah. In his second attempt, "...Yes, He Looks Good, But Can He Act?" he criticizes black women for their unanimous opinion that Christopher Williams can act his a— off 'cause "He looks goood!" Hello? Reality check. Do high-priced ho's and loud, fat, black girls in movie theaters speak for all of us? I think not. And if Wonderboy speaks for black

males in general, I feel sorry for all those poor individuals who, like Wonderboy, appear to be getting dissed on a regular basis and feel the need to blame it on everything except their own inadequacies—or arrogance.

It must be nice for Mr. Boy to be able to write with no opposition whatsoever. Heaven forbid someone else should punch holes in his tissue paper theories., or worse yet, be a better writer. In these days of PC, why not print a female viewpoint, perhaps equally as offensive? For example: "Hmm...Does a Fat Bootie Bear a Brain?" or "Hmm...Does a Fat Bootie Equal Ecstasy?" Oh, I'm sorry, I know you guys look at the face too. Well, how about, "Yes, She Has Light Skin and Long Hair, but Can She Sing?" or "Do Light Skin, Long Hair and a Fat Bootie..." well, I could be here all day, but you get the idea, all those pertinent issues so important to our black men.

I certainly hope my views are not original, as I'm sure I'm not the only black woman who feels this way. At least consider this idea, lest you be considered, I hesitate to use the word, chauvinist.

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