



Why journalism lacks 'the heart'

KEIR BICKERSTAFFE
editorials editor

Charles Dickens once said of newspapers that "they are so filthy and bestial that no honest man would admit one into his house for a water closet doormat."

Now as I dedicate countless hours a week to this paper, I tend to disagree with Mr. Dickens—for the most part. But it is true that journalism can be seen as a particularly distressing vocation. It's a part of the job to give a story and its contents much more attention than the people it may be adversely affecting. Any other approach runs the risk of becoming journalistically soft and, in all reality, boring.

This week, for the first time in my life, I had to deal face-to-face with that reality. One small article on the opposite page brought me to it.

With the exception of one word, the letter written by Patty Delaney's Race and Ethnicity class was standard fare. Something no newspaper would have thought twice about including in their issue. But then came that line.

"We find Lucas's opinions to be... racist." Racist.

By the letter of law, there was nothing wrong with the letter Delaney's class wrote. Very carefully worded, it accused the *opinions* in the article of being racist, not Lucas himself. It succeeds in skirting clear of libel.

And quite frankly, it's the kind of thing *The Guilfordian* has been looking for for a while now. Our goal this semester is to be a more colorful and aggressive paper. To get students talking. To arouse sincere interest in what's going on in the world.

The problem on a personal level is, I know Adam fairly well. He's an outstanding writer who always makes deadlines with days to spare. And a very friendly, amusing person to go along with it.

Do I disagree with his politics? Definitely. Does he deserve the flak he gets for his strong stances? You bet. Were there errors in his article? Sure, which is as much my fault as his. Is Adam a racist?

Absolutely not.

What Delaney's class did not realize is *that* word, even if not meant as a personal attack, carries with it an ugly and powerful stigma. It's a very dangerous generalization to make, and should be used only with extreme caution. Caution that wasn't practiced in this case.

Eventually, as you can see, the journalistic side of me won out. It had to. The letter holds a viable opinion of a group of students, and it is our job to print that.

No matter how much the actual person in me disagrees.

Police disturbed 'hope' at K-Mart protest

JACK SHULER
staff writer

January 15th was a beautiful day. God was smiling on the earth. It seemed like there wasn't a cold spot in Greensboro. But I was wrong. Once my friends and I joined the demonstration at Super K-Mart I saw a frown, a cold dark cloud—two buses and 141 cops all decked out in riot gear. I began wondering why these intruders were here. Where were our guns, our stones, our Molotov cocktails?

I asked a Union member standing by me if he had carried his sawed-off shotgun today. He laughed and lifted a sign that read "Don't Shop at K-Mart" higher, higher towards heaven. I asked an elderly woman where her rocks were. All I got was a sweet "We shall overcome" and cool chills down my spine.

There was no violence on January 15th—only songs and hope. Hope that one day some laborers will earn what they deserve. Hope that what King dreamed may come true. Hope that corporate America will open wide its ears and listen to everyone regardless of their differences.

But this hope was dimmed in my heart. The blank stares of police officers waiting with billy clubs in hand can create that effect. This sight evoked images of children being clubbed by cops and sprayed with firehoses, the consequences of African-Americans struggling for their basic rights in the sixties.

The protest at Super K-Mart was a peaceful and planned demonstration. The organizers wanted some people to be arrested. Those who wished to be arrested were told not to protest when charged with trespass-

ing. Thus the likelihood of a serious event occurring was slim.

So why all the policemen? The need to be prepared for any problem is clear, and I am not criticizing the police officers themselves. I am simply questioning the necessity for so many cops protecting K-Mart shoppers on a holiday in honor of a man who championed peaceful protests. If anything, the city of Greensboro wasted some money and left citizens disturbed by the images the multitude of police officers evoked.

In the end no weapons surfaced amongst the protestors. Those who chose to be arrested did so peacefully. And the sun shone down a bit longer. Things are getting brighter—we just can't forget that Dr. King's peace will keep the sun shining forever.

Lure of fortune dangerous for Camby

ADAM LUCAS
staff writer

There are times when the love of sports can create a haze that can only be seen through under extraordinary circumstances.

It is just this type of circumstance that led me to sit down at the computer this week. I have been watching and playing sports as long as I can remember. They're an important part of my life, and one I would not want to do without.

However, they are not life and death. No matter how much it may seem that way when Carolina is down by three points in the last minute of an important ACC game, there is life outside basketball.

It is this sentiment that I sometimes wonder if other people share. Some of you may have heard of Marcus Camby. An All-American center at the University of Massachusetts, he is widely regarded as the best player in college basketball today. With that honor comes the certain future of a high draft

pick and millions of dollars as the reward.

I want Camby to walk away from those riches.

You see, before a recent game he collapsed and was close to unconscious for over than ten minutes. Continuing a disturbing trend started by Hank Gathers and Reggie Lewis, two stars who died on the basketball court, Camby has dismissed the incident as "nothing." His mother has gone so far as to suggest that he is simply "not eating enough."

That's not the case, and she should be the first to recognize it. Although I don't have first-hand experience, I imagine that it's easy to be blinded by the lure of letting the NBA make you financially secure for life. That's the trap Camby and his circle of friends are falling into.

They don't seem to realize that there is life after basketball. Which makes more sense: to play a game—a game—against the likes of St. Bonaventure and risk your life, or to use the free education from a fine in-

stitution which basketball has provided you and make something of yourself in the real world?

You might think I'm making too quick a judgement. However, I've seen the anguish caused by decisions much like the one Camby will soon be confronted with. Over Christmas break, a 16-year-old high school basketball player died on the court not thirty minutes from my house. Like Camby, Gathers and Lewis, he ignored the preliminary signs of his illness and continued to play.

Every night on the news I saw his mother wail about how she "wished she could bring him back." I saw his teammates serve as pallbearers at a funeral that came too soon. I saw a coach being forced to deal with the fact that he should not have let a 16-year-old with a heart condition be on the floor in the first place.

This is one time that I don't want to be able to say "I told you so." Come out in the real world with the rest of us, Marcus. I'll leave the light on for you.