

The last time I checked: I was still sane

BENJAMIN C. JOHNSON
staff writer

"Democracy is the art of running the circus from the monkey cage."
- H.L. Mencken

I've got to vote on Tuesday? You've got to be kidding me.

I've laid hands on a sample ballot thanks to our local newspaper/coupon distributor, the *Greensboro News & Record*, and it's not a pretty sight (I mean the ballot, not the newspaper).

There are fifty positions to be filled, three amendments to the NC constitution, and eight bond issues to approve. That's 61 selections I have to make on Tuesday. Yippee.

And, guess how many I have any real position on: Five. "Yippee" again.

I'll admit it: I'm basically unin-

formed about most of the candidates and issues (not all of 'em ... I'm not a complete idiot).

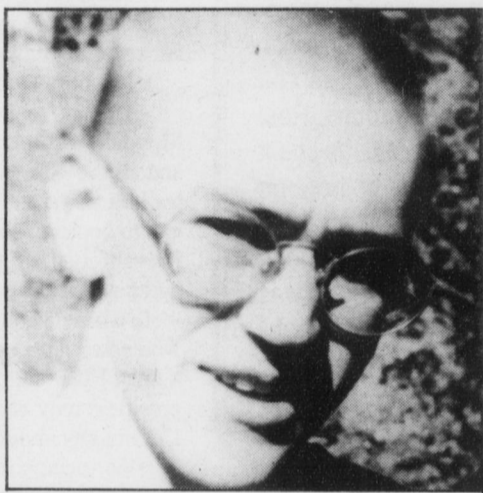
And, on Tuesday, a very large percentage of the voting public (if they bother to show up) will be making most of their selections fairly, mostly, or totally uninformed.

Why is this? We're all relatively sentient creatures, not suffering from dementia or recovering from a state-sanctioned lobotomy (wait ... that's just me).

Like everybody else (I hope), I read the paper, I watch the news ... and all I'm certain of is that Jesse Helms' granddaughter is positive

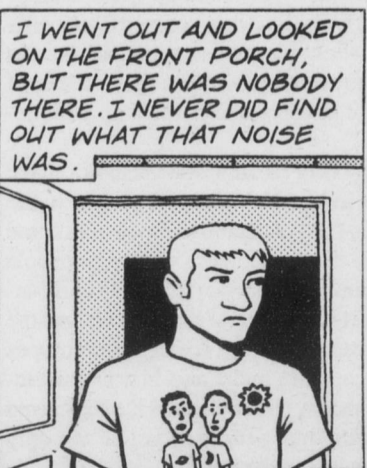
Jesse is a nice guy ... or maybe he's just not above bribing family members to appear in political ads (I

"I'm not Ben."



Becca Lee

My Noise by Rob Ullman



Hey all you groovy kids!

Looking for something to do on a Friday Night? Well, come out next Friday, November 8, to see:

The Slackers and The Jumpstarts

in our very own cafeteria!

As a Union event, it is free to Guilford College students with their I.D. and three dollars for non-students.

can respect that).

Even though this is print media, I will make the bold statement that television is probably the most influential yet least beneficial medium when political campaigns are concerned. Turn on the local news: you'll notice a smaller than usual number of annoyingly excited car dealership ads, and an amazingly large number of identical, bland, and fairly useless political commercials.

(Paraphrasing:) "Vote for me! The incumbent is soft on crime. My opponent has a shady financial past. Stop lying about my record! It has NOT been proven that I am the Antichrist."

You get my drift.

I am gladdened, though, by the fact that the N&R as well as other daily papers I read, after stealing them from people's driveways, have attempted to flesh out the "real" issues and the candidates' responses to them. Sure, these responses are simply written-down "sound bites," but at least we have their positions right in front of us.

So, before you and I vote, let's figure out, right now, what one issue is important to us (I really mean "later." I don't have that much room on the page.). Let's cut through all the silly, "non" issues—for example, school prayer, allowing homosexuals the right to marry ... yeah, these are earth-shattering issues ... give me a break.

There's a multi-trillion dollar debt ... let's stay focused.

Whether it's crime and punishment, taxes, the security of the federal social programs (anything that starts with Medi-, Social Security, unemployment insurance), education, yadda yadda yadda ... figure it out as best you can. Try to cut through the chatter and find out what the candidates are really saying about your issue. Then vote. For [insert deity of your choice]'s sake, vote.

Maybe democracy isn't that perfect. Most politicians are probably "crooked" to some degree and are simply tools for the tobacco lobby or the unions ... or even the Indonesians. But,

the last time I checked my all-encompassing, mammoth, worldwide history book, democracy sure beats anything else that's been tried ... hands down.

We can continue moaning and whining anew when the

new "bums" are voted in ... but always remember: we have no one to blame but ourselves, the voters.

Just vote.

Tune in for Guilforum "Aftermath: The day after the elections," Wednesday at 6pm on WQFS.

Benjamin C Johnson, news director of WQFS, appears courtesy of WQFS and Ir-ritable Records.

"Neither am I."



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