

## ACA's day in court

The government involves themselves in every aspect of our lives. Now, they have overstepped boundaries by enforcing the Affordable Care Act's contraception mandate, challenging our religious liberties.



**BY KELLI URESTI**  
STAFF WRITER

That is the focus of the Supreme Court case Hobby Lobby v. Sebelius.

Originally, Hobby Lobby qualified for exemption from the ACA because of its religious values. However, the government then proposed a new rule excluding companies like Hobby Lobby because the government did not consider them religious

employers.

The issue here is whether the mandate goes against the Constitution and affects religious freedom.

This is not exactly black and white; if it were, then there would not be as much controversy surrounding it. However, I think it is wrong for a government to force companies to provide health care going against their religious beliefs, whatever those beliefs may be.

One of the arguments against this case is that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act states "persons" are protected against laws threatening their religious beliefs. Though this side could argue against Hobby Lobby being considered "persons," they would ultimately be disproved.

"According to the Dictionary Act, unless context stated otherwise, 'person' ... include(s) corporations, companies, associations, firms, partnerships, societies and joint stock companies, as well as individuals," said senior and President of Guilford Republicans Will Moore.

Not only does this definition support Hobby Lobby, but so does Citizens United v. FEC, the case ruled that companies essentially are persons. This ruling protected freedom of speech for companies; because of this, I believe they also have religious freedoms.

"The RFRA (states) the government should not place any substantial burden on your religious freedom unless that is the least restrictive way to meet a compelling government interest," said chair and Associate Professor of Political Science Maria Rosales.

The fact that we even enacted the RFRA in 1993 is nonsense, because our religious liberties are already protected in the First Amendment of the Constitution. Since we have both the RFRA and the First Amendment, this contraceptive mandate now violates two legal documents.

However, the 10th circuit of the U.S. Court of Appeals ruled the government was not able to articulate a compelling interest for Hobby Lobby to pay close to \$475 million more in taxes every year.

"Companies feel coerced into embracing this act that goes against their religious beliefs," said Don Barefoot, CEO of Christian organization C12, in a phone interview with The Guilfordian. "(The government) has this weird view that corporations are these nameless, faceless bohemians that are all about profit (at the) expense of people."

Another issue in this case is that Hobby Lobby did provide contraceptives in their previous employee health care plan, but they did not intend to provide health care allowing for aborting fertilized eggs, which goes against their religious values.

"I think it is incredibly hard to argue that providing insurance that your employees may or may not choose to use to get contraception is a substantial burden on your religious freedom," said Rosales in opposition to Hobby Lobby's position. "If that is a substantial burden on your religious freedom, then so is paying a salary that they may or may not use to get contraception."

After evaluating that side of her argument, I concluded that once an employee earns that money, it belongs to the employee, not the employer. Employee-based health care benefits are different, because if the employee leaves the job, the benefits are terminated with the job.

I believe the Supreme Court will have to rule with Hobby Lobby in order to uphold our constitutional rights. This country was founded on freedoms, amongst them religious freedom. This is also a country that has been known for being a country of opportunity; people and businesses create that opportunity.

Corporations should be protected under the Constitution. Anything less than that would lead to distrust of the American government by the American people.

## Nearing the end: what's the plan now?

After a long and dreary winter, flowers are beginning to blossom, the weather is slowly changing, and seniors are beginning to think about life after graduating college.

This is the time of year when students begin to formulate a next-step plan once the celebrating of graduation has ended.

Whether it is having a few internships from the years past or even a polished resume, the fact that a student has some sort of preparation like an internship can help for the unplanned future.

Internships are a great tool for experiential learning in the specific field you

wish to go in. Most jobs require experience before accepting someone into their workforce, so having an internship can be the difference between getting a job and continuing the job search.

"I'm looking at internships abroad where I can get field experience in conservation or marine conservation," said senior biology and English double-major Makayla Esposito.

When asked about whether or not she had a plan for next fall, Esposito added, "I'm trying to focus on the things I love and the things that sound really exciting to me, instead of focusing on the big picture."

Alternately, instead of jumping into graduate school or a specific career, this might be the best time to study abroad, take some time off and travel, or even just enjoy not having the obligation of working.

Senior biology major Matthew Dunbar plans on earning a master's degree within the next few years but plans on taking some time off.

"Next year, I am going to be taking the year off working, probably not within my field, but also taking college courses at my local university to try and better my resume for graduate

school," said Dunbar.

His tentative plan for the summer is to move back home to Nova Scotia and work as a tree planter. Although his plan for the fall is not necessarily solidified, it is still a rough idea of the future.

If you do not seem to have a strong sense of direction for the future, there are plenty of online resources to use. Glassdoor is a popular website and phone application that has personal reviews of job interviews, so students can get a full grasp of what each job application and interview entails.

Some other websites you can use to better understand the job market are Indeed.com, Monster.com, as well as Careerbuilder.com.

The application process for jobs will most likely be quite frustrating coming right out of college because the job market will be saturated with recent graduates.

"Recognize (the job search) will take a while (because of saturation of the job market immediately after college)," said Assistant Director of Career Development Amanda Fontenot. "Be persistent, apply and set goals for yourself."

Even looking on young professional networks like the ones suggested above will help you generate a sense of what to look for and what to have on your resume if you choose to go directly into applying for jobs.

With regards to the future, it would not hurt to have a rough outline of what you would like to do immediately after graduating.

But remember: life is not a race.

"It's not about knowing," said Fontenot. "It's about getting in somewhere, starting something, and learning about yourself. (This) will help narrow down what you want to do."

If you have questions, contact Career Development. To make an appointment, call 336-316-2187 or go to the main level of King Hall located in room 110.

**BY CHASE CLAUSEN**  
STAFF WRITER

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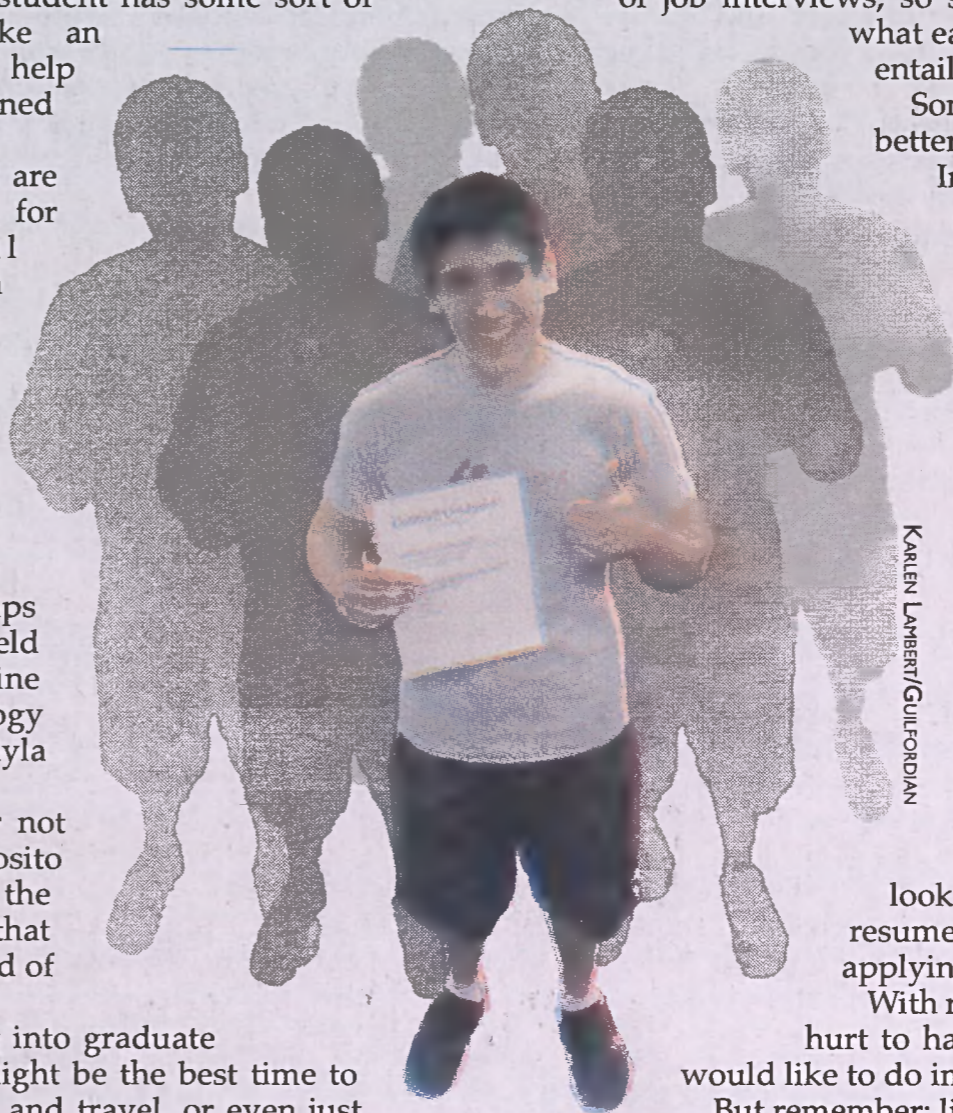
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KARLEN LAMBERT/GUILFORDIAN

## Russia's bold action forces US subtlety

### U.S. AS WORLD POLICE: WHY AMERICA SHOULD STAY FAR FROM THE CRIMEAN QUAGMIRE

On March 18, President Vladimir Putin welcomed Crimea back into the arms of its mother, Russia.

Russia's annexation of the Crimean peninsula, which violated international laws of acquiring territory, has sent shock waves throughout the Western world, leaving us with this question: how will the United States respond?

**BY MAILE MUNRO**  
STAFF WRITER

Public support for our allies in the region is all the U.S. can afford right now.

The current American government has taken the historically popular path of participation in other nations' conflicts. In a speech on March 27 in Belgium, President Obama called for a threat of stronger economic sanctions and a strengthening of military forces along the Ukrainian border.

But, is this really the best option?

The current sanctions target an elite few and are unlikely to hurt the population as a whole. Further economic sanctions, such as a

transnational embargo on Russian energy sources, would do little now to make a significant impact.

There are evident Russian weaknesses that the U.S. could take advantage of.

"We (should) start selling our oil and gas to (Russia's) clients," said Robert Duncan, visiting assistant professor of political science.

Considering Russia sells one third of its energy exports to Europe, this could be on the right track. The impact of economic sanctions is questionable.

"Putin has a time limit on his regime," said Matthew Carter, junior and political science major. "The sanction will hurt when the next leader is in power; that is when the sanctions will start to take effect."

So, if military action is ill advised and economic sanctions are unlikely to make an immediate difference, what are we left with?

Staying out of it. The U.S. can't get itself involved in an expensive overseas conflict again.

"(Considering the notion of) the U.S. being the world police, I think we should step away from that," said senior and political science major Patrick Withrow. "We definitely should not put any military pressure on Russia."

Bullying fellow nations into democracy and unwanted wars has certainly not benefitted the U.S. in the past.

"It's up to Crimeans to decide what they want to be a part of," said Assistant Professor of Economics Natalya Shelkova, who still holds

Russian citizenship after moving to the States 10 years ago. "They have the right to make an informed decision."

There is speculation as to what if any American interests are in Crimea. Economically and militarily speaking, there is little for us there.

"From a principled perspective, it is a problem we have to care about," said Rob Bobroff, interim chair of the history department at Wake Forest University, in an interview with The Guilfordian. "Not that Crimea is essential to our interests — it's not vital to us in any way — but the principle of national sovereignty is important to us and to the European Union and its members."

Our interests are political. They are based on American morals and we have had a long and unsuccessful history of exporting those ideals.

"The U.S. has an investment in security in the situation," said senior and political science major Avery Hill. "Ukraine is the only democratic buffer between Russia and Europe."

The feelings from the Cold War seem to linger as suspicions arise again. But, this is not the Cold War; we are no longer fighting a communist, autocratic regime, and we can no longer respond with imperial heavy-handedness.

"The Cold War is over, and we don't have to worry about detente," said Withrow.

There is no need to continue domineering international policies which alienate us from much of the world. This time, America can sit on the bench.

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Natalya Shelkova, assistant professor of economics