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The Daily Tar Heel

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Game over

Just when a turbulent year is beginning to wind down, another professor has fallen victim to the University's flawed tenure review process.

Assistant math Professor Idris Assani filed a lawsuit May 21 against the University in U.S. District Court. He charges he was discriminated against in his tenure review process because of his race and nationality. Assani, who is black and was born in Niger, says he was expected to meet a higher standard to receive tenure than others in his department.

Assani is seeking \$2.6 million and an injunction to order the University to promote him to associate professor, a position that comes with tenure.

Assani's complex battle with tenure began 2 1/2 years ago when he was denied promotion to associate professor in the math department. All along, he has avoided publicity and played within the rules of the tenure game. First, he wrote a 13-page letter of complaint to Stephen Birdsall, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and waited patiently for a response. University policy requires that a professor wait for a response from his dean before his case can be heard by the Faculty Hearings Committee.

But Assani discovered that to file charges against the University with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, he had to do so within 180 days of the date he was denied promotion. He received Birdsall's response about 10 days before the deadline.

Assani went ahead and filed a charge with the EEOC, but the commission found insufficient evidence to conclude he was discriminated against because of race. Assani was left with another short deadline. He had 90 days to file a case in federal court. So he did.

Whether Assani deserves tenure or not, one thing is certain: the system has failed him. And, like the many other tenure cases this past year, Birdsall is at the heart of the problem.

Why did it take Birdsall 170 days — almost half a year — simply to respond to Assani's complaint? As dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, it is Birdsall's responsibility to look into such matters expeditiously and seriously.

Assani is but another casualty in the University tenure game. Five other professors, including four who have won University teaching awards, have contested their tenure denials in the past year. Two have had their denials overturned, and two still are appealing their cases.

Enough is enough. The University's tenure review process has been long overdue for a complete overhaul. It is a flawed process, and it needs to be changed — yesterday.

Let's stop playing games and come up with a process that is more fair. Let's do it before any more professors join the growing-list of casualties.

No traveling

It's like building a better mousetrap. There are always new ways to do it, but it always can be better.

Theories about how to improve student basketball-ticket distribution change every year, but there's never a solution to the problem — it's inefficient.

Carolina Athletic Association President Daniel Thornton has come up with the newest solution to long lines and drunken brawls.

Instead of having students wait in line all night to get numbers at 4 a.m., the CAA will begin distributing tickets at 9 a.m. That eliminates the 4 p.m. return to the Smith Center to stand in another line with a hangover as the CAA distributes tickets.

The plan might not be a great one, but it's an improvement.

Students will still must camp out on the freezing

cold asphalt of the Smith Center parking lot to be able to see the Magic Trio — otherwise known as the best recruiting class of the year. But at least it's not a weekend commitment, and Thornton promises to try not to schedule ticket distributions at the same time as major concerts at the Smith Center.

The CAA is trying its best to serve the students, but it's up to the students to help make the system work.

Ticket distribution always is marked by obnoxious, drunken wisecracks who cut in line or complain to the CAA all night.

Following the CAA's rules and making constructive comments will make the process smoother and more pleasant for everybody.

True, there should be a more civilized way to distribute tickets, but at least we're not Dook.

Thanks, Ma Bell

Kudos to Southern Bell for answering the call of duty.

About 4,300 of their customers in northeast Chapel Hill lost phone service last week when workers installing a sewer line severed two phone cables and damaged another.

Southern Bell employees worked diligently for 70 straight hours reconnecting the lines to bring service back to their customers. By noon Friday, the work was done, and Southern Bell began assessing its losses. While the phones were down, Southern Bell set up phone banks at Eastgate Shopping Center and Village Plaza so that customers could make free, non-emergency calls. Customers will not be billed for the time they did not receive phone service.

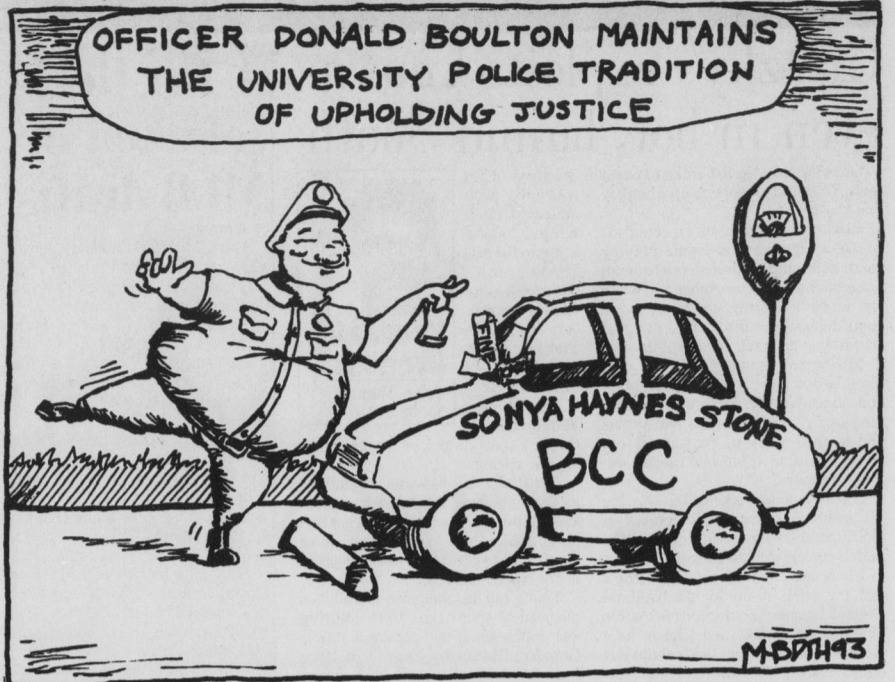
Southern Bell did all it could as quickly as possible to restore phone service to its customers. The phone outage occurred through no fault of the phone com-

pany. The company has determined that workers of Bryant Electrical Co., the private company hired by the Orange Water and Sewer Authority to install a sewer line, was responsible for cutting the cables. Bryant will be charged for the damages.

Others also came to the rescue. Orange County Emergency Management set up emergency access points where residents without phone service could reach fire, police and ambulatory services if necessary. Chapel Hill police and fire departments increased patrol in areas that lost service.

Because the cause of the phone outage was well-publicized, most Southern Bell customers were able to cope without their phone service.

The phone outage was a reminder of how much modern society has come to depend on technological services. Thanks to Southern Bell's hard work it was only a short reminder.



Evolution of college student: waif to veteran

Well, kids, the first wave of C-TOPS has hit us like the Allies storming the beaches of Normandy, destroying our way of life and just being a major nuisance. As I stare in disbelief at a pack of fraternity embryos looking blankly like mental patients on a Thorazine fun-ride, gaping open-mouthed at the hairstyles of the Pepper's crowd, it causes me to pause and reflect upon the evolution of the college student, from a wide-eyed waif stumbling around campus with a tablecloth-sized map to a jaded and battle-scarred veteran of the Hill.

Freshman Year: As freshmen get their feet wet in the collegiate deep-end of academia, trying to negotiate the labyrinth that is Venable Hall and accustom their stomachs to the Lenoir Dining Hall "cuisine," they explore the unlimited freedom of life away from the folks. This normally consists of packing themselves into the Ellis Island crowds of a Granville Towers crawl and consuming enough grain alcohol to kill a middle-aged man.

Because they're usually denied access to the bar scene, the liquoring of these kids mainly comes from bribing upperclassmen to get them a fifth of distilled beverage and then holing up in a dorm room with a few friends, flubbing the rules to three-man and keeping an eye out for the resident assistant.

Those with the yearning always can cruise the frat scene during Rush, where they'd find enough liquid to float the Titanic. I myself pushed the outer limits of the envelope at a "War on Brain Cells" held by one of these fine institutions. That little skirmish with sobriety resulted in a new-found familiarity with my porcelain pal as well as a nagging three-day hangover. The joys of youth.

Sophomore Year: "Sophomore" literally means "wise fool." The adjective "sophomoric" means "intellectually pretentious and conceited but immature and ill-informed." Sad but frighteningly

true. Sophomores feel like old pros. They've discovered that the fry cook in Lenoir cares as much about their academic records as their General College "advisers" do; that if the Student Health Service can't nail it down to strep or mono, they never will cure what you've got; and that the average student inevitably will owe rights to his or her first-born to the University Cashier.

In reality, they haven't learned squat. Academically, they've exhausted the realm of "Introduction to..." courses and finally have whittled that choice of major down to six or seven. Socially, they've abandoned the notion of dating Miss Right and latched onto the idea of hooking up with Miss Right Now.

Though they may seem knowledgeable, they still are going through the motions of the freshman alcohol mindset, target-vomiting from the eighth floor of Hinton James after shot-gunning a 12-pack of "The Beast" or trying to funnel their body weight in Budweiser. Sure, they think they've got this college thing down pat because they have realized finally that a case of Olympia is a lot better bang-for-your-buck than six shiny bottles of Miller Lite. Oh, if they only knew.

Junior Year: Suddenly college is half-over. Half of their favorite hangouts have closed, moved or gone up in an inferno like the flames of hell. (And don't try to tell me that the neon nightmare of Miami Subs has replaced the beauty of Hector's in any way or that a crappy Pizza Inn is going to make up for losing The Parlor, either.) Juniors wind up roaming around East



Kevin Kruse
Public Embarrassment

Franklin Street, cursing under their breath like reminiscent alumni tailgating by the rubble that once was home to Top of the Hill's 40-ounce Budweisers, paying their last respects to the matronly memory of Big Bertha, buried deep under the mini-mall eyecore that now occupies Fowler's rightful throne.

This is the year when the "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not gonna take it anymore" attitude kicks into high gear. They're sick of the know-it-all sophomores ridiculing the freshmen because both groups look the same to them. They eye the seniors with the same look they give their Barcolouring fathers — "Someday, that's gonna be me."

Senior Year: In this whole year of alcohol legality, seniors no longer have time for it. The joys of blurry late-nights are overshadowed by the looming weight of internships, LSATs or GREs and (shudder) life on their own. (Well, not completely overshadowed, but hey, run with me on this one.) Those who spent their academic career knee-deep in a Blue Cup make a last-ditch effort to pull up that GPA like they're the hero in a disaster flick attempting to yank that plummeting 747 out of its nose dive into the Great Plains.

Suddenly, "career" and "future" are words that paralyze them like toddlers wetting their Underoos over a "Nightmare on Elm Street" promo. Sure, a knowledge of beers from around the globe is handy for party chit-chat, but not many people will pay you six figures for that. Unless you're a U.S. senator, of course.

That's where I'm at now. Because I just turned 21 on June 8, I've still got a little alcohol experimentation to work out. Other than that, my life seems to be devoted to paychecks and a looming senior thesis. It's gonna be a real hoot of a summer. Yeehah.

Kevin Kruse is a senior history major from Nashville, Tenn.

Eighth-grade pencil incident scars kid for life

As if I didn't know it already, people love controversy. I've gotten more congratulations on being blasted in a letter to the editor than on any of the three columns I've written so far. I'm not too sure what that says about my columns, but I've got people talking then I'm doing something right.

Judging from the response, my words have drawn sour blood from some of my readers, so I think it's time I get this off my chest. My cynicism is not just a bad attitude or narrow-mindedness. My anger and opinions are rooted much deeper in my childhood. Back when I found for the first time that a pencil could be a powerful weapon. Literally.

In the fragile days of eighth grade gym class, students can be classified in four groups. There are the girls who screamed when the ball came at them, who also happened to be the ones the boys liked. There were the girls who actually played volleyball, who frankly never were talked to by any of the boys.

There were the athletic types like myself, who arrogantly basked in our overzealous mediocrity, and finally, there was Dirk's type.

Everyone knows a Dirk. Dirk was always too cool to dress out, so every day he would take off his Members Only jacket, roll up the sleeves on his Motley Cru 'T-shirt and fake it in order to keep up his image.

Needless to say, Dirk and I didn't get along so well.

Guys don't grow chest hair until they are 16 or so, but eighth grade gym class is when the women get separated from the girls, and in my class there was the

love of my life. But just to respect her anonymity, I'll call her Luscious Linda. Dirk is his actual name, but I hate the bastard.

Luscious Linda wasn't very good at volleyball, but we all wanted her on our team anyway, and the louder she squealed, the harder we tried to make her think we were good. She just happened to be wearing my sweet gold chain that faithful day when my life was changed forever. That day when my disposition was shaken, and fate's cruel whisper told me to forget about controlling my own destiny 'cause it ain't happenin'.

It was a typical game. Dirk and I pounded each other a few times, desperately trying to get to the ball. Ladies, if you remember that guy who would knock you down just to get the ball, well, that was me.

Anyway, after Dirk and I had hit each other a few times, it happened. Dirk always kept a few pencils in his back pocket just in case he had to forge a permission slip or hall pass or something, and in one faithful leap, he wrote my reputation a one-way pass to uncool-guy detention.

As I came down, a sharp pain shot through my left side like a bullet. My eyes teared up, my mouth pasted up,



Buddy Harris
Eclectic Drip

and I tried to get the courage to touch my wound. My hand reluctantly followed the back of my leg until, sure enough, it found a pencil lodged about an inch into my left cheek.

Could no one help. "I knew you should've dressed out," I screamed at Dirk. I looked around helplessly, futilely for sympathy. We all know that in eighth grade, the amount of sympathy you get is inversely proportionate to the amount of acne on your face, so I can't say that I actually expected any.

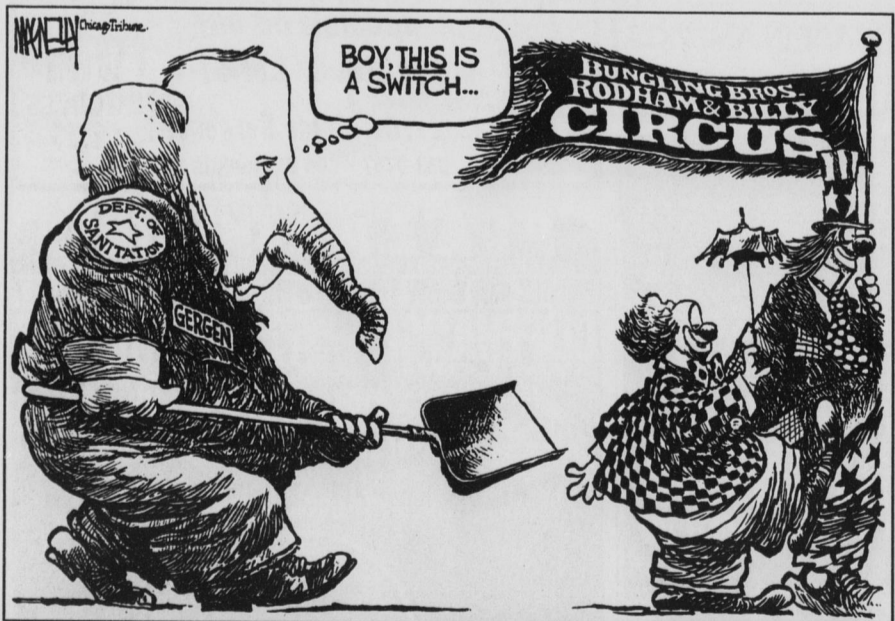
"Buddy got a pencil in his asshole. Buddy got a pencil in his asshole," Dirk yelled as he fell to the ground laughing. "It's not in my asshole," I cried. "Shut up. I'm gonna kill you as soon as I pull this pencil out of my ass." I'm sorry if I'm rambling, it's taken me eight years to muster up the strength to talk about this.

I walked into the locker room with my only true friend in the class, Rick. "Rick," I said, "you've got to do me a favor. You've got to pull this pencil out of my butt."

"Hell no," Rick answered loudly. In my pitiful state, I looked at Rick passionately. "OK, OK, but you've got to do me one favor. Tell Luscious Linda that it didn't go in my butt hole."

Whether that No. 2 went in my butt hole or not — and it didn't — as I lay in the backseat of my Dad's Impala, I realized I was destined to be on fate's bad side. And to be honest, I'm still pissed.

Buddy Harris is a senior journalism and psychology major from Charlotte.



The Daily Tar Heel

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READERS' FORUM

No evidence shows that Saunders was in KKK

To the editor:
There were several statements in the June 3 column by Charles Jones ("BCC an equitable reparation for slavery past") that I found interesting. One in particular, however, is of urgent concern to me. As editor of the "Dictionary of North Carolina Biography," to be published by the University Press, I am in the midst of reading proofs for volume five,

which includes the letters P through S. Jones appears to have access to information that historians of the state have been seeking for nearly a century, and if he can share his primary source with me I would like to include it in the sketch of William L. Saunders. Historians and biographers have long written that Saunders may have been a member of the Ku Klux Klan. He said that he was not a member, and a congressional investigation could not prove that he was. So far as I know, evidence that he

was an actual member still has not been found. Nevertheless, Jones describes Saunders as "a militant leader of the Ku Klux Klan during Reconstruction." If he can share with me contemporary evidence to that effect I would certainly like to include it in the biography of Saunders and settle the question permanently.

WILLIAM S. POWELL
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