

The Daily Tar Heel

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Detrimental Advertising

After all the debate, negotiations, sit-ins and closed Board of Trustees meetings, the fight for a free-standing Sonja H. Stone Black Cultural Center might be hitting the University where it hurts — its pockets.

Former BOT member John Pope took out an advertisement in the Sunday edition of The Chapel Hill News imploring private contributors — including alumni, local residents, parents and students — to stop giving their money to the University because the money might be used to construct the BCC.

As a former representative and trustee member of the University, Pope should not be calling for a boycott of private donations to the school. It hurts the very University he represented from 1985 to 1993.

While serving on the BOT, Pope frequently voiced his objections to the BCC, saying public money should not be used to construct a building on public land and calling the BCC a throwback to the days of "separate but equal."

But the ad, which certainly is within Pope's right to exercise free speech, is detrimental to the entire University's fund-raising efforts — not just to the BCC effort.

It is ludicrous for Pope to ask people to stop contributing to the University and regrettable

that the University should suffer all around because of one issue.

If BCC fund raising becomes part of the Bicentennial Campaign, only \$7 million of the revised \$327-million total would go to fund the BCC.

Private contributors who make donations through the University's development office have the option to designate their money to whatever department or fund-raising campaign they wish. They also may make an unrestricted donation to the Chancellor's University Fund, which is spent at Chancellor Paul Hardin's discretion.

The BCC is a separate option given to alumni and others when money is pledged to the University. It is up to the individual — not a random panel of University administrators — to decide where the money is needed or used.

"If they don't want to listen, your money talks!" Pope's ad states. This might be true, but the trustees already have made the decision to construct the BCC on the Coker Woods site.

Money might talk, but everyone — including the Bicentennial Campaign, academic departments and students — would suffer if private contributors to the University bow to the rhetoric of one politically charged advertisement directed at one politically charged debate.

A New Note from Home

St. Augustine's College in Raleigh has taken a bold, brave and potentially unpopular stance by requiring applicants to submit a police profile from their hometown police.

However unpopular this stance may be, it is an understandable reaction to the increasing violence on the St. Augustine's campus. Last year, one student was murdered and another was charged with murder. St. Augustine's administrators needed to take action.

St. Augustine's should be applauded for taking a step to prevent future students from committing violence. But its administration should make sure the policy does not produce unintended results, such as losing good students.

Students who have had previous scrapes with the law but now are completely law-abiding citizens and are academically prepared might be discouraged from applying to St. Augustine's.

There is also the chance that administrators

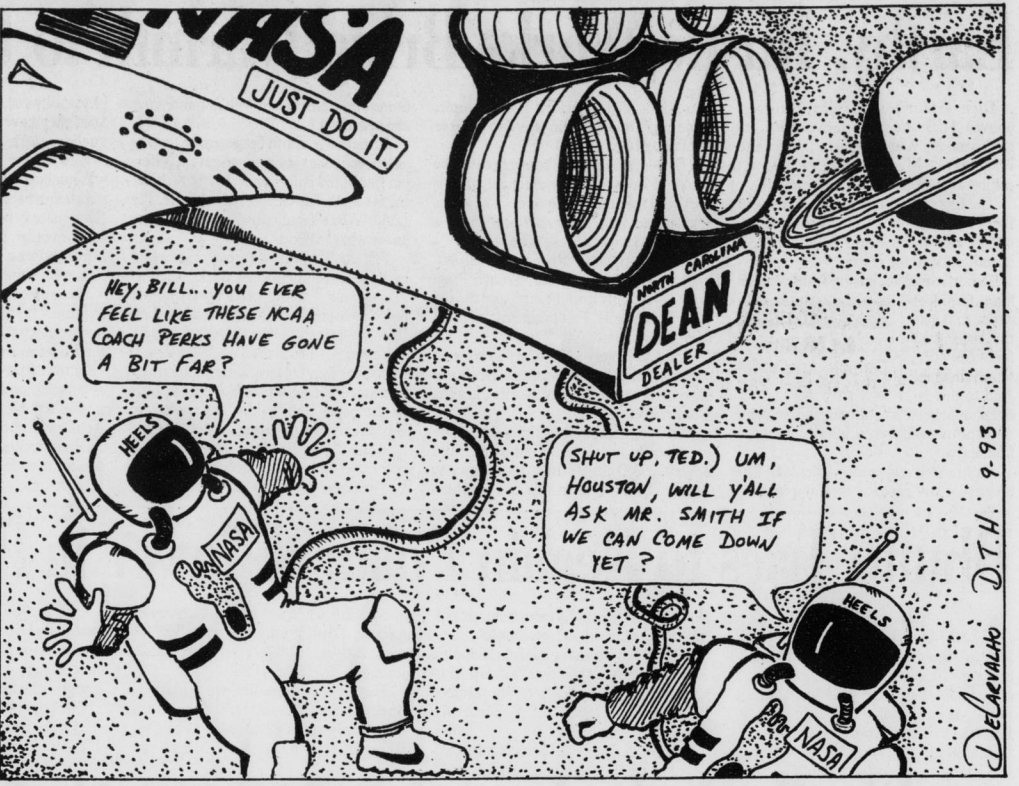
could use the police profile information inappropriately. It would be unfair for administrators to use the information to "weed out" all applicants who have criminal records.

Some students with juvenile criminal records end up straightening themselves out by the time they enter college. It would be unjust and unfortunate if the administration blindly denied them a chance to attend St. Augustine's.

The administrators now should take the next step forward by making sure they use the police profiles fairly in their admissions process.

In light of the incidence of violence among St. Augustine's students, requiring the police profile is reasonable and justified. But the administration should follow through to ensure fairness to all applicants.

It's sad that St. Augustine's administrators feel the need to request a police profile from each of its applicants. It's sad but necessary.



Washington Gridlock Causes Leadership Breakdown

President Bill Clinton recently stood up at a conference and slammed Congress for delay and gridlock in passing his legislative program. A heckler in the crowd — one William Kelly — shouted: "How can you talk about gridlock... when the Democrats have control of Congress? Why don't you show some leadership?" Clinton, who is becoming increasingly thin-skinned these days, turned on Kelly and scolded him for his ill manners.

Nevertheless, Kelly had a point. One of Clinton's main campaign platforms last year was that a Democratic president would break the gridlock with the Democrat-controlled Congress. And yet the gridlock still continues.

Part of the problem may well be what Kelly rudely pointed his finger at — the lack of leadership from Bill Clinton. But a lot of it is just that Congress is very powerful — perhaps inherently and constitutionally the most powerful of the institutes of American democracy.

On top of that, this Congress is especially strong. It is one of the peculiarities of U.S. politics (and by no means necessarily a bad one) that in the last four decades, a Democrat has been president for only about 12 years, yet the Democrats have controlled the House of Representatives for the entire period and dominated the entire Congress for almost as long.

In that time, the Democrats in Congress have grown into an extremely strong institution, trading patronage for allegiance and exploiting the advantage of incumbency to become a seemingly immovable presence.

Congress also has evidently become so accustomed to doing its own thing that it is virtually indifferent to the political affiliation of the person in the White House.

Hence Clinton's rude shock at the start of his

presidency, when Congress nonchalantly tossed out his cherished economic stimulus package and forced him to invoke Vice President Al Gore's casting vote to save his budget from defeat in the Senate — a setback that might have signed the death certificate of his presidency.

Many of those who voted against Clinton were chairmen or deputy chairmen of congressional committees. The Democratic leadership made a half-hearted attempt to discipline them by divesting them of their positions. But so begrudging was Congress of its own power that the attempted retribution just fizzled out.

Since then, Clinton has backed down from a host of other promises at the first sign of congressional opposition — his nomination of Lani Guinier as civil rights chief, his broad-based energy tax, his pledges to accommodate Haitian refugees and to lift the ban on gays in the military. And so Congress has prevailed time and time again.

After these early setbacks, Clinton has, on the advice of his new spin doctor David Gergen, adopted a hands-off approach to the job, setting broader goals and leaving the nitty gritty to congressional Democrats to thrash out.

That ploy has been rather successful in that it has shielded him from the fallout that accompanies the minor defeats compromise brings. But the other effect is once again to cede more power

to Congress, thereby reinforcing the idea that it, and not the president, really governs the country.

Moreover, the new strategy probably will not convince Kelly that Clinton now is demonstrating leadership qualities. Or if he is, it must surely be leadership of the kind that Tolstoy admired so in the Russian General Kutuzov, who fathomed the direction of events and then went with the tide.

Clinton also has said that if he compromises more, it is because he attempts more. In the end, by aiming higher he achieves more, even with compromises. There is undoubtedly much in that. Yet Clinton's problem is the huge chasm between his ambitions and his means of attaining them.

Hence the growing perception that Clinton either is insincere or easily thwarted, but clearly not a man of conviction. Of course, incidents such as Travelgate and a \$200 runway haircut hardly helped his overall image either. Judging by his static approval rating, it would seem that people do not count his recent achievements; they merely look for their notion of a strong leader, and do not find it.

Certainly not an auspicious beginning for the president — I wonder if Clinton emitted a Homer Simpson-esque "Dowhhh" when aides tactfully told him that D.C. shops are teeming with T-shirts exclaiming: "Don't blame me. I voted for Bush," and "When I was young I was told that in America anyone can become president. Now I'm beginning to believe it!"

And Congress? It probably views the prospect of a new inhabitant in the house down the street with some indifference.

Alan Hartdegen is a junior economics and political science major from Johannesburg, South Africa.



ALAN HARTDEGEN
OUT OF AFRICA



Gays, Lesbians Not Intended To Have or Raise Children

TO THE EDITOR:
Has anybody out there noticed that nature/God creates no gay parents? There are no gay parents. Gays do not have children. Heterosexuals have children. They are the blessings of heterosexual marriages.

Children were not intended to be raised by either two women or two men. It is not natural. Couples with children should either stay together until the children are on their own, or, if they separate or divorce, they should not engage in immoral behavior and certainly not in the same home where the innocent child must live. Surely adults can put aside their sexual appetites on hold that long. Abstinence has never killed anybody.

I am glad to hear that Kay Bottoms has custody of her grandchild ("Va. Judge Rules Lesbian Mother Unfit, Immoral," Sept. 9).

Why? Because hopefully she is old enough to be patient and understanding of the child's needs, and she has had time to wake up to the realities of life and know what is really of permanent value.

Experimentation of lifestyle with sexual deviations inclusive of homosexuality, long touted by trendy psychotherapists, may provide brief thrills and plenty of filth and germs and diseases and new lovers.

This sexual experimentation also may provide revenge against dictatorial parents. But such loss of self-control does not provide peace of mind and contentment.

It does not show any respect for the values of our parents and grandparents. I have said that one of the really super ways for rebellious youth to hurt their parents would surely be to adopt a homosexual lifestyle.

"Children raised in (homosexual) homes have not proven to be different from any other children" ("The Rights of Gay Parents," Sept. 9). Ha! It will be about 20 more years before the truth or falsehood of that statement comes to light.

Children do copy what they observe. That is why my grandchild says "Thank you" in English, but the Japanese children say it in Japanese.

The editor also probably thinks that a one-parent home doesn't affect a child adversely either. Well, think again! A father missing from a home is like a vacuum in a child's brain forever.

Women have a real nerve to think that a child's father doesn't happen to matter or be needed — very trendy notion but it isn't so. Time will show this.

A child shouldn't be forced to live with his mother just because she is a lesbian either.

I'm one of those out here in reader-land who is fed up with hearing how great those "way-out-

READERS' FORUM

The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments and criticism. Letters to the editor should be no longer than 400 words and must be typed, double-spaced, dated and signed by no more than two people. Students should include their year, major and phone number. Faculty and staff should include their title, department and phone number. The DTH reserves the right to edit letters for space, clarity and vulgarity.

in-left-field" groups (minorities, homosexuals, et cetera, ad nauseum) are, as though any resemblance to the law and order and decency of my childhood (when crime was almost unheard of in my hometown) ought to be apologized for.

I don't think it is any coincidence that way-out lifestyles and crime are both on the rise simultaneously.

Self-control is the only route to real freedom and decent living.

Lorraine Scott Smith
CHAPEL HILL

Columnist Rehashes Rhetoric Of National Rifle Association

TO THE EDITOR:
In his column, "Handgun Ban Would Not End Crime or Violence" (Sept. 2), Alan Martin rehashes the tired rhetoric of the National Rifle Association.

"If handguns are illegal," the NRA and its flunkies declare, "only criminals will have handguns."

Do knee-jerk opponents of handgun control ever stop to consider where criminals obtain handguns?

Some criminals purchase handguns legally from the local gun shop. Others steal them from law-abiding citizens who own handguns. Many purchase them on the black market.

Handguns enter the black market either through theft or because someone who legally purchased a weapon sells it onto the black market.

One recently broken-up Raleigh gun ring, for example, made legal purchases of more than 1,000 weapons, which they in turn sold illegally.

In short, virtually every handgun used in the commission of a crime enters society through a legal purchase.

Every handgun used to commit a crime is legally manufactured. (It is the arms manufac-

turers, by the way, that are the real force behind the NRA.)

Would a national ban on the manufacture, sale and possession of handguns get every gun out of the hand of every criminal? Of course not.

Would it make handguns more difficult to obtain and dramatically reduce the numbers of handguns in the possession of criminals? Of course.

Guns are not like drugs. They cannot be manufactured in someone's basement.

Ironically, the tragic murder of Kristin Lodge-Miller, which Martin believes illustrates the futility of gun control, is a perfect example of its necessity. Anthony Simpson stole the murder weapon from a relative who owned and obtained it legally.

If Simpson had not had such easy access to a handgun, would Kristin Lodge-Miller be dead today?

It is true that a local handgun ban would be of limited effectiveness.

If, however, a local ban helps us move toward the national ban that we desperately need, then I am for it.

One final note to Alan Martin: no one is proposing to take away your shotgun. We would all be better off, in fact, if every handgun owner traded in his or her weapon for a shotgun.

The only advantage of a handgun is that it is easily concealed and easily transported. These are advantages of use only to those with nefarious motives.

Joel Sireps
GRADUATE STUDENT HISTORY

DTH Should Place Crossword At Bottom of Page Every Day

TO THE EDITOR:
We have noticed that the location of the crossword puzzle has been floating longitudinally on its customary page.

Many of us depend on the crossword puzzle to tide us through some of the, shall we say, slower lectures.

Doing the crossword during class without detection is an art. It is an art that is facilitated when the crossword is at the bottom of the page. The name of the game is subtlety.

We would like to request that the crossword (and Calvin, too, of course) be anchored at the bottom of the page.

To us it is an essential component of The Daily Tar Heel.

Anupama Mohanram
SECOND YEAR MEDICINE

Gregory Levitin
SECOND YEAR MEDICINE

THE DAILY TAR HEEL
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The editorials are approved by the editor, which is composed of the editor, editorial page editor and five editorial writers.
The Daily Tar Heel is published by the DTH Publishing Corp., a non-profit North Carolina corporation, Monday-Friday, according to the University calendar.
Callers with questions about billing or display advertising should dial 962-1163 between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. Classified ads can be reached at 962-0252. Editorial questions should be directed to 962-0245/0246.
Office: Suite 104 Carolina Union
U.S. Mail address: P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-3257
ISSN #0197-9436
Campus mail address: CB8 5210 Box 49, Carolina Union