

A somewhat modest proposal

Comptroller O'Neal?

On Mike O'Neal, the book is now closed.

— Marcus Williams
Student Body President
October, 1974

When Mike O'Neal failed in his bid to remain as president of the Residence Hall Association last fall, some political prognosticators, including the then student body president, predicted that O'Neal would fade from Carolina's political scene.

That prediction fell flat on its face when O'Neal emerged last February as the prime mover of Bill Bates' presidential campaign, a role O'Neal downplayed in the *Avery Advocate* endorsement suit before last spring's run-off election but which he has openly explained in detail in yesterday's *DTH*.

O'Neal surmounted a strong stand against his appointment as student body treasurer in the spring to win his post in a Student Supreme Court decision of some controversy. He lost that post in the same forum by a similarly controversial decision.

Only this time members of the Campus Governing Council have sought to legislate away most of the impact of the Student Supreme Court's decision.

The Student Supreme Court ruled that the student body president has the power to dismiss the student body treasurer in the case of the long-standing Bates-O'Neal contest because impeachment was not warranted, because the treasurer is a member of the executive branch subordinate to the president and because of the chronological order of the initial appointment process.

The response of the O'Neal bloc on the Campus Governing Council has been to introduce a bill through the CGC Rules and Judiciary Committee to cut the statutory authority of the student body treasurer and to relocate that authority in a CGC-controlled "student body comptroller."

Two of O'Neal's staunchest supporters, Dick Pope (who circulated a letter urging O'Neal to resist Bates' dismissal) and Ben Steelman (a co-plaintiff in O'Neal's reinstatement suit), are also staunch supporters of the treasurer/comptroller bill. The bill would make the constitutional office of treasurer merely an administrative post handling Suite C financial affairs, while the comptroller would handle all other organizations' budgets and general

supervision of treasury law.

The bill's supporters claim the comptroller would be apolitical since he or she would not be permitted to hold any other post in Student Government or in Student Government-funded organizations. That stipulation can now be applied by the CGC to the office of treasurer without any statutory provision since the CGC must approve any treasurer nominee and can establish its own criteria for approval. (No such potential conflicts of interest have been alleged against any of the recent student body treasurers.)

Indeed, the bill's selection and dismissal provisions seem to insure that the comptroller will be the creature of one small part of the CGC.

The CGC would have complete control over the selection and dismissal of the treasurer/comptroller. Any dismissal action would have to be approved by the Rules and Judiciary Committee, a handy device to insure that the treasurer/comptroller is responsible only to a small subsection of the CGC, not "to all entities and facets of Student Government equally, and more importantly, to all students" as the preface to the treasurer/comptroller bill states.

In question at this point is: whom will the CGC appoint to the newly created post?

Mike O'Neal? If the Campus Governing Council is serious about restoring its role in the dismissal of the student body treasurer, it ought to address the matter directly and not play political games with dubious schemes to substitute a "comptroller" and circumvent the intent of a court ruling. A constitutional amendment clarifying dismissal power ought to be framed and presented in a referendum to determine the will of the students as it relates to this constitutional issue.

If Mike O'Neal is serious in continuing to contribute to the solutions of student needs, he should choose a route that is not suspect and that does not interfere with the proper functioning of the executive branch, as determined by the Student Supreme Court.

The penny-ante politics behind this most recent chapter in the political squabble consuming Student Government are unworthy of the most powerful institution which can and ought to devote itself to the protection of the student interest.

It is my Honour to report to you to-day the Events which transpired last evening at the latest meeting of the Fellows of the College of Public Health, an Assembly, at which, and I must beg your Indulgence for any lack of Modesty on my part, two Proposals were adopted at my Suggestion which will presently be submitted for the consideration of the Scholars of the Several Colleges in the form of Referenda. My Colleagues and myself are encouraged, after our small Victory over the Cigarette in the vote of Wednesday last, in our Belief that Regulation of the Bodily Fluids and various Humours is instrumental to the scholarly Labours; and, I am pleased to report, we are enthusiastic about the Prospects of these additional Proposals which we do humbly present for your Perusal. The Proposals are: First, that we ban from Lectures the Presence of Ladies who are without the Benefit of Brassieres, and, second, that we ban from those same Lectures Persons who violate the tenderer Sensibilities of their Fellow Scholars by failing to restrain the Emission of their Intestinal Gases.

After a Luncheon at the Carolina Inn, a Meal which, I noted, occurred without Incident, the Assembly endeavoured to discuss my Proposals. Lord Grenville, the prominent Barrister and my personal Friend, paid me the Honour of making the following Arguments in support of my position on the Question of Brassieres.

"We do not wish to remind those Ladies who, by individual Choice, choose to sport themselves braless, of the Experiments made by the Royal Society which suggest that irreparable crypto-kinesthetic damage is incurred upon pectoral Tissues of the unsupported Breast. That is presently a Matter of individual Discretion and not the Law's concern. Neither do we wish to remind those same Ladies of the vulgar Criterion advanced by the journalist Ann Landers for determining when a Breast is too large to flop freely in a Manner pleasing to the Eye. That is a Question of Aesthetics, and hence not suitable for reasoned Discourse. Rather, as in the case of Cigarette Smoking, we wish to demonstrate that braless Females are a Discomfiture to the classroom Atmosphere and are injurious to the Health of their fellow Scholars."

Lord Grenville continued his Proof with great skill, submitting that young Gentlemen, who have yet to gain sufficient control over their baser Passions, are unfavourably diverted in the presence of Ladies without Brassieres; that their Palms perspire, their Heartbeat increases, their attention to scholarly Labour wanes, etc. Furthermore, those young Gentlemen who are of an especially inferior mental Constitution are placed in great Peril, for the Sight of a Breast in its natural Apportment is not only for them an unfortunate Distraction, but a Temptation which seriously endangers their Nobler Instincts. By summation Lord Grenville argued that as Cigarette Smoke corrupts the Body, so do Braless corrupt the Mind—therefore both needs be constrained. For what good does it accomplish, the noble Barrister concluded, for a man to save his Lungs and yet lose his

own Soul?

These Proofs were well received by the Assembly, and Lord Grenville received much due approbation for his Remarks. As the Issue was clear and the Precedent, by virtue of Lord Grenville's explanation, well-defined, my first Proposal was easily approved by Vote of the Assembly.

However, my second Proposal, concerning the constraint of Flatulence, met with much Controversy. One Fellow, of whose name I was not well-acquainted, endeavoured to demonstrate that Passing Wind is an Act of Pleasure ordained by Nature, in that it relieves Discomfort to the Bowels; and, that since Man inclines toward Pleasure and avoids Pain, constraints against Flatulence would violate the Laws of Nature. Challenged as to his Premis that Passing Wind is in fact an Act of Pleasure, the Fellow organized an extemporaneous Poll by Show of Hands in the Assembly, the results of which are the Following: 77.3 per-cent of the Fellows of the College of Public

Examination of the Facts.

There was much learned Debate among the College, the content of which I need not relate here, since the Proofs would be of much mystery to the Layman, concerning the crucial Question of my Proposal; that being, are the Fumes arising from Flatulence injurious to Scholars in a Classroom? The College was unanimous in its agreement that emitting Flatulence was an odious Practice in which to engage oneself in Public; however, one younger Fellow, who was newly-appointed to the College, and hence not acquainted in our Manner of Thinking, made the ill-advised Argument that Passing Wind in Company was alike to Picking one's Nose or procuring Snuff among Companions of good Quality; that each was a violation of Manners and not of Law, and that to legislate what Behaviour is ill-mannered and what well is to treat a Man as if he were a Brute, without the Faculties to discern the Comfort of his Companions, or the Sensibilities to temper his Acts.

Digressions are sometimes diverting, but more often they tax the Reader's patience, when he discerns that the Author is Avoiding the Subject, and merely attempting to display his own Wit by employing the Book's pages and the Reader's time with idle commentary. Thus I will address the Subject.

It was concluded by the Assembly after more learned debate, that the Fumes of Flatulence are indeed injurious to Scholars in a classroom; and, therefore, I am honoured to report that my proposal regarding that Subject was adopted, and will be, with its companion proposal concerning the Utility of Brassieres, submitted presently to the perusal of the Scholars of the Several Colleges. The convincing Arguments on behalf of my proposal were put forward by Dr. Marlborough, who honoured me with his support in presenting the Fellows the results of his latest experiments on Vermin. Proceeding on the Assumption, as validated by the Scholars of the Several Colleges in their vote last week, that Cigarette Fumes are noxious even when received indirectly, Dr. Marlborough constrained a White Rat with Braces, Wires and like Accoutrements, and forced the Animal to breathe the Fumes of smoking cigarettes. After Breathing such vapours with the aid of a small Bellows and glass pipes secured in his nostrils and mouth for 27.3 hours, the Animal died. Dr. Marlborough then constrained the identical Contrivances a Vermin similar in Mass, Weight, Volume, and Apportment to the deceased Rat. The second Vermin, who was in fact the first's Brother, if I perceive the relation correctly, was made to inhale a continuous stream of Intestinal Gases which had been collected the previous day from volunteer Scholars and stored in hermetically sealed Containers. To the Consternation of the Experimenter, Dr. Marlborough concluded, the second Rat expired after only 9.1 hours of inhaling such vapours.

The import of Dr. Marlborough's Findings was immediately discernible to even the least mathematically adept Fellows of the College, for a scant proficiency in the Art of Multiplication and Division of Sums affords the conclusion that not only is the inhalation of flatulent Vapours injurious to the Health, it is three times more injurious than inhaling the Smoke of Cigarettes. There was Excitement and sober Purpose among the Assembly as we moved to confront this Menace to the General Welfare. Dr. Wotton, our Natural Theologian, endeavoured against public Flatulence. We thence proceeded to vote, and I beg your Indulgence once again to report that my Proposal was adopted overwhelmingly.

Next week the Fellows of the College will consider the Question of Free Will and its application to Body Odour, as well as entertain a new Study by Dr. Pederasty, concerning the Effect of Spanking upon small Boys. Sic Semper Tyrannis.

Ashley Montague-Clarke, M.A., is sometimes the pseudonym of John Russell, a junior English major from Greensboro.

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Health affirmed that Passing Wind did give them Pleasure; 10.2 per-cent replied, for various Reasons, that the Act was painful to them; and 12.5 per-cent of the college ventured no Opinion on the Matter.

These Arguments confounded the Issue and threw the Assembly into general Confusion, until Prof. Shaftesbury, M.A., O.B.I., and Rhetorician, reconciled these Matters to everyone's Satisfaction.

"It is true," he began, "That Flatulence is derived from an Act of Nature and thus affords Pleasure. But in that the Odours arising from making Fart would be objectionable to the General Company, it would be the General Company's Pleasure for the Act not to occur. And since the Mathematical Probability of a majority of any Company making Fart in unison at any one time is indeed small, we may reasonably conclude that Flatulence is an Act against Mankind. In short, Gentlemen, it is the Pleasure of the Many that the Few should not fart."

At that conclusion Prof. Shaftesbury ended his remarks and received an Ovation of some Vigour from the Fellows of the College.

Although I am not a Man who considers Questions of Natural Philosophy with Facility, it seems to be of Necessity that the Many, guided by those of us who can induce the Laws of Nature, should impose their Pleasure upon the Few. For in what other Manner can we regulate the Bodily Fluids and thus move towards Perfection of the Race? The Wisdom of Progress is such that Questions of Ethics, which were once so troublesome, are now Questions of Number, and can thus be dispensed with quickly. Hence, we presently disposed of these Abstracts and applied ourselves to an

The young Fellow's Remarks caused much Embarrassment among the Assembly, since his speech was very animated and he seemed to be in a State of Agitation. I trust the Ignorance of his Arguments to his Youth and to the unfortunate reading of certain ancient Authors who were unable to know that in this Modern Age learned men are able to induce from the Laws of Nature, and render in the Laws of Society, how a man should rationally act to attain his own Health and the Health of the State. Hence the distinction between Manner and Law is specious, since, as we move towards Perfection of the Race, there will be no difference between how a man should act and how he shall act.

The Embarrassment of the Assembly was eased by Dr. Gulliver, a learned Physician and renowned Wit, who endeavoured to confound the young Fellow's argument to the great diversion of the College. Dr. Gulliver, who, since his celebrated Travels has immersed himself in a Study of Social Diseases among the Yeomanry, explained his conjecture that the syphilis Germ is transmitted by implanting in the Mucous Membrane certain Bacteria of the Air through the Act of Picking One's Nose, a theory which, Dr. Gulliver added, accounts for the peculiar Disfigurement of that Organ in extreme Instances of the Disease. Dr. Gulliver's Remarks received for the honoured Physician laughter and general Approbation, since men of good quality appreciate true Wit.

I beg your indulgence in relating these several Digressions and will address myself presently to the Manner in which the Assembly resolved the Issue at Hand, that is, whether Fumes arising from Flatulence are injurious to Scholars in a Classroom.

Ralph Irace

Reviving the medieval spirit

Have you ever wondered what thirteenth-century university students did with their spare time besides studying? Was their frugal existence distinguished by greater erudition than is found in their modern day counterparts?

Historians have shown that although the medieval student endured an impoverished existence, he was anything but docile; a little wine in his stomach and he could put townsman and professor alike to foot.

The differences between the earliest universities of seven centuries ago and those of today are broad and striking.

The great scholastic centers of the Middle Ages — Paris, Salerno, Oxford, Padua, Bologna and a handful of others — lacked any of the material attributes of their twentieth-century lineal descendants. The medieval university in its seminal stage had no buildings, libraries, administration offices, laboratories or any of the physical structures we commonly associate with collegiate institutions today or for that matter, any educational institution.

Fundamentally, the medieval university was "built of men" rather than buildings; a gathering of students and masters who, sharing a common desire for the pursuit of knowledge and learning, banded together in some rented hall or neighboring church. Instruction was initially limited to four curriculums: liberal arts, theology, canon law, and medicine. Dialectic argument was used almost exclusively as the principal method of instruction. Books (as they existed then) had to be hand copied and was a costly procedure — most students rented books from the local stationer. There were no closed-circuit television, language labs, programmed texts, extensive libraries, films and slides or any of the other tools which modern day instruction occurs.

Without any athletic programs, clubs and organizations, college newspapers and journals, snack bars, pool rooms and unions, what did the medieval student do for excitement?

It seems that our predecessors were a quarrelsome lot and often argued among themselves over women, ownership of animals, theological semantics or whatever might provoke a confrontation. They were constantly armed and carried knives, occasionally assaulting passersby and abusing women in the public streets. Errant groups of marauder-style students having found "wine that was good and sweet to drink" not infrequently beat up the townsmen and rioted in the streets. Perhaps they had some encouragement: students of

the University of Paris were granted immunity by King Phillip from arrest by the civil authorities.

Aside from an infrequent brawl at Town Hall, UNC students can by contrast be said to be considerably subdued by medieval standards. Governor Holshouser hasn't yet decided to follow King Phillip's practice of exempting university students from civil arrest, and the civil authorities today are many and feared — Chapel Hill Police, Orange County sheriff's deputies, N.C. highway patrolmen, University police, SBI, FBI . . . and, if you cause a ruckus at a home football game — Pinkerton guards.

The medieval university, being a fraternity of spirited and restless minds rather than fifty acres of brick buildings, had no "school rivalries." So the students fought among themselves and sometimes attacked their professors. Fist fights, knife slashing, eye gouging, dueling, brawling in the local tavern, and outright rioting was drawn along the lines of nationality. Jacques de Vitry is remembered for his classic description of our subjects in question: ". . . the English were drunks and had tails; the French were proud, effeminate, and carefully adorned like women; the Germans were furious and obscene at their feasts; the Normans, vain and boastful; the Poitevins, traitors; the Burgundians, vulgar and stupid; the

Lombards, avaricious, vicious, and cowardly; the Romans, seditious, turbulent, and slanderous; the Sicilians, tyrannical and cruel; the Flemish, fickle, prodigal, gluttonous, yielding as butter, and slothful." Such were their feelings about one another.

Insults to one another based more or less on the above sentiments usually lead to blows and verbal barrages of virulent vulgarity from our company of scholars.

Gone today is the enterprising, adventurous spirit of the noble medieval student. The rivalries of today are cast largely in athletic competition between neighboring universities. Physical confrontation between the two is limited to athletes who must be supervised by referees and subject to myriad rules and regulations. Students in Raleigh call Chapel Hill Bush League. We retort and call Raleigh Farm League. Yawn.

Today, the university professor, after years of teaching, research and cultivating the department chairman and full professors, eventually reaches a high enough professional rank to attain tenure.

Students of medieval days determined the tenure of their professors, then called masters. These early archetypal faculty subsisted almost entirely of the fees of their pupils. To be paid, the professor had to abide by a set of regulations which guaranteed the students of their money's worth. Among

other restrictions, the professor was expected to be punctual in beginning and ending class; could not be absent from class without permission from his pupils; was required to leave a deposit to ensure his return if he had to leave town temporarily.

The social position of the medieval professor was pre-eminent among all other occupations during the Middle Ages with exception of the clergy.

Today, although university professors do not enjoy the community-wide sovereign influence their predecessors had, they have more than influence over their students. Dependent on the institution for their salary instead of the students to who they were originally accountable to in the Middle Ages, many of today's faculty have become little less than domineering academic demagogues, "avenging" their medieval precursors for the brutalities committed by the assertive medieval student.

Seeing the subordination that today's students are subjected to, and the diminutive role they play in controlling the antics of the faculty, one wonders if we will ever see the resurrection of the spirit of the medieval student. The progenitors of the university tradition demand this revival — or do they?

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