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The Daily Tar Heel

88th year of editorial freedom

Eating alone

By BUDDY BURNISKE

I like to eat alone. That causes problems in Chapel Hill. It's a problem because people object to others eating alone here. It's as though the habits of freshman-year orientation—eating, touring and going out in herds—never cease when it comes to dining practices. But every now and then we all need to break away.

You see, solitary eaters aren't necessarily lonely, friendless creatures with a dish towel's personality. More often than not they don't have an insecurity when it comes to eating in front of other people either. Often, it's a simple case of a person wanting to eat alone—whether it be due to a hunger that can't wait for company or the need for a peaceful meal without the constant chatter of a friend who knows not the value of silence.

I've told people this before. Many times. When I eat alone it's because I want to eat alone—not because I have a disease inside my mouth and don't want to risk being found out at the dinner table. But few people listen. Instead, they try to restrain me at all costs, considering this wanton desire for solitude to rank right up there with the most heinous social crimes on record.

My roommate tackled me when I tried to leave our house last week. "C'mon, we'll have a cookout," he said. "Invite friends, ya know?" That would've been the fifth consecutive night in Greasy Grill City. "No thanks, I'm gonna go this one alone," I said, and stepped bravely out the door.

I went from there to the Porthole for supper. I went alone. I like the Porthole because it's one of the better places to eat alone. The friendly people, the open atmosphere—a good one to be in if you're detached but feel like watching people, and those nifty egg carton-sized booths all make it a perfect spot for the solitary you.

I was sitting in booth No. 17 with my back to the women's room and my head turned to that Porthole painting when I noticed a couple—male and female—looking at me with saddened eyes. I immediately looked behind me to see who they might be pitying. Nobody was there.

"What's wrong," I asked with a curious laugh. The girl broke her clutch of her boyfriend's arm and leaned toward me with great conviction, sweetly asking, "Are you having trouble getting adjusted to Carolina?"

"Huh? No-no, not at all," I said.

"I just thought I'd ask," she said. "You looked...well...you're so alone over there."

"Yeah...I guess I am," I said. She pulled back and smiled, then resumed her taut hold of her mate's arm, like a pigeon gripping its perch.

When you say solitude, you seldom say it all



My food came a minute or so later. The couple got up and walked out, paying me a compassionate nod as they left. I put my head down and attacked my Shrimp Garden Salad with fervor. I love to eat.

The next invaders were a group of supposed friends, four guys who had lived on my floor in Ehringhaus two years ago. "Yo, Burniske, what's happening?" one said as a piece of shrimp fell from my mouth. They had been hidden back in the large booth (No. 21) and were heading for the door. Such meetings are always fun. See, solitary eaters aren't antisocial, they just like a passing hello without forced conversation.

"Ah, not much man, not much," I said.

"I see you're eating with all your friends," another one said. They laughed heartily, savoring the quip like it was a line never served to a solitary eater before. They made some small talk and then turned away.

"Stop by E'haus sometime," the joker said. "Bring your friends."

As the pony-tailed waitress brought more rolls and tea, I felt an oppressive eye burn through me from somewhere nearby. It was a girl. A solitary girl. She sat to my left at table No. 19, peering over the partition separating her from two guys who dined voraciously on sports and salad. She was older than I, but not much. Her face was fresh, her eyes understanding. I looked straight at her and smiled. Perfect. Just perfect, I thought. It was mutual respect—love, and understanding, at first silence.

She looked down at her table and then got up, raising her eyes to meet mine, and moved toward me. She was wearing a green T-shirt that said Orientation 1980 on it, but I barely noticed as she neared. I wanted

her to sit with me in that little booth and just stare for a while. No talking. No arguing. No joking. Just eating—rolls, rolls and more rolls. My eyes fell from the trance with hers as she stood over me and looked toward her hands, which clutched a multi-colored array of papers.

"Hi, my name is Kim," she said. "I'm an RA in Olde Campus. I was wondering if you might like to read some of these." She placed the sheets of paper before me, fanning them out like a full house in the last hand. I read the top of each.

"ARE YOU DEPRESSED?"
"LEARNING TO COPE."
"HOW TO MAKE FRIENDS"

It was literature I'd only seen in the bathroom of a dorm in the past few years. Now it was to come between me and an exquisite understanding.

"I hope they'll help," she said as I stuffed the last two rolls into my mouth and got up. "It's a difficult time, I know, but you'll get through it, and..." She followed me to the register and continued babbling as I paid the bill. I'd never wanted to be alone so much before in my life. And I've never enjoyed solitude more than when I was outside the Porthole, heading toward Franklin Street with a trail of Student Health brochures behind me.

I like to eat alone.

Buddy Burniske, a junior English major from Hatfield, Mass., is editorial assistant for The Daily Tar Heel.

The Zeta Psis

The sisters of Alpha Omicron Pi, a newly chartered sorority at Duke University, had never been to a non-Duke fraternity party. They must have been impressed when they saw the Zeta Psi house from the outside for the first time; the four white columns out front and the high balcony above the door give the house an almost antebellum, Southern plantation look. It was December and the occasion was a so-called Christmas party. The sisters had been promised Santa would be there.

Inside, the women found the house decorated grotesquely. The Christmas tree was littered with sanitary napkins stained with ketchup and condoms filled with crushed cucumbers. When Santa arrived he began handing out presents to the brothers, including naked barbie dolls and sex aids. Finally he took out a baggie of excrement and the brothers tossed that around. When the bag landed in the lap of one of the sisters, the women got their coats to leave.

But the front door knob had been removed. Finally, one young man walked in and some of the women walked out. Others later escaped through a back door. The brothers inside, many of them drunk, lost what little control they had. One walked around with his pants down, shouting at the few remaining women; another attacked a sister and was pulled off her by some of his brothers. The president of the sorority said when she got home she shook uncontrollably all night.

There was more to this sick joke, but we thought we would just try to jar your memory in case you had forgotten. In the weeks following the incident, we were confident that stern action would be taken against the fraternity, but now, half a year later, the Zeta Psis appear to have escaped virtually unpunished.

The first disciplinary action was taken by UNC Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Donald Boulton. He acted on the report of an administrative review committee and severed University ties to the fraternity for three years. He also recommended that the national fraternity close the chapter for the same period of time. However, the national fraternity decided last week only to put them on probation, a sanction of little consequence. Now, with the UNC administration having taken perhaps the harshest legal action it could, means for pursuing the case in that manner seem exhausted.

The Zetas still live in their house; their term of not being able to throw parties is over. As long as they do not participate in formal rush they can still go about accepting brothers, just like old times. In three years, if all goes well, they will be considered for University recognition again and the freshman at the Christmas party could be the proud seniors in a full-fledged fraternity.

All this could take place unless active prosecution of the Zetas is continued. For some reason in a case like this students assume that if the administration does not spank them then no one will. But this is a time when the Zetes' peers should be the disciplinarians.

When Boulton rescinded University recognition of the Zetes, he thereby took away the power of the Inter-Fraternity Council to take measures of its own. The IFC had undertaken an investigation and was preparing to hold a hearing, but could take no action against a fraternity it no longer recognized.

One student organizer, —the Honor Court—still has the power to effectively censure the Zetes. The court had begun an investigation of its own, but sources say it was shelved until the national fraternity had time to act. It has acted, and we find its verdict wanting.

Student Attorney General Louis Bledsoe sent a letter to freshmen this summer. He wrote, "You can easily appreciate how important honesty, integrity and responsibility are in a system where people work hard and compete for distinction. You deserve a fair and honorable system and you should demand it." The actions of the Zeta Psis give Bledsoe an opportunity to put his words into action.

The conduct of the brothers of Zeta Psi on Dec. 2 violated every standard of behavior deemed acceptable and decent by the Honor and Campus codes. The Honor Court has an obligation to prosecute, aggressively, the Zeta Psis; else it will have flouted every principle it is empowered to uphold.

The Bottom Line

Bye-bye, birdies

It's been a rough summer for homeowners in Charlotte, but the fall may turn out to be even worse.

Residents have been battling the Charlotte City Council since June over proposed cuts in municipal services. One suggestion would institute roll-out garbage pickup, which simply means that sanitation workers can get folks' trash at curbside instead of hunting around for it behind their houses. That idea was shouted down; apparently the sight of garbage cans out on the streets is too tacky for Charlotteans to bear.

Alas, the situation can only worsen this fall. The city has called a halt to leaf pick-up, which means that homeowners will have to bag their own leaves instead of piling them at curbside. But that hardship is insignificant in contrast to Charlotte's annual autumnal onslaught—of starlings.

The nasty little critters fly down from Canada every October, coming to roost in the affluent Charlotte neighborhood of Myers Park. This year though, Charlotte will be prepared. It looks as though the City Council will approve shooting permits for a volunteer army determined to blast the birdies out of the sky.

Other more effective solutions—like trimming back trees and shrubs the starlings roost on—have been rejected by

appearance-conscious Myers Park residents. The sharpshooters may not do much good, but at least they'll let off some steam. In the meantime, don't fly into Charlotte.

Designer diapers

For a long time blue jeans were a standard bit of apparel in this country. One needed no more than a couple of pockets, a good zipper and quality denim to be satisfied. But that was before Calvin Klein and a host of others complicated things with designer jeans. Now they've taken it one step further.

The newest victim of status symbol hype—following the pattern already established by the teen Izod shirt as well as infant docksiders and other preppie garb—is the diaper consumer.

It was announced recently that Calvin Klein will be designing the diapers with pocket, insignia et al for a mere \$9.50. The diaper will have extra padding and the usual Klein quality, but won't be made of blue denim—a fact that even the most fashion-conscious 3-week-old will be glad to know.

It's uncertain as to how much further—or should we say lower—this status-seeking barrage will go, maybe designer toilet paper is right around the corner. For now, though, some people will gain satisfaction in the sure knowledge that many a Calvin Klein label soon will be soiled and sogged.

And that—if you'll excuse us—is the bottom line.

Letters to the editor

Referendum low priority for RHA

To the editor:

When the students returned this year, the governing board of the Residence Hall Association was concerned about how much money it had for officer training. Officer training is one of the most important aspects of the Residence Hall Association, for the officers are the link to the residents, the backbone of the association.

Many possible solutions were brought up from talking to the chancellor and the Campus Governing Council to calling for a referendum. When we tried to find out more on each of these possibilities, the word "referendum" sent whispers and rumors throughout campus.

Holding a referendum is the least of the governing board's worries. There are many issues that concern the residents more, and we plan to face these. There are North Carolina and University laws that if repealed or changed would allow residence halls, student organizations and others the opportunity to raise their own money. These are the areas the governing board is looking into.

The Residence Hall Association is a way that residents can voice their opinions. The governing board is the voice and ear of the needs of these residents, and we plan to represent them in many issues this year. Some of these include the noise ordinance, Southern Bell increases, visitation policy, the use of alcohol on campus, racial balance on campus, traffic problems and many more. We are willing to listen and act on any activity or action that directly or indirectly affects the quality of life of the on-campus resident.

Peggy Light
RHA president

Tryout bias?

To the editor:

A lot of people undoubtedly were disappointed with the mike man, Ross Coppage, at the game Saturday. But I am not writing to complain about his performance—I only hope he gets better. What I am writing about is the way in which he was selected to be mike man.

Mike-man tryouts were held during the first week of classes, and the cheerleaders judged the winner. While this might be a good system generally, in this case, it was not. Since Ross was head cheerleader last year, he was a good friend of the judges, the cheerleaders, and this gave him a big advantage over the others trying out. A large group from my hall went to the tryouts since one of our friends was trying out. We thought Ross did not do as well as our friend and probably not as well as a couple of the others. But, of course, we were hardly objective judges. And that is just the point. The cheerleaders deciding who would be mike man was just as unfair as my hall deciding who would have been. I am sure that they tried to be objective, but they could not be. If my hall had tried to be as objective as possible, we still would have felt that our friend was the best. And the cheerleaders, though trying to be objective, could only feel that their close friend was the best.

I realize that nothing can be done about this year's mike man, but I suggest that if this kind of situation occurs in the future, a more objective set of judges should be used. Perhaps then we would not have to suffer through a season with a dismal performance by the mike man.

Jim Tucker
1205 Granville West

Whoops

To the editor:

On the back page of Friday's Daily Tar Heel (Sept. 5), there appeared a cartoon captioned "Stereo Wars." This cartoon was not particularly accurate, with respect to the parties (pardon the pun) involved. The point about noise was well-made. As residents of Fraternity Court, we cannot deny the overabundance of sound that originates from the various juke boxes, bands and stereos on any given night. Point conceded.



DOONESBURY

by Garry Trudeau

Powell, in his cartoon, identified each of the houses on the court correctly, save for one. The second house on the left was incorrectly identified as the Lambda Chi house. Wrong! That house is the Pi Lambda Phi Fraternity house.

OK, so we don't have a lot of large, noisy parties that would call attention to us. We do, nonetheless, have our own identity. What bothers us is how we were misrepresented. Powell either did not

bother to find out the identity of that fifth house, or he did not care. The fact that his oversight got past the editors, and was allowed to be printed without correction seems to point out a general disregard for accuracy. Come on people, let's get your act together. Just think how you would feel if your publication was to be identified as *The Daily Tar Heel!*

The Brothers of Pi Lambda Phi

THE Daily Crossword by Marie West

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