

The Daily Tar Heel

93rd year of editorial freedom

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Leading the way

Franklin Delano Roosevelt once said, "The truth is found when men are free to pursue it."

The leaders of several campus organizations, frustrated by a bureaucracy ostensibly at their disposal, looked to other avenues of communication last Friday morning. In an unprecedented action, they took their concerns to the University's Board of Trustees, the highest administrative authority on this campus.

In an opening statement, Student Body President Patricia Wallace said that untrustworthiness on the part of the administration had created a growing rift between students and administrators that undermines the effectiveness of student action. The lack of real student input into decisions concerning student life has crippled the confidence students once had in the administration.

Student relations with the administration are in a desperate state indeed when students are forced to subvert the regular channels of communication to relieve the pent-up pressures of being contemptuously ignored and abused. Yet, it is not the students' fault that they became an unscheduled item on the Trustees' agenda: the administration of this campus ought to be ashamed that students now have so little confidence in them as to resort to such appeals.

As Wallace pointed out, the fundamental purpose of this University is the education and enlightenment of students through the exchange of ideas. "Exchange", a two-way transaction, has lately become a mockery as students find themselves pleading for explanations to

board opinion

administrative actions with great bearing on life in Chapel Hill.

Apathy, a serious problem of our times, stems from a feeling of impotence. The administration breeds this sense of powerlessness when it refuses to talk honestly with students. If students are to continue a long tradition of involvement and concern on campus for others, they must have confidence in their rightful autonomy.

The issue is communication, if the recent edicts mutely handed down can be termed so. Residents of Steele and South buildings must realize that their decisions, with the weight they carry, demand explanations. The avoidance of dialogue about these decisions alienates all students, but most importantly, it disillusiones the people it can least afford to, the people who contribute time and effort to the University to promote its stated goals.

Thus, the ten or so leaders gathered Friday to head off this destructive disillusionment and bitterness. In honestly discussing their hopes and complaints, they acted with greater responsibility than their administrative counterparts have so far done. We hope that the encouraging reception the Board of Trustees extended is the beginning of a more fruitful search for honesty and cooperation with the students on the part of all administrators.

The search begun Friday must yield material results. The first of these must be the clearing of blocked pathways of communication. Administrators must recognize the importance of the student in student affairs. A student body with an administration which discourages student involvement is one which needs no administration whatsoever.

To the dth degree

To judge or . . .

not to judge

Last Monday, we ran a sports feature picture on the front page — something which we often do. No big news. It may not have struck you as unusual. But unusual it was.

The picture showed a group of UNC's women's field hockey players standing together after their season-ending loss to Old Dominion. In the foreground, another UNC player — wearing goalie shin pads — lay on the field, holding her hands to her face. The short headline read, "Agony of Defeat." Then, beneath the headline, the cut-line read, "UNC goalkeeper Jan Miles grieving after the Tar Heels' season ended with a 3-2 loss to Old Dominion Sunday afternoon at the AstroTurf Field. Miles watched the game-winning goal pass by her untouched apparently thinking it was headed over the end line . . ."

Well, as it turns out, the goalkeeper on the turf was not Jan Miles — it was her teammate, Kathy Mulvey. And she has since written us that she was not merely grieving — that she was actually laughing, ironically, that one of her pads had come apart in her hands. While we stand by our photographer's own impressions of the incident (as seconded by other photojournalists who were present), we do need to address the other issues brought up by the photo.

For the error in identification, we ran a "For the Record" the following day. But an "FTR" could not address the second problem of the cut-line — the fact that we had tried to describe that which really required no description. That is a problem that should never have presented itself.

In theory, a photo cut-line should never try to explain the emotions or thoughts of the person shown in the photo. As journalists, we hope that the photos we publish will be able to speak for themselves. Certainly, our photographers expect no less; they are as upset as anyone when an error of this sort occurs. Believe me.

Obviously, some cases draw more attention than others. The case of last Monday's field hockey cut-line was a gross error — in part the responsibility of both the reporter and the photographer who attended the event (for incorrectly identifying the UNC player lying on the ground); in part the responsibility of the person who wrote the cut-line (for having improperly — though certainly not maliciously — interpreted the player's emotions); and ultimately, the responsibility of Dave and myself, for having failed to catch the copyediting error when it was pasted up on the page.

We apologize to both Kathy Mulvey and Jan Miles — and to our readers as well. The "interpretive" error — guessing at the player's emotions — should never have occurred. At most, a cut-line ought to state the circumstances during which a photo was taken — the emotions, implicit in the photo itself, ought to be left open to the reader's eye. For instance, we all recall the photo of the girl from Kent State; the body at her feet; the posture of her body . . . a posture of grief, you say . . . or was it? Actually, the girl was a 16-year-old runaway who didn't even know the person who lay at her feet.

Still, our guidelines sometimes become blurry to the person who is writing — or even reading — cut-lines. The effort to be creative in writing cut-lines makes us especially vulnerable to subjective "grey-zoning." For instance, on Tuesday, the day after we ran the aforementioned field hockey photo, we ran a photo that showed two kids reclining in a pile of leaves at a soccer game. The cut-line stated that the two kids were "enjoying a leaf bath." Well, unless the kids told our photographer that they were "enjoying" such a thing, we really had no business in supposing that they were. For all we know, they could have been chatting about the summit in Geneva, contemplating the impending Holocaust and just having a rotten time.

But no one wrote in to say, "Hey, I think you were really off-base in supposing that those kids were enjoying a leaf bath." I doubt anyone even stopped to think about the judgement that had been made by the author of the cut-line. For the reader, as for the writer, the grey-zone definitely exists. We are all subject to errors in judgement.

Perhaps this allows you to understand how such errors come about. The field hockey cut-line was no more written out of malice than was the cut-line for the kids in the leaves. Yet the former is obviously a worse mistake than the latter.

Why obvious? Because we do apply subjective values to various manifestations of the same human tendency. Because we do apply more critical discretion to man in his state of grief than we do to man in his state of exultation. That is our nature. And just as we are prone to making subjective evaluations, so too are we prone to writing creative — yet nevertheless subjective — cut-lines. I apologize for these errors in judgement.

— ARNE RICKERT

READER FORUM

SBP Wallace's statement to the BOT

To the university community:

The following statement was delivered by Patricia Wallace, student body president, to the Board of Trustees on Nov. 22.

A fundamental purpose of the University is to promote learning through the exchange of ideas. Our Student Code, which supposedly sets forth the premises of the University, confirms the obvious: "intellectual honesty is integral" to the enterprise of discovery and dissemination of knowledge. This atmosphere of honesty and trust must extend beyond the classroom. The Code states: "Members of the University community should be accorded the greatest possible

degree of self-determination correlative with the acceptance of the full responsibility for their conduct and the consequences of their actions."

Unfortunately, we student leaders have discovered that this trust has been violated. The larger issues and the subsequent reactions on the part of students reflect the day-to-day state of affairs and level of morale. The level of trust is so low that these conflicts are erupting more and more frequently, and growing. We agree that healthy conflict is good and can produce positive results, but we often find ourselves unable to communicate openly about our disagreements. We are discouraged by the lack of real student input in making decisions that have impact on student life. We are discouraged

that we are often not truly listened to. Students are considered to be transient. Certainly there is turnover every year, but the student body is always here; educating and developing those students is, after all, one of the main reasons this university was founded. The University is obligated to inculcate a trust among all members of this community. We students work to make a name for the University and create a positive mood on campus through programming and service. It is to this institution's discredit that many of our predecessors have left bitter because of the lack of responsiveness to students needs, ideas, and inquiry.

We come before the Trustees to inform you of an attitude prevalent

among student leaders. We have not exhausted all of our other sources of recourse; in fact, several key administrators are working with students to set up dialogues in which we can talk about our common concerns and problems we have with each other. We ask the Trustees to support the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellors, and the entire University community in their efforts to dispel this growing distrustful atmosphere that destroys the basic premises of our University. We need support, encouragement, and trust from the Trustee level on down so that we may engage in open discussions without the fear of being cut off at the pass.

Patricia Wallace
student body president



Real problem is Student Affairs

To the editors:

The Campus Y's efforts lately to have Assistant Director George Gamble re-instated are very commendable, but I am afraid that they are only identifying, rather than focusing on, a pernicious evil facing this campus. This evil possesses the ironic title of "Student Affairs."

Student Affairs must ask themselves the most fundamental of questions: "Why are we here?" The answer is between facilitator or dictator. In creating a Division of Student Affairs, the University would logically want one which promoted students' independence, self-sufficiency, and their ability to make decisions for themselves, so that they could survive in the "real world." In other words, Student Affairs would facilitate our growing into responsible, informed and caring adults. This would be an honorable model.

Unfortunately, Student Affairs has chosen, deliberately or not, to be a dictator, telling the students

"how it is going to be" with the students' organizations. They have abdicated their responsibility to the students with rather obtuse policies, which do not begin or end with George Gamble. As silly as it sounds they have forgotten that the University would not be here without us, the students.

We did not choose to come to this University so that Student Affairs could operate "in loco parentis". Answers, such as "we know better than you," to earnest questions from concerned, mature student leaders were only acceptable when we were children. We are no longer so. Those answers are unacceptable.

We are growing up and have an inalienable right to have our voices heard and our opinions matter — especially when they concern our organizations — not Student Affairs'. No more sneaky summer-time selections, contrary to all student and advisory input. No more mistreatment of the Band and

its leader, an issue which has seemingly escaped coverage. No more self-serving autocratic leadership by the people who claim to be our friends.

Students, we must ask ourselves "Why are we here?" If we can answer that we are here to learn how to make decisions and handle responsibility, we must take notice of this very bad precedent. If you do not stand behind the members of the Y, do not complain when Student Affairs chooses your organization next because they "know better than you."

This University is a pretty good one, in spite of its Student Affairs. Let's hope a little chastising of its errant organization will set it on the right course and then Student Affairs can join in our movement towards the status of great University, rather than working against it. Our demands are not great, just reasonable.

Todd Hart
321 W. Cameron Ave.

Pit rally today noon

To the editors:

Today Students for a Student Voice is holding a rally at noon in the Pit to protest the Office of Student Affairs' disregard for student input and to increase student awareness and support. Student Affairs' past history of dealings involving student-oriented issues shows a flagrant lack of concern and interest in the rights, opinions, and wishes of the student body. These issues span such topics as the meal plan, the Upendo Lounge, Sorority Women Against Discrimination, and the recent dismissal of Campus Y Associate Director George Gamble. In each of these incidents, Student Affairs acted without thought or consideration of the best interests of students, and their decisions were reached either without any consultation with students or with a token request for input that, with the course of time, proved to be meaningless and insincere.

Students have tolerated such treatment in the past, but now it is time to take a more active and visible stand on issues concerning student rights. This is a cause that reaches far past the concerns and interests of individual organizations and into the heart of student life itself. We, the students, have a right to participate in integral decisions concerning the direction and vitality of this university because it is we, the present and future students of this university, who must ultimately abide by and live with these decisions. Please join us, Students for a Student Voice, in voicing our concern and taking a stand for our rights by participating in the rally today.

Rachel Winters
Joel Katzenstein
Students for a Student Voice

Voice your opposition to administrative control

To the editors:

A recent trend of domination by the administrators has arisen on our campus toward student issues. Donald Boulton, Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs and his division of the administration are disregarding student input again as they now seek to take over student organizations such as the Campus Y.

For those of you who are in the dark about the Campus Y, here is the situation. The Office of Student Affairs hired Zenobia Hatcher-Wilson to serve as the director of Campus Y. Since that decision, Hatcher-Wilson and George Gamble, the associate director of the Y, have differed in the approach which they take toward student ideas at the Y. Hatcher-Wilson supports allowing the administration and the director of the Y to make and control all functional decisions and to only allow students to have input

when that input is advantageous to their goals. Gamble on the other hand has striven through his three years of service with the Y to give students the challenge and responsibility to make and carry out all administrative decisions of the Y. Over the past four months Zenobia and George have debated the role in which students will be allowed to play in decision-making and implementation of the Y's activities and the final decision by Donald Boulton is and stands as of Wednesday to fire Gamble and move in the direction of administrative control of the Y.

Our grievance with Dean Boulton and the Division of Student Affairs is their constant disregard of student input when making policy and administrative decisions that directly affect the students on our campus. Boulton and his staff should realize the Division of

Student Affairs was created for the improvement of college life at this university and not the detriment of it. Moreover, we hope that you the students will see the need to become involved in the protest against the latest of unanswerable decisions made by Boulton and those officials in Student Affairs.

We ask the Division of Student Affairs to realize that their staff sometimes makes mistakes when making policy decisions that they hope serve the best interests of the UNC student body; furthermore, those decisions should be corrected, not covered up in order to support the decision of another in the student affairs division. We ask that students realize the necessity of expressing opposition toward Boulton's decision now. We encourage you to write letters expressing your opinion to President Friday, Chancellor Fordham, and Vice-

Chancellor Boulton before it is too late for George Gamble and your Campus Y; after all, in three weeks the semester will be over and Boulton's decision will be final!

In conclusion, we want the Division of Student Affairs to stop stone-walling us for once. We are tired of their unconditional public support of each other's decisions in the student affairs division. The Campus Y is powered by student volunteers. If these students are not given a voice in how their labor is managed, they will stop volunteering, and the Y will cease functioning. Then all of us will be forced to send our little buddies over to Steele Building for a lecture on stubbornness. Please become involved.

David Brady,
CGC finance chair
Ryke Longest,
student body treasurer

The bottom line is a question of student power

To the editors:

In all the talk about the Campus Y — the hirings, the firings, the discussions, the protests — the bottom line is a question of power. Who makes the major decisions on this campus, specifically those that deal with student organizations? Whose input is taken into account?

The circumstances surrounding George Gamble's firing answer both questions very clearly. The most wide-ranging decisions, even about student groups, are being made by administrators, whether they reside in Steele Building, or in the Campus Y itself. And though it is hard to say whose input is being considered, it is clearly not that of the Y Advisory Board or the students who compose the Campus Y. Many students, faculty, and members of the community have expressed amazement at the blatant disregard for student opinion displayed in the Gamble case. But should we really be surprised? Take a look at the two opposing forces.

In one corner, we have the Division of Student Affairs. They have employed a simple two-step process. First, ignore students,

delaying or even derailing their protest until the issue is no longer hot in the public's mind. Given this mind-set, can we expect honest dialogue? Can we realistically say we hoped for conciliation from an organization that would ignore the students it is supposed to serve and then deliberately lead them astray in order to quiet down their potentially embarrassing protest?

In the other corner, we have the students. Traditionally apathetic, students have occasionally mobilized around certain issues close to home (e.g. the meal plan). But when faced with Steele Building's often practiced stone-walling of student requests, protestors have become discouraged and let issues die. Administrators have learned to treat student agitators like unwanted visitors — just offer them a cup of coffee and a few minutes of pseudo-friendly small talk and they will go away. Given this history, can we expect serious consideration of student viewpoints? Can we honestly hope to influence an office that has every reason to believe it can ignore us without losing face?

So if the bottom line is a question of power — of student power — the answer is simply that we have none. Judging from the history of both sides' actions, the blame for this unjust state of affairs cannot be placed solely on the shoulders of either students or administrators. It follows from this conclusion that the solution to the problem, which can be found only in student empowerment, cannot come wholly from one side or another.

For our part, students must capitalize on the issue at hand to show Steele Building and other administrators that we will no longer bend over after only an initial bit of agitation. We must use the small amount of leverage and the few tactics we do have to make clear our commitment to gain the power we deserve and to use it responsibly. On the other side, the Division must live up to its name as the office concerned with student affairs. First, administrators must show a little basic respect for students, by which I mean among other things simply not misleading us about issues we find important. Second, they must go a step beyond honesty

and treat us as equal, responsible partners in the main decisions that affect our organizations and our lives.

Power-sharing is a two-way street in which both sides are willing to put in time to solve problems and work towards common goals. This concept of cooperation is what Students Concerned for the Y have been talking about all along: cooperation between George and Zenobia, between students and Steele Building, and between Student Affairs and the Y. And true cooperation can only occur between entities that respect one another and are willing to give and take sincerely. It is this basic understanding that is missing in the George Gamble controversy, that has been missing in past conflicts, and will continue to be missing until students are willing to stand up for their views and administrators are able to accept this activism as a valid assertion of student opinion.

Bryan Hassel
321 W. Cameron