

The Daily Tar Heel

94th year of editorial freedom

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Editorials

Riding out the storm

Outright denial of one's wishes is an easier pill to swallow than evasive and sneaky tactics. A credible decision made, however disliked, is at least respected as a decision. But a wishy-washy approach produces only bad feelings.

The University Endowment Board's decision Friday to delay consideration of divestment proposals until a later meeting indicates the deplorably low level of regard that board members give student opinion.

By declining to act Friday in response to UNC's largest student protest in recent years, the board effectively ignored the students' proper sense of urgency in dealing with an atrocious system. By not reaching a decision, board members showed their disdain for student opinion.

Last fall, the Board of Trustees recommended divestment from corporations giving "direct and extensive" support to the government of South Africa. Months later, the endowment board claims it needs time to study a report that will help them define what constitutes "direct and extensive" support.

Naturally, hasty decisions should not be made when dealing with a \$100-million endowment. But if the board lacked the proper information to make a decision about its investment policy, why did it agree to meet at all?

Board members did not meet to learn more about possible approaches to dealing with apartheid. Although the board allowed members of the Anti-

Apartheid Support Group and the UNC College Republicans to present arguments about divestment, the statements offered by board members made it clear that the students' arguments had no impact on the opinions of board members who have discussed the issue in detail for years.

The board agreed to hold an emergency meeting to placate student protesters on both sides who had progressively increased the intensity of their activities. Faced with the possibility of student rebellions like those which hit the University of California at Berkeley last week, the board urged students to be patient.

The date of the board's next meeting, April 24, reiterates this disregard for student opinion. On the last day of classes, students will be distracted by the pressures of upcoming finals, and no campus publications will be able to report the board's decision for a month. Between last Friday's meeting and April 24, three weeks will pass — weeks that the board hopes will be enough time to let student fervor wane. Fortunately, student beliefs are not just whimsical notions. Regardless of their stance, students have substantiated arguments that should not be summarily ignored.

Great amounts of student energy, time and devotion have been committed on both sides of this issue. We are appalled by the endowment board's refusal to recognize the sincerity of these student protests. Students deserve better than this condescending treatment.

Biased politics

The Democrat Shuffle, all the rage over in Raleigh, is not the most impressive of dances, but it merits watching. It shows that political maneuvering is alive and well in North Carolina, albeit on the heels of a clumsily executed soft-shoe.

Just before the close of last year's legislative session, Democrat House leaders pushed through a measure to move state and county elections to odd-numbered years, offset from presidential election years. Now it's up to Tar Heel voters to decide, in a May 6 referendum, if they want the plan implemented.

If the public recognizes a lemon when it sees one, the measure doesn't stand a chance — especially if Gov. James Martin's campaign against it, begun last week, attracts enough attention.

At its worst, the plan represents a contemptible partisanship. It passed the Democrat-controlled General Assembly conspicuously after the 1984 elections, when numerous Republicans in North Carolina and other states rode easily into public office on the impressive coattails of Ronald Reagan. The correlation is obvious: No state and local elections in a presidential election year, no coattail

effect. And that usually means fewer Republicans in office.

But no, say the plan's supporters, they're not exercising self-serving bias, just improving the elections process by not bombarding the voter with too many candidates at once. Even if that's true, the plan's implicit prospect of about one election a year — a presidential face-off one year, a state-local match the next, a U.S. Senate horserace the year after that, a state-local contest after that, and so on, with an intermission only every 12 years — promises a kind of hell no human being deserves.

Besides, spreading elections out in such a way may very well dilute voter interest instead of crystallizing it. Political directions are best charted when federal, state and, sometimes, local elections are held at the same time. Voters are better able to place candidates into a more inclusive context and vote accordingly.

If a politician rides another's coattails, so be it; that's a justified, healthy feature of the electoral game. Just because Democrats don't have their own Ronald Reagan is no reason to circumvent common political sense.

The Daily Tar Heel

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Tar Heel Forum

Rape awareness vital to women, men

Sally Pont
 Guest Writer

What I admire most about the Union Human Relations Committee's program, "Confronting Rape: A Week of Awareness," is the way it promotes a thorough and constructive form of education. The program confronts the general problems of rape and speaks to the specific needs of women on this campus.

In general, education about rape can be positive in ways that even educators may not suspect. Not only does the program provide information on how to avoid rape and how to gain the physical strength to combat rape through self-defense, but it gives women the courage to speak out against the oppression of this particular crime and to band together in such movements of solidarity as "Take Back the Night."

It is a shame that some women, often the strongest, ignore education. They feel that awareness only imposes fear on women, denigrates their confidence in themselves and the society around them and completely subjugates their lives to oppressive forces that remain unseen, unmet and therefore unreal. Awareness seems, in effect, to be as psychologically and physically imposing as rape itself, because it locks women inside, away from the rest of the world.

Still, what is the alternative? If women deny awareness and endeavor to live "freely," they make themselves vulnerable to the most personally affrontive form of oppression that they might ever face. In the choice between awareness and actual rape, women can only choose one option.

The active avoidance of education is so common and so dangerous. Such fundamentals as statistics of rape reports, which are easily ignored because of their impersonality, are relevant to our lives because we walk the same streets as those nameless numbers did when they were raped. Women sidestep such information, choosing to rely on their own strength and luck, unaware that real strength can only come from a confrontation with rape.

On Monday and Wednesday of Rape Awareness Week, The Tin Drum Theatre Group will respond to this problem by chanting rape statistics over and over until they reach a frightening crescendo. That manner of confrontation imposes those statistics onto our senses in such a way that we cannot depersonalize them.

The rest of the program for this week devoted to rape awareness is equally constructive. In addition to discussions, presentations and movies focusing on the general issues of sexual assault and a workshop on self-defense for women, several events are dedicated to a form of rape that is rarely spoken of, but occurs in nearly

half the cases of reported rape: date rape.

Those concerned with rape awareness and rape rehabilitation stress the fact that countless numbers of date rapes go unreported. Educators feel that the fact that date and acquaintance rapes go unreported indicates the uncertainty surrounding the issue. The fact is, no one can quite define it. Expectations between college-aged men and women are nebulous, causing confused attitudes that accept forced intercourse as a social norm. Men regard sex as their right, and women don't know better than to acquiesce.

To challenge this degeneration of male-female relations, the Human Relations Committee is presenting a mock trial on Tuesday night in Great Hall to present a particular case in which a woman asserts that she was forced to have intercourse with her date, while the man states that no force took place at all. The situation is as nebulous as the notion of date rape itself, but by the end of the trial, perhaps date rape may at last be defined.

What ought to emerge from the trial, and indeed from the rest of the week, is respect for women. The law defends women against rape. Out of understanding of the law, men ought to respect women's rights, and women ought to respect themselves. Only through that respect will women ever be free of oppression.

Sally Pont is a senior English major from Northford, Conn.

Lesson no. 1

To the editor:
 It's springtime . . . time for the annual outbreak of bad grammar. You hear it everywhere: "Do you want to lay out in the sun?" or, worse yet, "Yesterday I laid out in the sun."

Okay. In the first place, laying in the sun, or in any public place, is illegal (not to mention immoral). When you sunbathe, you lie in the sun. The past tense of lie is lay; therefore, if you sunbathed yesterday, then yesterday you lay in the sun.

Yes, I'm an English major and I can't take it anymore.

And while we're at it: when did "a lot," as in "I like you a lot," become one word? It isn't. If this trend continues, pretty soon we'll see sentences like "I had agood time" and "I want aloaf of bread."

"It's" is a contraction of "it is," just like "you're" is a contraction of "you are" and "who's" is a contraction of "who is." We do not say "The French Club held it's (it is) meeting at two o'clock." We do not say "I hope you're (you are) classes are interesting." We do not say "Who's (who is) suntan lotion is this?"

What's (what is) really bad about this? NO ONE CARES. The people who bothered to read this letter are going to toss it aside and say, "Let's go lay out in the sun." It is too late to stop this scourge of the English language. But I feel better now, anyway.

Sally Pearsall
 Junior
 English/Journalism

Stop, litterbugs

To the editor:
 One of our university's greatest attributes is its beautiful campus. At no time of the year is Carolina more beautiful than in the spring. Everyone loves the blooming trees and green grass. We all enjoy relaxing on the lawn between classes. How truly sad it is that at this time of year the University is covered with trash.

Littering this beautiful campus is inexcusable! How difficult is it to carry your paper cup or candy bar wrapper to the nearest trash can? I am aware that this campus does not have enough trash receptacles, but that is no excuse. We can all take the time to properly dispose of litter.

Every student would agree that Carolina is one of the most



beautiful campuses in the country. Therefore, every student should take pride in maintaining that reputation.

Traci Austell
 Sophomore
 Education

Open your eyes

To the editor:
 Why are University officials so vigorously defending ARA in the face of widespread student opposition? What led Associate Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs James Cansler to the conclusion that most students are satisfied with ARA (ARA officials say students like present food service . . . March 26) just one week after Student Congress joined a coalition of other student groups to oppose the renewal of ARA's contract? The other groups were the Executive Branch of Student Government, the Residence Hall Association, the Black Student Movement and the Labor Support Group.

Does the administration think it can continue to ignore student opinion like it did during the George Gamble affair or during the meal plan conspiracy? Does James Cansler think students are lying when they say they have been served rotten meat by ARA, or that employees are lying about horrible working conditions?

Perhaps administrators are trying to defend the indefensible. Students have made their stand.

Letters to the Editor

When will the University acknowledge that it is time for ARA to go?

Marty Leary
 Junior
 History

Going to the dogs

To the editor:
 We, the undersigned, feel that we represent the overwhelming majority of the student body regarding the feature of March 18, "Fraternity pets loyal to house." We are certain that everyone gives a flaming flea collar about Nugget and Reuben. In fact, students across the University were concerned with Reuben "messing" on the Sigma Nu house dog.

Let's face it — the majority of people at this university have never, nor will, come in contact with a pet sometime in their lives. We are certainly glad that there were so many astute observations made throughout the story. A prime example was the extraordinary insight by Mike Nichols: "It's great, everybody loves the dogs. I have a couple at home, so I like having these around here." Simply amazing, huh?

Then, of course, we have Peter Carr enlightening the readers with his pure genius. Pete actually has

enough intelligence to realize that it takes a lot more than petting and playing with a dog to make it a worthwhile pet. Gee, Pete, thanks for the advice.

The photo that went with the story was quite remarkable. It certainly is an honor to see someone playing "get the stick" with that amazing canine Reuben. The poor photographer sent to record those live-action shots of Pete and his miracle fraternity dog. Certainly, we were truly amazed by such a wonderful glimmer of fraternity life by learning the Sigma Nu house dog is usually named "Dammit" — truly mind-boggling information for all. Maybe we should call the six o'clock news.

Carr's story is especially intriguing to those of us who have never seen a dog chase a stick. Certainly there are not any in this area who can perform such a remarkable feat of canine coordination.

Thank you for sharing such knowledge with the masses.

Sean Rindge
 Sophomore
 Geography

Michelle Tenhengel
 Sophomore
 Nursing

A little reasoning amid the madness

Murphy, or Murphy's Law fame, probably relished the late-night atmosphere in a newsroom. In the past five weeks, the 94th editorial staff of The Daily Tar Heel has discovered that when the deadline crunch strikes, many minor catastrophes follow. Expect computers to go down or creativity to dry up when you need to write a headline fast.

But we're having a blast. I think we must be a bunch of masochists. Anyway, the staff has weathered the transition and is now nearing some degree of normalcy in publishing UNC's student newspaper. Today's column offers a kind of status report on some of the policies, changes, happenings and results in organizing this newspaper.

Late distribution — Contrary to popular belief, the DTH staff does not want to publish an afternoon newspaper. This has been the most talked-about problem I've heard since becoming editor. We've instituted some changes in our late-night production work that still need refinement. An extra proofreader has eliminated many of the typos that would otherwise slip into the paper; it has also introduced another time-consuming step in the chain of production. The later the paper goes to press, the later it gets in your hands

the next morning. This problem simply needs time to be resolved.

Promotion — Randy Farmer, who has been serving as production editor since mid-February, has been named managing editor of the DTH. Randy's primary duties, overseeing the design and layout of the paper, will be expanded to include some of the administrative and managerial duties of running the paper. He's been doing a bang-up job and is committed to bringing you an outstanding newspaper.

Summer Tar Heel Editor — A weekly tabloid replaces The Daily Tar Heel for the two summer sessions. I'll be taking applications this week to select the summer editor. Anyone who will be enrolled this summer and thinks they want to get involved in this madness is eligible.

The Bottom Line — Every Tuesday and Thursday, this column is designed to bring you humorous, perhaps even insightful comments on

some event. The more bizarre or off-the-wall the topic, the more bizarre or off-the-wall our column develops. The column is written by one of the five editorial desk writers — Stuart Tonkinson, Ed Brackett, Tom Camp, Dewey Messer or myself. We will now end these columns with our initials so you will know where to place the credit, or the blame.

Editorials — While The Bottom Line appears in the editorial column, it is not the same as an editorial. The editorials represent the position of a majority of the editorial desk; The Bottom Line is an individual's work.

Editorial Page Cartoonists — Three campus editorial cartoonists alternately appear on the DTH editorial page: Adam Cohen on Mondays, Bill Cokas on Wednesdays, and Trip Park on Fridays. Each cartoonist has total freedom to express any opinions he chooses to depict.

Newspaper folks, us included, are a curious lot — they gripe a lot and are never satisfied, but that's because most of them strive to assist their readers, and you're a pretty fickle bunch, too. So, feel free to give us your comments, advice, beefs, even praise if the mood strikes.

Jim Zook is a junior journalism and political science major from Little Rock, Ark.

Jim Zook
 Editor