

The Daily Tar Heel

96th year of editorial freedom

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Sending the wrong message

UNC doesn't care about its black students.

board opinion

That's the message Gillian Cell, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, has sent by refusing to consider students' complaints about her proposal to restructure the Office of Student Counseling.

The future of the counseling office has been in doubt since January, when the office's head, Associate Dean Hayden Renwick, announced plans to resign. Renwick had served as a father figure to UNC's minority students for close to 20 years.

After Renwick's announcement, a "committee of students" representing several campus groups asked that their opinions be considered in any plans to replace Renwick or to restructure the office. The students said no administrators responded to their request.

The proposal Cell presented to the Faculty Council last week would restructure the counseling office by placing Elson Floyd, associate dean for academic services, in charge of the office. It would eliminate Renwick's position. Instead, an assistant dean under Floyd would serve as the office's director.

Administrators often accuse students of waiting too long to get

involved, or of complaining after decisions already have been made. The students who visited Cell were not guilty of either of these. They gave Cell a list of their concerns and requested to be involved in any decisions. They were ignored.

But administrators could not ignore the more than 400 students who gathered on the steps of South Building Tuesday to protest Cell's plans. Both Cell and Chancellor Christopher Fordham came out of their offices to hear the protesters. The question now is whether they listened.

Cell said she would not reconsider her proposal. In doing so, she told all of UNC's black students that their opinions about their own counseling service do not matter.

Minority students on this campus need the personal and academic support offered by the counseling office. Reorganizing an office that exists to help those students without consulting them is foolish at best.

Cell's refusal to listen is a slap in the face to all students. They should not have had to march on South Building to force the administration to hear their concerns.

Now, there is more at stake than the Office of Student Counseling. All students have a right to be a part of decisions that affect them. Administrators must learn to respect that right.

Lack of campus art is appalling

Long ago, early man knew a need to express himself. He traced the outline of his hand on cave walls and drew representations of battles and other scenes from his life. Since these early forms of artistic expression, art has become universally recognized as a valuable, even necessary, cultural experience. The appalling lack of art work on UNC's campus does not reflect that need.

Yes, there are a few forms of artistic expression that have managed to survive here, despite vandalous attacks. There is a sculpture in front of Davis Library. It's sort of rusted, and most people make derogatory remarks when they pass by it, but at least it is a form of artistic expression.

The Undergraduate Library also contains a few forms of artistic expression that often draw derisive remarks. And Silent Sam is a statue, but it's really more of a historic marker than an actual work of art.

There are a couple of gargoyles and a statue of a bishop stuck on the outside of Person Hall. They were given to the University by English officials, who didn't want them and took them off Big Ben because they were too weathered. Despite their worn appearance, the gargoyles and the bishop are some of the most interesting art works on campus.

Probably the most accessible display

of art work is the Union Gallery. And Hanes Art Center has a small gallery that usually exhibits student work, but the building is so far removed from central campus that few students make the trek.

As you can tell, examples of art work on campus are few and far between.

The senior class of 1988 is donating money for a fountain that will be placed in front of Bynum Hall. While some graduate students are understandably upset because the fountain will replace their volleyball court, this is a step in the right direction.

This is a large campus, and the proportion of art works to space is very small. The campus needs more art works that everyone can see and enjoy — not just a couple of small galleries and a rusting sculpture. Art promotes creativity and inspires those who observe it to think in new ways and to broaden their horizons.

Future graduating classes, artists and people who wish to make donations to the University should consider giving art works or money for the purchase of art works. Art and other forms of creative expression should be encouraged and readily available to everyone in the University community. — Amy Hamilton

We all need a little Mother Goose

Ian Williams

Wednesday's Child

*Monday's child is fair of face
 Tuesday's child is full of grace
 Wednesday's child is full of woe
 Thursday's child has far to go
 Friday's child is loving and giving
 Saturday's child works hard for a living
 And the child that is born on the Sabbath day
 Is bonny and blithe, and good and gay.*

I've always loved this Mother Goose rhyme; no matter where it's said or seen printed, it always invokes the subconscious urge to call mom and ask her what day of the week it was when you were ejected from the warm comfort of her womb. Chances are that she can't remember either, but if she does, you are stuck with the curse or blessing that the rhyme bestows upon your entire existence. It's a little like astrology, where your personality, mood swings and sex life are dependent on what time of year your parents decided to procreate — except that astrology is a little more comforting. Even moody Scorpius will build churches and cure cancer, but if they were born on a Thursday, they might as well be put to sleep at birth.

Does that seem pretty stupid? I'd hope so, but nonetheless the fact that we feel a twitch of foreboding about that kind of stuff at all leads to the dumpster of the human mind: subconscious superstition. And I'm not talking about lucky bowling shirts and dead grandmothers on Friday the thirteenth; I mean the basic underlying feeling that our entire lives are controlled by the most piddly things imaginable.

We're pretty glib, as individuals — no matter how intelligent we think we are, deep down we always have this horrible feeling that someone else may have more of a clue than we do. I'm sure even Einstein felt the urge a time or two to ask his hairdresser for some nuclear advice. And so we put our mental stock into little sayings and weird actions, thinking that some brilliant soul long ago had walked around a ladder and thus saved his species

from sure extinction. Mother Goose? Obviously this lady had some divine intervention when she made up her clever little ditties. Can you imagine if, in every situation, we struck while the iron was hot and looked before we leaped? How about the "out of sight, out of mind" type girl whose absence made your heart grow fonder? If you ask me, Mother Goose was a paranoid schizophrenic born on a Saturday.

Now, before I have Library Science grad students attacking me in the Pit with their bookbags, screaming about mixed metaphors and misquoting Shakespeare, understand that I mean Mother Goose in the grand sense, that great mystical lady who is a hit at anyone's bedtime. But the weight we give senseless ideas in our lives runs much deeper than that, almost verging on the neurotic. When I was a wee lad in Iowa, I had this consuming notion that there was something innately evil about odd numbers. I would go out of my way to make sure I never had three or five of anything, even if it meant throwing one of them away. I slept with two pillows, ate an even number of Ho-Hos at every picnic, and always flushed the toilet twice. My parents must have thought I had a bladder the size of Pittsburgh. The strange thing was that I continued to do these things unconsciously even as I got older. It was so deeply ingrained in my instincts that even as a freshman in Hinton James, I could feel the shaky urge to yank the Quiet-Flush handle just one more time.

God forbid that I should imply that everyone has these neurotic tendencies, but I think everyone expresses their silly beliefs in some way. Who would dare throw away their fortune inside a cookie at a Chinese restaurant without reading it? And who is not delighted at good news or slightly

worried at bad?

It doesn't stop there; people pay money for these things. There are those Rate Your Romantic Passion machines in arcades, where you insert a quarter, hold the handle and the machine randomly assigns you a romantic light bulb rating. Eternal desolation and impotence befalls the hapless soul who is rated "harmless" or even worse, "CLAMMY."

It's amazing what a role absolute luck plays in our feelings. I was recently at a party that had a reverse raffle going to pick the winner of a trip to the Bahamas. After the drawing, the winner had a certain magical quality about him — the other guests congratulated him with a subtle respect reserved for those who possess something that can't be taught or controlled, even though he did no more than everyone else who entered the contest.

But is there some truth to their feelings of envy? Don't good things keep happening to the same people? Aren't there just a whole hell of a lot of beautiful Tauruses who always win the raffles, get rated "Uncontrollable" at all the arcades and find fortunes that promise Porsches and Swedish masseuses? Before we go dreaming about master races of Sunday babies, remember how history deals with those who think that some people are innately better humans than others. Seems to me that more than a few people have died for stupider reasons than anything my sweet Mother Goose could have told me at bedtime.

And so we go, inexorably joined at the hip with our ignorant Siamese twin, reverent disciples to a religion of luck and circumstance. Whoever created us must be laughing hysterically. So if you'll excuse me, I've got some mirrors to shatter and some black cats to squash with my Volkswagen.

Ian Williams is a junior music and psychology major from Los Angeles who was actually born on a Friday.

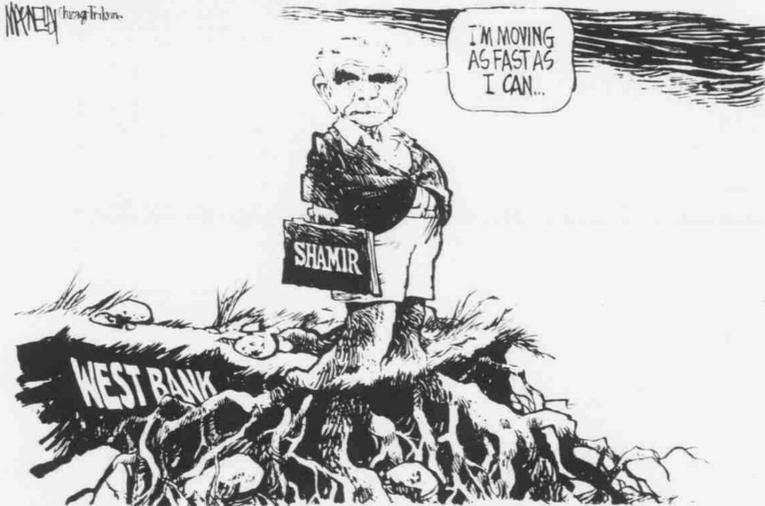
Readers' Forum

Poor coverage incites disgust

To the editor:
 I can no longer hold down my disgust. In fact, I would like nothing more than to vomit all of it over your desk. My extreme repugnance accrues from the inept coverage of a recent magnificent accomplishment by none other than Rob Koll.

Rob Koll, the winningest wrestler in ACC history, four-time All-American, and *National Champion* at 158 pounds, deserves much more than a page 10, short, inconspicuous article in the DTH, downplaying his phenomenal accomplishments. It totally baffles me how someone can achieve such an incredible accomplishment — not only winning nationals, but pinning his opponent in 1:14 — and go virtually unrecognized in DTH coverage.

Because you have already shown your indifference toward Rob Koll's fantastic achievement, then I believe that a good measure of contrition and redemption is required for your careless coverage. Rob Koll is certainly someone we can all admire, respect and thank for representing our



institution in such a grand manner.

TAD WILSON
 Class of 1987

A lottery: that's the ticket

To the editor:
 It is time to change the way we choose our president. I propose that we implement

a lottery system. Anyone who wants to be president can purchase a ticket and then in early November, on prime-time TV, the winner will be drawn.

A lottery system would bring with it a number of significant benefits. All presidential aspirants would have an equal chance. The proceeds from the sale of the lottery tickets could go to reduce the national deficit. The contributions usu-

ally made to political candidates by individuals and PACs could instead be donated to charities and other worthwhile causes. Finally, and most importantly, we would be spared all the mind-numbing clap-trap associated with the usual political campaign.

JONATHAN WOODY
 Junior
 History

Learning process should never end

Peter Filene
 Symposium 1988

As near as I can calculate, I'm in the 43rd grade and still not close to graduating. In other words, I've been in school for all but five years of my life — the first five years. Whereas other people talk in terms of calendar years or fiscal years, I talk in terms of academic years that begin on August 20th or so. Most people move through four natural seasons, but I move through two semester seasons and a long summer.

My non-academic friends react in diverse ways to this collegiate life of mine. Some of them envy or resent that four-month summer vacation. "Four months to read, to write, or to sit around and swat mosquitoes — that's a helluva job you have!" Some barely conceal their pity or scorn that I never made it out into the real world of grownups, profit and loss, and no tenure. "Doesn't it get boring to teach the same old Presidents and world wars to a new crop of kids?" Indeed, after 20 years at Carolina, it's come to the point where I meet former students, now a bit portly and gray and pushing baby strollers, who say: "Still teaching History 115? I remember that course." While they squint nostalgically, I ask myself: "Why am I still doing this? Isn't it time to graduate?"

Once I tried to graduate. In 1970, at the height of the so-called Sixties, I decided that teaching inside a classroom inside a hierarchical university was suffocating me. I wanted freedom from curricular requirements, grading systems, publish-or-perish rules, and all the other impersonal, spontaneous, unexperiential aspects of academe. I decided to work in a youth-crisis center in New Haven, counseling kids and helping Hispanics get federal funds for a medical clinic. That was in June.

By August I was homesick for my

courses, my colleagues and my books. Freedom was just another word for nothing else to do, especially not enough to do with learning and teaching. So back I went to Hamilton Hall and haven't regretted it since.

But let me clear up some possible misunderstandings. Although I have been teaching American history for almost a quarter-century — and in fact have majored in history since my freshman year — I have not at all been doing the same old thing. This is the point of this essay. (At this juncture, I'm embarrassed to realize that I'm about to disobey the topic-sentence rule that I ask my students to obey, so I had better start a new paragraph immediately.)

Learning by definition reaches toward the new, the yet-to-be-known. And being the kind of teacher who enjoys helping others and myself learn, teaching has been for me constantly renewing or — dare I say it? — rejuvenating. Twenty years ago, for example, I was teaching seminars titled "The History of Extremism in America" and "The History of Protest Movements." Fifteen years ago, along with three women graduate students, I launched a course on the history of American women. Ten years ago, feeling the itch to study materials more tangible than ideas floating invisibly in midair or typed on a page, I created a course on the history of photography. Lately, I taught a seminar on biography and fiction.

In other words, so long as I put "the history of" in front of the title, I can get away with teaching it, studying it, enjoying it. For half my life I've majored in history, but it hasn't been the same history. It has changed as I have changed. With each new phase I had to learn new information and new skills, which meant being a student of other people (in UNC summer school, at Duke, at the Carrboro Arts Center, at Rhode Island School of Design) and of books in strange fields.

What does my story have to do with yours? Well, if you're an undergraduate about to get out from under and graduate, I hope you don't tuck those 120 hours beneath your arm and stop learning. If you do, then I and my fellow teachers will have failed. After Commencement, there will be 50 or 60 years of life for you to fill with something, and I hope that something is not simply the same young you.

If you want inspiration, consider what my friends have been doing in their thirties, forties or even older. There's John, who earned a pilot's license. And Erica, who's taking her first drawing class. And Pete, a carpenter who's writing a novel about Vietnam. And Bob, who found that he hated being a lawyer and is working on a Ph.D. in Renaissance Literature. And Sue, mother of two boys in junior high school, who decided at age 35 to go to school herself — medical school.

Keep on truckin', they used to say in the Sixties. Keep on learnin', is how I say it now.

Peter Filene is a Bowman and Gordon Gray professor of history from Chapel Hill.

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