

Opinion

When the forum becomes the debate: the Critic

Magazine supports self-reliance, not racism

As publisher of The Carolina Critic, I welcome Mark Leeper's criticism of our magazine which appeared in the Nov. 9 DTH ("Conservatism an easy ride for well-borns"). Unfortunately, Mr. Leeper chose to rest his argument more on charges of racism rather than upon a more rational discussion of the issues raised in our November edition.

Before I answer each of his charges, let me first outline the vision under which most of the Critic staff operates. We see the value of individual liberty to be the primary prerequisite to a just and happy society. We also note that historically the power of the state is the most prevalent enemy of liberty in most of its forms. Coercion by the state is rarely the most effective way to cure social ills; instead we posit the notion that, given more freedom to run their own lives, people tend to solve their own problems more effectively than government intervention does.

Mr. Leeper argues that our call for the defunding of the Black Student Movement (BSM) is a racially-motivated slap in the face to black students at UNC. Clearly, this is far from the truth. Given our disrespect for any actions which inherently abridge freedom of choice, the Critic has consistently argued for the "defunding" of all student groups, not just the BSM. By forcing students to fund projects or groups with which they do not agree, the current system violates the principle of liberty on a daily basis. One may legitimately disagree with our pro-liberty position, but it is hardly a racist doctrine.

Another accusation made by Mr. Leeper is that our criticism of a proposed minority scholarship for UNC students is further evidence of our racism. It was certainly anticipated that our opposition to special

David Hood
Guest Writer

treatment for blacks could be seen as racism by the careless observer. However, I am disappointed that such an obviously thoughtful individual as Leeper could come to that conclusion. Our point was that discrimination on the basis of race is wrong regardless of whether it is against whites or blacks, and would also violate stated University policy which bans such special treatment with public money. If the scholarship were to be funded with private money, then we withdraw our opposition to the proposal. Our objection was to the use of tax dollars in a racially-biased scholarship program.

To his credit, Mr. Leeper does soberly and rationally present the case for government-sponsored discrimination in favor of blacks. Unfortunately, it is absolutely wrong. He argues for special consideration for blacks to make up for past governmental discrimination against them. This ignores the fact that such past discrimination was wrong primarily because it violated the individual freedom of blacks, and others who didn't wish to fund racist policies. An affirmative action program does exactly the same thing, except that non-blacks are the target. Our point is that the end does not justify the means; that having a just, fair process is more important than trying to use an unjust, unfair process to achieve certain otherwise desirable goals.

In terms of affirmative action at UNC, it is our position that this policy only makes a bad situation worse. By lowering the admission standard, or specially funding the education of black students, there is the unfair and

essentially racist implication that blacks cannot stand on their own two feet. If blacks are subject to poor primary/secondary education, making them in need of special consideration, then the place to fix that inequity is not in college, but during lower education. Otherwise you raise the erroneous speculation that blacks at UNC are only here "on quota," which is unfair and demeaning to those who would have qualified in a racially-unbiased system.

Next Leeper takes exception to our pointing out that whites currently make up the minority in California public schools. Our purpose in bringing the matter up is to refute the notion that SAT and CAT tests are racially biased because whites make up a majority of students. It is not the test that is the problem here, it is our educational system. In their efforts to blame the messenger (the test) rather than the message (educational inequity), supporters of affirmative action for blacks are ignoring the real issue.

His other points (about CIA protesters, etc.) are best left to other articles, perhaps in the pages of the next Critic. My purpose here is simply to rebut the notion that we are racists or compassionless "conservatives." What our magazine is interested in is a thorough and complete discussion of governmental policies and their alternatives. Indeed I hope Mr. Leeper will himself contribute to the debate taking place on the pages of our journal. However, I also hope that further rash accusations of racism or any other "ism" can be resisted by those who wish to differ from the position presented by our editors and writers.

David Hood is a first-year law student from Carboro.

Choose Ferris Bueller Society over the Critic

Chris Osborn
Guest Writer

Although this letter was in part provoked by Mark Leeper's review of the latest issue of The Carolina Critic ("Conservatism an easy ride for well-borns," Nov. 9), let me say that I am not writing to defend the Critic or even conservatism *per se*.

As Leeper says, some of the statements in the most recent Critic are somewhat offensive. When I first saw the statement calling for defunding of the Black Student Movement, I indicated my distress to my editor. The views expressed in "The Critical Eye" are largely views of the editorial staff. Not everyone on the staff ascribes to the particular sentiment behind each statement. I personally despise racial discrimination and do not condone the printing of that statement.

I am partially to blame for the overzealous use of the word "tendinitis." Since writing my article concerning CIA protests I have gotten to know some of the protesters personally, and I have read some of their sources. Many of them are committed as a result of personal experiences in hotbeds of political turmoil such as South Africa. Therefore, it is unfair to say they are just following a trend. While maintaining disapproval of the tactics employed in last year's protest, I commend the protesters for their recent educational protest of the CIA; no one's rights were infringed upon, and some people might have actually learned something, as I did.

I also urge all students to condemn publicly the death threats made on two student activists. The right to live free from intimidation is as important as the right to dissent. I also apologize for assuming that all CFD members are activist rebels with the same political ideology. Similarly, do not assume that either the Critic or the College Republicans necessarily

speak for every conservative or Republican on campus.

Obviously, I am disgruntled with conservatism, such as the assumption that all Americans are honest, unprejudiced and intelligent enough to make decisions without some guiding form of government. However, Leeper unfairly generalizes that all conservatives are racist. Leeper says that being a WASP is an automatic ticket to getting "pretty much what we want" while being born black is an automatic resignation to failure and distress unless government intervention equals things out. Such a false pronouncement is insulting to blacks.

Each side is guilty of hasty generalizations and self-interest. Promises of welfare legislation are legalized vote-buying while promises of corporate tax breaks have an equally distasteful financial motive. Most politicians want primarily to be elected, and in seeking election, confine their policies to soundbites and oversimplified economic theories. On several key issues neither conservatives nor liberals can claim to be right; the answers lie in finding a happy medium, bringing me to my main point: "moderate" is not a dirty word.

One should not make a personal response to an issue based on what beliefs his espoused doctrine says he should think. Currently, I am tossed about on a turbulent sea of political chaos, armed with a fleet of questions but no answers. I have decided to sit on the proverbial fence in the field of political thought in order to avoid stepping in the bullstuff on either side.

However, I would like some companionship, for certainly there are a few other people who will admit they don't have all the answers either. So I am starting a new campus organization, tentatively titled Ferris Bueller (because he didn't believe in "-isms" either), with a threefold purpose: to provide a forum for confused, nonpartisan thinkers to sort out these problems, to provide a support group for these people, and to encourage an appreciation of the mind's ability to make its own decisions as an alternative to reflex political responses.

Our "therapy sessions" will consist of some killer activities, including debates of troubling issues, nature walks and discussions of the fine arts. Other ideas include listening to R.E.M., thrash dancing to release tension and reading Bloom County.

If any of these ideas sound interesting, then The Ferris Bueller Society is for you. If you want to discuss why the world does not always make sense, and you recognize that workable solutions to complex problems will not be as simple as the "wimp and the shrimp" say, then you need Ferris, and Ferris needs you. If you had any trouble casting your vote Nov. 8, please write me at 22 Old West. From the chaos of our questions order will arise. We may be slower to make our commitments, but we will be more serious and dedicated when we do. Please, all similarly tortured persons join me in my quest for the happy medium, the harmonious balance, or the Tao, which will bring us closer to true understanding.

Now, if you'll excuse me, I'm going to take a massive "dandelion break."

Chris Osborn is a freshman English and political science major from Albany, Ga.



Anti-abortion a selfish ploy for votes, support

Julie Gammill
Guest Writer

George Bush is my new president, and I am terrified. Four more years of a Republican administration could easily tilt the presently fragile conservative/liberal balance of the Supreme Court when Mr. Bush continues the Reagan tradition of appointing conservative judges. With a conservative majority, the court's reversal of the *Roe vs. Wade* decision to legalize abortion is imminent; however, my concern reaches beyond the impact of such a decision on our society. I am equally angered by the hypocrisy of "life-loving" George Bush and Dan Quayle, who misrepresent their opposition to abortion as morally and religiously motivated.

For the Republican party, the abortion issue is an effective marketing tool. By promising to "rid" American society of the problem of abortion, they attract many religiously conservative voters to the party, offering a so-called moral solution. I believe the elite leaders of the Republican party care very little about the "rights of the unborn" that right-to-lifers fight for; rather, they can think only in the number of votes that their party can gather on this issue alone. Thus, many Republican politicians are merely paying lip service to these groups, gaining votes through a situation that should have never become a religious or political issue to begin with.

The farce of the religious front to the Republican's abortion stance surfaces in the socio-economic reality of the abortion issue; the rich will always be able to receive safe abortions regardless of abortion's legality in the United States. In the real world, money can buy anything, including reputation-saving abortions. George Bush can claim, "I'm against abortion. I'm for adoption. I'm for life," until he is blue, but the fact remains that women will continue to have abortions no matter what the law says, and only wealthy women will be able to buy safe ones. Meanwhile, those of the poor and middle classes will resort to the horrendous back-

room abortions that America knew before the *Roe vs. Wade* decision, and Humanitarian George will have a skyrocketing maternal death rate on his dirty hands.

This conclusion leads me to believe that the Republicans' anti-abortion kick is actually part of their master plot to oppress the poor of America. Their plan: Eliminate the abortion option, continue to cut back birth control education and funding for the lower class, allow the poor to continue to over-populate and restrict or eradicate social programs that would help people break the never-ending chain of poverty. The result: A population explosion in poverty-ridden areas and a rapidly growing gap between the rich and the poor.

As a female, I am frightened by the prospect of having my rights to personal choice concerning my body revoked; however, the scary side of the issue is that I am fighting a wolf in sheep's clothing. George Bush pretends to oppose abortion for moral and religious reasons, but I truly believe that his abortion position is merely a political move to appease the conservative body of voters, his financial supporters. Many politicians will do anything to stay in office, including restricting a freedom that they can still keep just to get a few votes and a few dollars.

The central controversy has been blurred, but a sickening truth remains: the plight of American women rests in the hands of a leader whose head is in his wallet. We can kiss *Roe vs. Wade* goodbye, because our country will surely pay the social consequences of electing shortsighted, money-motivated George Bush and Co. to office.

Julie Gammill is a sophomore journalism major from Cary.

Leave the campus as you found it: clean

David Ball
Guest Writer

Like all South Campus residents, I am privileged enough to see more of the campus than those who live "up North."

Some complain about the treks they must make daily, but I've actually grown to enjoy walking along the many footpaths that crisscross the University. These walks have given me a chance to enjoy the beauty of the campus as I walk to and from my dorm.

Although each path is unique, I've begun to notice one common denominator along every one: trash. University students have made their presence known by throwing litter all

over the place. Coke cans, plastic bags, even copies of this newspaper are strewn by the sides of every path.

Once it's there, it won't go away until someone else picks it up. If no one bothers to clean up, the trash will remain until long after we graduate. Is this the kind of legacy we want to leave Chapel Hill?

The only thing that stands between the present situation and a cleaner

campus is laziness. People should be responsible for their own litter. This isn't a problem that affects other people: it harms the place where we live and go to school. There are maintenance workers hired to clean up the campus, but they shouldn't be necessary.

The next time you finish a drink or a newspaper or whatever, wait until you see a trash can before throwing it away. Better yet, throw your cans into one of the recycling bins sponsored by the Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC).

If your friends litter, pick up after them and remind them that their

laziness is spoiling the campus for everyone else.

Chapel Hill is a beautiful university, and we have an obligation to pass it on to future classes in the same condition in which we found it. Surely no one would want visitors to have the impression that the University is a dilapidated dump, populated by apathetic students too immature to have learned the pre-school lesson, "Always pick up after yourself."

David Ball is a freshman political science major from Atlanta.

Life in a one-dimensional world just doesn't cut it politically

Randy Bullock
Guest Writer

Well, it's over now. All the -isms have been hooped and the airwaves are back to their rightful owners. All that is left are the soft, sucking sounds of the Democrats licking their cantaloupe-sized wounds.

I'll say right off that I am a non-partisan observer and speak merely as someone who regularly shuts off a football game when it is 73-10, no matter whom I am rooting for. The situation I witnessed the other night was similar to watching the United States declare war on the Swiss Society of Ologists.

So why the -sidedness, especially in what was almost universally

considered to be a "lesser of two evils" election? I figured it must be something subtle, something apparently innocent, an intrinsic flaw that, like a purloined letter, has gone undetected — maybe something as fundamental as the very terminology used in differentiating between the two groups running.

I don't mean the party names either. "Republican" and "Democrat" ceased having any meaning before

they even showed up in the dictionary. Those terms are as meaningless as bumper stickers. I am concerned instead with the terms "right" and "left."

Think about them, not what they mean, but what they imply. First, you have "right," used in such phrases as "right on," "right as rain" and perhaps the most appropriate, "right in your face." Then, there is "left," used in such favorites as "left behind," "left out in the rain" and my favorite, "left to rot." Am I making myself clear?

The problem is not just that we are adopting the remnants of an archaic British parliamentary system, but that we are unnecessarily exploit-

ing the traditional one-dimensional outlook of the American people. The universal visualization of this system is what invariably amounts to a number line, with the lefts on the negative side of zero, and the rights on the positive side.

So what to do? I would say there is only one fair way to handle it. Start again. Get rid of the narrow-minded one-dimensional means of description, which inadequately reflects the complexity of American politics, and replace it with a system that is abstract enough to represent the true nature of politics. In other words, everyone should be equally in the dark.

exist on our time-space continuum, intergalactic ad campaigns and, better still, an opportunity to find out where all those balloons go that get set free at the primaries are a few possibilities.

We all must seriously consider this. We have been trapped in one dimension long enough. Four years may seem like a long time, but the wheels of change must begin to turn now. If we don't we will all be most rightfully left behind. Thank you.

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