

# The Daily Tar Heel

96th year of editorial freedom

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## History of a landmark decision

The news broke in early February 1986 that Old East and Old West residence halls were slated for conversion to offices. Although administrators assured students that the change wouldn't occur immediately, the conversion seemed to be a foregone conclusion. The Daily Tar Heel reported the plans Feb. 10 and followed with an extra-long editorial Feb. 11 condemning the decision, which was made with no student involvement.

Clearly, the renovation of Old East and Old West was a touchy subject. After all, what's more important to a student than where he lives?

### Sentimental and historic value

The strongly negative student reaction to the decision seemed well justified; University officials had already set a precedent for turning North Campus dorms into office space. Several of the residence halls on North Campus had recently been appropriated for just such purposes. Steele building, Battle-Vance-Pettigrew halls and even Carr Building, where University Housing is located, were all residence halls at one time.

Because Old East and Old West are national historic landmarks (Old East is the oldest university building in the United States), students were especially sensitive to the idea of converting the dorms into offices.

Obviously, officials realized converting the buildings into much-needed North Campus office space would be less expensive than renovating and restoring them as historic residence halls.

### SAVING OLD EAST, WEST

2/86: Officials tell DTH the dorms will be converted to offices.

3/86: Board of Trustees votes to support continuation of dorms as residence halls.

9/86: Officials form Old East/Old West Task Force, an advisory committee of students and administrators.

3/87: Architectural firm report recommends restoring the buildings for use as dorms.

4/87: Task force recommends that Old East and Old West remain all-male dorms. Also submits plans to renovate and restore the buildings.

### Making student opinion heard

In response to the stink raised by students upset at the prospect of losing Old East and Old West, administrators established a task force. The Old East/Old West Task Force was composed of student leaders such as Student Body President Bryan Hassel; Residence Hall Association President Ray Jones and later Jones' successor, Kelly Clark; representatives from dorms in the area; and several administrators, including Director of University Housing Wayne Kuncl and Donald Boulton, vice chancellor and dean of student affairs.

By creating the task force, the administration publicly confirmed its interest in gathering student opinion on the dorm renovations. However, the group was established after the initial discussions had taken place. Also, because it was merely advisory, the task force had no power aside from suggesting an appropriate use for Old East and Old West to the Board of Trustees.

After the task force consulted with an architectural firm, the most feasible option emerged: Make some structural changes, add modern conveniences and allow the buildings to remain as dormitories.

### Who gets to live there?

Students had won the proverbial battle, but the war wasn't over yet. The students wanted a say in how the residence halls would be renovated and in who would live there when the restorations were complete. Signals from the University were confusing



Playing David to the University's Goliath?

this point.

The Board of Trustees had supported the continuation of the buildings as all-male residence halls — a suggestion that seemed to match the desires of current residents exactly.

Another idea came from Gillian Cell, dean of General College and the College of Arts and Science, who issued a proposal to reserve Old East and Old West as honors dorms. Cell wanted outstanding students and student leaders to be housed in the Old East and Old West.

But most student leaders didn't support the idea. They feared such a program could cause elitism, and isolate leaders from the students they were to represent. The proposal had limited support and is unlikely to be implemented.

Of course, it's clear that the buildings will remain as residence halls, and it seems likely that the long-standing tradition of all-male residents will continue. But until the renovations and restorations are completed for the University's 200th birthday celebration in 1993, students won't know for sure who will be eligible to live in the dorms.

Students can only hope the buildings will continue as all-male residence halls for ordinary students as well as outstanding ones.

It's the responsibility of students, then, to pressure the administration until the job is done to students' satisfaction.

### Lessons to be learned

Several factors contributed to positive impact of student involvement in the decisions about Old East and Old West. First and foremost, the Board of Trustees was on the students' side; obviously, when the trustees talk, the administration listens.

Another integral part of this process was The Daily Tar Heel. From frequent articles to editorials to letters to the editor, the DTH performed its first duty to the student body — to be a watchdog of the administration and to keep students informed.

The most outstanding students in this conflict, however, were Ray Jones and Kelly Clark. They never backed down before the administration. Their first duty was to stand for the rights and desires of the residents of Old East and Old West, and this they did relentlessly.

Also, Jones and Clark did something all student leaders can learn from: they wrote everything down. Everything. This prevents later confusion about what was said at any given time, and it helps future student officers when they begin to deal with the administration.

Only by staying on the backs of administrators did Jones and Clark force the administration to consider seriously the issue of converting the residence halls. In the same way, the DTH forced students to consider the conversion as well. A strong power for students on this campus is spreading the word — letting a student representative know something is not right or writing a letter to the editor. If students cause enough conflict, trustees or high-level administrators responsible for decisions inevitably come under public scrutiny. Then, the people who wield the most power must become involved.

## A columnist down in the mouth, literally

Bill Yelverton  
 Notes from the Abyss

There are times when it's nice to have this space to fill every week, when I really have something to say come immediately to mind. I am a vocal person, and I like to talk with people about what they are thinking and why. I do this everyday, and I'm sure there are those out there who would like me to shut up for a while. Well, if it were not for this space this week, they would have their wish.

You see, I'm in pain right now. It's not because my editor is whipping my back each time I glance up from the computer screen. I didn't fall down the stairs and twist my ankle. I didn't slip in the shower and slam my head against the porcelain. I didn't spill hot coffee down my front on the way to class. I would have preferred to have any of these things happen to me this week, even all of them compared to what did happen. On Wednesday I visited my orthodontist. Since that time I have been unable to think, write, speak or eat.

This pain should come as no surprise to me. I have worn braces for over a quarter of my life. What started with a seemingly innocent appliance known as a palate separator has become an eight year struggle to save my mouth.

I remember thinking how neat my braces were in the beginning. Those little things attached to my teeth would give me the perfect smile in no time. I quickly learned to hate them.

My family had just moved to Ohio. I was the new kid in town, completely uncoordinated, a little shy and I wore glasses. I already had an image problem and braces were not going to add to my popularity. Instead they added to my list of nicknames. "Brace Face," and "Tinsel

Teeth," now joined "Geek," "Spaz," "Brain," and "Four Eyes" in my list of pseudonyms.

I finally grew out of my shyness, and my coordination has improved somewhat but the braces stayed with me. I thought they would be on for a year, maybe two. The orthodontist's words were always the same, "You're looking good. We're making real progress. See you in four weeks." With that he would bend the wires and send me home for a week of pain as my teeth contorted themselves into interesting new shapes.

Each visit I would hope to hear those magic words, "We're all finished up in here. We'll need an extra long appointment next time to take those suckers off." Instead I would look up into my orthodontist's perfect set of teeth and hear, "I've read about a radical new treatment for cases like yours. I want to try it out next time. I'll see you in four weeks." This continued for over four years.

Most of the milestones of my life have passed with braces steadfastly attached to my molars. Instead of enjoying my first real kiss I was trying not to maim the girl. I had perfected the process by the time my junior and senior proms rolled around. I refused to smile for my first driver's license picture, but I learned how to smile without showing any teeth for my senior yearbook photo.

The day before I left home to come to

Carolina my orthodontist took off the braces. He said that he had done as much as he could do and that as long as my jaw didn't grow any more I would be fine. I didn't know it at the time, but it was analogous to the fairy godmother telling Cinderella that she had to be in by midnight.

I arrived at Carolina with naked teeth. I felt invincible, ready to take on the world unburdened by the weight of metal in my mouth. So many things were easier. I could smile without worrying that I was exposing someone to broccoli casserole remains. When I spoke, I no longer spit all over myself. I was in heaven.

Last April the clock struck midnight. On a routine checkup my orthodontist informed me that the worst had happened. I would have to have surgery or face the risk of not being able to speak or eat by the time I was 30. It was a tough choice, but now I'm back in braces getting ready for the surgery.

These are no ordinary braces though. The orthodontist's assistant who changed my wires the other day told me these might hurt a bit more than usual. Playing the role of seasoned veteran I assured her that I had my Tylenol ready and could handle the pain. She simply laughed and inserted some kind of titanium steel wire that doesn't bend.

Since that time I haven't been able to move or think about anything other than my teeth. No social issues, no pleas to attend Craft Fest, no redeeming value at all, just a rambling moan. Hopefully I'll be back up to speed next week.

Bill Yelverton is a senior English major from Darien, Conn.

## Readers' Forum

### Put Dale on pg. 3

To the editor:

Aren't we all getting a little tired of hearing about Dale McKinley? Do you ever wonder why each minor development in his case makes the front page? Does anyone really care about the CIA anyway? I think that Dale is getting way too much free publicity. We only give his cause additional support every time we print new articles about him.

I think that it was ridiculous for his picture to be on the front page of the DTH on Nov. 28. Isn't it really obvious that is exactly what he wanted when he decided to wear a Cocaine Importers of America T-shirt? Why don't we just give him a daily column to let us know everything he thinks? Better yet, how about a staff position on the DTH? Or does he already have one? Pardon my conjecture, but since when has Dale been so opposed to cocaine anyway? Maybe I just missed his "Just say no to drugs" protest.

Isn't it really obvious what Dale is trying to do now? His intentions are very clear. He is trying to skip town before any resolution can be made regarding his case. That is why he walked out on the court earlier this fall and is now claiming that his rights are being violated. I hope there is a law somewhere stating that a student cannot receive a degree from this University with a case still pending in the Graduate Court. I think that it would be a terrible breach of justice to let him off with no trial just because he is about to graduate and leave the country. Wouldn't this set a rather dangerous precedent for the future of student government?

I admit that I'm interested in what happens to Dale's case. Not because of his ideas or CIA protests, but because of a



dangerous precedent which may be set if he is allowed to walk on the charges against him. After all, I'm still waiting patiently for the next takeover of a newspaper in Lumberton. So let us know what happens. But please... don't bombard us with pictures and articles about Dale and the rest of his entourage every time they plan a protest or open their mouths on campus.

BILL CRAVER  
 Sophomore  
 Economics

### Steamed about Rice

To the editor:

King Rice — a waste of scholarship? One that will always be remembered as messing up the finals? Not a good player? Now I have a question that has been bothering me for months: Why? Why does everybody from the DTH to

Sports Illustrated still insist on talking about King Rice's "mess-ups" that occurred last year? You don't know how sick and tired I get everytime I pick up an article to read about King and all I read about is his "disasters." I'm sure he's sick of it, too. For once, I would like to read something positive about him without a mention of his mistakes. King realizes he made mistakes (he can't help but remember, thanks to the media), so he doesn't need to be continually reminded. He's been through enough! Can't you see that he's worked on improving his game this summer? I wish the media would stop harping on last year and concentrate more on this year. Give the man a break... leave him alone! And to King — good luck! I'm rootin' for you, and I know you'll do well this year... so well soon the media will be raving about you!

AMY WILLIAMS  
 Freshman  
 RTVMP

### Gun down this ad

To the editor:

No sale! In the future, when would-be advertisers bring you class A trash, like the recent ad with a handgun pointed at a student's head, please say "No!" Add yukety yuk to Yackety Yak!

ANN EVANS  
 Faculty  
 School of Nursing

### Letters policy

The DTH reserves the right to edit letters for space, clarity and vulgarity. Remember, brevity is the soul of wit.

Students should include name, year in school, major, phone number and home town. Other members of the University community should include similar information.

## Trivializing cruelty to animals is beastly

Alan Hall  
 Guest Writer

The nice thing about living in a free society is that each individual has a right to express his opinions. So I was not so agitated when I perused the letters page of the Nov. 28 DTH and saw immediately J. Christian's political cartoon, "Trivial Pursuits." I knew I had the right to express my disagreement with him.

While I am not unaware of the excess of horror and pain that is currently rampant in the world (usually because some one group of human beings is perpetuating said pain on some other), I can not agree that those who use their high profile and/or high energies to champion animal rights are pursuing trivialities. That is entirely a matter of opinion, and one to which I must reluctantly admit J. Christian is entitled. I, however, am incensed more by the possibility that many people will agree with him than I am that he holds the opinion in the first place.

Champions of justice are usually people defending those who, for one reason or another, cannot defend themselves. Animals top this list. Outside of killing the hunter who comes to capture it, an animal has no defense against incarceration and exposure to any kind of test, treatment or torture its captors see fit to inflict upon it. These creatures who are supposedly our neighbors have no rights, no recourse, no avenue for redress of grievances, that have been so carefully preserved for all of

mankind (at least, supposedly, in the United States). Unless some human animal seeks to protect those who cannot defend themselves, there will very soon be no animals on this planet other than human beings and those few species raised as food sources. Witness the ever-increasing lists of extinct species who will never be seen again on this earth, not because of natural selection, but simply because man did not give enough of a damn about any life form but his own to keep it from happening.

There are those who feel that medical science could not exist without lesser species to experiment upon. This is a reasonable argument for humane experimentation on animals, but it does not give us the right to exploit and deplete the population of any other species in favor of our own. Whales are helpless against whaling vessels. Mice (yes, and hamsters, too, J. Christian) are helpless against the lab technicians who inject, subject and reject their bodies every day to diseases that are killing us, let alone them. Diane Fossey's mountain gorillas are helpless against poachers. Dogs and cats are used daily in experimentation; do you happen

to own a pet, Mr. Christian? I would be interested to know if you would allow your pet to be subjected to the kinds of experimentation I have seen forced on others of the species.

Man is not, as a member of the biological chain, tolerant of other species. If it's in our way, then it better get the hell out, or it's not going to survive. And if it benefits man, then another species ought to be proud to be wiped out in the pursuit of scientific knowledge. This is what your cartoon says to me, Mr. Christian. It speaks just as loudly as terrorism, war, poverty and all the other nouns that show up in your cartoon, of man's inability to care about any but himself.

I applaud Bob Barker. I applaud Doris Day, Diane Fossey and the hundreds upon hundreds of other people, both famous and not, who seek to end the unjust horror we inflict on the animal life of this Earth. It is no less a just and worthy cause than the end of hunger, the end of war, the end of man's inhumanity to man. If we can end the suffering we have caused those who cannot combat it, then maybe we can learn to live with our human neighbors, eventually, too.

Alan Hall is a staff member at the Law Library.