

# The Daily Tar Heel

96th year of editorial freedom

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## Putting the 'B' back in BCC

In the student body president campaign, there has been talk of establishing a multi-cultural center in place of the planned Black Cultural Center. The reasoning behind the talk seems sound: Why single out one culture to preserve when so many other worthy and diverse cultures could be included?

Certainly, blacks aren't the only individuals struggling to make their way in a largely white and often unreceptive community. Asians, Native Americans and other minorities could all benefit from a center dedicated to their culture.

Unfortunately, the situation is not that simple. Students have fought long and hard for a BCC; finally, their work seems to be paying off, as the center has gathered administrative support and bureaucratic momentum. The administration has spent valuable time and money consulting experts, investigating possibilities and hiring Margo Crawford as the center's director. To submit new proposals for a multi-cultural center at this point would rob the project of at least five years of momentum.

The BCC is more than just a monument to black music and literature, and it's far more than a convenient social gathering place. If established, the BCC will serve as a symbol to blacks of the administration's concern for minority issues. By

making UNC's environment more comfortable for blacks, the BCC will also be a useful tool in black recruitment and retention.

By attracting more black students, a BCC would make the University more culturally diverse as a whole. Thus, everyone would benefit from increased contact and interaction with individuals of different beliefs and cultures — not just those inquisitive and courageous enough to visit a cultural center.

In an ideal situation, students wouldn't have to make a special trip to a room in the Student Union to encounter unique cultures; instead, students would be surrounded by such cultures for the duration of their education. It would also be ideal if every minority group at UNC could be represented by its own cultural center. Unfortunately, the resources simply don't exist to construct a building for everyone who wants or deserves one; nor to build a cultural center large enough to do justice to every culture at UNC.

Black students have struggled for a concrete commitment from the administration to minority concerns. They have earned the right to a BCC. Aggressively pursuing the creation of a multi-cultural center in its place will only set back the entire project and leave students with nothing. — **Matt Bivens**

## Prison conditions hazardous

Recent investigations into conditions within prisons throughout the nation have shown one common and troubling factor — overcrowding. They also have graphically revealed to the American public the violence and filth that results when inmates are squeezed into facilities far too small to accommodate such vast numbers.

North Carolina's prisons are no exception. In 1987, the General Assembly responded to the overcrowding issue by passing a law limiting the state inmate population to 18,000. Under this regulation, when the number of inmates begins to approach the limit, officials have 90 days to reduce inmate population. Such "emergency" conditions have occurred five times this year already.

Thus, another problem has been created. In the effort to reduce prison population, an increased number of prisoners are made eligible for parole. This means at five different times this year, convicts who normally would not have been eligible for parole had a chance to be released.

The purpose of sentencing a person to serve a prison term hinges on protecting the public and rehabilitating the inmate so that he or she can become a productive member of society. Early paroles, while helping to alleviate facility overcrowding,

severely impede both goals.

The state attorney general has recommended that the General Assembly study all aspects of North Carolina's prisons in an effort to determine what changes should be made in the justice system. He has recognized continued overcrowding as a pressing problem.

Both the General Assembly and citizens of the state should take his words seriously. This is a situation that must be addressed and changed immediately. Inmates cannot continue to be forced to live in squalor because we do not have adequate correctional facilities, nor should the public suffer because criminals are not serving their terms.

Some government officials have suggested that alternatives to incarceration should be explored. For example, smaller facilities for those convicted of less serious crimes could be built; inmates at such facilities would be placed on work release and would actually only spend the night inside.

This situation requires immediate and careful attention. Unless we can stop all crimes from being committed, we must have sufficient prison space to ensure that our justice system does us — as well as our inmates — justice. — **Mary Jo Dunnington**

## When in Rome on Valentine's Day . . .

For those of the campus population with significant others, Valentine's Day is, simply put, a good time — cards and flowers and a nice dinner out followed by an early bedtime.

But for the unentangled, Valentine's Day can be a nightmare — flirtation is misread, an unexpected card becomes the object of excessive speculation and anxiety, a casual date assumes apocalyptic dimensions.

But what has old Saint Valentine to do with all of this? What was he like, that his feast day is so full of hormones and pheromones and just moans in general? Was he some randy Chaucerian friar, elevated to sainthood by virtue of his mythic stamina and prowess? Or was he more Shakespearean, remembered for his kindness to star-crossed lovers?

In truth, neither. According to legend, there were two Saint Valentines. One was a Roman priest martyred during the oppressive reign of the emperor Claudius. The other was a bishop of Terni, also martyred in Rome in the third century. End of story.

Where's the passion? Did they both date a lot, or what? Did Terni have a steamy red-light district? What's the connection?

There is no connection. Saint Valentine bears no relation to those cute doily hearts we once made in kindergarten. "Be my Valentine" has more to do with a vow of celibacy than a bashful invitation to a sorority cocktail.

What's going on here?

That question will be answered, but first I feel obliged to make a small aside. The story which follows has nothing to do with holding hands or making out in the back of a movie theater. It is a gruesome tale indeed, and squeamish readers should perhaps flip back to the crossword puzzle now.

No? Well, fair warning has been given. Cast your mind back to Rome in the third century A.D., when dating was simple and there were no parked cars to neck in. It is February 15, the morning of the Lupercalia, and the whole city is hopping. You've camped out for three days to get good seats near the altar on Palatine hill — you can even see last year's faint

### Brian McCuskey In the Funhouse

bloodstains on the stone.

And here come the Luperci! Those nutty priests strut up to the altar, carrying mangy dogs and goats whose legs have been bound with rope, for ease of sacrifice. The beasts are laid out on the altar and the crowd begins to rumble. A wrinkled little man selling bags of wolf nipple chips squeezes in front of you for a better view. You kick him aside, but not before snatching one of the larger bags.

Out come the swords, raised high, finely honed edges gleaming in the sun. Down come the swords, again and again, until the dogs and goats are headless carcasses lying in a spreading pool of blood which drips off the altar.

Two youths approach the altar and kneel before the eldest priest, who holds a bloody sword. The youths raise their faces to the priest, and he lifts the sword above them

and gently lowers it to their foreheads, smearing their faces with sticky animal blood. Centuries ago these two youths would have been ex-youths at this point, but human sacrifice is so difficult to explain to the Church these days.

The priest picks up a wool rag soaked in milk and wipes most of the blood from their faces, leaving a pinkish caul glistening on their cheeks. And, as per tradition, the two youths laugh loudly at this moment, the crowd chuckling an echo.

Long strips of flesh are cut from the dead beasts and fashioned into thin whips handed out to the Luperci priests. The crowd presses forward, eager for what comes next . . .

The priests bolt toward the crowd, running along the fringes, swinging their whips and striking the women who strain toward them. You see your wife take a backhand blow across the face, the lash leaving a bloody smear on her cheeks, and you jump up and kick your heels — another child will soon be on the way.

Legend dictates that a blow from the whip (called *februa*, from the Latin *februare*, to purify) ensures that pregnant women will have an easy childbirth and that non-pregnant women soon will be.

The priests grow tired and cast down the whips. The crowd shuffles back down the hill for the feast to follow. You catch up to your wife and take her arm as she wipes the animal blood from her eyes and smiles into yours. Already, both of you look forward to next February 15 . . .

February 15? Query those readers iron-stomached enough to have read this far. What about February 14?

What about it, indeed. The Lupercalia survived until A.D. 494, when the queasy Gelasius de-paganized the ritual into a tamer holiday, the Feast of Purification. Gone were the whips, gone were the laughing youths, gone were the dead animals. And, since Saint Valentine's feast day was so close, it fused with the fertility festival and later was watered down with doily hearts and little valentine candies.

In other words, it was a historical accident.

But now we know the truth, don't we, dear reader? The ignorant among us will exchange cards and kisses today, dance and drink at Valentine's mixers, buy flowers and candy for the loved ones.

Hah! A fool's paradise! The truth will out!

Let us run loin-clothed through the streets of Chapel Hill tomorrow night, man and woman alike, laughing madly, the two-percent Lo-Fat still dripping into our eyes, wielding strips of fresh squirrel hide, in and out of Molly's, lashing, lashing, in and out of Spanky's, whipping, whipping, through Davis Library, striking blow after blow in the name of fertility and procreation and purification! Enough with doilies and dalliances!

Love is sacrifice, the pop songs remind us.

Well, then, so be it.

Brian McCuskey is a senior English major from Los Angeles.

## Election Forum

### Senior class president, vice president teams Bobby Ferris and Greg Zeeman

It seems like only yesterday that we were hiding our campus maps in folders so people wouldn't know we were freshmen. We would make up imaginary friends to wave to at all-campus parties so it would look like we knew lots of people. And now we're almost seniors! Before you know it, we'll be looking for jobs, applying to grad schools and figuring out exactly what our future holds. That's why it's important to make the most of our senior year.

The first step to ensuring a successful senior year is by electing senior class officers who can combine innovative ideas with effective leadership. These officers must be leaders who can begin working for us the day they're elected. There is so much that can and must be done: our class needs experienced leadership. Through our combined experience in student government and the Residence Hall Association, we understand the real demands of these offices. This experience will enable us to begin work immediately on new, creative ideas to make the most of our senior year.

One of the most important elements of

a successful year is ensuring that everyone knows exactly what's going on. We have specific plans to involve all seniors in current class activities. This will be done by increasing the frequency of the current senior class newsletter and by setting up senior class information centers throughout the campus. By building this awareness, social events such as a Fall Germans dance and a new, Spring All-Campus Ball will be enjoyed by everyone.

Another essential aspect of our senior year will be creating new opportunities for our future. We plan on establishing a comprehensive senior resource center, giving us access to alumni contacts for jobs and graduate schools, as well as helping us locate future roommates and apartments. Also, our job recruiting program will increase the number of companies who recruit at Carolina. And through a favorite professors selection and recognition banquet and a faculty-senior wine and cheese party, even faculty can be a useful resource for our future.

Lastly, as seniors, we should leave the

University with just as strong an impression as when we first came to it. To ensure this happens, commencement needs to be made into a much more special event. We plan to make our last days at Carolina more memorable by planning a full weekend of activities leading up to graduation for us and for our families. During the weekend, we'd also like each classmate to receive a new Senior Record (much like the Freshman Record) to commemorate our class by recording its people and events.

The current senior officers have taken their class to a new height. We will strengthen the traditions they have given us, and use our innovative ideas to raise the Class of 1990 to even greater levels of accomplishment and enjoyment. It's up to you.

Bobby Ferris is a junior chemistry major from Winter Park, Fla., and Greg Zeeman is a junior political science/economics major from Wilmington.

### Peter Hancock and Ranchor Harris

The most important element of any successful senior year is ensuring that the following responsibilities are carried out: the December recognition program, May Commencement, senior gift and senior trip.

**Senior Newsletter:** A weekly publication of information pertaining directly to the senior class. The format of the newsletter will be based on news dealing with career placement events, social events and other activities dealing with the senior class.

**Senior Enrichment:** A volunteer program designed to offer seniors an opportunity to reach out to the community of Chapel Hill and offer assistance to those less fortunate. The purpose of this program is to show our gratitude to the four years spent in Chapel Hill by performing volunteer work.

**Senior Involvement on Campus:** It is not uncommon for seniors preparing to graduate to realize that they have not gotten involved with many extra-curricular activities that the school offers. By implementing a program designed to promote senior involvement with organizations such as the Union, seniors will have greater access to activities related to campus life.

**Continue and Expand the present Alumni Outreach Program** designed to offer seniors access to information pertaining to alumni contacts. This program is a very beneficial resource to seniors who are searching for jobs.

**Senior/Faculty Interaction:** This program is an effort by the senior class to meet with professors on an informal basis in order to bridge the gaps built in the

classroom. By promoting interaction between students and faculty, seniors will be better able to utilize their relationships with faculty members when searching for jobs.

**Speaker Selection:** This program is designed to establish an alternate consideration period for extending honorary doctorates to commencement speakers.

**Senior Socials:** Activities interspersed throughout the year to develop cohesiveness among the class. These activities will include the Fall Germans Dance, senior discounts at local bars, and expanded block seating.

Peter Hancock is a junior political science/speech communication major from Lenoir, and Ranchor Harris is a junior RTVMP/political science major from Lexington.

### Danny Rosin and Bryan Brayboy

Career opportunities and benefits for our senior class. That's what we are about. Our planning, research, past experience and enthusiasm will facilitate your transition into the job market, increase senior unity through more social events and provide the Class of 1990 with many new and creative programs.

**Let's talk about careers.** If you don't want to be flipping burritos and working your way up the fast food ladder of success for the next eight years, stick with Rosin and Brayboy. You are hopefully graduating with some sort of degree from one of the top 10 public colleges in the nation, and although we cannot guarantee that you will be Trump's right hand man or woman (we're not sexist), we can provide opportunities such as workshops, internships and corporation recruitment that will help you get your foot in the door. We will work hand in hand with UNC's Career Planning and Placement Services to set up a revolving data base consisting of an updated list of Carolina alumni, their jobs and locations. This would provide seniors with easier access to job opportunities that they may have otherwise missed.

**What is a senior year without parties?** The words "senior" and "party" are almost synonymous. We want to increase senior unity through more social events. "Blue

Heaven" . . . this is our idea of a Springfest during the summer. In between summer sessions the senior class would sponsor this blowout that all students would be encouraged to come back for. Next year we will be seniors and many of us for the first will be able to use IDs legally. So, we want to provide more Senior Nights Out that include more bar specials.

**Did you know that seniors must file for graduation?** Our seniors are going to know what's going on! You probably yawn in technicolor every time you walk by a wall filled with campaign posters, but if you've seen our new "Take Time Out To Vote" posters, you will see that we have creative ways to publicize. Along the lines of publicity, seniors will be sent a bimonthly newsletter and will have the chance to get more information from the continued senior hotline.

**A service project for the Senior Class?** We think that the senior class can leave something more than just a class gift behind. When I (Danny) was in high school, I had the opportunity of traveling with Operation Smile to the Philippines to help in the operating room as a scrub nurse and in play therapy. I was a part of putting smiling faces on children who could not afford surgery to get rid of physical facial deformities that kept them

from going to school or getting jobs. Our senior class can help. We can have fundraisers, school supply, clothes and food drives to help our brothers and sisters from Operation Smile's new chapters in Kenya, Liberia, Columbia and even Vietnam.

**Better and more seating at our beloved Student Activities Center.** We would work jointly with the Carolina Athletic Association to make this Carolina dilemma come true. We deserve it; we've had enough nosebleeds to buy out the Red Cross.

**And you thought we forgot commencement.** Besides getting one of Carolina's many famous alums to speak, the Senior Class would sponsor yet another party. Let Mom and Dad spend another fortune at the Europa for a night while you and your senior classmates rock and roll together. One last time at the Senior "Last Blast."

If you've taken the time to read this, you know we are very serious. So, on Feb. 21 take time out to vote for the career opportunities and benefits that Danny Rosin and Bryan Brayboy have to offer.

Danny Rosin is a junior education major from Portsmouth, Va., and Bryan Brayboy is a junior political science major from Baton Rouge, La.

### The Daily Tar Heel

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