

Opinion

Variety means an interesting world

To the editor:
I think it was a year ago that the idea of a "Shoe Day" was first proposed as a show of support for heterosexuals. Spying Sharon Sentelle's suggestion in Friday's Readers' Forum ("Homosexuality a violation of natural laws"), I was struck by the unoriginality (although she called the possibility of such an event this year "the first annual") and its absurdity. The people who notice the presence or absence of selected garments are usually avid supporters or opposers, the majority remains oblivious.

As a heterosexual, I might wear shoes April 26, maybe along with the same pair of dungarees I wore on "Blue Jeans Day." Some could see me as sitting in the middle, but what I am trying to say is that just because I am sexually oriented one way does not mean I have the right to dictate how others should live. Further, I approve of any group, like the CGLA, or individuals who do not choose to force their will upon others. The UNC College Republicans would be happy if we all had the same interests, but that would be boring. Not only enjoy a world with variety and freedom, I'm grateful for it. Sharon Sentelle should also be thankful.

ANNE BLEYMAN
Senior
English

Change needed, but not by CGLA

To the editor:
In response to "Homosexuality a violation of natural laws" (April 21), we were appalled at the ignorance and lack of intelligent, rational thinking displayed in Sharon Sentelle's letter. First, the CGLA does not promote any "unmentionable illegal activity," by which Sentelle presumably means homosexual sex. The organization exists to provide support for a minority. The minority is defined by its sexual preference, but its concerns and interests extend far beyond that, just as do those of most heterosexuals.

Sentelle's argument that only heterosexual sex is "natural" or biologically correct also falls short of persuasion. Humans, for the most part, do not engage in sex for purely procreative reasons but for pleasure and intimacy. Following Sentelle's

line of reasoning, we should eradicate the use of birth control as well as homosexuality, since the human body was not "meant" to be manipulated by hormones, latex or spermicides. And we would like to know who held a gun to Sentelle's head in an effort "to force their lack of sexual morality" on her during Gay Awareness Week. The purpose of the designated week was to provide, for anyone interested in learning, information about the gay and lesbian community at UNC, about the myths and lies and misunderstandings surrounding it and about its concerns. No one was forcing anything on anyone. Sentelle should not twist the simple fact of Gay Awareness Week into such an "unnatural, forced account."

Perhaps if she had been inquiring enough to learn something from Gay Awareness Week, she would have been able to see the weaknesses in her own arguments and to develop a modicum of tolerance. Because it's never too late to change.

ZOE PARKER
Senior
English

LURIE WATEL
Senior
Art history

Bare feet represent freedom of choice

To the editor:
In her letter, "Homosexuality a violation of natural laws" (April 21), Sharon Sentelle, chairwoman of UNC College Republicans, proposed that Wednesday, April 26 be declared "Shoe Day."

Her idea is that heterosexuals and their supporters should wear shoes on that day, in response to the CGLA's annual Blue Jeans Day.

I am in a quandary. As a habitually barefoot person, I probably won't be wearing shoes on Wednesday anyway. God forbid that anyone should interpret this personal preference as animosity!

So, for the record, I am going barefoot because it is a matter of individual choice that affects only me and a few others I like to get together and be barefoot with. I harbor no hatred toward heterosexuals, shoed or otherwise.

In fact, I support heterosexuals. And homosexuals. And bisexuals. And people who try to support each other and make the world more tolerant of diversity and less tolerant of hate-mongering.

All of these kinds of people belong to the CGLA. Also, I'm sure, to the College Republicans. Maybe the latter will speak out within their own ranks and question whether they want to be known for the kind of bigotry Sentelle's letter exhibits.

In the meantime, College Republicans, please don't take my bare feet as a statement against you, but as a statement for freedom of toes and individual expression. After all, my feet are a matter of private choice. As is my sex life. And yours. And everyone else's. So to you and our state legislators, I would like to say, keep your laws off my toes. And the rest of my body, too.

T. RISTIN COOKS
Junior
Journalism

Education failing to open minds

To the editor:
I'm ashamed to admit it, but I used to be a Republican. My disillusionment with the party began in 1980 and culminated this week with that astonishing outpouring of self-righteous bigotry and ignorance from Sharon Sentelle ("Homosexuality a violation of natural laws," April 21). The College Republicans? They should call themselves the College Fascists, for all the devotion to the principles of democracy they've displayed. Clearly, Ms. Sentelle and her group did not invent stupidity and intolerance — the much older Rep. Stephen Arnold is proof of that — but they are an excellent example of the failure of the liberal arts education. The hysterical assertion that student fees are funding "crime" (being homosexual is not a crime in North Carolina) and the griggish insistence that homosexuals "choose" their sexual orientation and should just jolly well unchoose it to suit the rest of us, are but two of the more obvious examples of faulty reasoning and basic ignorance of the facts of human sexuality exhibited recently by the opponents of the CGLA. Ms. Sentelle's statement that "there were certain things the human body was not meant to do" is particularly interesting — would she care to list what, in her opinion, the human body was "meant" to do? Unintentionally funny though her letter was, I find it really sad that a 20-year-old should be so rigid, and that at least two years of a college education should have so little impact. While they're defunding the CGLA, the Legislature might



as well go ahead and defund the entire University, if this is the sort of open-minded scholar it's producing.

VANESSA VAN ORNAM
Graduate
German

Letter reveals irrational thinking

To the editor:
I write this letter because I am a card-carrying Republican who does not wish to be associated with the absolute idiocy of Sharon Sentelle ("Homosexuality a violation of natural laws," April 21), chairwoman of the UNC College Republicans.

So far, I have heard of three possible explanations for the origins of homosexuality. One is that it is a characteristic from birth. If this is true, I see no more logical reason for discriminating against these people than against blonds or against someone of a particular race. Another explanation is that it is a mental illness. If this is true, I can still see no logical basis for discrimination. We do not discriminate against other forms of mental illness unless the individual is a danger to himself or another. A third is that it is a simple choice of the individual like any other choice. If this were proven to be the case, then it is reasonable to hold the individual responsible for his choice. I am reluctant to adopt this last

explanation because I cannot see why anyone would choose to subject themselves to the kind of blind hatred directed at gays which Ms. Sentelle so aptly exhibits in her letter.

Ms. Sentelle appears to be confused about her own explanation for the origins of this phenomenon. Her recommendation that gays go to Student Mental Health indicates she adopts the mental illness theory. If so, I am shocked by her not even thinly veiled contempt for gays. Would she defund a Carolina chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous and order them to Student Mental Health?

Of course, I think it is far more likely that Ms. Sentelle views the behavior of gays as their own choice. Based on this view, she feels very comfortable, in fact downright upright, about telling them how to run their lives. She claims gays are manipulating us with Blue Jeans Day. Imagine how they must feel with her nosey little intrusion into their moments of intimate expression. Really Ms. Sentelle, can you not find anything better to do with your days? If you are going to use the Bible as a guide to structuring your life and your approach to your fellow human beings, why not use a little Christian compassion instead of appointing yourself campus stone thrower?

Ms. Sentelle may have no rational or Biblical justification for her hatred. Indeed this is the very definition of hatred. But she may legitimately

oppose funding of the CGLA, just as she may oppose any action by Student Congress. She is dead wrong, however, when she says, "Students currently have only one choice in determining where their money goes — pay your student fees and fund the CGLA or don't register for the next semester." (I count two choices there.)

There is a third choice. Elect an anti-CGLA Student Congress. Ms. Sentelle points to the Student Congress' continued refusal to defund the CGLA as a justification for Rep. Stephen Arnold's intrusion into campus politics. Yet it is perfectly legitimate for members of Student Congress to fund the CGLA regardless of last year's non-binding resolution. If the resolution were really a reflection of the majority's view on an issue of highest priority, it would certainly be reflected in the election of an anti-CGLA Student Congress. If the voters feel so strongly about this isolated issue, they can vote for an anti-CGLA candidate (there always is one). If Ms. Sentelle thinks voters see this issue as that important, let her organize and lead this effort, rather than running off campus looking for political muscle.

As a Republican, I hope Ms. Sentelle does not represent the future of my party or our campus.

PHILIP SKILLMAN
Graduate
Law

Criticism of Critic was without basis

Editor's note: The author is senior editor of the Carolina Critic.

To the editor:
In his April 19 letter ("Protesting support group irresponsible"), William Shudderth makes an important observation about CGLA funding — namely, that the sexuality of the group's members should not be a reason for defunding them. Unfortunately, William does not stop there, but goes on in his letter to insult writers for the Carolina Critic and to demonstrate a complete lack of understanding concerning the issue of defunding and its relationship to individual rights.

I don't think William knows anyone on the Critic staff — he certainly doesn't know me — yet he passes judgment on all of us as being "definitely biased against homosexuals." Certainly William must have some basis for this belief, and I assume it stems from our stance on defunding the CGLA. Insofar as this position is part of a broader belief that all fees-funded groups should be defunded due to the coercive manner in which they obtain their funds, William acknowledges our concern as "legitimate." His letter, however, suggests that he actually has very little understanding of our position.

William rightly argues that homosexuality is a personal matter and an individual right, and I strongly concur. By asserting support for the funding of this group, however, he tramples underfoot the very idea of individual rights. To quote his own article, he stands on "very shaky

ethical ground." It is hypocritical to assert the freedom of individuals to choose their sexual orientation in one breath, and in the next to deny them the right to keep or spend their money as they see fit. William, along with so-called "liberals" on this campus, falls into a reflexive trap of believing that one must advocate the appropriation of the property of others to demonstrate one's support for the rights of homosexuals (or the rights of blacks in the case of the Black Cultural Center and the rights of health nuts in the case of the Student Recreation Center). The homosexual's right to the expression of his sexual preference does not confer upon him the right to my wallet. I am completely supportive of the rights of homosexuals to do whatever they please, so long as I don't have to jump in or pay for it.

William doesn't think opposition to CGLA funding on moral grounds is well-founded, but I strongly disagree. To fund the CGLA, or any other group, by depriving individuals of their rightfully owned property is fundamentally immoral. Curiously enough, when an individual takes another's property against their will, we call it theft. When a group under the auspices of "student government" does so, we call it democracy. Interesting how Student Congress speaker Gene Davis and other "student leaders" get their underwear all tied in knots at the thought of losing total control over our money (per Rep. Arnold's bill in the General Assembly), yet none of them gives a thought to letting us spend it

ourselves. Most annoying is how Gene and his pals continue to ignore the arguments set forth by myself and other Critic writers for defunding, yet they have the audacity to go to Raleigh in opposition to Rep. Arnold's bill and claim to represent us in the name of "student self-governance." Seems if they really believed in self-governance, they would let the students decide how to spend their own money, rather than gathering in bureaucratic cliques to spend it for us.

I understand the position that William and others take on the issue of funding groups such as the CGLA. It is natural for any caring human being to feel that we should provide money for the support group of an oppressed minority such as homosexuals. Their error, however, is not to venture beyond this emotional level, and consider the implications of violating some individual rights in the name of supporting others. I strongly urge William and others to call me or any of the Critic staff or to come to one of our meetings, and talk to us. I would be perfectly happy to debate the issue of funding, in a public or private forum, whether specifically concerning the CGLA, or all funded groups. Until William takes the time to talk to us about it, however, he, and others who disagree with our position, has no justification for labeling us "biased."

ANTHONY WOODLIEF
Junior
Political science

Cyclists' risks endanger all

Now that the weather has turned truly spring-like, UNC students and faculty are beginning once again to cycle on and around campus. I commute by bike, and I'm disturbed by the dangerously irresponsible behavior which some cyclists exhibit. Cyclists regularly weave through traffic, pedal to the front of lines of traffic at stoplights, and run red lights. Riders also regularly jump from street to sidewalk and vice-versa. While riding on the sidewalk is obviously acceptable on campus, doing so in the rest of Chapel Hill is annoying and illegal. What bothers me about this sort of behavior is that it is often shown by people who see less than a mile of asphalt every day: some live on or near Cameron Ave., others at Granville Towers. One person who lives in my complex, which is less than two miles from campus, loads his beautiful \$800 mountain bike onto the roof of his car every morning, drives

David Parker
Guest Writer

to a parking place on Cameron and then rides his bike in (presumably so as not to dirty his state of the art dirt bike). When the weather is warm and serious riders are training more than 100 miles a week, the irresponsible image given to cyclists by these ultra-short distance riders carries forth into the community and comes back on those of us who spend an hour or two on the road every day. At a race in Cary a few weeks ago, I saw the driver of a pick-up truck gun his engine and threaten to run down a race official; the truck then screeched off to harass the pack of racers. Obviously, this driver had problems more deeply rooted than a brush with a rude rider, but the prejudice against cyclists runs deeply

in many motorists, and dangerous riding is at the heart of much of it. As the maxim goes, if you want to be treated like traffic, you have to cut like traffic. After all, cutting in front of a car and running a red light in the morning because you're late for class may not be all that dangerous for you, but it could very well be dangerous for me at six that evening when I'm getting in a twilight ride and that driver you cut off is coming home after a long day at work. He may be just sick enough of bicycles not to give me two feet of clearance or a turn signal. Cycling is risky enough, and I'd rather irresponsible riders not make it any riskier for themselves or for me.

David Parker is a graduate student in English from Tucker, Ga.

Activist's death brings on sadness

I'm crying. I'm crying because one of the last people left over from a time when people cared took his life last week.

Personal integrity is a rare commodity these days and growing ever scarcer. Social responsibility is even rarer.

Personal interest and social fear have wormed their way into what — however brief — was once the heart of a progressive republic that gave a damn whether people were free.

The concept of freedom seems to have become such an abstraction in the American experience that people believe they can take away the

Stewart Waller
Guest Writer

freedoms of others but preserve their own. They don't understand or don't care that when they advocate roadblocks, those roadblocks might be used against them. They don't realize that when they limit what others may express on a bumper sticker, they might irrevocably be limiting their own expression. They don't have the foresight to see that when they allow the state to determine what beliefs

should be promoted in the classroom, the state could one day decide that druidism is the way to go.

Are people really that willing to release their autonomy to the state? Or are they just so blinded by self-interest that they can't see that any precedent which limits freedom can be used by either side?

I wish you had hung in there, Abby Hoffman, but I can see why you chose not to.

Stewart Waller is a junior advertising major from Kents Store, Va.

A week chock full of cuts, computers, condoms and the CGLA

"This machine is broken. Due to state budget cuts we are unable to repair this machine. Microcomputing Support Center apologizes for any inconvenience. Direct your complaints to the legislature." — A sign on a computer terminal in Morrison Residence Hall. At least until July, computers in dorms will have to remain unrepaired or out of paper and ribbons because of the \$3 million budget cuts.

"What this bill is suggesting is this: In North Carolina, sodomy and other such related offenses are on the books

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as illegalities. Any such homosexual behavior is certainly immoral. North Carolina students and taxpayers should not be obligated to fund any group that advocates illegal behavior." — Rep. Stephen Arnold, R-Guilford, explaining why he introduced a bill to the House that would require the UNC Board of Governors to "adopt rules to ensure that no state funds and no student fees are used, whether directly or indirectly, to permit or promote any gay and lesbian association or any other

community or campus organization that advocates immoral, illegal or criminal behavior." The bill would also prohibit those groups from using campus buildings and facilities.

"I don't approve of homosexuals, and anything that goes against it gets my approval. The bill does not say where they (student fees) will go, but where they don't go. I don't think certain social things should be funded through student fees." — UNC Board of Governors Chairman Robert "Roddy" Jones, saying he supported the House bill that would prohibit

the use of student fees for homosexual organizations on UNC-system campuses.

"We are here defending a sacred trust that has been given to us as student leaders of our respective institutions. We're not going to waver from standing by that sacred trust of student self-government." — Student Body President Brien Lewis, who joined student leaders from three other North Carolina universities outside the General Assembly in Raleigh to protest Arnold's bill.

"We can't regulate morality, and a lot of people will be sexually active. The machines won't scream, 'have sex.'" — Residence Hall Association President Liz Jackson, commenting on the Student Congress resolution to put condom machines on the first floor bathrooms of all residence halls and on the top and middle floors of residence halls with more than five floors.

"We know where you are, so you better watch out — we're gonna kill your ass." — A death threat left on the answering machine of Christopher Smith, a graduate student in the School of Social Work, who is president of Students for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. The threats followed SETA's advertisement of a workshop to be held at UNC by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. Smith's phone number was on posters and fliers publicizing the event.

Compiled by editor Sharon Kebschull.