

The Daily Tar Heel

97th year of editorial freedom

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Time to act Cops' complaints can't be ignored

The University police department has come under fire recently from its own employees and the press regarding several allegations of racism in its hiring and promotion procedures; in addition, an investigation by University police and the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) during the last two weeks uncovered the theft of UNC property, and a University police officer was charged in the theft. While the department has gained the respect of the University community in the past, such controversy within the department can only damage the reputation of both the police and the University. Police officials must work swiftly to root out possible wrongdoing, both in personnel and their management, before the situation gets further out of control.

While police officials have denied most allegations from their disgruntled employees involving racism, the content and quantity of these complaints cannot be ignored; so many grievances from black and white officers alike is evidence enough that something about the department isn't quite right. If nothing else, such disputes make it difficult for officers to work together at their job.

Just within the past two months, the police department has had five employee grievances pending about the department's promotion and grievance processes. One officer contends that special consideration was given to a black officer — who denies the allegations — because the officer threatened to sue if not promoted. Another officer claims he never received a pay raise following a promotion, a charge denied by the department. In yet another case, the hearing for one officer was postponed when two important witnesses, also with Uni-

board opinion

versity police, could not attend because of their assignment to wash squad cars that same day.

The department's only black woman officer, Keith Edwards, filed a grievance along with 13 other officers in 1987, arguing that 13 promotions that year were influenced by racism and favoritism. Now, two years later, Edwards is in step four of her appeal; recently, her hearing was postponed for another month. Edwards says that during her 15 years in the department as the only black female, 15 white females were hired, many of whom were less qualified than some black applicants. This contention alone raises suspicions.

Also, several white officers support Edwards in her claims, citing examples of racist hiring practices and the general unhappiness among black officers.

Two weeks ago, the department removed three officers from active duty after \$4,000 in University property was discovered stolen at the beginning of the month. One of the employees taken off duty and his wife were discovered dead on Sept. 6, victims of an apparent double suicide. On Monday, University police formally arrested another officer, who was charged with the theft of more than \$700 in telephones and answering machines from a University building. The investigation by police and the SBI continues.

While a few employee grievances may be normal, such extensive problems with employee relations indicate a need for swift and thorough reform. Students and the University community are genuinely concerned about the policies of the department and their effect on the University, and police officials should uphold their responsibilities — in this case, the protection of the name of this university.

A hole in the curtain E. Germany needs to learn tolerance

The Hungarian government opened its borders Sunday with West Germany to allow refugees from East Germany to cross to the West. Almost 15,000 East Germans are expected to leave the communist country by the end of the week. The East German government has criticized the Hungarian and West German governments, but perhaps the country's leaders can learn a lesson in moderation.

Since World War II, East Germany has been the most zealous supporter of the Soviet Union in the Warsaw Pact. While other countries have experimented with moderation and democratization, East Germany was always first to criticize the "liberalization" and follow the hard line of the Soviets.

The best examples are the crushing of the democracy movements in Hungary in 1959 and Czechoslovakia in 1968. East German troops were part of the multi-national force that invaded Czechoslovakia and took down the moderate government.

Erich Honecker's government is one of the least lenient and successful in Eastern Europe. The country has countless economic problems, while censorship and oppression go beyond the scope of all other bloc countries.

Other Eastern European countries, meanwhile, have moved toward democracy in recent months. Poland has created a coalition government of Solidarity and the Communist Party. A non-Communist was selected as Polish prime minister for the first time since World War II.

Hungary will soon have its first free elections since 1949, and Czechoslovakia is moderating its government.

Even the Soviet Union has permitted the new attitude in the bloc, a radical change from the country's response in 1959 and 1968. President Mikhail Gorbachev has realized that modernization and democratization are vital parts of improving the economy and morale of his country.

It's time for East Germans to realize they have been passed by. Perhaps 15,000 citizens fleeing to freedom in the West will be a hint to Honecker and other East German leaders.

It is illogical to think that a country that has lived under communism for more than 40 years will suddenly change its ways. But the country doesn't need radical change. As Hungary and Poland have shown, progressive and gradual change are much more effective in the eyes of the Soviet Union and the country's citizens.

The illness of Honecker may lead to a replacement and perhaps a more moderate government, but no one should count on this. We can count on more East German citizens leaving for the West, and this exodus will end only when citizens are satisfied that their government will work to improve their lives.

The history of communist East Germany is one of intolerance and intransigence. Unfortunately, it may take Hungary's tolerance to force East Germany to change. — William Taggart



Readers' Forum

Don't condemn many on the basis of a few

ELLEN S. STRETCHER
English
Sophomore

To the editor:
Chapel Hill has long been a haven for tolerance of differences in lifestyles. This attitude of acceptance has lured many individuals to the city and especially to UNC. Without question, a short stroll across campus and down Franklin Street reveals an abundance of differing races, hair styles, methods of expression and styles of dress, to name a few of the obvious examples. In the same way, this campus is known for its liberality in terms of political, sexual and (hopefully) religious views.

Therefore, I was greatly disturbed by Shilpi Somaya's letter, "Religious groups lack true spirit" (Sept. 11). Somaya pens an attack, which is based on her evaluation of one religious group's meeting, on the whole of Christianity. The main crux of her argument? That the Christian church is intolerant of other faiths. Regardless of the diverse treatment among the many sectors of the Christian church of this age-old question of tolerance, the point remains clear that Somaya, in condemning the Christian church for what she sees as its practice of condemnation, is quite hypocritical.

Moreover, Somaya berates the Christian church after claiming unfamiliarity with its practice. She states that she "would hope for something a bit more" than the closed-mindedness towards other religions which she observed at her singular exposure to what she assumed to be the whole Christian church, since it was on campus "where education is supposed to be the focus." Somaya has obviously overlooked or bypassed the opportunity to learn of religions through UNC's wonderful religion department; what she has opted for instead seems to be a condescending ignorance towards a particular religion. How sad for a person to insult and question the validity and intentions of a certain group simply because of their lack of knowledge of the whole, true picture of that group's beliefs.

Granted, UNC isn't a perfect picture. Everyone has been harassed by a Pit preacher or has received propaganda from other religious sources. But to condemn whole groups based on the actions of a few, or to throw stones in the darkness of ignorance — that lacks the "true spirit" on which our great university thrives.

Playboy shouldn't be major issue of 1989

To the editor:

There has been a good deal of campus outcry in reaction to the Playboy advertisement that was printed Sept. 8. I doubt very seriously that the DTH will run another controversial ad for quite some time. Some students have drafted petitions to make the DTH print a full apology for its decision.

A number of UNC students are opposed to the running of the ad, but should the DTH seek the appeasement of its readers? And would those who criticize the recent advertisement be "shocked and appalled" enough to begin financially supplementing or supporting the DTH? Perhaps they would take the form of an increase in student fees or personal paid subscriptions.

The issue for most is that of the "represented exploitation and the offensiveness" of the ad, but need we drag the editor and staff out to the Pit for a public apology? I am not trying to downplay the issue of exploitation. Whether it be racial, sexual or social it should be noted and remedied. What I would stand against is the future regulating on which grounds the DTH may or may not read.

Whether our student newspaper is in the right or wrong in its decision, it should not have to seek to justify itself in the form of an apology. And when compared to such issues like the Beijing atrocity, the deep government cuts in student aid and North Carolina's last place position in national SAT scores, I would hope that the DTH's decision to run a questionable advertisement is not the student issue of 1989.

BRIAN SIEGLE
History
Junior

Ad, machines show bad acceptance of sex

To the editor:

I am writing to protest the installation of condom machines in the dorms and DTH's running of the Playboy advertising insert on Sept. 8. I make this protest because I object to the social attitude which seems to me to be reflected

in the condom machines and the Playboy insert. That social attitude is an acceptance of pre- and extramarital sex.

I object to this social attitude/acceptance because I believe that sexual intercourse is designed to physically and spiritually bond a man and a woman in a permanent union and that such a union can only occur within a marriage. While I cannot speak from experience, it seems that pre- or extramarital sex certainly is "fun" or "feels good" in the short term. For some people, it may even seem like an appropriate demonstration of their true affection and love for another person. However, in the long term I believe that a person ends up hurting himself or herself by giving bits and pieces of himself or herself away through sexual union with multiple sexual partners either before or outside of marriage. It seems to me that people reserving their bodies and their sexuality as exclusive gifts for an exclusive marriage partner is a better, more healthy alternative.

Certainly my view of sex is out of touch with contemporary moral standards. But perhaps contemporary moral standards undermine the joy of exclusive sex within marriage. And maybe that is sex as it is meant to be.

KEITH WILLIAMS
Graduate
Law

Photo caption on missile misleading

To the editor:

The Daily Tar Heel (Sept. 6) featured on the front page a photo with the caption, "Mary Riner ... and Mary Lou White display a peace banner ... in protest of the Trident submarine, a first-strike nuclear weapons vessel."

Official U.S. strategic policy is that we will not consider a preemptive first strike. While it may be true that a Trident missile can deliver a warhead with incredible accuracy and therefore might be more useful in a first-strike role than older, less accurate missiles, that doesn't mean that it will be used that way or that our national strategic policy has changed. Greater accuracy of delivery systems is simply a product of today's better technology. Consider this crude analogy: today's car bumper systems can withstand blows (with little or no damage) that would have resulted in substantial dam-

age fifteen years ago, but when someone pulls abruptly into our path, most of us still apply our brakes because our personal policy of avoiding confrontation and destruction remains unchanged. (Except on California freeways where the offender is likely to be shot!)

The Trident submarines carry newer missiles which, because of their reported greater accuracy, are considered to have potential as first-strike weapons. That doesn't make the Trident a "first-strike nuclear weapons vessel" any more than carrying an automatic weapon makes a Secret Serviceman detailed to protect the president a mass murderer.

Words are powerful tools for shaping people's perceptions. Please, wield them carefully. Your caption implies (accidentally or intentionally?) a particular change in U.S. strategic policy which, to the best of my knowledge, has not taken place and hopefully never will.

CHRISTOPHER CAMPBELL
Graduate
English literature

Letters policy

The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments and criticisms. When writing letters to the editor, please follow these guidelines:

- All letters must be dated and signed by the author(s), with a limit of two signatures per letter.
- All letters must be typed and double-spaced, for ease of editing.

• Most letters run from one to two pages, but longer letters may be run as guest columns.

• Letters should include the author's year, major, phone number and hometown.

• The DTH will make every effort to contact writers to verify their letters, so please be sure that both a daytime and evening phone number are listed.

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

• Questions about letters or the DTH letters policy should be directed to the editor at 962-0245.

• Place letters in the box marked "Letters to the Editor" outside the DTH office in the Student Union annex.

Grads need to work for changes

Graduate students constitute a large but generally invisible part of the UNC community. Faculty members often know little of their circumstances, administrators sometimes seem to consider them a group safely ignored, and undergraduates are not quite sure what they are doing here. Nevertheless, they play a major role at this university, and it has a vital interest in their well-being.

UNC has two tasks, teaching and research, and graduate students contribute to both. They carry a large part of the teaching burden — grading exams, leading discussion sessions and labs and sometimes conducting classes. Some cite their role as proof of the neglect of undergraduate teaching at UNC, but the reverse is true. Major universities only have so many professors — too few to teach every section or to watch the progress of every student. By using graduate students, UNC can keep classes small and ensure that undergraduates receive individual attention. Furthermore, graduate students, new to their disciplines and excited by them, often bring an enthusiasm and freshness to their teaching that makes up for their inexperience. In addition to their own research, graduate students also work as research assistants, helping faculty members by checking footnotes, feeding data into a computer, performing lab work and

Wyatt Wells
Guest Writer

sometimes managing entire research projects. Finally, graduate students help ensure the future of higher education. As professors retire, universities must hire replacements, and by training graduate students, UNC helps to create a body of scholars from which colleges and universities can draw.

Unfortunately, graduate students have a hard time getting by at UNC. Too old to rely on their parents, often laden with debt from college and sometimes with families to support, they must somehow make enough money on which to live. To deal with this problem, the University provides them with stipends, but these are generally inadequate. A survey of the history department indicated that its stipends, not the University's lowest, cover only about 55 percent of expenses. Many students cannot even afford so basic a necessity as health insurance. Surveys of the history and philosophy departments found that 25 percent and 14 percent respectively of students had not health coverage, and that almost half of those with insurance had to rely on

someone else, such as a spouse, to pay for it. A study comparing stipends at UNC with those of nine equally regarded universities found that North Carolina's payments to graduate students ranked either last or next to last in every department considered.

Poverty among graduate students hurts UNC. To make ends meet, they must take second or even third jobs, subtracting significantly from the time they can put into teaching and research. Even worse, many able people drop out because they simply cannot afford to go on.

Graduate students, concerned with their situation, formed Graduate Students United (GSU) late last spring. They agreed to ask that UNC provide graduate assistants with a minimum stipend of \$4,000 per semester, in-state tuition, health insurance and day care, and they launched an organizing drive to generate support for this program. To this end, GSU will hold a rally at noon in the Pit on Sept. 18.

If successful, GSU will, by making the living conditions of graduate students more tolerable, help secure UNC's place as one of the nation's finest universities, a place where North Carolinians can get the best education available.

Wyatt Wells is a graduate student in history from Nashville, Tenn.

The Daily Tar Heel

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