

The Daily Tar Heel

97th year of editorial freedom

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An unnecessary loss Resignation could have been avoided

The resignation of a Student Congress member last week following controversy over his appointment to the Undergraduate Honor Court was an unfortunate result of an oversight in a revision of the rules governing student government. What made the situation worse, however, was that it could have been avoided if it had been addressed prior to Wednesday night, when the court appointees were to be confirmed.

board opinion

Bill Stallings, who was elected last spring as a representative from district 15, resigned just before congress' vote in the hopes of preventing delays in the appointees' confirmations, which could have halted Honor Court proceedings indefinitely. Many members of congress agree that they have lost a hard-working and respected colleague needlessly. Stallings, who was instrumental in the defeat of a bill that called for a revote on the Student Recreation Center, has shown his dedication to congress by faithfully attending meetings and serving on the summer congress.

The controversy at the meeting arose when Rep. Jeffrey Beall (Dist. 7) introduced an amendment to remove Stallings from the list of appointees. Beall claimed that serving on both the court and congress leads to conflicts of interest, pointing to Title II of the code prohibiting congress members from serving on the judiciary.

The issue of a conflict of interest between congress and the Honor Court was

addressed last spring by the 70th congress, which amended Title VI of the code to allow non-officer congress members to hold non-officer positions in the judicial branch. Issues dealt with by the court members seldom overlap with the jurisdiction of congress — specifically, only in cases of changes to code governing the judiciary and confirmations of the justices. In these cases, that representative should be expected to abstain from debate and voting.

Regrettably, the 70th congress overlooked Title II, which also addressed representatives' participation in the judicial branch. The vast majority of congress was not aware of the discrepancy until the meeting Wednesday, when it was too late to make repairs.

As a result, Stallings and the rest of congress were needlessly placed in a tough spot. Congress members were faced with the choice of following the rules to the letter while understanding the 70th congress' intentions or approving the list and changing the rules later. Stallings tried to help by announcing his resignation and leaving, but his resignation was not official until he put it into writing the next day.

The blame here must fall on any members who knew about the discrepancy but failed to notify the rest of congress until Wednesday. As it happened, it seemed like a personal vendetta against Stallings, even if that was not the intent. Student Congress should refuse to tolerate such a lack of courtesy and professionalism within its ranks.

Furor over the flag Constitutional ban makes little sense

Ever since the Supreme Court ruled in June that flag-burning is a protected form of speech, patriots across the country have protested the sacrifice of the decision. The pointless battle rages on, with the House approving legislation last week that outlaws flag desecration amid continuing talk about a constitutional amendment to protect the flag. When will the wasted time and money spent on this issue stop?

The House overwhelmingly approved the bill as Democrats tried to avoid a drive for a constitutional amendment. It now goes to George Bush, but a spokesman said Thursday the administration believes only an amendment would adequately protect the flag.

It was unbelievable how much emotion this issue stirred in the United States this summer, and if this issue is as disturbing to some people as it obviously is, then the bill the House passed last week may soothe their consciences some. If that's the case, then let it be, but there is no reason to approve an amendment to the constitution to protect the American flag.

The bill the House passed said that burning or otherwise defacing the flag is punishable by a fine and imprisonment for up to one year. To the credit of the bill's authors, it attempts to protect protester's political message. However, it is not clear how the bill could do that.

From the time the debate started, the argument from the flag protectors has been that our flag is sacred and should not be defaced because our war veterans have fought and died for it. But the flag merely represents what our veterans fought for. The flag stands for free-

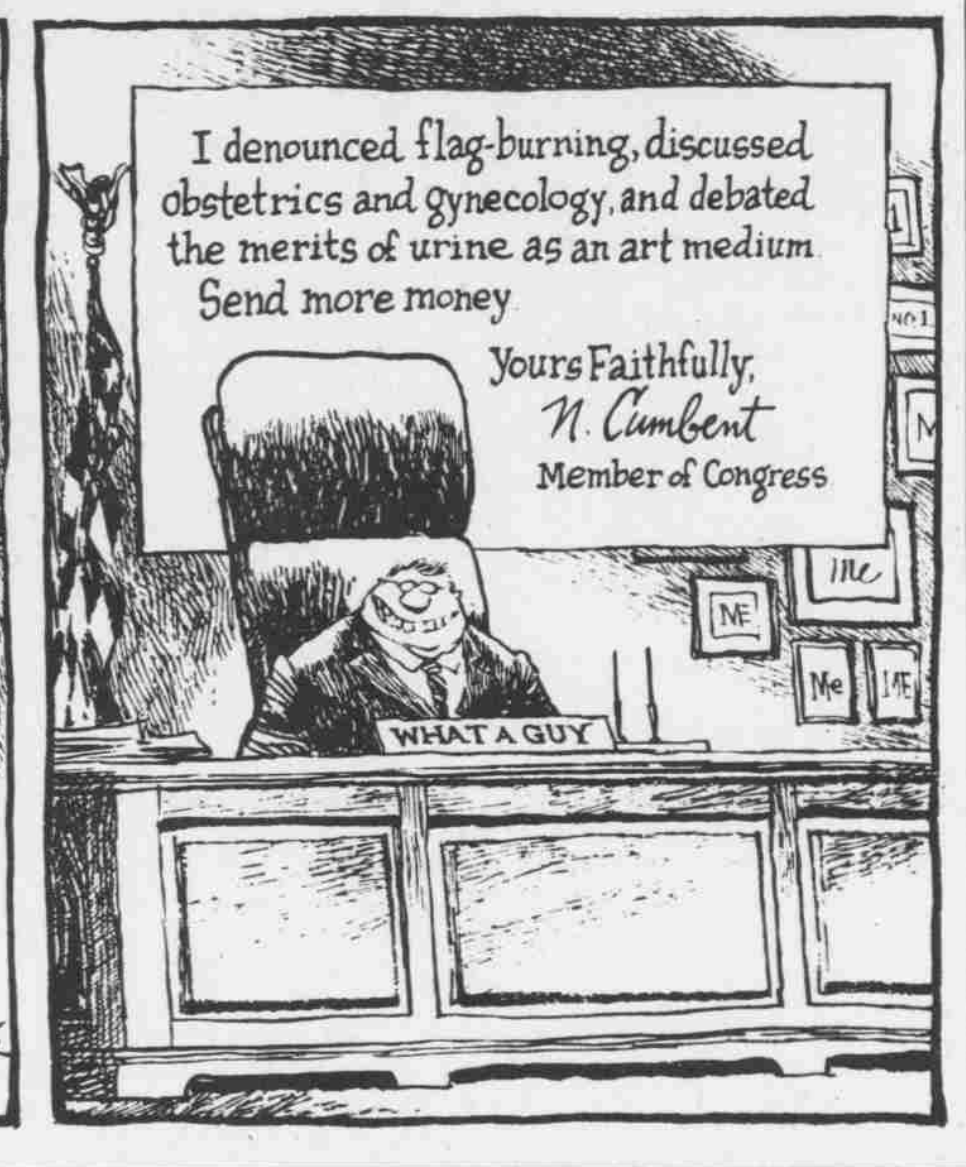
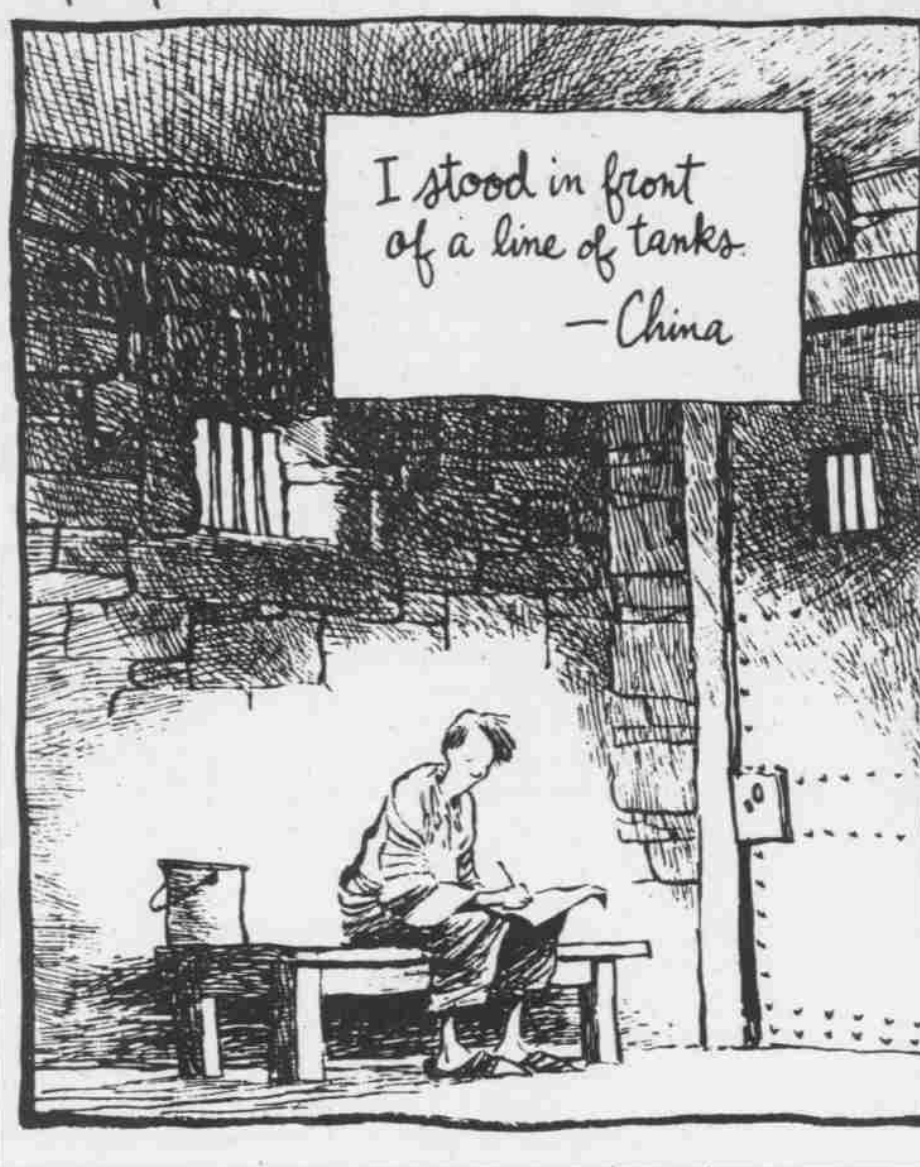
dom — freedom of religion, freedom of speech. The founding fathers made provisions so citizens could protest ideological stances they disagreed with and so they could express their own political and ideological beliefs.

The flag represents that freedom. It is merely a symbol of that freedom, and it is only for that freedom that our forefathers died. Granted, it should be sacred to American citizens, but a citizen's right to protest can't be restricted. Protest can only be restricted when it infringes on another's rights, and as much as some would disagree, burning the flag does not infringe on any individuals' rights, even if it upsets people.

But the most perplexing fact about the flag-burning issue is the amount of protest it illicit. Few issues in recent years have created as much furor as this one. When American patriots were voicing their outrage over the "despicable" conduct of the flag burners, it is curious to note that not even a fraction of those patriots seem outraged at the homelessness in America, at the failure of the American education system or at the violence in the cities. These patriots don't seem to be up in arms about children being killed in the crossfire of drug dealers or the alarming increase in teenage pregnancies.

If America is as important to its citizens as it seems to be, then someone has to save America from itself. The constitutional amendment idea needs to be dropped. Unless people can find it in themselves to feel as strongly about more important issues facing this nation today, the freedoms the flag stands for may not mean much someday. — Tammy Blackard

What I Did Last Summer



There's no tellin' where the money went

A real crisis faces UNC. The demise of the football team, talk of dry fraternity rush and the plummeting black turtle-neck market in Chapel Hill should all take a back seat to the issue of academic deterioration at this university. Students, faculty and staff could be rudely awakened by a dramatic decrease in UNC's quality unless somebody gets together a plan of action. Stories of faculty migration, library and departmental budget slashing and mealy pay for graduate students appear next to news of tuition and student fee increases. What's going on? There's no money — at least in the right places.

Last week Chancellor Paul Hardin III was supposed to outline his vision for the future of this university. I went to University Day because I wanted to see UNC history in the making. Hardin was going to deliver a fire and brimstone speech demanding fiscal reform, announcing new fund-raising campaigns and emphasizing the academic priorities of the University. Hardin's eloquence and enthusiasm had me excited. He glorified the power of the mind, the teaching profession, the values of research and the need to make this institution "even stronger for those who will come after us." After this great introduction to his supposed climactic calls for radical change, he stopped. He said thank you very much and the audience clapped and eventually gave him a standing ovation.

Back to square one. No one is addressing the pressing problems facing virtually everyone associated with the University. Hardin wants fiscal autonomy for UNC, but it's not clear what advantages autonomy would give us. How could this be done without massive tuition increases? Regardless of the merits of autonomy, Hardin's campaign is handcuffed



by the power of the N.C. General Assembly and the attitude of UNC-system President C.D. Spangler. While Hardin claims independence is a necessity for UNC, Spangler rebuts that, saying autonomy for Chapel Hill does not serve the interests of the entire system. Both have legitimate reasons for their arguments, but this bickering forces the neglect of more immediate problems.

Despite the improved ranking in the revered ratings of U.S. News and World Report, a tailspin lurks. The UNC library system deteriorates every day because of decreased buying power. Inflation tremendously affects one of the most important pillars of the University. Thousands of requested materials are denied because of the failure of the legislature to allocate more money for library materials.

Library funding was recently increased by 4 percent, but subscription rates and books rose by 28 percent and 22 percent, respectively. The libraries no longer carry all requested reserve books — something which previously went unquestioned. UNC's libraries averaged 77,000 acquisitions over the last decade, but last year's acquisitions only reached 44,000 volumes. The importance of the libraries cannot be understated. Their quality adds to every aspect of students' education and professors research. As they go, so

goes the school. Lack of money also results in the continuing loss of faculty. UNC can't compete in bidding wars with most private and many public institutions. Like any other market, high demand for good teachers and researchers means high prices. Unless UNC begins to offer a plan for improved compensation for faculty, the scholars who undoubtedly enhance the quality and reputation of UNC will be — and have been — drawn away by higher bidders.

These problems are not easily solved. Certainly neither Hardin nor Spangler can be expected to do it alone, but they must work together to at least begin presenting some concrete plans to alleviate the problems which threaten the University.

Money exists. A \$7 million press box for the football stadium, a \$9 million alumni center and a \$35 million basketball coliseum aren't being paid for out of thin air. Hardin is known for his hard work with alumni and fund-raising efforts, but it's not clear where this is leading the University. The bicentennial celebration is expected to raise enormous amounts of money (organizers are hoping for \$200 million), but the bicentennial is not a panacea for UNC's economic woes. The University needs results soon or the amount of money UNC has in the future will be irrelevant.

Hardin and Spangler have called for the recruitment of superior faculty and improved facilities, but some mechanism needs to be outlined. Roles need defining and action should follow. Otherwise, UNC could start down the slippery slope to mediocrity.

Chris Landgraf is a junior political science major from Atlanta, Ga.

Readers' Forum

Allow free speech unless it's insulting

To the editor:

I applaud and commend Marilyn Keating ("Conversion attempts insulting to others," Oct. 13) who spoke out against the words of a Pit preacher on behalf of the ordinary, decent people of the campus who nonetheless aren't of ("stated religion.") I too am a staunch defender of freedom of speech but think that society has a moral imperative to place a limit somewhere. If I may be so bold as to distill the essentials from her most incisive treatise: "I support absolute freedom of speech as long as it doesn't insult or offend anybody." I believe that this should be adopted almost verbatim into the Constitution, as it provides such a simple, yet morally correct, yardstick to measure just how far we should let people go with their absolute freedom of speech.

To make enforcement practical, I have already designed a device, which I call the Insult-O-Meter, which samples the collective emotional state of a crowd

and will detect a preponderance of offense and/or insult and automatically summon the appropriate security forces. I believe strategic placement of the Insult-O-Meter on campus and indeed, around the world, will make it possible for both Marilyn and myself to venture forth from our bedrooms with the least possibility of having our delicate sensibilities threatened.

JEFF LEWIS
Graduate student
Computer Science

Pit preachers' words come from tradition

To the editor:

I am writing in response to "Conversion attempt insulting to others" in the (Oct. 13). I would agree with Ms. Keating that no one likes to be yelled at, whether it be by Pit preachers or your own mother; however, I want to approach the statement that was made: "He said, or should I say yelled, 'And all of you who aren't

(stated religion) or don't convert, are going to hell.' I don't know about you, but I think this is about as pompous and insulting as a person can get." Certainly the claim that the Pit preacher made was narrow! You mean to tell me there's only one way to heaven ... and the rest of us go to hell? How arrogant! Well, if you think this guy was pompous, you should read John 14:6, where Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (NIV translation of the Bible). Talk about a narrow claim! So we see that the Pit preachers' concept of following Christ or perishing wasn't an original idea ... he got it from Jesus himself! It is quite an alarming statement and worthy of investigation. Maybe we shouldn't be so concerned with this preacher guy but the one who made this claim in the first place!

In doing historical research my professors tell me to go to the source material, for it is there that I will find the best information. I encourage Ms. Keating (and anyone else) to do the same. Conclusions on any subject can't be drawn

accurately without a thorough examination of the material. Yes, the claims of Jesus Christ were radical, but don't depend on the media or Pit preachers to render a true picture of Christianity — go to the source! The best example is Christ himself. Investigate and make up your own mind.

CATHY COCKERHAM
Senior
History

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The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments and criticisms. When writing letters to the editor, please follow these guidelines:
 • Letters should include the author's year, major, phone number and hometown.
 • 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.
 • The DTH reserves the right to edit letters for space, clarity and vulgarity. Remember, brevity is the soul of wit.

The Daily Tar Heel

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Schools cannot be responsible for athletes

To the editor:

The recent incident in Raleigh involving the assault by eight N.C. State University wrestlers on a couple and their friend and the editorial page response to this incident by James Burroughs ("Eight Men Out? N.C. State must supervise its wrestlers," Oct. 13) has highlighted a social issue that I wish to address. What bothers me is that we seem to hold athletes to a different standard of citizenship from other members of society. This is not to condone the behavior of those involved in the incident since it was clearly reprehensible.

There is an undue emphasis that athletes should be treated differently from other members of society with respect to legal action since the N.C. State coach appeared with his athletes in court, implying that their membership in the athletic program entitles them to some sort of representation in court that is not available to others. It is also implied that somehow the athletic department is responsible for the behavior of its athletes off the field, as shown by the criticisms of Jim Valvano for not notifying university administrators that the athletes may be charged.

Whatever happened to personal responsibility and citizenship? Why can't these individuals answer for their actions on their own as responsible adults? The athletic department of a school should not have to appear in court for their student athletes when they get in trouble unless that occurs during a school sponsored activity. The only common denominator among these athletes, which is in fact irrelevant to their guilt or innocence, is their membership on the same team in a currently troubled athletic program.

In response to Burrough's call that a clean image should begin with players and coaches I would like to say that we should not expect athletic directors and coaches to be babysitters or remedial teachers of ethics and values for their players.

If I were to get into similar trouble as a graduate student, it would be ludicrous of me to expect the chairman of my department to come to my rescue. It would be equally ludicrous for society to equate my behavior with some sort of failing on the part of my adviser and the members of my committee to install in me a sense of ethics and responsible behavior.

This is the task of society at large and should certainly begin long before one reaches college age.

I participated in cross country and track in college and continue to do so with a local club that I am proud to be a member of. However, unless I am wearing a club jersey or participating in a club event, I fail to consider myself an "ambassador" for that club since I have responsibilities and interests that are in no way connected with it. My personal behavior is guided by the principles of citizenship that are universal regardless of any athletic or professional affiliation.

There are a lot of fine athletes at N.C. State University and I have had the pleasure to run against some of them. It is not fair for society and a newspaper to penalize these athletes by making an illegitimate connection where none exists between the unrelated behavior of others and an organization to which they belong.

BRIAN L. PALMER
Graduate student
Ecology