

The Daily Tar Heel

98th year of editorial freedom

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The cola wars, UNC style

Officials ignore students in vendor choice

Add another chapter to the cola wars saga. In a behind-closed-doors deal, the University awarded Marriott Corp. the right to control the vending machines on campus over Classic Food Services (a division of the Durham Coca-Cola Bottling Co.), the original contractor. And, once again, student concern has been overlooked in the decision-making process.

Granted, the decision to change from Classic Food to Marriott was made before everyone came back this fall. And if students were really worried about whether their dorm vending machines would be furnished by Coke or Pepsi, they could have been more vocal about their preferences. Yet administrators might have made the effort to find out what students wanted.

Decision makers never consulted members of the Food Service Advisory Board, a committee created to advise administrators on student opinion, when considering the bids. The bids were fairly similar; Marriott promised only \$5,000 more over a period of five years to the University. Administrators could have allowed product popularity to influence their decision.

However, the bids are not as equal as they may appear. Marriott has been pressuring University officials to consolidate all food services under its name so that the company could turn a profit. This worried officials, and for good reason; if Marriott is not happy with the business it does here,

the company could decide not to reapply after its contract ends, leaving UNC without a food contractor. And considering the reluctance of other contractors to take on the University's business, attempting to find a new one would be a hassle at the very least.

So administrators decided to avoid these complications, and gave Marriott what it wanted. Students did not have the chance to say which product they wanted. The Food Service Advisory Board, which has had a strong voice in past decisions concerning University food services, was not even consulted. The snacks and soft drinks available to students were decided without even student opinion being considered.

Even worse, due to the commotion Classic Foods has caused concerning the fairness of the bid selection, some residence halls were without vending machines for a few days. The Coke machines provided by Classic Foods were either removed or unplugged, and the Marriott Pepsi machines could not be plugged in because of the restraining order obtained by Classic Foods.

Of course, a can of soda is no reason to start an uprising. But it would be nice if administrators took student opinion into consideration when making decisions that affect students. Students, after all, are the ones who will be most affected by which vendor provides their soft drinks and snacks. — Crystal Bernstein

Bigger isn't always better

Charlotte faces the perils of expansion

When the U.S. census report came out a few weeks ago, the people of Charlotte were elated about surpassing Atlanta in population. For them, it meant their city was the new queen of the southern hill.

Add excitement about the chance of having a professional football team, and one can feel a fervor and pride in the city that has never been there before, even when the Hornets came. For years, Charlotte has envied the attention given to larger cities. Now it seems to be on its way to the "big time" as well.

But Charlotte is slowly realizing that bigger is not necessarily better.

The Queen City is receiving increased revenue and national prominence, but it is also paying the price of size and stardom. As with every major city turned booming metropolis, crime is on the increase. Charlotte, once a simple town full of honest, down-to-earth people, has a new generation who aren't so good natured. They have boosted the crime rate in Charlotte and have caused despair to its other residents.

And the crimes are getting more horrendous. A Charlotte police officer was killed two months ago, something which was shocking if not unheard of a decade ago. Yet, the violence wasn't over. Charlotte and its school system were still reeling from the death of a youngster over his jacket in 1989, when at the first game of this year's high school football season, a junior high student was shot and killed.

Again, it seemed as if the problems had peaked. But when two youths went on a shooting spree downtown Monday afternoon and another Charlotte man killed three people later that day, the Queen City realized it wasn't over with yet. In fact, the question now is if the violence will end, instead of when.

The saddest part about this crime wave is that one word continues to pop up — youth. Charlotte's teenagers are now involved in gang warfare, drugs and guns — a far cry from the seemingly simplistic worries of past years such as smoking in the bathroom and petty theft. Parents, who are traditionally stabilizing forces in children's lives, have taken a backseat to the "cool" guys — guys who carry .44 Magnum pistols.

Charlotte was able to rebuild itself from Hurricane Hugo, but these man-made problems will be much harder to fix. The sorrow in a mother's heart over her dead child is an almost unbearable pain, especially when it was caused by the recklessness and ignorance of a delinquent. It used to be uncommon to have to bear such tragic wounds in Charlotte, or try to heal them. Now, it is something the city will have to get used to.

For a city, "growth" brings many new things and new opportunities. The Queen City is finally getting its chance to experience them. Congratulations, Charlotte. — Tim Little



Sigh! All dressed up and nowhere to protest

Today I wanted to address the disgusting and disheartening problem of student apathy, but I really don't feel like it.

I guess I'm just depressed because I can't find any decent protests going on. It's getting so bad I went out to the Pit yesterday to protest the lack of protests, but nobody heard me on account of all the pit preachers. So I started protesting the pit preachers. I said, "Yea, and they came unto the Pit area, and lo they spoke. And lo they spoke some more, and lo they did not shut up, and lo and behold nobody paid any attention to them, save one hippie-looking dude with a goatee who asked them if they had change for a five, and yea, though I walk through Lenoir without a meal card, I do not fear the lasagna, because I've got my Pepto." Et cetera.

Then the pit preachers started protesting back. Sort of. They pointed to me and said stuff like, "Fiery damnation for thee, heathen, and thou and thy kinfolk shalt forever burn in the coal mines and Fast Fares of eternal Hell!"

Shoot, hell doesn't scare me. Fayetteville scares me.

So I started taking a poll, right there in the Pit, even though I should have been sitting in my 12 o'clock philosophy class asking important thoughtful questions such as "Does a D minus count for a pass?" Instead I was asking random strangers questions like: "How do you feel about the U.S. presence in Guam?" "Should President Bush take a wedge from the traps or go with a driver?" and "What are you doing Friday night?"

The answers: "Where?"; "Huh?"; and something that resembled a maniacal cackle.

This just made me more depressed. I mean, let's face it, things are never gonna be like they were 20 years ago. Iraq's not like Vietnam. We can't go around protesting U.S. involvement in Iraq because they've been calling us "sissies." The Viet Cong didn't go around calling us "sissies." Don't call Americans "sissies." If you call us "sissies" we'll have to draw a line in the sand. Don't cross that line. If you cross that line and call us "sissies" we'll have to go to the U.N. Don't make us go to the U.N. If you make us go to the U.N. and cross that line and call us "sissies" you know what that means.

Jesse Helms will get another campaign com-

John Bland

Less Filling

mercial on TV.

Don't make Jesse Helms get another campaign commercial on TV!

I've seen many a damn fine protest in my many years here, but the ones nearest and dearest to my heart are the ones that are most socially relevant, most critical of the powerful elite and most important in the eyes of the world at large.

I'm talking, of course, about the Playboy controversies.

Last year, when the DTH boldly presented an advertisement for the magazine, it brought all the radical liberal sandal-wearing environmentalist feminist hairy-legged intellectual types out of the woodwork (I should know; I dated most of 'em). My old buddy Rainbow (you remember Rainbow?) spoke the loudest. "Blow up the building!" she'd shout, and I'd have to slap the open palm of her hand with my face a couple of times to get her to calm down.

"Blowing up the DTH offices won't solve anything," I pleaded.

"Do you have any suggestions?"

"Yeah. Why don't you send me on a fact-finding mission to the Playboy offices? I'll disguise myself as a photographer, or maybe a rich Swiss banker, and I'll infiltrate the Playboy mansion and find out all the sexist information you want. Shouldn't take more than, oh, couple years."

I could tell she wasn't too keen on it by the gentle way she placed her knee upside my gazebos.

Then there was the time two years ago or whenever the hell it was when all those protesters tried to get the Student Stores to take all the Playboys out. I was down there myself, but I was trying to get them to put the Penthouses and Hustlers and Dutch Treats back in. There I was, sitting in the back by the overpriced five-section notebooks, minding my own business and holding up my little placard which read "Yo Scum! What about Larry Flynt's Freedom of Expression, Huh?" as is my god-given constitutional right, when suddenly all these people

started giving me fist-to-mouth resuscitation and I realized that my lonely struggle was all for naught and also slightly perverted.

But that didn't end my involvement with protest movements. Oh no.

You might remember my most famous one. You may have read about it in one of those liberal pinko rags like "Campus Police Roundup." You may have even seen it. It was my one-man effort to protest streak-banning on campus, and it ended all too abruptly when I ran through a ... no, I don't want to talk about it. It's still painful.

Of course, the best way to protest unfair issues on this campus is to write a letter to the editor. People have been writing letters to the editors for more than 100 years, and pretty soon the editors will get around to reading them. Here's a recent example:

Dear Edater Skum:
why don't you print sum reel riters like me U dirty mutha—

After editing for style, clarity and spelling it comes out like this:

Dear Edater Skum:
why don't you print sum reel riters such as myself U dirty mutha—

Then we get the real copy editors on it and it comes out like this:

To the Editors:
I say, you are doing a simply fabulous job. I especially like that Less Filling Fellow — he's tres amasant!

—Until the copy editors kick me off their terminals and I have to find something else to screw around with.

Anyway, gotta run. I heard there was supposed to be a pointless protest to another lost cause, but I can't get near any lost causes without smelling a liberal in the area.

Dale McKinley, you out there?

John Bland is a senior English and Peace, War and Police Action major from Charlotte. Hey, you kids, get away from that Constitution!

Helms ignores purpose of art by targeting NEA

David Madison

Guest Columnist

If there is one thing a visit to an art museum will create, it's introspection. Slow cognitive interplay between the art and the self. As I walked quietly through the many Spanish and Italian museums last summer, my mind moved at the pace of my steps. Each painting created a new image and in turn a new thought about myself. The rest of the touring crowd was equally silent and absorbed. All thinkers and dreamers united in appreciation for the aesthetic past.

I guess that's why I didn't see Republican Senator Jesse Helms there, mixed among the tour groups, peering seriously over the rims of his glasses at the masterpieces before him. Or was he the tacky American tourist I saw covering his wife's eyes in front of the statue of David? It's entirely possible.

Of course, it is silly to think the Helms family would squander their vacation time in Italy when Myrtle Beach and "South of the Border" are so close by. I can hear the senator and the Mrs. now as they tour South Carolina's finest wax museum.

"Now that's art. I have never seen a wax Liberator of this quality."

"But Jesse, darling, he was a homosexual."

"That's right, nothing but smut. Remind me to have this place closed down."

Luckily, the museum in Myrtle Beach also houses the world's largest tobacco plant in captivity and thus would have to be spared.

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) may not be as lucky. By following Helms and instituting congressional censorship of the federally funded arts, a conservative tide in Congress could also wipe out the NEA completely. What voters and legislators need to realize is that by censoring art, this country is turning its back on itself. These controversial artists are

responding to the existing culture and subcultures in America. Photographer Robert Mapplethorpe, probably number one on the Helms hit list, graphically creates images from the dark, urban, homosexual society he was a part of in New York City. To deny Mapplethorpe's work is to deny the existence of his society.

Currently, grants for artists are screened and approved by qualified personnel at the NEA. The competing artists are judged by their peers instead of narrow-minded politicians, leery of passing any work that may link them to homosexuality or sacrilege.

Helms insists that taxpayers should not support artists who produce what he calls pornographic filth. Ironically, Helms does not hesitate to push for increased military aid to murderous regimes in El Salvador. Which photo is more repulsive: a picture of two naked men embracing or one of six Salvadoran priests shot by gifts from the United States?

In essence, Helms avoids confronting the substance of his actions by chasing the reflections of others. Mapplethorpe's photographic impressions of the male anatomy cost this country only a few thousand dollars as opposed to the millions Helms helps send to governments repeatedly cited for human rights violations.

The simple reason for this is that it is easier to create a shallow controversy than to solve a solid one. By rattling his sword in the name of

a morally cleansed NEA, Helms has placed himself in the spotlight of national politics. Preying on the fears of both conservative and undecided voters, Helms hopes to project himself as the candidate who will stand up for decent Southern values.

Those who agree with censorship of music and the institution of warning labels for all music can breathe easy with Helms in office. Unfortunately, he may overlook the urgent need for warning labels on country music albums. A federally drafted precaution attached to the albums of such artists as Hank Williams Jr. and George Strait could read: "Warning — the music contained on this recording contains lyrics only about trucks, women and drinking. Southerners tired of being stereotyped as simple-minded members of the 'Hee-Haw' cast may find these songs offensive. Listen with caution."

North Carolina has a very large voting population who firmly believe in the freedom of the arts and refuse to identify with the image of a stagnant and backward South. The N.C. School of the Arts in Winston-Salem, along with the other colleges and universities around the state, produce NEA grant recipients every year.

In other words, this state serves the rest of the country by providing people trained in the art of preserving and advancing American culture. Helms wants no part in this progression because to him, anything shocking, graphic or questioning is automatically worthless and evil. Helms strolls through museums with his closed mind focused on the future of American art, hoping one day all the paintings will be done in red, white and blue.

David Madison is a junior in American Studies from Chapel Hill.

Hey, you! Yeah, the one with the newspaper in your hand. We want (and need) your letters!

Got a gripe? A bitch? A moan? Then tell us about it. We want to hear how the budget cuts have affected you. We want to know what you think about mandatory drug testing, the football team and/or mikeman, and the Gulf Crisis. We want to know what's on your mind.

But we'll never know if you don't tell us. Write in today, and get your name published in the DTH. After all, why should we have all the fun and controversy?

If you want your letter published, please sign and date it. No more than two signatures, please. We do not print anonymous letters.

After those all-important signatures, please include your year in school, major, phone number and hometown.

Just drop your works of literary genius in the box marked "Letters to the Editor" outside the DTH on the first floor of the Student Union annex.

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