

# OPINION

## Monumental election lets voters show their priorities

Harvey Gantt's platform centers on education, environmental concerns

On Nov. 6, we as students have the chance to contribute to a historical event. We can elect Harvey Gantt as North Carolina's first black U.S. senator. Although Gantt would be the first black senator from North Carolina, he is not focusing his campaign on race, but on priorities such as education, freedom of choice and cleaning the environment.

Priorities. That is what we have to think about. What are our priorities? Those of us that are "twenty-something" must realize that the debts amassed today will fall on our shoulders in the future. This debt is not just financial, but it is also an environmental debt which cannot be easily repaid. The result of this environmental debt is unclean water, air pollution and the continuing depletion of the ozone layer. Another part of the debt involves education and the declining stature of the U.S. educational policies. These policies have allowed our students to fall behind the students in other highly industrialized nations. The debt continues to grow when the government is allowed to restrict our First Amendment rights. Gantt does not believe the government has the right to become the "moral arbiters of the nation." We as students at the University of North Carolina have to choose the candidate that has priorities in mind.

Not only is the University slipping, but the state is also falling behind. We are ranked near the bottom with low SAT scores, high infant mortality rates, high dropout rates and a growing illit-

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eracy rate. We cannot afford to fall any more; it is time for a change! Gantt realizes that we need a change. "It's time we spent less money on B-52 bombers and more on the students." We, as students, are the future of the state and of this country; we need to start exercising our political power.

On Nov. 6, we must go out and vote. If you can not make it home, please request an absentee ballot from your county's board of elections. Time is running out; the 3,500-plus Harvey Gantt supporters in the Pit on Oct. 15 proved that we can make a difference.

Gantt does have a chance, but he cannot win if we do not go out and vote. We all know that the 1990 Senate race will be close and if you are too busy to vote or if you assume that Gantt doesn't have a chance, then the race is over. Every vote counts; we can not afford to have another six years of an administration that is afraid to be open-minded. On Nov. 6, we can prove to the world that Harvey Gantt is a winner and that we are ready to take control of the political reins that run this country.

Kara Stroud and Kimberly Ellington are junior political science majors minoring in Afro-American studies and are from Charlotte.

### YOU NEED JESSE! IF YOU ARE:

- A) A GIANT TOBACCO COMPANY SCREWING THE FARMERS.
- B) AN OIL COMPANY INTO OFF-SHORE DRILLING.
- C) HOMOPHOBIC.
- D) STILL HUNTING COMMIES.
- E) A BELIEVER IN THE INALIENABLE RIGHT TO OWN AN AK-47.



Jesse Helms offers real solutions to problems of security and education

On Tuesday, the voters of North Carolina are charged with a monumental responsibility: whether to elect Jesse Helms or Harvey Gantt to the U.S. Senate. When one considers the records and values of the two candidates, the choice is clear: we need Jesse Helms.

Helms has been the victim of some of the most vicious, unfounded attacks in American political history. Why? The extreme political left is threatened by politicians of conviction and courage and will do anything to defeat Helms. They spread unsubstantiated distortions of the senator's record. They believe this will convince voters that the senator is "out of touch." They are wrong and will be resoundingly repudiated by the voters of North Carolina on Election Day. Helms will prevail because he offers real solutions to today's problems and does not promise to cover them up with more federal money. Gantt, however, has admitted he has "no idea" how much all his spending programs will cost the taxpayers.

The ultimate example of liberal policies run amok is in the field of education. Gantt would have us believe that the solution to the educational crisis is more federal spending and control. Anyone naive enough to believe that should be put in stocks in the Pit and pertained with dead cats. Federal intervention in education never has and never will work. The federal government returns less than fifty cents on the dollar for education spending due to the

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wasteful governmental bureaucracy. Helms realizes that the solution to the educational dilemma is to improve standards and raise educational quality. We must return control of our schools to the states and local communities who are better able to meet the needs of students and their parents.

We need a senator who will place fiscal accountability over the concerns of special interest groups. We need a senator who was first to call for sanctions against China after students were massacred in Beijing.

We need a senator with enough foreign relations experience to realize the precarious position of Mikhail Gorbachev and who will not let America's guard down until we are sure that there will not be a military coup. We need a senator who was the first to call attention to the threat of Saddam Hussein and would never attempt to cut from our national defense with our soldiers in the Middle East. We need a senator who co-sponsored legislation to give tax credits for parents with children in day care. We need Sen. Jesse Helms.

Charlton Allen is a sophomore history and political science major from Wilmington. He is president of UNC College Republicans.

## Art censorship issue should play major role in voters' choice

With the senatorial elections quickly approaching, voters need to focus on the issues at hand. One important issue that voters must not overlook is the funding of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). Recently, Congress voted to cut \$45,000 from the NEA's budget in response to widespread disapproval of displays by artists Andres Serrano and Robert Mapplethorpe. A group of congressmen thought that the works were obscene and decided the artists did not deserve federal funds to promote their efforts. I urge readers to recognize that refusing an artist a grant on the basis of his choice of subject matter is detrimental to American society for the following reasons. Congressional assumption of the right to dictate to artists what they may or may not depict in their work bears major implications on American people; it both threatens the future of art in America, an important aspect of our society, and it blatantly denies artists and viewers alike their rights under the First Amendment to the Constitution.

First of all, the NEA is an organization which promotes the advancement of art by offering grants to various artists. In order to offer these grants, the NEA receives funds from the federal government. Recently N.C. Sen. Jesse Helms proposed a change to the Interior Department appropriation which would prevent the use of NEA grants to promote what he calls obscene materials. Helms feels that Congress should de-

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velop a definition of obscene and impose it on artists and viewers of America. Some conservatives even suggested that it would be best to abolish the NEA altogether. The question lies in the implications of such a decision; any action of this type would have negative effects on American education.

Throughout my elementary and secondary education, teachers used artists' works to relate feelings and moods which narratives in a textbook could not convey. Art gives students a basic understanding of major themes within an era. Today's art, even if controversial, will act as tomorrow's aid to teaching. Historians of the future will rely upon our art to acquire useful knowledge about our generation. If we restrict artists by banning certain subject matter, then historians will gain an unrealistic perception of our time period.

Anthony Lewis, columnist for The News and Observer, points out that many people don't realize that much of the music, art and plays published over the last 25 years reflects the work of NEA grants. Only 20 works of over 85,000 funded by the NEA have been considered controversial. Art is an "important measure of a society's quality" which, as Lewis points out, receives minimal funding as compared to other countries

like Germany, France, Italy and Britain. If Congress takes any action, it needs to think about offering more support to the endowment. As America struggles to remain competitive in today's changing world, we cannot afford to deal such a devastating blow to the endowment because it suggests that we place no concern in the quality and richness of our society.

Even if art were not characteristic of a superior society, any action against various artists as a result of subject matter is a direct violation of the First Amendment, which guarantees individuals the freedom of expression. A group of officials in high positions should not possess the power to tell artists what they may portray in their works.

Some may claim that Congress wants to stop funding obscene art, not ban it. I suggest that refusing to fund and censoring are one and the same. As Robert Brustein maintains, the distinction between the two "derives from the pernicious American tradition of letting the marketplace... function as the censor of the arts." If artists had to seek funding from private companies rather than from the government, their art would be censored even further to reflect the companies' views, which may not necessarily coincide with those of the artist. Furthermore, Brustein exhibits that the Endowment's charter committed the government "to help create and sustain not only a climate encouraging freedom of thought, imagination, and inquiry,

but also the material conditions facilitating the release of this creative talent." Brustein explains that this allows for freedom of "artistic expression" under the First Amendment.

Others argue that Congress consists of officials elected by the people and so they necessarily represent the views of the people. We should never become so naive as to believe every campaign promise any politician makes. Once a politician gains an office, he should still feel an obligation to accurately represent what the people support. Our system of government would fill with corruption if officials made decisions based solely on what best suits their own desires.

We as voting citizens in today's America need to understand the importance of the issues at hand and make an effort to choose carefully whom we put in the government. And as students we need to find candidates who support art and the role it plays in education. Art needs support in society and currently the NEA provides it. We can make a difference in the futures of both art and the NEA by making conscientious decisions in choosing which candidates we put in office. Before voting for a candidate find out where he stands on the issues which face us today. The future well-being of American society may depend on it.

M. Jonathan Clary is a freshman math major from Phoenix, Md.



## Library bond money would be well spent

Writing in support of the library bond referendum, I want to address some of the economic questions being raised by those who oppose the bond issue.

Undoubtedly, the current budget cutting that the University has had to endure is in the back of our minds when we think of current economic conditions. However, I should like to point out that during the budget revision, no permanent employee has been laid off and no permanent UNC employee has had to take a salary reduction. As a matter of fact, permanent state employees were given, on the average, a 6 percent pay raise by the last legislature, and all retired persons covered by the state retirement system were given a 6.7 percent increase in compensation.

Let us all remember that the University does not pay real estate taxes; we the employees and former employees do pay taxes, and we cannot say that UNC's budget cuts are coming out of our remuneration.

It has been argued by some that the added bond money is to be used to upgrade the new library to a Taj Mahal. The library staff has already proven that they know how to get the most out of what they have to work with. Let me

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cite but two statistics.

One way to get at efficiency is to determine how many books each member of the staff on the average circulates. This figure is 23,446 for our library against an average of 13,801 for all the public libraries in the state. Finally, based on the overall cost of running the library, it costs \$1.58 to circulate each book in our library compared with a state average of \$2.28. This does not sound like the efforts of a group out to build a Taj Mahal.

Building and operating the larger facility will increase the taxes on a property with a \$100,000 valuation by \$34 per year. This past year we paid \$21 on the same property to provide ambulance service by the rescue squad. Though I don't begrudge the taxes spent on ambulance service, I think building and operating the larger library is a steal by comparison.

Earl N. Mitchell is a professor of physics.

## Actions of Helms' opponents are hypocritical

This is a first-hand account of a N.C. Sen. Jesse Helms supporter living in Chapel Hill.

There is no doubt that Harvey Gantt is a formidable opponent. Win or lose, he should be commended for running a crafty campaign. Although I disagree with virtually everything he stands for, I respect the fact that his supporters are exercising their right to support the candidate of their choice.

The problem arises, however, with the masses of people who don't seem to care about Harvey Gantt, but who are so eaten up with hate that they will do anything to "get Jesse."

This is a massive, hypocritical group, and evidence of its existence abounds. A walk through any Chapel Hill park-

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ing lot reveals bumper stickers ranging from the mildest "Defeat Helms" to the most hypocritical of all, "Vote Against Hate, Vote Against Helms." Who is the real hater?

Surely there are those who disagree with Helms, but have they actually made themselves believe that this nationally respected statesman is some hateful ogre who sits around each night planning horrible things to do the next day? If he is so bad, wouldn't this senate colleagues stand up with Gantt in opposition to him? They are, after all, the people who

know him.

I personally have tasted this hatred toward Helms supporters. My Helms bumper sticker has been ripped off my car twice, and I have been screamed at while driving down Franklin St. I have even been denied service at a local gas station because I have a Helms sticker. I was forced to buy a textbook that was only available at a store that supports Gantt.

Of course, these incidents are nothing more than inconveniences. However, what if the tables were turned, and Gantt stickers had been stolen, or a professor had ordered a book only at a store that supports Helms? Would these not be considered acts of hate?

This University community prides

itself on its reputation for free thinking and expression. But, in the case of this election, it should be ashamed. The only voice heard is that of Gantt, and anyone pro-Helms is deemed closed-minded. Yet I can't keep a sticker on my car, pro-Helms signs have been erased and the news coverage has been, at best, slanted.

No matter what your political position, live up to the tradition which has existed on this campus for 200 years! Discuss and respect all opinions, no matter how they differ from your own. If you don't, how can you claim to be any better than that which you stand against?

John D. Ward is a junior interdisciplinary studies major from Wilmington.

## Gantt acknowledges his duty to environment

One of the most crucial issues of the 1990 election campaign for the U.S. Senate revolves around the immediate threat to our environment. Harvey Gantt realizes this danger and strongly believes that it is the responsibility of our citizens and our government to ensure a clean, environmentally safe world for our children and our children's children. Harvey Gantt will make sure that those who defile the environment pay the cost of cleaning it up, instead of dumping it on the taxpayers.

Experience shows that Gantt will vigorously defend the environment. Gantt, who holds a master's degree in city planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has successfully combined the need for environmental

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protection with the constructive growth of our nation's urban centers. As mayor of Charlotte, Gantt supported the city's efforts at energy conservation, recycling and resource recovery. During Gantt's tenure, Charlotte won national recognition for its creative use of open spaces as urban parks and green ways. Due to his support and leadership, many people across the nation regard Charlotte-Mecklenburg as a state and national leader in recycling, resource recovery and overall prosperity.

As a U.S. senator, Harvey Gantt will

ardently continue his lifelong professional, political and personal goals of creating cleaner and greener living and working environments. He will work for cleaner air, drinkable water, safer cities, protection of our forests and wilderness areas and preservation of N.C. coast lands and wetlands from abusive and dangerous drilling. As Gantt says, "We've got to work together to clean up the environment, protect it from further damage and, most importantly, preserve it for our descendants. A clean environment benefits everyone."

Gantt's opponent has, regrettably, demonstrated his contempt for the environment on numerous occasions. Helms voted against the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act and the Superfund

for the cleaning up of hazardous and toxic wastes. These proposals were supported by many Democrats and Republicans alike, yet Helms paid no heed to America's most pressing problem.

Gantt, on the other hand, cares deeply about the needs of the citizens of North Carolina. Gantt's quintessentially American values have earned him the support of the Sierra Club, among other groups. Our children must not grow up in a world choked by poison. Help Gantt help North Carolina in its hour of need. On Nov. 6, 1990, vote "YES" for Harvey Gantt for the U.S. Senate.

David Tucker is a senior Russian and East European studies major from Rocky Mount. He is a member of Students for Gantt.

### Opinion page policy

The Daily Tar Heel prints a second editorial page every Monday in an effort to include more letters and columns. When several letters on a single issue are submitted to the DTH, we will occasionally package them together on this page to present many sides of the debate at once. We also solicit opinions from sources directly involved in the issues to add a fresh, authoritative perspective.