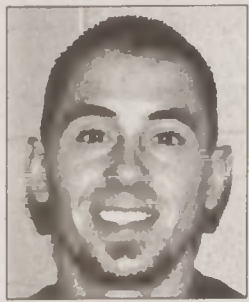


Opinion

Where are the Campus Police when we need them?



Dustin Jordan
Staff photographer/reporter

Where are you, Campus Police? I ask because I am tired of parking in the lower gravel parking lots because freshmen are parking in the West Ridge parking deck. Around 1 a.m. Feb. 9, I counted 14 freshmen parked in the parking deck. Only two had parking tickets. Twelve hours later, seven of those cars were still

there and had not been issued a new ticket or a ticket at all. Three cars had the same photocopied resident sticker number R2100: a white Honda Accord, a blue Jeep Liberty and a black Volkswagen Jetta.

And, how long will you let freshmen renew their temporary permits?

Section 9.3 of Parking Registration and Permits No. 3 says, "A temporary permit will be issued to any member of the campus community whose registered vehicle is being repaired and who is parking an unregistered vehicle on campus. The time limit for temporary permits is two weeks."

How often do you check this? I wonder because I have seen several freshmen parking illegally with these permits for months now.

Where are you when residents call you because of noise ordinances and drug issues and you show nearly one hour later?

I wonder where you were when all those car tires were slashed last year. Where were you when a female student was in a Highsmith bathroom stall while a man crawled on the floor toward her?

Did you catch the guy? Or did you just send out an e-mail stressing females to be careful on our "safe campus?"

I know where you are when all this happens. You are sleeping in your squad cars or speeding around campus.

I have seen both happen in my three years here.

I have also seen your officers smoking in the lobby of Vance Hall. For your information, UNCA Smoking Policy PPM No. 48 reads, "In order to protect nonsmokers from the hazards of passive smoke, smoking is prohibited in all indoor areas at UNCA except residential rooms."

I realize you are understaffed, but something needs to be done. When I approached an officer last semester about

parking, he said he doesn't bother ticketing when it rains. Does that give students a free pass to park wherever when it rains?

If so, look out for my car to be parked next to the flagpole on the Quad.

Because of your slack, freshmen residents now adhere to the parking notion that it is acceptable to park illegally at night, as long as they move their cars by morning. Contrary to belief and Campus Police's lack of action, section 9.4 of Parking Regulations No. 12 says, "Open parking hours do not apply to resident student parking lots."

So, Campus Police, when will you take action? I don't even work for you, and I seem to know more about freshmen parking than you do. Will you explain yourselves? Or will it take other students to complain as well?

If so, I encourage all students legally parking in the West Ridge parking structure to write in as I have.

Kyoto Protocol takes effect without U.S. support

by Sean Robinson
Campus Editor

As of midnight Feb. 16, the world witnessed the coming to fruition of the first international effort to curb pollution, manifest in the 1997 Kyoto Protocol.

One hundred and forty-one countries, an overwhelming majority of nations, agreed to the accord that, now in effect, will strive to reduce greenhouse emissions from developed countries by 5.2 percent before the end of 2012. The event is monumental and a victory for environmentalists worldwide, but how much was won? The sad truth is that the largest contributor to the amount of greenhouse gas emissions that daily bore larger and larger holes in the precious ozone layer is none other than the most powerful country in the world: us. The United States of America would not sign.

I know that people have been complaining about the U.S. policy on international compliance with environmental standards for a long time, and maybe it's a tired argument, but the question still remains: How much of a victory can really be won for anything internationally when the most powerful country in the world refuses to lead the way to progressive policy?

I would like to propose that no matter how many conciliatory moral victories like these are won all over the globe, none of them will amount to anything more than a show of hands

until the self-proclaimed leader of the free world decides to stop acting like a spoiled third grader and share the responsibility of caring for the planet with the rest of the international community.

This goes for all aspects of international politics, and not just for environmental issues. The United States has to stop waging war unilaterally, ignoring the policies of the U.N. and perpetuating the inequalities between rich and poor within our own borders before the international community affords us any respect.

We must decide to be the kind of nation that values the lives of human beings across all borders and of future generations. Ideas like the Kyoto Protocol don't even impose a financial penalty for non-compliance, a policy more than likely aimed to lure countries like the U.S. into signing. Such a small level of commitment is being asked for us in this baby step toward an environmentally conscious future. Shouldn't we be willing to undertake such a small task to prevent such a potentially disastrous end as what is threatened by continued global warming?

The answer is simple to free-thinking people, capable of empathy for the world in which we live. It is not simple to oil-hungry, war-mongering Republican domineers like George W. Bush.

So the next time we're all given the opportunity to choose a leader, ask yourself this question: Is it more important to keep homosexuals from marrying or to keep the world a healthy place to live for ourselves and our posterity? Then, do yourself a favor, and don't vote for a Republican.

Meet the Banner staff:

The Banner's Features Editor Amanda Edwards and Lifestyles Editor Sara House share all

What are your job responsibilities at the Blue Banner?

Sara: My job at the paper is Lifestyles editor, astrology columnist and bartendress extraordinaire.

Amanda: I come up with story ideas, assign them to the writers, create the layout for the section and do the initial edits to the stories.

What kind of music do you like?

Sara: I like lots of different stuff. Lately, I'm feeling the rap, but I also love Magnetic Fields and PJ Harvey.

Amanda: Anything from Led Zeppelin to The Allman Brothers to Skynyrd to Johnny Cash. And a little bit of Dr. Dre every once and a while if I'm feeling saucy.

Where are you from?

Sara: I was born in Texas, but grew up in Hawaii, Los Angeles and Albuquerque.

Amanda: A little place called Weaverville.

What is your favorite TV show?

Sara: I love "The Surreal Life" on VH1. I love the American obsession with celebrity.

Amanda: I'm totally obsessed with "LOST," "The



Amanda Edwards
Features Editor

Amazing Rac," and "Six Feet Under."

What's the best class you ever took at UNCA?

Sara: I really like my media aesthetics class with Dr. Hantz, but mostly just because he's an awesome teacher.

Amanda: Newsriting, because that's how I was introduced to Dr. West, one of my heroes.

What's your favorite food?

Sara: I love Indian food. If it has the words masala, chutne, or paneer, I'm loving it.

Amanda: Any kind of pasta, most recently my



Sara House
Lifestyles Editor

famous four-veggie, double-layer baked ziti.

What are your plans for after you graduate?

Sara: To become rich and famous or to work for a newspaper.

Amanda: What I really want to do is get paid to write from the comfort of my couch or be a TV watcher for Jimmy Kimmel Live.

If you got a tattoo today, what would it be and where?

Sara: I already have two, but I would love some kind of bracelet.

Amanda: Got one, don't really need another.

What's something not a lot of people know about you?

Sara: I grew up in the Hare Krishna and chanted to Hindu gods.

Amanda: I'm a video game dork, and I'm very comfortable with that.

If you could be any cartoon character, who would you be?

Sara: A cross between Jessica Rabbit and Tank Girl.

Amanda: Marge Simpson.

Part I: Analyzing the flaws of conservative Christian thought



Jonathon Czary
Columnist

If you are like me, you have noticed some serious flaws in conservative thinking, particularly from those who claim to be Christians. Further, their blasphemous twisting of religious doctrine in order to justify national policies, particularly Republican political stances concerning abortion, gay marriage, war and capital punishment appalls you.

It is my intention with this column to do three things. First, to point out seriously damaging discrepancies in the reasoning of the religious right, hopefully bringing normally good people back to the foundations of their faith. Second, to give rational folks the insight and ammunition to win future discussions with self-proclaimed conservative Christians. Finally, to show how justifications for war, capital punishment and bans against

abortion or gay marriage are antithetical to true Christian values.

To begin, we must first define what it means to be a Christian and decide the ultimate goals of a good Christian life. This is a very difficult task, considering the numerous factions of Christianity and the hundreds of interpretations of even the simplest Bible passages.

Before going any further, I would like to make one thing perfectly clear. I am not speaking for Democrats, nor am I speaking for liberals, nor any particular faction of Christianity. I speak only of behalf of rational truth, in the spirit of Socrates, by examining my own understanding of reality.

I am not fighting for your cause, unless your cause is open discourse and truth. You are safe in your little box, so please excuse me while I venture outside of it.

So what does it mean to be a Christian? In my view, a true Christian is someone who acknowledges the divinity of Jesus and accepts his life and sacrifice as the ultimate example of the perfect human life.

How should a Christian live? A true Christian strives to follow Jesus' teachings and life-example of forgiveness and self-sacrifice. Thus, a true Christian is a "follower of Christ." The now clichéd question, "What would Jesus do?" is still a viable and valuable question to ask

when determining moral actions. The right thing to do, in any circumstance, is to emulate Jesus. It follows that not doing what Jesus would do is always wrong.

It doesn't take much thought to realize the enormity of such a task. To overcome our mortal instincts—self-interest and indulgence—or our emotions—jealousy, anger, lust, etc., is the exact point of our existence. This is quite a lofty bar to set for ourselves, and the difficulty in overcoming these powerful emotions and instincts is perhaps the very definition of the human condition.

Moreover, when we fail to overcome these decidedly human traits, we fail as Christians. Failure to transcend these mortal instincts is the very definition of sin. In Spanish, the word "sin" translates to mean "without." I like this translation and think it fits this discussion. Since I am restructuring Christianity, I might as well change the definition of sin.

Do not think of sinning as breaking a moral or religious law. Instead, think of sinning as an action without divine grace. When we fail to follow Jesus' teachings, either purposefully or accidentally, we are acting decidedly as humans, without divine grace, and thus sinning.

Before I can show how the "religious right" has missed these major points, I must address a few other "givens" in terms of true Christianity. Two very

important principles in true Christianity involve the idea of free will and judgment.

First is the premise that it is not our place to judge each other. "Judge not, lest ye be judged." This combined with the command for us to not seek vengeance or to force justice are the only two supports holding up the idea of our lives as a test. God must reserve these rights in order to preserve free will.

Without free will, humans would not exist, or, at the very least, we would cease to be human at all. Free will is paramount to salvation. Without free will, heaven is not attainable, and the purpose of life shifts dramatically away from God's intentions. It follows that anything that would lead us away from God is evil by nature.

Further, anything that restricts free will, either directly or indirectly, in actuality or in effect, undermines God's design. Moreover, any social policy that restricts free will based on erroneous human assumptions supercedes God's authority, effectively replacing God as ultimate judge.

This could arguably be the worst sin against God imaginable. In fact, this might be the best definition of evil—attempting to replace God.

For Part II, make sure to pick up a Banner next week.

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The Blue Banner

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