

This weekly column will feature confessions of a Southern religious studies major. Each week, Jonathan will offer a light-hearted look at the little things in life that can make a big difference.

## IT'S THE *Little* THINGS... Playing the Game

**Jonathan Chapman**  
Columnist

Competition has always been my secret weakness.

Granted, I have always had a tendency to be somewhat overly concerned with leadership advancement.



**Jonathan Chapman**

But my hidden competitive side isn't so much about personal advance, as it is about winning. In fact, it is the exact reason I steer clear of games. I'm not just talking about sports either. It doesn't take much for a friendly game of Twister to turn into a WWE wrestling match.

Operation starts off as a nice game of precision and accuracy, and soon, at least when I play it, it turns into a game of sabotage.

*"It's not whether you win or lose, unless you're losing ..."* -Anonymous

And if I was ever tried for how I play Monopoly, Martha's sentencing would be child's play.

I suppose I've always wanted to disconnect from my need for competition, not wanting to let people see me as an overaggressive player in an activity that could be easily labeled as an insignificant game.

I'm so concerned with not assuming that label that I refuse to play games, but I don't refuse to watch them.

Two Saturdays ago, I went to watch the men's soccer game in Rhodes Stadium.

I don't claim to know much about sports. In fact, I had to ask the guy standing next to me which color Elon was, but once I knew, I didn't stop clapping or screaming or being just plain irritating.

There is just something about winning that is good for the soul. The sensation

right before you know for sure that your team has won is second to none.

It's the building anticipation of the glory to come once your team smashes the faces of your opponents that makes victory so tasty.

Get my point?

When I was growing up, my parents made me play little league baseball for two years.

Two heinous, painful, disappointing years.

Why was it so painful?

It wasn't because I couldn't catch the ball, much less hit it with a bat (please insert any inappropriate jokes here). It was because my team lost.

A lot.

I try not to think too much about losing. I know that it's the effort that counts.

But when the clock begins to tick away

the final seconds of a game that Elon is about to win, I can't help but feel my heart racing, all the while my mind thinking "if you sacks of poop lose this game, I will never speak to you again."

It may seem a tad harsh, but it seems to work.

And to the gentleman two rows behind me at the soccer game that kept yelling "Where's your whistle ref? Did you leave it at home with your husband?"

We can't get married yet.

If you're going to yell an insult, try to make it accurate. Ass.

Contact Jonathan Chapman at [opinions@elon.edu](mailto:opinions@elon.edu) or 278-7247

## When did 'liberal' become a four-letter word?

**Erin Moffet**  
Columnist

Watching television in Richmond two weeks ago was very frustrating. With the gubernatorial election nearing, as well as attorney general and other offices, campaign ads were shown non-stop. None of them had anything good to say. And the thing that stood out in all of them was the word liberal in bold red font when a Democratic candidate was being described.

Well, of course they are liberal; they are Democrats so naturally they are more liberal on issues than Republicans. So why is it that the word liberal has such a negative connotation attached to it?

Liberal is defined as those favoring proposals for reform, open to new ideas for progress, and tolerant of the ideas and behavior of others. How can being tolerant and open-minded be such a bad thing to be?

Ironically, conservative is defined as favoring traditional views and values and being opposed to change. Not that tradition

is a bad thing, but changes are necessary in society. To oppose change rather than being tolerant should be the worse trait.

Yet the label 'liberal' is still used as if it were the mark of the devil.

And not only are Republican candidates using it to put a sort of scarlet letter on their opponents, but even churches have jumped on the anti-liberal bandwagon.

Churches are advocating anti-liberal sentiment on the basis that liberal views contradict religious views. How can this even begin to be justified? In Christianity, God wanted people to be tolerant of others. This goes along with the principles of liberalism. The traditional ideas of religion can be intertwined with conservatism but liberalism is not anti-religious by any means.

Liberals have brought along many important changes in our nation. Some of those would be the Civil Rights Movement and Women's Suffrage. People are too quick to forget these monumental steps made by those associated with liberalism.

Non-liberals would rather dwell on the non-accepted views liberals tried to push, for example, affirmative action. When proposals for change fail or affect people negatively, they are quick to blame it on "those damn liberals." People need to understand better what each side represents and that liberals are not the enemy of democracy but are the very people who are truly living democratically and taking advantage of being part of a government that can change in time.

Because without liberals, by definition, change would never come about. So Republicans should stop trying to attack their Democratic opposition with marking them as a liberal. This attack gives the word liberal a very unnecessary negative meaning. Instead, Democratic candidates should proclaim their liberalness since it is actually a very great thing.

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