

# OPINION/ FORUM

THE CHRONICLE 36 Years

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Official White House Photo by Pete Souza  
 President Barack Obama prepares to meet with members of his staff in the Oval Office on Sept. 9.

## Tea Party Out to Cripple Obama

In just a few weeks, we will face a critical turning point for our nation. On Tuesday, November 2, your family's future, the strength of your community and the direction of our country will be on the ballot.

The choice is simple ... and the stakes have never been higher.

Should we keep pushing forward towards the brighter days that are just ahead? Or will we allow the forces of intolerance, ignorance and division to take America back to a much darker time?



William Clay  
 Guest Columnist

So, to all of my Republican colleagues and their new Tea Party friends, I have a message for you: We're not taking one step back.

Hard-working families across this country, especially African Americans, know all too well the pain that this recession has caused. New Census figures show that one in seven Americans is living below the poverty line. That shocking figure includes 25 percent of African Americans.

So while we're fighting to create jobs, preserve families, and lift up our communities, what is the Republican plan?

- They want you to stay home on Election Day so that they can elect their Tea Party extremists to Congress.
- They want to put insurance companies back in charge of your health care.
- They want to give Wall Street speculators a free pass to engage in new reckless financial schemes.
- They want to give millionaires a tax cut by adding \$700 billion to the deficit.
- They want to privatize and cut Social Security.

And that's not the worst of it. The Republican Tea Party's real objective is to use fear, ignorance and intolerance to cripple President Obama. But we won't let that happen. Not this time. Not this year. We're not taking one step back.

We're not going to allow them to take this country back into the darkness. With your vote, we're going to keep America moving forward into the light.

With your vote, we're going to give President Obama the tools he needs to create jobs, fight poverty, close disparities in health care and education, extend unemployment benefits, defend Social Security, and fight for all of us.

Your vote is vital on Tuesday, November 2.

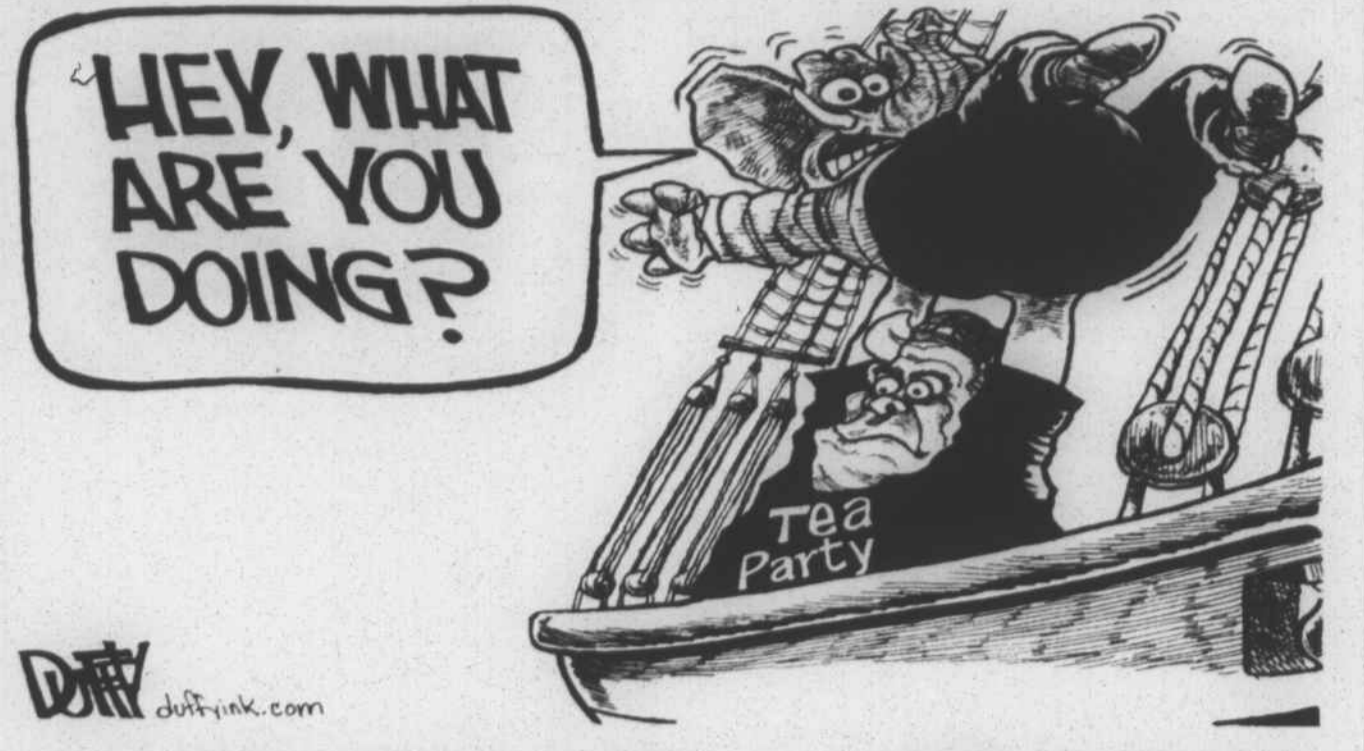
Rep. William Lucy Clay, a Democrat, represents the First Congressional District of Missouri.

Submit letters and columns to:

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## I Support Jerry Herron



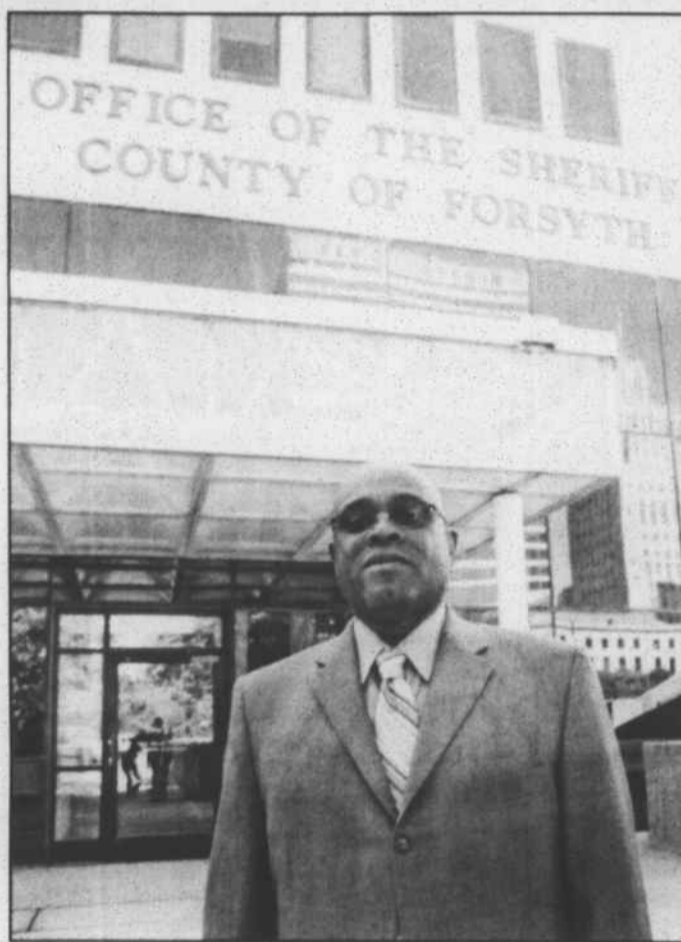
John Polite  
 Guest Columnist

In 2008, we had a historic event when the nation elected a black president, Barack Obama, who electrified the people of Forsyth County and the nation.

I'm writing about another situation that is just as important as electing Barack Obama as the first black president - that's electing Jerry Herron as Sheriff of Forsyth County.

Bear with me. The United States of America received its independence in 1789. The County of Forsyth was established in 1849. It's now 2010 and Forsyth County has never elected a minority to the Office of Sheriff. We must not allow our voting participation that was displayed in 2008 to dissipate.

Forsyth County is facing a challenge in trying to elect Jerry Herron. Why? Because we don't understand the importance of the Office of the Sheriff. Local politics play a major role in our lives, even more so than national politics. The Sheriff is responsible for a budget of more than \$40 million of your tax dollars. The Sheriff employs over 600 personnel and is the top law enforcement officer in the county.



Jerry Herron is looking to make local history.

I ran for Sheriff in 2002, and I appreciate all of your prayers and support in that endeavor. Hopefully, you remember what happened during my campaign. I won the Primary and two of the Democrats that I defeated jumped ship and endorsed my Republican opponent in the General Election to keep

it as the "good ol' boys" club going in the Office of the Sheriff. The message was that a minority or female dare not attempt to pursue that throne. Regardless of your political affiliation, gender, race or sexual orientation, you deserve to be represented by someone that has compassion for you and for the job; that person is Jerry Herron.

## Cyber-Bullying and Our Children



Al Sharpton  
 Guest Columnist

Adolescence is a challenging time for virtually everyone. Discovering yourself, building your own identity, and finding your place in this sometimes confusing world is no easy feat. And along the road to self-awareness, antagonists - better known as bullies - may present themselves in various forms and throw roadblocks in the way of our progress. This can range from abusive words to malicious behavior and even physical harm. But in this day and age of social networking and interconnectivity, the harassment and cruelty can linger forever with no relief in sight for the young victim. As the tragic suicide of Rutgers University's Tyler Clementi clearly exemplifies, the results can be devastating for all parties involved and for our collective consciousness as well.

When those of my generation and I were coming of age, things were simply, well, much more simple. Although the phenomena of bullying is nothing new and many of us were forced to deal with the matter our-



Clementi

selves as youth, we never faced the daunting reality of a 24/7 world of torture. Finding safety with our parents, friends or at home, we knew that for the most part, the bullying ended when we were in the comfort and security of those that protected us from negativity. But with the advent of text messaging, social media, and other endless forms of communication, the torment of a bully can and does linger forever. More often than not, parents and teachers are unaware of the torture children are suffering with, and when it is reported, it sometimes isn't taken as seriously. Unfortunately, that may be exactly what occurred when young Tyler first requested a room change at Rutgers University.

A few months back, iSAFE, a non-profit dedicated to educating and empowering youth to safely utilize Information and Communications Technology (ICT), released a startling study on cyber-bullying. Pulling data from approximately 90,000 students from schools in all 50 states, the study found that 44 percent of children in grades 5-8 and 54 percent of those in 9-12 said people on the Internet said 'mean or hurtful things about them or others'. And out of this alarmingly high number of cases, only 13 percent of kids in grades 5-8 reported the incident to a

trusted adult, and in grades 9-12, it's even worse with only 8 percent reporting it. As technology continues to advance and our children learn new mechanisms of communicating, we must also keep up with the times. We must remain actively involved in their lives and remain cognizant of what they do online. Parental supervision and guidance are unquestionably the greatest assets we have in protecting and assisting the development of our children. But they also serve as the greatest shield to negative forces that attempt to harm and influence them. We must learn to effectively engage with young folks today across all mediums, and simultaneously halt malicious behavior wherever we see it - even when it is done at the hands of our own.

While Tyler Clementi's family grieves and searches for answers, the families of the two students charged with violating his privacy are also grappling with the very real notion that the lives of their own children are ruined. There are no winners in this catastrophe. And as the debate surrounding crime and punishment in this case continues, we cannot forget to update our laws to keep up with an ever-changing world. Antiquated legislation is ill equipped to tackle some of the dilemmas of today's society. Without clear, definitive boundaries, codes of ethics and punishment for violations, we will be lost in an endless debate over guilt and innocence. When there is no question over privacy issues, harassment and cyber-bullying, people will also be less likely to engage in it.

Rev. Al Sharpton, a well-known activist, is head of the National Action Network.