

The Daily Tar Heel

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Changing Tactics

It's easy to see why many UNC housekeepers are frustrated with their jobs. Most housekeepers cannot afford to live in Chapel Hill and thus have to commute from places such as Durham or Hillsborough. Those who clean the classroom buildings have to be at work at 3:50 a.m., and many have to work another job after putting in eight hours at the University just to pay their bills.

Changes need to be made to improve pay, working conditions and advancement opportunities for housekeepers, but writing nasty letters to Chancellor Paul Hardin is not the way to bring about these changes.

Several members of the Housekeepers Association Steering Committee sent an open letter to Hardin last week comparing their situations with the chancellor's and those of other employees on campus.

They addressed Hardin as "Paul" and justified it by saying that members of the administration call housekeepers by their first names all the time.

The housekeepers then blame Hardin for, among other things, driving up the cost of living in Chapel Hill by paying faculty and upper-level staff high salaries.

They also accuse Hardin of taking a vacation and playing golf while the housekeepers were

busy cleaning his house and office when the chancellor had scheduled his vacations to have cataract surgery on his eyes.

The confrontational tone of the housekeepers' letter was unproductive and uncalled for. Members of the Housekeepers Association should not waste their energies writing a letter that is a personal attack on the chancellor and only antagonizes him and does not offer ideas or solutions for the many problems the housekeepers face.

The steering committee instead should establish a cordial working relationship with Hardin, one in which the chancellor would address them by courtesy titles just as they would address him by his title, one in which they can work together to improve working conditions for the housekeepers.

The University made some progress this summer when all state employees were granted a 2-percent raise plus a one-time, 1-percent bonus. The General Assembly also set wage floors for the state's lowest-paid employees, which includes UNC housekeepers.

More can and should be done to improve pay and working conditions for UNC housekeepers. The Housekeepers Association should work with Hardin rather than against him to effect those changes.

Clean and Green

The University's efforts to increase environmental awareness and recycling programs keep getting bigger and better.

Although UNC is far from becoming a clean, green campus, Carolina Dining Services and the Tar Heel Recycling Program have taken some measures to reduce waste in the campus dining halls.

CDS hopes to make styrofoam less attractive to students by providing more glasses instead of styrofoam cups and by making styrofoam take-out boxes less accessible.

In addition, Pizza Hut has designed a take-out box that uses 23 percent less paper than the one currently being used.

And now, for a trial period, students will receive their pizzas on plates, not in boxes. Based on the students' response to the change, CDS will decide whether such efforts are worthwhile.

CDS also has been training its staff to recycle the steel cans and glass jars that hold the food products it uses. It also has pledged to recycle

glass bottles that are left on trays.

Along with CDS's efforts, the Residence Hall Association, Student Environmental Action Coalition and the Office of Student Body President are sponsoring the UNC Green Games, in which groups of residence halls will compete to see which area can recycle the most products and conserve the most energy.

Although such efforts taken by various University organizations are encouraging, it is up to the students to make sure such programs are kept in check.

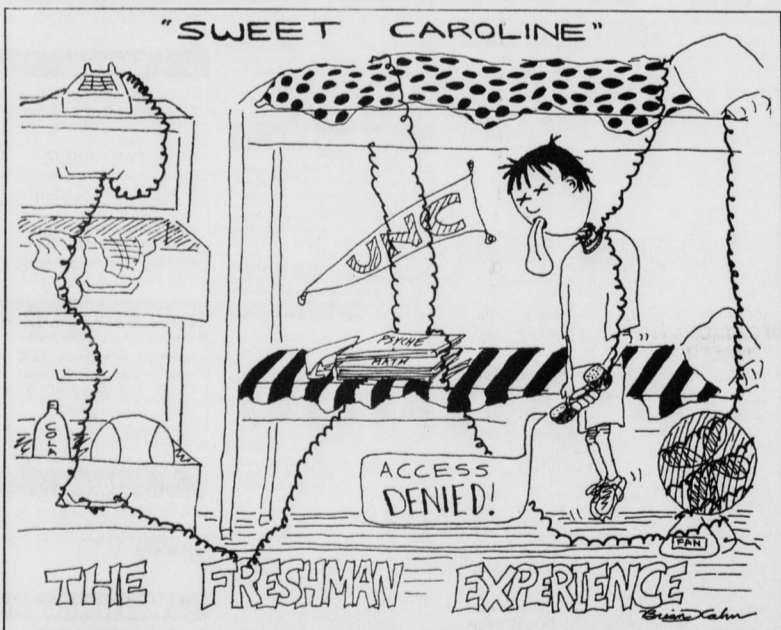
Students need to make sure that CDS doesn't fall short on its promises to recycle and reduce waste and that the Green Games are here to stay.

Students also should make sure these programs are successful by taking an active part in the recycling efforts—in the dining halls, in their rooms or apartments and around campus.

After all, it is the individual students—not CDS or RHA—who ultimately will make the difference in making UNC a greener and cleaner place.

Editor's Note

Don't forget that editorial board applications are due at The Daily Tar Heel office by 5 p.m. Friday. If you haven't dropped by the DTH office or the Union desk to pick up yours yet, do it! The editorial board needs your ideas and opinions.



Covering All Topics Makes Most Interesting Columns

I've read enough columns to know what a columnist is, but before I started writing I had wanted to check the dictionary just in case my conception of my job happened to be incorrect.

"Columnist: the writer of a regular newspaper feature" (Webster's Ninth Collegiate Dictionary).

No, I was right. Nowhere in the dictionary did the words "singular viewpoint," "necessary controversy," or "write with fury about the same topic every week" come up. Phew.

When I first told my friends about the column, most of them asked me what my angle, or dominant viewpoint, would be. When I answered that I didn't have one I was greeted with suspicious glances and gentle pats on the back seemingly suggesting that I would find one, and soon.

I was questioned just as much about column topics. Would I stir controversy? Incentive the campus? Create feuding factions that would eventually destroy each other in desperate on-campus skirmishes for student funds? Nope, not that either.

In fact I realized that I would do just the opposite of what everyone seemed to expect of me.

I can't write from one angle because I'm not singularly faceted. I'm not just Chinese. I'm not just a woman. I'm not just a political science major. I'm not just a "Yankee."

It's true that these characteristics are very much a part of who I am, but to say that any one of them defines me more than another would be faulty reasoning.

Therefore, writing from one viewpoint just doesn't make any sense. Anyway, it would be downright boring for me to write about and for

you to read about the same issue every week.

As for controversy, I won't purposely shy away from it, but what's the use of writing with the sole purpose of causing it? That would only take away from the validity of the writing. Although the idea of inciting riots does sound kind of exciting...

Speaking of riots, when I first heard about the Lorena and John Bobbitt case, I thought, what a riot! If you haven't heard, earlier this summer, Lorena Bobbitt used a 12-inch kitchen file knife to remove her husband's penis while he slumbered. She then drove off with it and threw it out her car window on a deserted stretch of highway.

So as not to be too evil, she called the police from a pay phone and told them where the crucial body part might be found. When the police located the penis, they wrapped it in ice and a team of doctors reattached it to John Bobbitt in a nine-and-a-half hour operation.

It's enough to make you laugh and then shudder. And shudder hard because Lorena Bobbitt's motivation for her violent act is nothing to poke fun at. John Bobbitt allegedly raped his wife and physically abused her. He now faces charges of marital sexual assault and goes on trial next month.

Lorena Bobbitt's actions and the outcome of the trial therefore prove to be monumental in



SHIRLEY FUNG
MONDAY'S ANODYNE

importance. Furious with her husband's alleged violations, Lorena Bobbitt took matters into her own hands. For the thousands of women who have been silently raped by their husbands, Lorena Bobbitt's actions are viewed positively.

For women who have been violated, Lorena Bobbitt has become an overnight idol, legend, example. She already has received letters and phone calls of support from women across the country. In fact, as you read this column, Lorena Bobbitt denunciations are probably springing up across the country as women everywhere revel in the ultimate justice of her actions.

At the same time, it is the idea of Lorena Bobbitt acting as an example that scares me. As with many extraordinary crimes, there will be emulators: women who are frustrated with the often unjust legal system which many times places the blame and stigma of rape on the female victim.

But it is also important to remember that our legal system, while often faulty, is the only one we have, and any actions to go above the law will eventually lead to problems. Violations of the legal system will lead to further violations, thereby invalidating the law and all it stands for.

Changing the law through legal means may be a slow process and an understandably unacceptable one by those who have been let down by it, but in the long run, it's the most effective and safe method of action. Case in point: the N.C. General Assembly recently overturned legislation which allowed marital rape to be legal.

And as for John Bobbitt, who has sold his story to television, I hope he gets lousy ratings.

Shirley Fung is a political science and economics major from Mansfield, Mass.

U.S. Should Drop Sanctions Against South Africa

TO THE EDITOR:

The recent incident in South Africa that left a U.S. citizen dead has led me to one conclusion: the United States, as well as the rest of the world, should drop all existing sanctions against the South African government, as well as withdrawing any aid they may be giving to black separatist groups.

The cold, senseless murder of Amy Biehl no doubt enraged many throughout the world. It is time we do something about it.

Ms. Biehl was in South Africa working to help achieve freedom and end apartheid. What happened? She was killed by the very people she tried to help.

Members of a militant separatist group, the Pan Africanist Congress, killed Amy Biehl. They dragged her out of her car, slammed a brick in her face and stabbed her repeatedly until after they were sure she was dead.

When one of Ms. Biehl's friends asked a criminal why he did it, he replied, "Because she is a settler (white person)."

It is obvious that the black community in South Africa does not want our help in overturning apartheid since they killed a person who was trying to do just that.

They killed her simply because she was white. If they don't want help, fine.

Let's rescind the sanctions, welcome the South African government back into all world agencies, and turn the clock back to 1959. Then we'll see how life in South Africa is for its black citizens.

I firmly believe in punishing those responsible for this. Executing the murderers, however, is not enough.

When I first read about this story, my initial response was, "Let's just nuke them and get it over with."

Of course, that's not a very practical solution. Dropping the sanctions and aid, however, is very much an appropriate response.

Jonathan Hart
FRESHMAN
JOURNALISM

Town Should Recall Officials Who Violate Trust, Law

TO THE EDITOR:

As a very interested observer of local politics, I view the current recall effort on Mr. Herzenberg with much curiosity. Mr. Herzenberg states that he has "done a good job" and is a "good council member." He says he merely made a "mistake."

Other supporters say that his conviction for tax evasion was merely a misdemeanor and should be forgiven.

But what is it really? One could question the "good job" statement at once.

After all, Herzenberg's primary job was to uphold the laws of the state, a task at which he



READERS' FORUM

The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments and criticism. Letters to the editor should be no longer than 400 words and must be typed, double-spaced, dated and signed by no more than two people. Students should include their year, major and phone number. Faculty and staff should include their title, department and phone number. The DTH reserves the right to edit letters for space, clarity and vulgarity.

failed miserably. Then any person who buys into the "mistake" business is simply ignoring the facts.

Remember, we are talking about 14 years of studied, deliberate, calculated and repetitive criminal behavior.

Something like that stretches the definition of mistake past the break point and cannot be passed off so simply. It is in fact indicative of a deep moral defect.

Then Herzenberg appears to be using the three-year statute of limitations to avoid payment of taxes for 11 of the 14 years. But that is beside the point.

The point is that the foundation of democracy is trust. The voters must trust their elected official, and the elected official must honor that trust.

In this case, there has been a profound failure on the part of the official.

At a time when the town is showing so much concern about crime and its effect upon youth consider the example being set by Mr. Herzenberg.

His message is this: Crime is OK if you make money at it even if you get caught; see, I'm still in office, and I don't have to answer to anyone about my taxes.

Is there anyone who thinks that Mr. Herzenberg would be paying his taxes now if he had not been apprehended?

So this recall effort is going to be a real litmus test of the resolve of the voters in Chapel Hill. The question is this: Will they insist upon quality officials, or is that an issue any more?

LaMotte H. Akin
CHAPEL HILL

Meat Legislation Protects Diners From E-coli Diarrhea

TO THE EDITOR:

The article written by Alan Martin in the Aug. 26 Daily Tar Heel describes his frustration with being restricted by North Carolina regulations from ordering a rare hamburger in a restaurant ("Lawmakers Can't Decide How to Cook

Burgers"). His misleading statements suggest that he did not do adequate background research before writing this diatribe.

Mr. Martin states that he should have the right to decide how his meat is cooked and that he should not be restricted by public health regulations.

Furthermore, Mr. Martin writes that "there has been no epidemic of ground beef food poisoning."

Unfortunately, this is not accurate. Outbreaks of E. coli-associated diarrhea secondary to undercooked hamburgers have been well-documented by the news media in recent years.

These outbreaks have resulted in a disorder known as hemolytic-uremic syndrome which may occur secondary to one form of E. coli diarrhea.

Hospitalization rates have been 40 to 45 percent, and deaths have occurred in 5 to 10 percent of infant and 80 percent of the elderly with this disorder.

To imply that this is a liberal-conservative issue is to totally miss the point of public health measures.

This regulation is no different than protecting the public by requiring immunizations before entering elementary school or requiring food-care workers to wash their hands to prevent the spread of hepatitis.

How Mr. Martin eats his hamburgers in his own home is his own business, but to suggest that a sound public health measure is an imposition on his freedom seems dangerous and unreasonable.

Mr. Martin believes that the risk of eating his meat rare is to increase his chances of eventually developing colon cancer.

He believes that it is the government's fear of having to pay for treatment of colon cancer that has led to this regulation. In fact, "red meats" is a generic term for certain meats (primarily beef) and does not imply how completely the meat has been cooked.

The association of a diet high in "red meats" with colon cancer is meant to imply the variety of meat, not the redness after cooking.

There is sound epidemiologic evidence of an association of red meats in diet (alcohol as well) with a somewhat increased risk of colon cancer, and individuals can decide for themselves whether they wish to take this small risk.

In the situation described by Mr. Martin, public health measures were meant to prevent the innocent bystander or those who prefer to ignore the facts concerning the contraction of E. coli-associated diarrhea with its potential risk of death.

We do not believe this is an excessive restriction on one's personal rights.

Martin H. Ushen, M.D.
PROFESSOR OF PEDIATRICS AND NUTRITION

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ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PEDIATRICS
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