

The Daily Tar Heel

Kelly Ryan EDITOR

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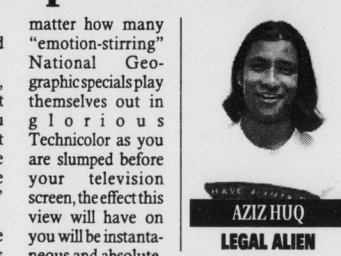
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Memories and Escapism Hold the Key to Exam Blues

To whom it may concern:
A simple remedy for the troubled breast ...
Take a stick, a good stout walking stick, severed by lightning and washed white by salt tides. Taking this stick, journey west until you find treasured mountains whose tips melt at sunset (although you might want to indulge in the use of an automobile for this 150-mile stretch of the journey; there's no point in taking Hinton James' example too much to heart.)
Choose a mountain. A snow-capped one would be nice, but at this time of year, beggars can't be choosers, so just start to climb.
At this point, you might discover the usefulness of your stick, the slope veering more than occasionally toward the vertical. Disregard all romantic claptrap you might have picked up along the way about choosing the path less taken. Mountain trails are dangerous, and most likely there's a reason for the disuse of a trail. Besides, the advice of a dead scribbler of pedestrian and sentimental doggerel seems less than appropriate. If he were to advise you on which hearth to buy — well, that would be a different matter.
No, stick clearly to the marked trail, strictly following the rules suggested by the friendly local park ranger. Never forget that you are not Yogi Bear. You can't fool the ranger. Ignore any will o' the wisps, pots of gold or crashed drug plants that might tempt you to stray from the path.
Eventually, near dusk, you might approach the peak, or another appropriate surface contiguous with a precipitous incline from which a view commonly stigmatized as "breath-taking" may be obtained.
Our jury of experienced theologians and philosophers are still out on whether such views were ordained by heavenly design, or whether their existence can be ascribed to the sheer fluke of geological process. Irrespective of which of these explanations proves to be correct, one thing is for certain:
No matter how many "awe-inspiring" landscape paintings one comes across in galleries, no



matter how many "emotion-stirring" National Geographic specials play themselves out in glorious Technicolor as you are slumped before your television screen, the effect this view will have on you will be instantaneous and absolute.
Perhaps it is the fullness and utter actuality, the terrifying "right-here-and-right-now"-ness of the valley that sweeps majestically before you, or perhaps it is the fair linger of pine cones whose scent the needle-sharp air carries up your nostrils.
It must have something to do with the extraordinary silence, the delicate, inhuman repose of what lies before you. Who knows what it is; all that matters is its effect.
Now, I'm not advocating any of that "alternative" medicine hocus-pocus, and perish the thought that I would cast aspersions on the abilities of the fine people in lab coats who brought you Thalidomide, AZT and Prozac. Feel free, gentle reader, to cram your cheeks with wee fistfuls of whatever narcotic, anti-depressant or meat substitute piques your taste buds.
It cannot be denied, though, that there is something infinitely stirring, something that truly can be called "wholistic," in standing on top of a mountain, watching the sun go down. It's an effect that secret laboratories from Switzerland to darkest Colombia have tried in vain to reproduce. Who will mourn the countless legions of lab rats who have died for the sake of this fruitless quest?
Not wishing to labor a point too heavily, it is a perspective you can't get anywhere else. And while all your papers, crises and hemorrhoids aren't going to vanish like the dead leaves of yesterday's trees, they do suddenly appear in an utterly different light.
No longer is that history paper the instrument

of the Almighty's vengeance (although Ma always said that going to a place of Satan like Chapel Hill was a sure-fire means of buying a one-way ticket to the infernal depths).
In six months, not only will you have forgotten every fact relevant to your current paper, but you also will have forgotten the grade you obtained on this paper. And if you do remember it — well, then, you're probably anal-retentive. As for relationships, they come and go.
Suddenly you look at the person you would have died for yesterday, and wonder how you didn't notice that nasty zit oozing from her chin. The past becomes a different country; things were done differently there.
As you look down from the mountain, the land before you spreads out like the jetstream of an airplane, like the past in your wake, revealed in all its tender and aching remoteness.
You wonder what this strange world was like, and who that shifting figure, who looks like you, could be ...
The biggest mysteries are not to be found across the stars, or beneath the seas — but behind our eyes and in our hearts.
Perhaps out of the alcoholic haze euphemistically known by some as "college," a few fragments of memory will emerge:
... sitting hunched in the Pit over a steaming cup of coffee chatting furiously with friends, while the sunlight plays a symphony across the few remaining leaves ...
... making a dash for Lenoir in the rain, knowing how awful the dinner is going to be, but turning, and seeing a rainbow rise from Wilson Library ...
... trudging out of the elevator on the eighth floor of Davis, to see the sunset explode like a supernova across the sky, spilling over the whole campus, filling you ...
Perhaps these are not the best days of our lives, filled as they are by wretched compromise and aimless labor, but can that stop us from filching from them a few meager gems of magic, the distillation of a distant and echoing dream?
Aziz Huq is a junior history major from Great Britain.

Carte Blanche

It can't be said that government and activist groups have not raised consciousness about AIDS.
Information is good, but it is only half the battle in controlling disease. Equally important are practical measures such as raising money or fighting prejudice against homosexuals in mainstream society. A new VISA card does both. The new "Uncommon Clout" card is aimed at gay, lesbian and bisexual communities.
Whenever the card is used, Uncommon Clout contributes 10 cents into a special bank account. The fund will be used to promote nonprofit AIDS-related groups at end of each year. Each cardholder will be able to "vote with dollars" to promote equal rights for gay men, lesbians and bisexuals. Cardholders also receive a free newsletter on gay- and AIDS-related issues.
The card also fights prejudice on a bare economic level. Domestic partners — including gay, lesbian and bisexual partners — will have the same benefits and shared privileges with

Uncommon Clout that married couples have with regular credit cards.
The card accords gays, lesbians and bisexuals the same basic financial rights straight people have enjoyed for years. And VISA has shown itself to be exceptionally open-minded, especially since large corporations have often been stereotyped as prejudiced.
The VISA card is an excellent idea that will combine information with practical good works. The card will be even more productive if it is considered more than an instrument of gay power.
If the card gains widespread use in society, gay and straight people alike will be helping to fund valuable AIDS research and education. Fighting an incurable, life-threatening disease is not a gay/straight or liberal/conservative issue. It is a human imperative.
By using the Uncommon Clout card, we all could take a small step toward affirming our common humanity.

Here's Some Advice

The General Assembly's mandate that all UNC-system schools attain a 15 credit hour average per student per semester has caused the Association for Student Governments to take a second look at UNC's flagging advising system.
Ultimately it is the responsibility of the student to graduate on time, but an effective advising system is also crucial, especially for students who change their major.
All advisers in the general college are currently trained by Donald Jicha, associate dean of the General College.
Although the General College has made a genuine effort, the fact that so many students continue to obtain their PIN numbers each semester without ever seeing their adviser makes one wonder how well advisers are trained.
For those students who actually want to see an adviser, it sometimes is a challenge to track one down.
Because most advisers are professors, they only have a limited amount of time to spend advising students. This problem could be rem-

edied by hiring additional faculty to work only as advisers. This would make advisers more accessible to students.
Another flaw in UNC's advising system is the small number of advisers. The student to adviser ratio is 220-to-1.
The University could balance that ratio by hiring graduate students as advisers. This would benefit everyone.
Graduate students would earn extra money, and students would have more advisers to work with.
If the University cannot afford to hire more advisers, they should consider making it possible for students to work with any adviser available. Even though students are assigned to a specific adviser, we should be able to consult a large pool of advisers if we have questions or problems.
An effective advising system makes all the difference in whether students have successful college careers or waste years trying to get enough credit hours to graduate. And it's time UNC had one.

Fear Less, Learn More

To many people, AIDS is just a word. It is four letters that represent a nebulous problem that doesn't affect their lives at all. But it's a virus that kills not just homosexuals or intravenous drug users but potentially anyone. Without awareness and concern for the fact that AIDS might strike someone they know, people will go stumbling on like ignorant fools.
AIDS kills without discretion. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there have been 1 million cases of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, reported in the United States to date. As of Dec. 31, 1993, there were 361,164 cases of full-blown AIDS in the United States, 5,228 of whom were children under the age of 13. There were 2,819 AIDS-related deaths of children under the age of 13 in the United States.
Often AIDS is not regarded as a family problem as well as a health problem. The virus is the cause of family members' deaths and lengthy hospitalizations. When the children who have contracted the virus die or must be hospitalized, unnecessary stress is placed on the family, a context in which many people do not think of AIDS.
Heterosexuals are the least aware of the dangers of contracting the HIV virus. In fact, the

percentage of reported cases of AIDS within the heterosexual population is rising faster than in the homosexual population. The CDC indicates that the percentage of AIDS cases reported by heterosexuals rose by 21 percent between 1990 and 1991. The misconception that the virus is restricted to the vacuum of large cities such as New York or San Francisco is also an antiquated view. The cases of AIDS reported in nonmetropolitan areas rose last year by 5 percent, a sharper increase than in any metro area.
One in every 250 people is infected with the HIV virus, according to the CDC. Statistically, that means that a certain population of our own campus is infected with the virus. In fact, the CDC states that in 1989 the fifth leading cause of death of people ages 15 to 24 was AIDS. It is right here at UNC, and it is present among people who are college age.
It is ridiculous for the public to take statistics such as these and become terrified and fanatical. The only way right now to prevent these statistics from continuing to rise in the future is to be aware of the threat of the HIV virus that causes AIDS. AIDS education is the base of its prevention, and the best way for people to guard themselves against the virus is to stop living in the dark.

Writer Needs to Learn the Facts About Vlad the Impaler

TO THE EDITOR:
DRACULA IS NOT REAL!
Reading the letter by Charlie Sarratt on Nov. 16 ("Native American Halloween Ghouls an Absurd Prospect") I couldn't restrain myself from clarifying a small problem that might shine some light into the debate.
Mr. Sarratt wrote: "In some parts of the world, namely Transylvania, Romania, Dracula is real."
Well my friend, I am from Transylvania, I lived there for more than two decades, and I can tell you that Dracula is NOT real!
Dracula is a fictional character from Bram Stoker's novel. He was inspired by the life of the Wallachian (Romanian) prince Vlad Tepes (known as "The Impaler," for his severe attitude against the criminals and enemies).
This has nothing to do with Dracula's bloody adventures, as they are known to the American public, and I could say that the majority of the Romanians are not even aware of the Dracula myth in the Western concept.
For further details you can read: "Dracula, prince of many faces: his life and his times" and "Dracula: a biography of Vlad the Impaler," both by Radu Florescu.

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. Send e-mail forum to: dth@unc.edu.

Tar Heel Quotables

"There's been a great deal of rumor and inappropriate discussion concerning the process. The decision was made not to comment on any more of the rumors floating around Chapel Hill."
Chancellor search committee Chairman JOHNNY HARRIS
On the committee's decision to stop talking to the public about the search following the withdrawal of two top contenders for the post.
"They considered merging RTVMP and speech communications my sophomore year, and originally I was outwardly against it. I did not see the connection between the two programs. Now I find the connection between the two, and it can work."
JEFF MARTIN, senior RTVMP major
On the now-combined RTVMP and speech communication curriculum one year after the Department of Communication Studies was formed.
"The instructors have limited time to work with students anyway. The one thing we don't need is equipment failure to limit us further."
First-year graduate student DAVID CONROY, who teaches bowling
Referring to the often closed and broken bowling alleys

in the Student Union. Some bowling students are petitioning for a partial refund of the \$28 student activity fee they paid for the class.
"We knew coming into the game that we were going to try and get it in to 'Ra.' We knew we would live and die by that."
Tar Heel forward JERRY STACKHOUSE
On UNC's strategy against Pittsburgh on Tuesday night to get the ball into the paint to center Rasheed Wallace. Wallace finished the night with 30 points.
"Dahmer had a death wish, and I know he didn't have the gumption to do it himself, so I had predicted that the day would come when he would be killed in prison."
GERALD BOYLE, Jeffrey Dahmer's lawyer
On the gruesome prison killing of the former chocolate factory worker who strangled and dismembered 17 boys and men and ate some of them.
"Anytime you have a community project and you get kids involved, you are doing yourself and the environment a big favor."
Carrboro landscape architect CHRIS GERRY
Who worked with UNC students at a Kwanzaa tree-planting ceremony at Carr Court Community Center in Carrboro.

Chiming of Bell Tower Too Noisy and Often Nonsensical

TO THE EDITOR:
I wish to express my annoyance with the excessive and unnecessary noise emanating from the Bell Tower.
Due to the close proximity of the tower to Davis and Undergraduate libraries, the noise from the Bell Tower can be heard inside these buildings.
I frequently visit Davis in the evenings to try to locate a quiet place to concentrate and study. The last thing I want to hear while studying is a Bell Tower concert.
While I was writing this letter the Bell Tower was playing a 15-minute concert. On occasion I have even heard such nonsense as "Old McDonald" being played during the evenings from the tower. Please silence this unnecessary noise!

Order of the Bell Tower's Strange Initiation Ceremony?

TO THE EDITOR:
On Saturday, Nov. 26, some friends and I walked up to the Bell Tower only to find three naked women prancing around it, hooting.
In but shoes and socks, two were wearing miner's lights and one a bright pink jester's cap. We listened to them read aloud the dedication and learned that it was the Bell Tower's 63rd anniversary.
Hooray for these women and their stout recognition of history and tradition. If they weren't members of The Order of the Bell Tower I'd like to suggest that the organization take a hint for next year.
S. Wellman
SENIOR BIOLOGY

Columnist Needs to Support His Conservative Arguments

TO THE EDITOR:
I have a few questions I would like Lance McMillian to answer in an upcoming column.
I hope he considers these questions a challenge and not a taunt.
1) A frequent rallying cry of conservatives is that "big government" controls too much and has legislated too many restrictions on the way people live.
If this is true, why are school prayer and the elimination of access to abortion part of the agenda? Why is interference with business practices "big government" and interference with personal practices not?
2) If Jesus were alive today and living in the United States, would he be apolitical, anarchist, socialist, democrat, republican or libertarian? Please support your hypothesis with Biblical passages.
3) Finally, what do conservatives see as the connection between democracy, capitalism and Christianity? One is a political system, one is an economic system and one is a religion. What do they have in common?
J.P. Sanderlin
GRADUATE STUDENT INFORMATION AND LIBRARY SCIENCE