

Who Admits to Masturbating on a Saturday Night?

I swore to myself that I'd give it up, not give in to my desires, allow my mind to overcome the weakness of my body. I said I couldn't take the pressure anymore. Yet, here I am, writing a guest column, without the duress of a deadline, even though I spent most of last semester complaining.

But I am programmed like a good little writer: every time I hear/read something, I think about how to incorporate it into a column. Every now and then, I hear something too juicy to resist. Like now.

With the new year, people made lots of resolutions; the paper was full of them on Jan. 1, but people have started to slack off. I'm noticing more cigarette butts in the ashtray at our apartment, beer cans littering the floor and books lying unopened. Essentially, a few weeks after muttering our good intentions in a drunken haze, things are exactly as they were on Dec. 31, 1994, and on Dec. 31, 1993, and so on.

This year, however, I have one resolution that I truly want to accomplish. Nothing so imbecilic as giving up my Camels or working out regularly or even keeping up with schoolwork. No, my No. 1 resolution for 1995 is to learn how to masturbate, following the controversial suggestion of Jocelyn Elders.

It gave me great pleasure, during my boring sojourn in Ocala, to read that a public official had decided to come out of the closet, or, er, the bedroom.

Elders said that maybe, perhaps, masturbation ought to be taught in school. Of course, everyone gasped in horror... a woman talking about masturbation as something good, as something that should be taught. The nation (and President Clinton) uttered a small "Ick!" encouraged by the media attention.

You realize, of course, that I wholeheartedly support this thought. I have never, even in my drunkest, bluntest conversations, talked about masturbation with women. It's more taboo than saying "c—."

So maybe it's more prevalent than it appears, but somehow I think that masturbation is seen as something not quite kosher, especially about which to talk. Education, as in most things is the best means of curing ignorance.

I do recall hearing of masturbation in those horrible first years of puberty. It was always the

little boys, trying to be cool, who would discuss "whacking off" (or some similar vulgar term) during class. I was utterly fascinated.

It seemed so simple, so fun, so vulgar to discuss, but my anatomy was not quite so simple to understand.

I mean, come on, it doesn't take a lot of creativity/skill for the basic male masturbation, although I have heard of some creative variations.

Female masturbation is a different story entirely. The most depressing conversation I've ever had was with a group of about 10 sexually active women, of which only two had had orgasms. The other eight seemed to be waiting on some charming, experienced lover to discover some secret spot that the others had missed.

We didn't speak of masturbation, but I tend to think that if those eight women actively attempted to pleasure themselves, they wouldn't put up with lackluster sex; they would at least have some notion of what to tell a guy to do. The question eventually arises, "What turns you on?" in one form or another.

The only way for a chick to answer that, if she has not yet come upon her Dream Lover, is to find out for herself, by herself. (I'm assuming here that most men are really rather easy to please, and although not always the case, that seems to be almost a truism.)

I don't quite understand why masturbation is seen as bad at all, for either gender. Most people cite the Biblical tenet of spilling no seed, or, better yet, Monty Python's "Every Sperm is Sacred." Yet, what's so bad about it?

I've gotten a lot of flak about promoting promiscuity/unsafe sex. Hypothetically speaking, if one is young and full of those pesky little hormones, and one doesn't want to have sex (I heard that some people feel like that), what does one do? Abstain? Easier said than done. The most practical thing to do is to masturbate.

Granted then, that the entire notion of masturbation is somewhat looked down upon, but it appears even more horrendous for women to give

in to these carnal desires. (Only Sharon Stone can get away with it.)

Examples of this are all over the place. When "I Touch Myself" came out, sung by a female, everyone was aghast.

"I can't believe that a woman would sing that... it's so gross," was the typical response. And in that stupid movie "Single White Female," the new SWF roommate, a psychochick, is shown in the midst of violent masturbation.

The producer achieved the desired effect as the entire theater audience gasped in horror. Obviously, this chick must be insane if she masturbates. Any woman worth her Y-less chromosomes can get a man.

Why do we think like this? An easy answer could be that the more that women understand that they can pleasure themselves, without a penis (or semblance thereof), the more things go awry in many ways — biologically, politically, socially. And — you've heard this line before — people are resistant to change, especially when that change involves power.

I personally think that a penis is a comfortable thing to rely on. Like alcohol, it's an acceptable form of pleasure that can even be licensed by god and country.

Who wants to go into work/class on Monday morning and talk about the great time they had fingering themselves after last call on Saturday night?

It's an admittance of what can be seen as failure — being unable to pick up/date/fuck a person and being forced to rely on oneself. I think that's one reason why the people who talk about masturbation, who aren't ashamed of it, are the ones who are publicly having sex. You're not going to appear "bad" or "desperate" if you have a regular partner(s). Rather, it's a "natural" outlet for unslaked desires.

It's said that a person is incapable of loving another if they do not love themselves. This adage seems analogous to masturbation: if sex is truly a physical display of love toward another, then masturbation is a physical display of love toward oneself. How can a person give and receive the best sex (love) if they can't give themselves pleasure (love)? It's unfair to expect a partner to achieve something that you yourself cannot achieve.

Jeanne Fugate is a junior English major from Ocala, Fla.



JEANNE FUGATE
GUEST COLUMNIST

Pro-Lifers Think Violence Justified

DAVID BAIN
GUEST COLUMNIST

In his column of 9 January ("No Need to Add Hysteria to Abortion Debate"), Tadd Wilson wonders why the middle classes are so much more outraged by the murder of abortion clinic employees than by the everyday victims of inner-city violence. One tempting reason for this outrage surely is that, unlike ordinary murderers, Paul Hill and his ilk seem to be dramatic cases of citizens trying to achieve political ends by mortal violence; they seem to illustrate a decreasing respect for the proper methods and channels for exerting political influence in a liberal democracy. Wilson agrees: "pro-lifers have every right to believe exactly as they see fit," but still "no individual employing mortal violence as a tactic is worthy of participating in a movement dedicated to... saving lives." And this is the sort of comforting thing that you'll find both pro- and anti-abortionists saying: Whatever the rights or wrongs of abortion, it is quite wrong for anyone to employ mortal violence as a political tactic.

Though comforting, surely that's false. Consider first an analogy: Imagine that you lived near the Auschwitz extermination camp during the 1940s in Nazi Germany and in order to hamper the process of mass murder that you knew to be occurring there, you started to kill those who were operating the camp. Many would suggest that what you would have done would be at least permissible and perhaps positively praiseworthy, even though you certainly would have employed "mortal violence as a tactic... in a movement dedicated to... saving lives."

Now remember that many anti-abortionists believe (truly or falsely) that it is as wrong to kill a human fetus as it is to kill an innocent adult human. Given this belief, surely it's reasonable for the anti-abortionist to think that he has good moral justification for trying to hamper the operation of abortion clinics by killing their employees. Why? Because, if his belief about abortion were true, the operation of abortion clinics in 1990s America really would be no less a case of mass murder than the operation of the death camps in Nazi Germany. And I've already suggested that many of us would support mortal violence as a tactic used to undermine the latter kind of mass murder, so why not the former kind, if that is what it is?

Admittedly Nazi Germany, unlike the United States, was not a democracy and thus the avenues of peaceful political influence that anti-abortionists might employ in the States were just not available to those Germans who objected to the Holocaust. Imagine, however,

that it were the case that Nazi Germany in the 1940s had been a democracy just like the United States, except that the vast majority of its predominantly gentle population were so rabidly anti-Semitic that they repeatedly and overwhelmingly voted in fair elections for a program of extermination of the Jews. Would this now make it wrong for you to start shooting employees of Auschwitz? If not, then nor does the fact that America is a democracy undermine the anti-abortionist's reason for believing that his slaying of abortion clinic employees is morally justified, given his belief that aborting fetuses is murder.

Another response to my claim would be to say that violent tactics are a very inefficient means of reducing the number of abortions performed. However, even if this were true, consider again the case of Nazi Germany. Even if you were persuaded that killing Auschwitz employees would have no impact at all on the number of Jews killed, mightn't you have defended your killing of Auschwitz employees on the basis that they deserved to die since they shared responsibility for the murder of millions of humans? Similarly, then, mightn't the anti-abortionist argue that his killings can be justified as an exercise in retributive justice rather than as a means to the reduction in the number of abortions, and wouldn't this be reasonable given his belief that aborting fetuses is murder? I must enter an important caveat: I abhor the killing of abortion clinic employees. But that is because I think that the anti-abortionist's belief that it is as immoral to kill the human fetus as it is to kill an innocent adult human is just false. Thus, the difference between Nazi Germany and 1995 America is just that the extermination of Jews was mass murder and the killing of fetuses is not.

But the unsettling conclusion remains. We shouldn't be seduced by the following slogan: it is wrong to employ mortal violence as part of the pro-life battle whatever the rights or wrongs of abortion. Rather, the permissibility of such extreme tactics seems to depend precisely on this question of whether or not abortion amounts to mass murder. If the anti-abortionists' belief that it does amount to mass murder were true, then why wouldn't they be right to employ the sort of tactics that a small minority of them already have? I happen to think that their belief is false. Perhaps, then, it is of this that we must try to convince them, since if we try to convince them that no end (at least in a democracy) could ever justify mortal violence as a means, we'd be trying to convince them of something untrue.

David Bain is a graduate student in philosophy.

Author's Views on Land Use Misrepresented

TO THE EDITOR:

The DTH article "Land-use company conducts forum" on Friday, Jan. 13, misquoted me in almost every instance in which my words are cited. While some quotes approximated my words, others are completely antithetical to what I said. Please allow me to state and expand upon the points I made at the forum regarding the potential development of the Mason Farm and Horace Williams tracts, and thus right the record:

1) We should pose a few questions regarding the assumption that the University needs to grow. Is such growth precipitated by projected enrollment increases? Or will the growth be administrative? While some uses of the land seem justifiable (such as affordable housing for students and University employees), do we really want to trade in two of our last large undeveloped areas for more overhead? Let's look how we are growing and then see if such growth is healthy.

2) In direct opposition to the quote the DTH fabricated for me, I feel that there is ENOUGH parking on campus! In fact each parking lot represents a squandering of space on an already squeezed campus. My proposal is to site needed new buildings on the parking lots, before building a whole shadow campus at Horace Williams or Mason Farm. The same number of parking spots could be maintained by incorporating below-ground parking structures. The additional transportation needs generated by such infill could then be met with innovative programs to increase transit ridership, commuting by bicycle and ridesharing. There are numerous cost-effective strategies the University and local municipalities could use to encourage the shift away from our expensive and unhealthy dependence on automobiles: more bike lanes, on-site lockers and showers for bike commuters, increased bus service... the list goes on and on. If such programs sound expensive, remember that the University is already subsidizing private automobile use at an even higher rate (parking permits on campus do not come close to meeting the costs of maintaining lots).

It is also important to examine why so many students and University staff find it necessary to live outside of Chapel Hill and commute to work. Clearly there is a major lack in affordable housing in our town. The answer to this problem should be an increase in affordable housing, within walking distance to campus, rather than more parking. Take a bike down Rosemary Street and look at the area covered by University-owned parking lots. Now imagine these voids filled with attractive apartment buildings (perhaps in the style of Chancellor Square) to be rented to staff and students at affordable rates. There would be innumerable positive effects of such infill: members of the University community could live in town rather than commute; additional downtown residents would increase the vitality of local businesses; and crime rates would drop as more people walk the streets at night.

3) Finally, after we have built upon all land currently squandered by parking, it may be time to develop selected parcels of the Horace Williams and Mason Farm areas. When this last resort arrives, again, let's ensure that such development incorporates affordable housing so that folks can avoid the need to commute. Future development should be oriented toward alternative modes of transportation: a rail line passes through the Horace Williams tract which could be used to run regular shuttle service between the two campuses, and the Carrboro Bikeway should be extended to serve this area. Such transit-based development would be far cheaper

and wiser than paving beautiful greenspace so that people can have the "convenience" of being dependent on an economic and ecological vampire (the automobile) which sucks an average of \$6,000 out of their pockets a year, poisons our atmosphere and causes an area the size of Delaware to be paved every year.

Andrew Koebnick
GRADUATE STUDENT
INFORMATION AND LIBRARY SCIENCE

Gridlock Allows Only Useful Policies From D.C.

TO THE EDITOR:

Ofttimes, over my morning coffee, I enjoy the usual vacuous blatherings of the editorial board's daily regurgitation of others' stale rhetoric in the guise of their own. Chuckling over the DTH's bleeding heart why-can't-we-all-just-get-along world view gets me through many a trying day. However, "Simmer Down, Newt" (Jan. 19) has left me wanting for any shred of coherent thought on the assumption of speakership by Newt Gingrich.

The editorial board maligns past Republican representatives of not having to "deal with the complex issues of policy formation." Additionally, the editorial suggests that Gingrich should now work with both parties to produce "productive legislation." In fact, many Republican policy initiatives, such as the 1994 Kasich budget plan, the discharge petition rule and the broadly popular A-to-Z spending cut plan were beaten down by tyrannical Democratic committee chairmen unwilling to give the minority party a fair chance. Of what the board accuses the Republicans, the Democrats have been guilty for years. Doubtless the editors use their own paper as a source of news. It is thus easy to see how they have only the side of the story that their own biases choose to see.

For reasons known not even to the authors, the tirade bursts forth with the statement that effective Republican leadership "must learn how to mediate the differences within the party" while convicting Gingrich of lacking the wherewithal to do so solely because he "has launched a no-holds-barred attack on the Democrats..." The sour grapes routine is getting old, guys! If you are going to be grumpy, at least make some sense.

The one accurate statement in the editorial is that Americans are sick of corrupt congressional politics and the huge roles of special interests. Yet why is no credit given to the enforcement of all laws upon the Congress (which until Jan. 4 was even exempt from the Ethics in Government Act)? Why are no praises sung for concrete promises to act upon overwhelmingly popular (and vexing to the special interests) issues such as term limits and the Balanced Budget Amendment?

The perennial liberal take on politics is that Americans want an activist government because it is government which best solves our problems. The failure of this mindset to explain the rise of Gingrich and the Republicans bedevils liberals everywhere. Thus the rest of us have been subjected to a barrage of liberal journalist group therapy under the banner of the ubiquitous "change" theme. But even a cursory analysis of the last two national elections leads one to the reasonable conclusion that most people want to shackle the ability of the federal government to do virtually anything except send checks to individuals. Both elections saw the firing of the president for attempting to govern against the will of the people; most notably Bush with his tax hike and Clinton with his health plan. Unfortunately, Mr. Clinton was not up for re-election, so the voters fired his ability to accomplish his undesirable goals.

Disenfranchised radical moderates such

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READERS' FORUM



as myself look to last November with glee just shy of that of Republicans. With the power of government divided, only those policies that are indeed productive have a chance of being enacted. While liberals will not see their utopian health care, neither will conservatives see the end of welfare. Hopefully, all of us will see term limits, a glide path to zero deficit and a more responsive democracy. The people have spoken. They have said, "Gridlock is good!"

Jonathan McMurry
GRADUATE STUDENT
BIOLOGY

SHS Inefficiency Keeps Prescription From Student

TO THE EDITOR:

Dear professor,
I'm very sorry that I did not have my assignment ready to turn in today. I thought that I had budgeted my time well, but I was wrong. I didn't figure that I would have to spend an hour on the phone with Student Health trying to ask a simple question.

Luckily, I don't have a major assignment due tomorrow, or I may have had to use that excuse. See, I called Student Health today so that I could get a prescription filled. I had been getting my prescription filled at home and having my mother send it to me. In November, I decided that it would be easier to just get it filled at Student Health. They wrote me a prescription for the first three months but couldn't let me have refills until my medical records from home arrived.

Well, it's been three months, so I decided to call Student Health today to find out what I needed to do to get my refills. I won't go into the gory details, but I will tell you that I talked to six different people. That was after I got to listen to a busy signal for half an hour. When the phone finally rang, I was expecting to hear a computerized voice say, "Welcome to Caroline."

Some of the people I talked to were friendly and some of them were rude. But, not one of them could tell me what I had to do to get my prescription refilled. They all suggested answers, but all of them were wrong. I really think that a university this big would benefit from some efficiency.

So, it's 5 o'clock now, Student Health is closed, and I still don't have my prescription. I figure that I will walk on over there tomorrow so that I don't have to hear that busy signal. But, that's after I stand in line for two hours at the Cashier's Office to get my scholarship money.

P.S. I was at the Cashier's Office at 7:15 a.m. They have "misplaced" my check.

Tamara Reynolds
SOPHOMORE
EDUCATION

Student Stores Doesn't Care to Meet UNC Needs

TO THE EDITOR:

Student Stores claims they are on the students' side. As the end of my stay at UNC approaches I have seen little evi-

clothing stores for me.

Greg Newman
SENIOR
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

Science Column Expands 'Liberal' Arts Educations

TO THE EDITOR:

I am writing in response to the editorial, "Reader Doesn't Like Having His Ignorance Thrown in Face" by a very sharp-tongued Brandon Sharp (Jan. 19).

Having been at UNC-CH for the past four years, I have read many editorials that have compelled me to respond. However, this is the first time I have chosen to do so. And, rather than scathing Mr. Sharp with "Sophomoric" criticisms such as the ones he included in his editorial, I would just like to make a few important points:

The column to which Mr. Sharp made reference, "Weird Science," is written by someone whom I have known for almost a decade, Monica Eiland.

One word that comes to mind instantly when I hear the name Monica Eiland is "intellectual." Not only am I aware of her superior intelligence in the field of biology, but I am also aware of her ability as a writer from both her column and from attending a writing conference with her some time ago.

I can assure you that "Weird Science" could be filled with esoteric terminology and concepts familiar to only those with a strong science background. However, Monica has not only chosen to make the column "light" in science babble but also interesting and certainly comprehensible to any literate human being (much less a Carolina student).

In addition, Mr. Sharp fails to realize that this prestigious university has an immense and growing number of science majors who go on to become very successful medical doctors, dentists, research scientists, pharmacists, etc., etc., etc. Falling into this group, I can certainly declare that it is a relief to pick up a DTH and read a column that not only has a very different perspective than the norm, but also does not involve bashing Newt Gingrich or discussing the political struggle for freedom of the Lemmings in the Northern Alps.

Finally, I could not help but notice the irony of this whole editorial.

I, a senior Biology major, am trying to remedy the myopia of someone who obviously shows a propensity towards the lib-

eral arts.

Hmmmm... I can't ever recall using myopia in the same sentence with liberal arts.

Mr. Sharp, I encourage you to read Monica Eiland's column, "Weird Science," every Tuesday to at least expand your horizons and your knowledge of the sciences but more importantly to realize that not everyone is like you.

Trent Riggsbee
SENIOR
BIOLOGY

Congratulations on New 'Weird Science' Column

TO THE EDITOR:

Any publication's purpose is to serve the needs of the readers.

A newspaper, being a publication, has this as one half of it's dual purpose, the other half being to report the news and local happenings.

I have made reading the DTH part of my daily routine now for almost four years, and there have been many times that the only items that I have found to be interesting are the sports columns, the campus roundup or Calvin and Hobbes.

Recently, however, there has been an addition to the DTH that I have enjoyed, the "Weird Science" columns written by Monica Eiland.

I find it refreshing to read her column, because it is, at least for the DTH, new and innovative, as well as being interesting to someone who has spent a good portion of his life studying the natural sciences. I know how hard it is to be a science major and still find time for other activities, and I have a lot of respect for Monica's ability to both be a biology major, and find the time to articulate the ideas for her column.

I just wanted to say, "Way to go!" to Miss Eiland, and to encourage the editors of the DTH to continue publishing her column, even if it causes some readers frustration.

If readers like Brandon Sharp ("Reader Doesn't Like Having His Ignorance Thrown in Face," Jan. 19), don't find her column interesting, and don't want to learn about others' viewpoints, they don't have to read it, but what exactly are they looking for in an education?

Michael Zvonar
SENIOR
CHEMISTRY

