

The Daily Tar Heel

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Cornerstone of Support

■ No matter how much money students raise through the BCC fund-raising effort, the community support and awareness created will be a commendable reward.

It'll be a great day when the Educational Foundation has to hold a bake sale to pay for the Kenan Stadium expansion, and the Sonja H. Stone Black Cultural Center has all the money it needs.

But until that day, a group of dedicated students are raising money — and building awareness — with an outreach effort to involve the entire student body in BCC fund raising.

Students in all walks of life cannot help but notice the concerted effort to build bridges between the BCC and the community. While the student fund-raising effort probably won't bring in enough money to get construction for the \$7 million building under way, their work will assure every member of the campus community a stake in the center.

Since the controversy surrounding the approval of a free-standing BCC almost three years ago, the University has been waiting for an effective, educational outreach effort to unite people.

After a year of relative silence, a committed core group of students has quietly built a network of support for — and understanding of — the center's mission.

Events — from acclaimed speakers like bell hooks, to sessions about educational issues — have linked BCC supporters in the sorority and fraternity systems across racial lines and have involved members of a wide variety of student groups. These programs have cemented awareness of the purpose and necessity of a cultural center for everyone.

When the money is finally raised to erect the new building, the student fund-raising campaign will reap the benefit of increased attendance at BCC programs and growing support for the center's mission.

After the center was approved, supporters called for a campaign to draw in members of the whole University community. This student fund-raising campaign lays the cornerstone for wide-spread support of the BCC.

No Turnin' Back

The appointment of Barbara DeLon, a 20-year University employee, to head the UNC Housekeepers Association is an admirable gesture. We hope this marks the Hooker administration's recognition of problems faced by the housekeepers. We hope it signals the beginning of an era during which the administration will make a concerted effort to work on the housekeepers' behalf.

Appointing longtime staff member DeLon is important because she intimately knows the University. Housekeepers are as much a part of the University family as professors or administrators.

It also helps to heal some of the many rifts over the years between the housekeepers and the administration.

The job dedication that many housekeepers have demonstrated while working here is admirable. This dedication comes from their loyalty to the University and would not be the same

toward a private company offering them little job security as workers.

Because having them as University employees brings intangible benefits like loyalty and dedication, the University should not privatize the housekeeping staff, this year or any year. Instead, the University should work to continue improvements in their working conditions, so they can get wages on which a family may live.

While we commend Hooker for appointing DeLon and making this move in the right direction, we demand that the administration continue to advocate for the housekeepers. Their need for better salaries should be justified to legislators. We urge the administration to continue making reforms about better working conditions, supervisors and break time — reforms closer to home that rest as our responsibility.

Barbara DeLon will hopefully keep the housekeepers heading in the right direction — "no turnin' back."

Choi Trial: Read Other Side of Underreported Story

The woman in State vs. Seul Ki "Dennis" Choi acted correctly by coming forward. She informed the police, went to Student Health Service, told her family and friends, sought counseling and consulted the district attorney's office.

If I did not remember part of an evening, during which time a friend informed me we had had sex, I would have done the same thing. If I later discovered my friend had "confessed" that sex had occurred while I was "passed out" and "not responding," I would prosecute. My training (I was a rape educator in high school), my personal indignation over being violated and a need to protect others from such an act would motivate me. Any doubts I might have had concerning my personal responsibility would have been eradicated.

Yet the Feb. 27 motion preceding this trial proved the transcript of the police interview to be erroneous. On tape, Williams says: "And she was passed out, wasn't she? Yeah." Williams' transcription attributed this answer to Choi. When taken out of context, parts of the interview are damning.

For example, Williams: "So was she saying anything?"

Choi: "No."

However, Choi responded with "no" as well to Williams' next question, "Were you saying anything?" Considering he had just told the lieutenant that the two had been talking, then kissing and undressing, it no longer constitutes a self-indictment. Furthermore, Choi stated in the interview that when they were finished, the "victim" said "she was cold"; so he covered them.

The Daily Tar Heel seems to be just as adept as Assistant District Attorney Nancy Vecchia at taking things out of context and omitting what it does not want the community to know. Although DTH reporters were present for the defense, the paper included only two sentences of explanation for the verdict. The editors should have cared more about informing readers than about space constraints.

Unlike the district attorney, who bears the onus of providing evidence of guilt, it is the duty of a good newspaper to report accurately all facts. In each of the four articles covering this case, erroneous statements were presented as

fact. There was ample "space" to correct inaccuracies and explain the verdict. The editors perpetuated those inaccuracies and encouraged community outrage by allowing the DTH to remain silent. The community, lacking true information, expressed outrage in eight different items on the editorial page.

Besides Choi, 10 witnesses testified on his behalf, among them six women. Five witnesses (four sober) attended the Dec. 3, 1994 party. Two women were among the group of females who asked Choi to live with them after he had to leave campus; one lives with him currently. Among other things, the defense established: First, their circle of friends considered the plaintiff and the defendant to be "a couple"; second, weeks previously, Choi told her to "let (him) know if (he) ever did anything wrong"; and third, Choi consumed a fifth of rum and several hits of marijuana; the woman consumed the equivalent of five to six beers and five hits of marijuana. Both parties threw up. Twice.

During the period she does not remember, the woman climbed the two flights of stairs to Choi's room unaided. They were seen by a mutual friend (voluntarily testifying on Choi's behalf) walking with their arms around each other, "looking into each others eyes." A man sitting outside of Choi's room testified he and others teased the two, who responded with "sheepish" grins.

In the room, after discussing their relationship, Choi asked the woman to kiss him. She did so. She was physically and verbally responsive before, during and after intercourse. Yet "moving her legs" was her only reported behavior. This testimony was corroborated by two female friends, with whom he discussed the evening shortly after it happened, and by the taped interview. Their conversations were "like pulling teeth," because Choi — due to his "upbringing" — "doesn't talk about sex."

The woman put her own pants on, albeit



SUSANNAH SMOOT
GUEST COLUMNIST

backward, to go to the bathroom.

When it was clear that there were parts of the evening she could not remember, Choi informed the woman they had had sex, because he felt "she should know." During the drives to her home and work, the two discussed and agreed that the woman needed to go to Student Health. They agreed to finish their conversation later that day.

Vecchia offered Choi two plea bargains. The last, offered the day before the verdict was delivered, reduced his charge to a misdemeanor (assault on a female). The state would permit an Alford plea, which meant the defendant need not acknowledge any guilt. There would be no fine, no probation, no imprisonment and no punishment. Choi, who has always maintained his innocence, turned both down.

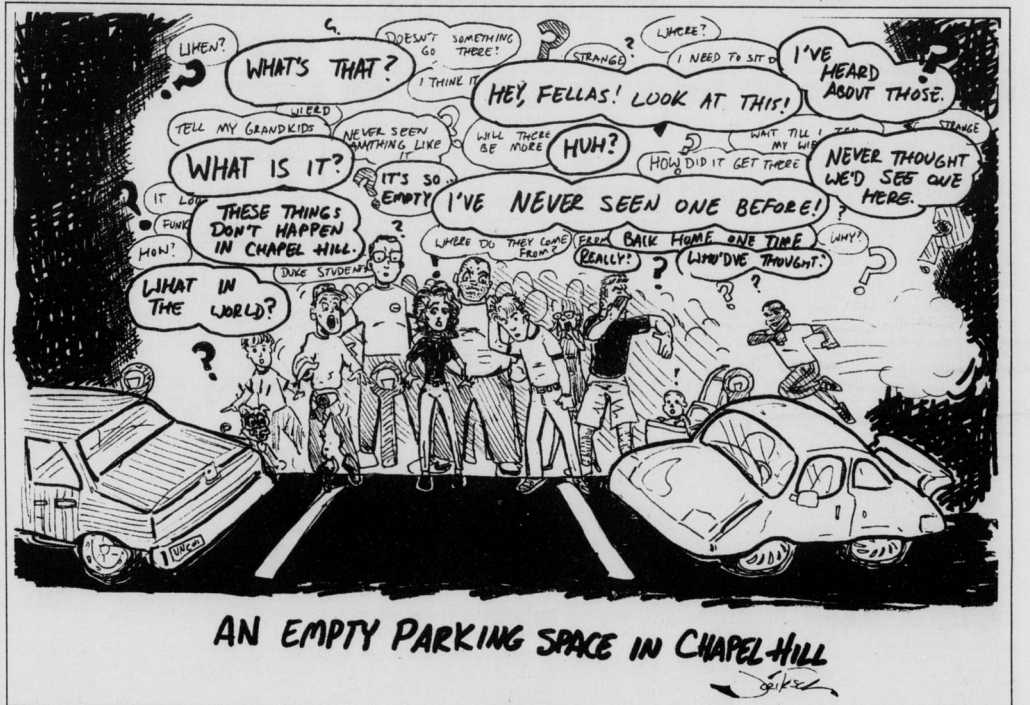
Despite what the DTH may have led you to believe, this was not a textbook case of second-degree rape. Choi did not change his testimony on the stand. The woman was not passed out. Vecchia lost the case, because she never should have made one.

Robert Gwyther, one of two jurors to write to local newspapers, stated ("Substance Abuse to Blame in Date Rape Case, Not Students," DTH, Mar. 14): "... the 'not guilty' verdict was based on the facts presented in this case. However, the verdict should not send the message that acquaintance rape should be condoned on campus."

The woman involved did exactly right by stepping forward; she could not remember having sex with someone and relied on the police and the district attorney to determine what had taken place. As Choi said (quoted out of context, Mar. 11 and Mar. 15): "I believe her when she says she believes she was raped; that was not the case." But it isn't always. Please, if you have been violated or believe you have been compromised sexually, come forward.

The evidence showed sex had occurred "between two consenting, impaired adults." The educated and informed jury made its decision based on the evidence. The "community jury" did not have the benefit of the evidence. Repeatedly spooned false information, they may have unfairly indicted Choi. Perhaps they won't now.

Susannah Lanneau Smoot is a junior history and Spanish major from Raleigh.



BAROMETER

Light Up, Everybody, Part II

North Carolina is refusing to take part in efforts against the tobacco industry. Maybe when officials get cancer, progressive legislation can take place.

Mooooooooooovies

For the first time in recent memory, some good films got awards Monday night. Rumor has it that members of the Academy are suffering from Mad Cow disease.

Trails of Tears

Inconsiderate mountain bikers are despoiling the once beautiful campus quads. Use the paths, don't make your own.

Sell-Outs?

Have you noticed a lot of your radical senior friends getting haircuts, buying suits and flying north for two-day jaunts? We wonder why.

Thou Shalt Not Park

Why stop at making the IM-Rec fields into a parking deck? If the University was really ambitious, it would raze South Building and give us some convenient spaces.

Directions for the Search Party

Chancellor Michael Hooker was spotted in Greensboro on Wednesday. The creators of the "missing" fliers can expect him in Chapel Hill soon.

Editor's Note

The following letters were submitted by Chapel Hill High School students as part of a community service project.

Fish Kills and Sores From Neuse River Must Be Stopped

TO THE EDITOR: Recently there has been a drop in the number of fish in the Neuse River, and scientists don't know much about what is going on.

A tiny bacteria — dinoflagellate — is killing the fish. Since its discovery earlier in the year, scientists believe this bacteria has evolved from pollution being dumped into the river. This is a very serious problem because it is not only killing fish and plants, it is creating sores on humans and animals.

This bacteria is a very lethal killer and very little is known about it. Scientists at N.C. State University aren't sure how to get rid of this creature. According to scientist JoAnn Burkholder and her assistant Howard Glasgow, this bacteria is very sophisticated. When it is threatened, it can swell 100 times larger than its original size in minutes. It can also go into suspended animation when its food supply runs out.

There are several ways the National Wildlife Association can stop this bacteria from killing fish. One way is to stop dumping agricultural and industrial by-products into the river. Another way would be for everyone to buy recyclable products and dispose of them properly. This would help keep our rivers and land clean. Mandating that companies find alternative ways of disposing waste products would eliminate the source of this bacteria.

Recognizing the problem and implementing quick legislation to prevent further pollution and fish-kills is the only solution in saving our rivers, lakes and streams.

David Webster
CHAPEL HILL

Hanging Is Supposed to Be Cruel, Not Unusual, Deterrent

TO THE EDITOR: Crime is high. The chances are good a pal of yours will become a victim of rape, murder, arson or kidnapping. Criminals rarely meet jus-



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. Bring letters to the DTH office at Suite 104, Carolina Union, mail them to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, NC 27515 or e-mail forum to: dth@unc.edu.

People like that in power build the crime rate alongside criminals who might kill them tonight!

Why harm publicly? If you were dying slowly with a bullet in your back, you would like the population to avenge your death by jeering at your murderer. Which would you be more opposed to? Hanging our wrongdoers, or being that one out of 19 whose life will end in a murder? The person who might want to murder you might go to the next public hanging and change his mind, like statistics say. If you're mad at me for being so inhumane (which I'm not), why don't you work off your anger by helping me carry lumber to the town square?

Carl Willis
CHAPEL HILL

Humans Cause Extinction By Hunting, Destroying World

TO THE EDITOR: The main reason animals are becoming endangered is us. Human actions that cause extinction fall into three categories: hunting, pollution and habitat destruction.

From the earliest times, hunters have caused the extinction of many species. With the spread of the Stone Age hunters, over 100 species of mammals became extinct. Then Europeans began traveling regularly and guns began to be easier to handle. By the end of the 19th century, the gun had brought one of the most numerous birds, the passenger pigeon, to the brink of extinction. Today, hunting is — in theory — regulated; but it remains a major threat to birds and mammals. Hunters should limit hunting on species that are becoming endangered.

Pollution is another major cause. Our food is contaminated with hundreds of chemicals. While we may only consume small amounts, large quantities of chemicals run off into rivers and the soil. Huge amounts of pollutants are being pumped into rivers, seas and the atmosphere. Oil slicks cause serious mortalities. Even more dangerous are the hundreds of miles of fishing net in the ocean drowning animals. Habitat destruction is undoubtedly the most significant threat and the hardest to prevent. Human populations are displacing wildlife in an effort to turn forest into farmland. In the mid-1980's it was estimated that of over 4.6 million square kilometers of forest in Africa, only 1.8 million remained. We should stop the destruction of animal habitats.

Brian Merritt
CHAPEL HILL

THE DAILY TAR HEEL

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