

# The Daily Tar Heel

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## BOARD EDITORIALS

### Glass houses

■ By re-electing Newt Gingrich before his ethics investigation is completed, House Republicans surrendered the moral high ground.

Two years after they stormed Washington with promises of a new breed of politicians and a political revolution, House Republicans put their integrity into greater doubt when they re-elected Newt Gingrich as speaker of the House on Tuesday.

All of North Carolina's Republican representatives voted for Gingrich, an act that raises serious questions about their dedication to ending corruption in Washington. They should explain to their voters why they preached ethical and moral reform in one breath, and then voted in a speaker with admitted ethics violations weeks before the House ethics committee will even finish its investigation into the charges.

For two years republicans have bombarded the public with their revolution and their accusations of President Bill Clinton. Even old-school democrats did not try to re-elect former democratic Speaker Jim Wright after Gingrich himself brought ethics charges against him.

Republicans weakened their stance on many issues by re-electing Gingrich. They proved that they are on the same level as many

of their declared enemies. They sacrificed the moral high ground for convincingly challenging Clinton's many ethical and legal problems. In debates about corruption in government, their voices will ring even hollower than before.

If Gingrich is censured by the ethics committee, he will be forced to give up the speaker's position.

The Republican members of the bipartisan panel investigating Gingrich's problems have already stated in writing that Gingrich will not be censured, but waiting to re-elect him until the investigation was ended would have prevented the appearance of complete disregard for congressional ethics. Choosing an interim speaker instead, even one drawn from outside the House, would have provided uncompromised leadership until Gingrich's problems could be settled.

In rushing to re-elect Gingrich rather than waiting for the results of the committee violation, the House Republicans built themselves a glass house from which it will be very difficult to throw stones.

### Teach English

Despite growing support for teaching English based on Ebonics, more emphasis must be placed on the chances whether the program will actually work.

Based on the success of preliminary tests, the Oakland, Calif., school district decided last month that Ebonics, a variation of standard English spoken by some black students, was a separate language. The district then asked for federal money to teach English as a second language to those who speak Ebonics.

School officials responded to criticism by claiming teaching English from Ebonics would allow a better understanding of the English language and would raise students' scores on achievement tests.

On the surface, correlating standard English to the way students speak would aid in improving Oakland's test scores, improving the schools altogether. While school officials mean well in their efforts, the idea that creating a new language will help is somewhat misguided.

The name Ebonics, ebony and phonics, suggests that speaking something other than stan-

dard English occurs only in black households. Anyone who has traveled from the Southern to the northern part of the United States knows that is not the case. Singling out black students who speak incorrect English paves the road for low self-esteem, which would cause students' achievement scores to drop even lower.

Supporters of Oakland school district's decision argue that correcting students for speaking substandard English is what lowers self-esteem. Teaching English as a second language, they claim, would make correct English another way of saying the same thing. But by allowing a student to think that saying "I be in class" rather than "I am in class" is OK, it gives him or her no incentive to learn what it correct.

Although the Oakland school district is to be commended for trying innovative steps to reach struggling students, validating incorrect English is not the way to do so. It and other school districts across the country should search for ways that teach students to succeed in the real world, not those that set them up for more failure.

### Different districts, please

Because of a decision by the U.S. Supreme Court this summer, the N.C. General Assembly faces a daunting task in the new year — fairly redrawing North Carolina's congressional districts and rectifying the mistakes they made five years ago.

The high court ruled that the current districts, approved in 1992, especially the majority-black Districts 1 and 12, had been achieved by racial gerrymandering and were unconstitutional.

A map of the districts as they stand now looks like a swirling North Carolina tie-dye. The 1st District, now represented by the state's only black congresswoman, Eva Clayton, sprawls from the northernmost eastern county to Wilmington in the south, crossing 28 counties. Charlottean Mel Watt represents the 12th District, a snake-like majority-black district that follows Interstate 85 from Durham to Charlotte.

The state's other districts aren't much better. Constituents are removed from each other by one hundred miles, sharing little of the same

interests and concerns. They are grouped by bland, blind numbers — they are the same race or class.

Anticipating how people will vote based on demographics and then grouping those people together violates the principles of democracy. Our government was based on the principles of area representation and majority rule balanced by a strong, vocal minority. In most of North Carolina's current districts, this balance has been destroyed. In majority-black districts, the interests of the districts' republicans are overlooked. Other districts lost key democratic votes when District 12 sliced through them, and are now solidly republican.

Five years ago, the General Assembly set out with a noble purpose — assuring the state of a black representative in Congress and breaking the state's glass ceiling of color. However, they did so at the expense of pure representative democracy and the Constitution. This year, they should objectively draw the districts according to area and leave the rest to the people.

## BAROMETER

### Iced in

Right about the time we're starting to unbox those summer clothes and seriously consider global warming, Mother Nature does a 180 and leaves us shivering.

### 'Stop' bickering

It's about time Student Stores and Internationalist Books found a compromise that respects professors' preferred bookstore without giving the Internationalist a monopoly.

### Panther pride

After putting the Cowboys in their place (to await trial?), the Panthers are headed up to Green Bay to vie for a place in the Super Bowl. Either way, the expansion team's already made its N.C. fans proud.

### Hooked on reading

Congrats for being chosen to help implement Clinton's work-study literacy program. Now if you can just get UNC students to read, maybe we can see some progress on the intellectual climate.

# What exactly does Student Congress do anyway?

Quick show of hands: How many of you know the name of your Student Congress representative? Now, put your hands down if you are (or live with) the aforementioned representative.

If the results are as I suspect, then there may be one or two lone hands in the room. When I asked my friends this question over break, only one raised her hand — kudos to Jason Jolley for being the only memorable congressman. Part of the reason might be that we changed districts since we voted last spring. Part might be that some of our representatives received, and won by, only one vote — their own. Nonetheless, if you conduct this study with some of your friends, I think the results will show you the problem is much greater than demographics.

One explanation for our ignorance is the pathetic lack of communication between the legislative branch and its constituents. How many of us know (or care) what legislation has been enacted by Student Congress? I am under the impression that all they do is vote on the allocation of student fees.

This impression may have stemmed from the fact that the only communication which I have ever received from any student politician was a letter from Student Body President Aaron Nelson informing me that I would have to pay a fee for my Student Advantage Card.

Although this "do-nothing" image may be inaccurate, I have seen nothing which would prove it to be incorrect. Where are the visible changes such as emergency phones at every P2P Xpress stop? Why are there no representatives explaining the various duties of Student Congress to the freshmen at orientation? Where are The Daily Tar Heel articles explaining major congressional decisions?

A portion of my tuition is supporting this organization, and I want to know how the money is being spent. My concern is not whether the Student Congress is keeping

accurate fiscal records, but whether the funding which they receive is being put to good use.

I have the feeling that it is being wasted by supporting pointless political bickering. Not only are congressmen wasting our money, they are also squandering their own talents.

Imagine if all of our congressmen directed their efforts into building for Habitat for Humanity instead of bickering in legislative committees. Hundreds of new homes could be built each semester. Dozens of student politicians would be able to have a positive impact on people's lives. Even though this example may be a bit far-fetched, it does illustrate how the manpower consumed by Student Congress could be dedicated toward other, useful purposes.

I do not mean to imply that individual student politics do not have great intentions, just that they get lost in the red tape. Student Congress may even beat Steele Building as the most wasteful bureaucracy on campus. Correct me if I am wrong, but part of my student fees are supporting an organization comprised of individuals who are strangers to their constituents and a costly bureaucracy which is completely alien to the vast majority of students. I know this may be a perfect model of the U.S. Congress, but that does not mean that we should tolerate it on this campus.

Right now, the only good which I can see coming out of the Student Congress is that it serves as a résumé-builder for the representatives. All of the decisions which it currently



ANDREA MAIN  
WATCH OUT,  
YOU'RE NEXT

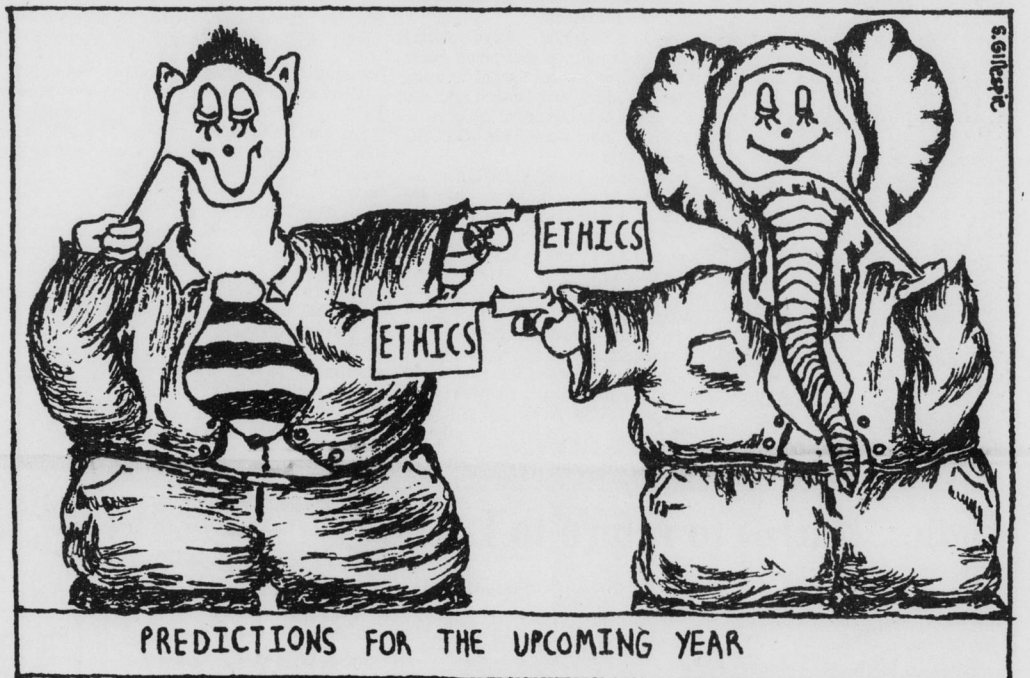
handles could be streamlined and effectively dealt with by committees such as the Chancellor's Advisory Committee and the Committee for Campus Safety. These committees are already doing a great deal to improve the condition of our campus and give students a chance to voice their opinions. Just think what they could accomplish with an elevated status — and the additional manpower of some dedicated ex-representatives. Come to think of it, with a few small adjustments, I see every student and student organization functioning perfectly well without the help of our beloved Student Congress.

The Navy has a saying: "Shape up or ship out." This could be applied to our Student Congress. But before we start campaigning to dismantle student government, we should give them the opportunity to make a some changes which would enable us to see the benefits that we reap from this esteemed organization.

Perhaps they could submit a monthly article to the DTH which highlights their recent legislative actions. Or better still, they should send their constituents an e-mail which delineates the major initiatives of the semester. Don't clutter our inboxes; just give us a brief note saying what you have done. Including the names and e-mail addresses of our representatives would be a nice touch.

If the bureaucracy of the Student Congress is too large to perform a task as straightforward as this, should we be allowing them to make decisions about our student fees? For that matter, why should we let them make ANY decisions? Twenty bucks says that our legislative branch will not be able to perform this simple task by the end of the semester. Watch your inboxes to see.

Andrea Main is junior elementary education and political science major from Raleigh. She has no clue what her representative's name is.



### UNC should not support Indonesian regime, genocide

TO THE EDITOR:  
After reading Managing Editor Graham Brink's column reprinted from Oct. 30, ("UNC should be wary of Indonesian partnership,") I am compelled to join him in condemning Chancellor Hooker's gestures toward Indonesia. To consider forging academic ties with Indonesian President Suharto's regime today is no less morally reprehensible than embracing apartheid South Africa, as many universities did before the mid-1980s.

Since the invasion in 1974, the East Timorese people have been slaughtered and tortured by the Indonesian military using U.S. arms and equipment, while a bipartisan progression of presidential administrations silently looked on in approval. The U.S. has continued to sell arms to Indonesia, concurrently blocking any official action against the Jakarta government in the United Nations. We ignore testimonies from human rights organizations, neighboring countries, church groups and survivors, insisting on maintaining a relationship with Suharto's murderous administration.

As Mr. Brink points out, today Indonesia is moving to snuff out all of East Timorese culture via forced sterilization, language bans and mass murder (Santa Cruz massacre of 1991).

As an academic institution, UNC-Chapel Hill alone cannot do much to influence foreign policy, but it can certainly avoid showing tacit support for genocide, even if Indonesia is going to be "a great boom area."

Recently, Chancellor Hooker has pledged to improve the intellectual climate on campus. Does the association of our University with the extermination of 200,000 people contribute to this goal? Do he and Provost Richard Richardson mean to forsake any trace of moral conscience for the sake of a financial windfall? Should you not consider the treatment of human beings when deciding with whom this University shall affiliate itself? If not, perhaps the next "four-person panel" should visit Guatemala, China, Turkey and Albania. Imagine the rewards.

Here's to the improved intellectual climate.

Jeffrey Campbell  
GRADUATE STUDENT  
ENGLISH



## 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.

### New political science course in Eastern thought offered

TO THE EDITOR:  
I am offering a new course in political thought. The course is about India/China, and their reaction to the West. I am looking for students who are interested in either India or China specifically, or who are more generally interested in such topics as colonialism and modernism. The course number is POLI B1-3, "Major Issues in Political Theory," Reg# 30337. The syllabus is posted outside of 300 Hamilton Hall.

Deepak Shenoy  
POLITICAL SCIENCE

### Did Jordan pass swim test like rest of UNC students?

TO THE EDITOR:  
I'm writing on behalf of everyone that has ever had to pass the swim test to graduate from this university. I was shocked to see that one of the University's most famous alumni, Michael Jordan, stated in the Dec. 4 USA Today that he CANNOT SWIM!!! Jordan's remarks, which came following the freak body-surfing injury of his Chicago Bulls' teammate, Luc Longley, made me wonder how Mr. Jordan graduated from this fine institution without being able to fulfill one of the stupid provisions necessary to get one's

degree from Carolina. Jordan told the press that they wouldn't have to worry about him surfing since he CANNOT SWIM! Jordan stated "There is something about water that doesn't agree with me." Well Michael, you know, I agree and I hate swimming just as much as you do, but I sucked it up and did my stupid lap years ago so that I can walk out of here next May with my degree. I hope you were joking, Michael, and that you at least did at least dogpaddle that crucial lap, proving your worth as a fellow Tar Heel. If you didn't, Michael, well, I hope Chancellor Hooker will deal with this appropriately.

Scott M. Hollmeyer  
SENIOR  
POLITICAL SCIENCE

### Another reason UNC should stay out of Indonesia: Clinton

TO THE EDITOR:  
I was glad to see you rerun the Oct. 30 warning to beware of close contacts with Indonesia. We have learned more about the "Lippo-suction" scandal: the Clinton corruption involving the Indonesian conglomerate the Lippo Group and its illegal political contributions. Its operative, John Huang, was placed by Clinton in the job of Assistant Secretary of Commerce.

Recently, still another Indonesia scandal has come to light. Many people thought it a bit strange when Clinton went to the Grand Canyon last September and issued an executive order designating a huge area over in Utah as a National Monument. (He didn't bother to go there to see it.) That order came just in time to prevent the mining of an enormous deposit of low-polluting coal in Utah. Many wondered why Clinton would NOT want this environment friendly coal to replace some of the high-polluting coal and oil we are now using. Did we really need another national monument that badly?

Now the likely answer has emerged. The only other major deposit of that low-polluting coal in the world is Indonesia! And guess who is involved — the Lippo Group. Keeping our coal off the market greatly increases the value of the Indonesian coal. I really don't want to see my University get involved in Indonesia until the stench of corruption is dissipated.

J.E. Williams  
CLASS OF 1950  
CARRBORO