

The Daily Tar Heel

Jeanne Fugate EDITOR
Office Hours, 2-3 p.m. Fridays
Laura Godwin MANAGING EDITOR

Julia Corbin EDITORIAL PAGE EDITOR
Balkees Jarrah UNIVERSITY EDITOR
Evan Markfield UNIVERSITY EDITOR
Mary-Kathryn Craft CITY EDITOR
Sharif Durhams STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR
Alec Morrison SPORTS EDITOR
Graham Brink SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS EDITOR
Jessica Banooy FEATURES EDITOR
Todd Darling ARTS & DIVERSIONS EDITOR
Michael Kanarek COPY DESK EDITOR
Amy Cappiello PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR
Leslie Wilkinson DESIGN EDITOR
Phillip Molano GRAPHICS EDITOR
Elyse Alley GRAPHICS EDITOR
Robin Linehan EDITORIAL CARTOON EDITOR
Susan Hazelden STAFF DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR
Erica Beshears WRITING COACH

World Wide Web Electronic Edition
http://www.unc.edu/dth

Established 1893
104 Years of Editorial Freedom

BOARD EDITORIALS

Unfair playing field

Performing to one's full athletic potential is a bit difficult with dust-filled lungs. Equally difficult is improving a club sports team when the slightest amount of rainfall renders a practice field unusable.

The condition and quantity of sports fields available to UNC's club sports teams is both lamentable and ludicrous.

Ehringhaus field, the practice field for club men's and women's rugby, men's and women's ultimate frisbee, softball, women's lacrosse, soccer and other club sports is an embarrassment to UNC. No grass grows on the center three-fourths of the field. Rain floods the field and turns it into a giant mud puddle. Without rain, the field is a windswept dust bowl.

During football season, the field doubles as a parking lot for alumni and other visitors. At practices the week after big football games, teams dodge the remnants of tailgating parties left on the field.

The problems with the field also affect club teams' ability to host other club teams for

games. Lack of usable field space makes arranging home games difficult for clubs.

Hundreds of students participate in UNC's notably strong club sports program. Known for teams with winning records and high participation, the club sports program is a selling point to potential UNC freshmen.

One wonders if those campus tour groups ever take their little treks past Ehringhaus field, an unsightly blemish on an otherwise strong program.

A quick-and-relatively painless solution to Ehringhaus field's problem: spread some grass seed, and stop mowing the dirt. Indulging in a little fertilizer wouldn't hurt, either. However, some things must be changed if the field is to remain usable in the long-term.

Parking for football games should be moved elsewhere, which is easier said than done, but still doable. Also, bringing in more dirt and grading the field for better water runoff would lessen the erosion of the field and keep grass on it longer.

In memory of a titan

The world lost one of its greatest inspirations to modern-day art, music and politics when Allen Ginsberg passed away Saturday.

His inspiration will continue to live within all who knew his work.

Ginsberg was a counterculture guru, serving as poet laureate of the Beat Generation. His inspiration is immeasurable.

Ginsberg's poetry — lifelike words fueled by drugs and clear confusion — made people think and react and think again.

His writing was composed of unexpected, powerful verse that shocked, scared and defined the figures that define today's young people.

Bob Dylan called Ginsberg one of the greatest influences on American poetry and song writing. Billy Corgan of the Smashing Pumpkins agreed.

His words told us of his homosexuality, the death of his mother, his relationships, frustra-

tions and the pleasures of simply living.

His controversial poem "America" opened him to an onslaught of criticism — for putting truth on the line.

"America I've given you all and now I'm nothing," he wrote. "I can't stand my own mind. America when will we end the human war? Go fuck yourself with your atom bomb."

"America I used to be a communist when I was a kid I'm not sorry. I smoke marijuana every chance I get."

Breaking the rules was a way of life for Ginsberg.

He injected passion and emotion into his writing and wrote what he wanted without fear. His influence will live for many generations.

Called beatniks, Ginsburg, Jack Kerouac, William S. Burroughs and Neal Cassidy embraced life, living and love with a candid energy — maybe we'll learn to do the same.

IN MY OPINION

'Swiftly' fixing government's woes

Here is a modest proposal of my own. We have problems with student government: students are apathetic, many representatives have big egos and decisions take hours of fighting. In light of these problems, I propose that we dissolve Student Congress and replace it with a chancellor's Task Force on Student Fees.

The new task force would take the power out of political students' hands, and put it in grips of a few executive branch toadies. Teachers and administrators would also be involved. Such involvement would mean that students would lose some say over their student fees, but wiser professors could help define worthy activities.

A new task force would also increase efficiency in campus administration. Task forces usually create only seven subcommittees to study issues, and can reach a decision in a whopping 10 months.

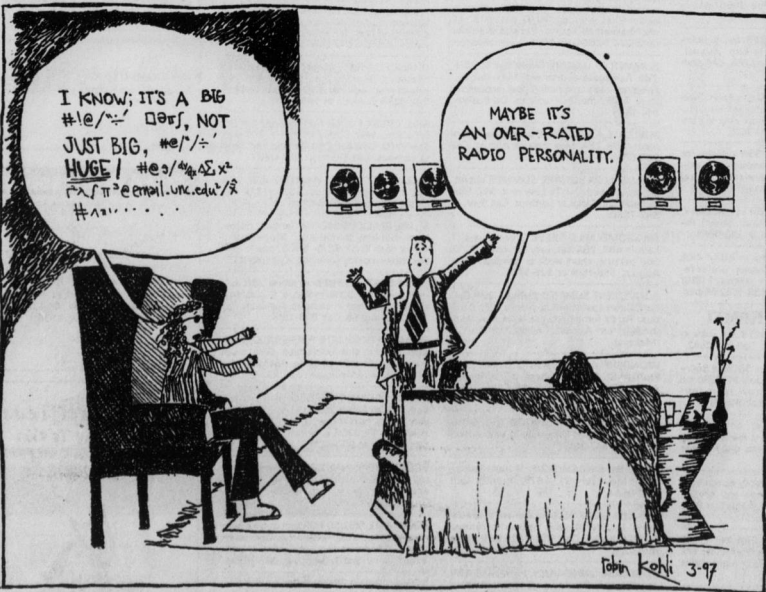
With the power to create subcommittees, and even subsubcommittees, the new task force

could grapple with problems that Student Congress has never dealt with: funding limits, guidelines for distribution and the color of the checks. The task force could adjourn to sub-committees for months to study the issues and would not have constituents to deal with when the funding process went past schedule, as Chancellor Hooker has yet to complete his tour of N.C. counties.

Students would not have to bother remembering which district they live in when it comes time for elections. Think of all the paper that would be saved from needless campaigning. If no one cares anyway, why should we even bother?



CAROLINE PAPA
EDITORIAL WRITER



CHARADES AT HOWARD STERN'S HOUSE

How can you ignore race with it in your face?

Tara Powell's column will return next Tuesday.

Remember me? I was a legend on the Morrison hoops court. No help? Me and the guy with the blinking hat were the ones who woke you up for the number checks during the basketball campouts. Hmmm, possibly you caught me pimpin' at Players on a Thursday night. For those of you who still don't remember me, and for those freshmen who might not have had the privilege of meeting me, perhaps a physical description is in order. I'm about 6 feet tall, short dark hair, green eyes, freckles and a complexion somewhere between cinnamon and honey. I was the one you were always dying to ask "the" question:

"So, like, you know ... what are you? I mean no offense, I was just wondering if you were of racially mixed ancestry."

"Your features remind me of a friend of mine from high school. He was 3/8 black, 2/8 white, 2/8 Native American, and the rest was Indian just to spice things up. So ... what about you?"

"A friend of mine thinks you're cute. So she was wondering what race you are?"

If I had a nickel for every time some inquisitive, red-faced whomever approached me with that question, I'd come close to paying off my student loans.

Ever since I started bubbling in the race question on those standardized tests with other students looking over my shoulder, I've wondered why. Why are people so interested and perplexed by my physical appearance; their minds struggling, evaluating and re-evaluating, to resolve the apparent enigma? Why, after two years, did a friend who could no longer stand the mystery enlist a third party to complete a racial reconnaissance mission? Why do people have trouble falling asleep at night because I can't be neatly tucked away into a racial box?

It wasn't until I came to Africa that I was able to get answers to my questions. An outsider trying to gain acceptance into a new culture and community, I was able to observe the application of race filters instead of being

inextricably entangled in them. It became clear that racial recognition, prejudice and prejudice join with experiential knowledge to determine our actions, thoughts and emotional responses. This modus operandi dictates that we draw conclusions about others at a distance, keeping our hands clean and free from the sticky awkwardness that always seems to accompany crossing the color line.

Rarely do we, as Americans, make honest efforts at crossing the racial divide through meaningful interaction in an atmosphere of mutual acceptance and respect.

More often we sit passively and become socialized by the misinformation and factoids in easy-to-swallow capsule form. Although it has become popular in the United States to claim color-blindness, even this small contingent sees in black, white and shades of grey. We live in a society that says race matters.

"According to a 1993 study by the US Sentencing Commission, blacks were 88.3 percent of all defendants convicted on crack cocaine distribution charges. Fifty-two percent of crack cocaine users are white compared with 38 percent for blacks, and whites are 75 percent of powder cocaine users, blacks 15 percent." (Emerge May 1996 p.50)

"When asked if participation in social groups and interest groups was affected by race, 65 percent of white (college) students and 84 percent of black (college) students agreed.

"Approximately one half of all the black (college) students have been the target of other students' racial prejudice and experience racial prejudice nearly six times as often as their white counterparts." (Journal of Black Studies Nov. 1995 p. 126)

"Illegal immigrants: pushing for a hard line approach, Dole will try to pit Reagan Democrats and blacks, who generally favor strict controls, against Hispanics ..." (Newsweek, Aug. 26, 1996 p.34)

How can you not see in color with race in your face?

That I am not instantly recognized as black or white — "Us" or "Them" — presents an interesting dilemma for those on both sides of the color line. I become a porthole, a corridor, a mirror in which one catches the occasional glimpse of internal prejudice. The mind tries to place me in the proper mental stereotype, distinguishing friend from foe.

Thus am I:
■ the affirmative action set aside who sucks up scholarship money or the guy who puts in the work and got a few breaks just like anyone else?

■ the sell-out who forgot his history when it was time to march for a free-standing Black Cultural Center or the brother who fights racial battles on his own terms?

■ the upstanding, trustworthy, good-natured role model or the lying, cheating, thieving ghetto punk you can't turn your back on?

■ the tragic mulatto who can't deal with dating an African queen or the guy who is not scared to follow his heart instead of a blood-line?

■ the student athlete who is trying to balance college life or the jock who got accepted to UNC but probably can't cut it academically?

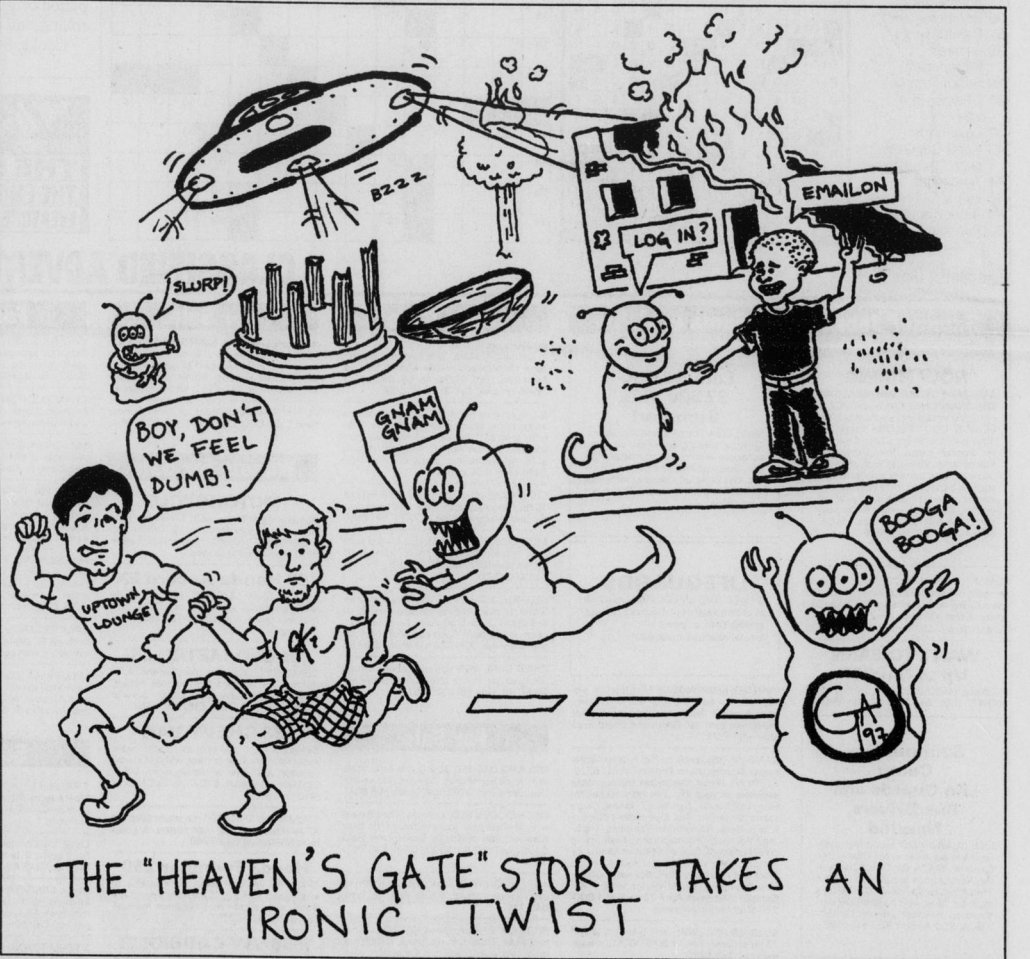
Somehow by asking me "the" race question, the grey areas are cleared, making it easier to fit me into a racial cage.

Alice Walker stumbled upon this truism when she went to Cuba: "I realized that as I had sat listening to them, I had separated them, mentally, into black and white and 'mixed,' and that I had assumed certain things on the basis of my own perverted categorization."

A critical self-examination of our racial subconscious is a necessary first step.

Bridging our racial divide can only be accomplished by unlocking my cage and your comfort zone with the same keys of mutual understanding.

Nate Brooks is a 1995 political science graduate of UNC who has spent the past 11 months teaching English and mathematics as a volunteer in Namibia.



Homosexuals deserve better than just 'common decency'

TO THE EDITOR:

Andrea Main's column from March 27, titled "Believe Me, I'm Not Checking You Out," presented a request to our campus that is not difficult to fulfill. In fact, it is one that should not even have to be made: that of "a little common decency and consideration." Before we learned that Andrea was gay, we loved her and accepted her as our friend because she is kind, honest, easy to talk to and so funny. After she let us in on what was her secret from most of the world until last Thursday, we still loved her for all of those reasons, and no less because of what we had learned.

Take Andrea's words seriously. Offer up the decency and consideration everyone deserves, but try to find a little compassion and understanding in your heart as well.

If one of your friends were gay, would they be afraid to tell you because of something you've said in the past?

Alison Pratt
SOPHOMORE
BIOLOGY

Not recognizing famous work shows lack of school system

TO THE EDITOR:

This is in response to Rebecca Todd's letter of April 1, "Categorizing women as weak degrades half of human race."

In 1730, Jonathan Swift wrote a piece called "A Modest Proposal."

In it, Swift outlines his proposal to take



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.

care of a "problem" involving the large number of poor Irish children choking the streets of Dublin, looking for handouts.

"A Modest Proposal" is one of the most famous satirical works, and the phrase "modest proposal" has become identified with satire.

Or so I thought. Ms. Todd's response to the March 24 letter of Scott Schwartz ("A modest proposal" opens topic of guarding weak ones) struck me with a great feeling of incredulity, as well as some dismay.

Mr. Schwartz's very use of the words "modest proposal" should have been a warning sign that the contents therein should not be taken at face value.

For whatever reason, be it blind rage or a

complete lack of understanding of the concept of satire, Todd chose to ignore the meaning of the original letter.

I find it a damning indictment of the educational systems of this country and/or this university itself that we are admitting students to this university who do not have a basic background in the works or elements of literature.

However, for those of you out there who are satire-impaired (or perhaps humor-impaired), I will be happy to explain to you the real message behind Schwartz's proposal.

Finally, a personal suggestion to Rebecca Todd: read "A Modest Proposal."

It's only eight pages long, and it can be found at Davis Library under the call number PR 3722 1995.

And if, after reading it, you honestly believe that Swift advocated eating Irish children to reduce the burden they imposed on society, I will eat my hat.

Jonathan Hart
SENIOR
POLITICAL SCIENCE/JOURNALISM

Get sucked in

Spread your opinions across the back page of The Daily Tar Heel.

Applications are now being accepted for editorial page editor, editorial board writers and columnists. All applications are available in the front office of the DTH (a.k.a. Suite 104 of the Student Union).

Editor applications are due to the DTH by 5 p.m. Friday. Editorial board and columnist applications are due by 5 p.m. April 18.

Questions? Call Editor-select Erica Beshears at 962-4086.