

The Daily Tar Heel

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BOARD EDITORIALS

Broken promises

Residents living near the landfill in Chapel Hill have been promised water and sewer lines for 20 years, now is the time for the LOG to deliver.

The Landfill Owners Group, has swept so much dirt under its carpet that even the center is bulging. In the distant past — the early 1970s — town and county officials promised residents near the proposed landfill site that water and sewer service would accompany the project.

The Chapel Hill Town Council has finally approved the plans for the project, decades after the promise was made to the residents.

If ground gets broken on the site, and the pipes pump water in and sewer out, then the residents of the area will be able to say they were not — literally — lied to. But the delay amounts to nothing less than lies in the eyes of many.

People have the general tendency to disregard waste after putting it into a trash can and local officials have done the same thing with the county's garbage. Apparently, after Waste Industries collects their trash, they don't think about it again, or the area where it will be taken, until the landfill is nearly full.

The compensation offered to the area's residents for decades of living near a landfill has been neglected.

Providing these people with water must have slipped off the agenda.

The area could be the home of an expand-

ed landfill, because closing the current landfill and locating the new one in a different area is no longer an option. Area residents can expect to face another 20 to 30 years of living near garbage.

Has bureaucratic red tape held up the bringing of water and sewer lines to the area? Have local officials not been able to reach a consensus amongst themselves because they can't deal with garbage any better than the general public?

Many Orange County politicians are elected again and again, because issues like this hardly affect anybody other than area residents. Most voters just don't know these elected representatives fail to make good on such heavy promises.

The construction of these sewer and water lines should begin no later than the construction of the new landfill. Even though local officials have had more than 20 years to examine the problem, they probably would like another 20 to figure out a solution that is deemed agreeable to all members of the respective governments.

If these officials table the zoning debates and put a deliberate cap on development for a meeting, they might figure out a way to uphold existing promises and take care of local residents.

Expand your mind

The N. C. Literary Festival, to be this weekend on the UNC campus, is an incredible opportunity to celebrate the works and talents of writers from North Carolina and beyond.

While many famous Southern writers will be in attendance at the conference, the weekend offers many opportunities to experience the works of lesser known Southern writers as well. In addition, students from universities across the state will have the chance to showcase their works.

The highlights of the week will include an address by Margaret Walker on Friday evening, a public reading by John Grisham in front of South Building at 11 a.m. Saturday, and an address by former U.S. poet laureate Rita Dove. While students are encouraged to take advantage of the chance to interact with these celebrities, the weekend will be filled with other activities which should prove as worthwhile.

Of particular interest to the UNC community should be a presentation by UNC creative writing students Saturday morning, a panel focusing on issues affecting the Sonja H. Stone

Black Cultural Center, ceremonies honoring the winners of the Independent's poetry contest and the Self Knowledge Symposium's essay contest and performances at Swain Hall of "Good Ol' Girls" by Paul Ferguson.

Exhibitors at the festival will include many publishers, historical groups and literary organizations. From the State Library of North Carolina to Harper Collins publishers, these exhibitors will certainly have something to add to the festival's activities. The festival will also include book signings and other chances to personally encounter the hundreds of authors who will be present on campus this weekend.

In return for a little chaos and a little craziness, members of the UNC community will have free and convenient access to some of the nation's best writers. It is a chance which no one should pass up.

We encourage everyone to take advantage of the festival's many events. Further information about the N. C. Literary Festival, including a complete calendar of events, can be found on the Internet at: <http://sunsite.unc.edu/litfest>.

BAROMETER

Final Four

Although the basketball team lost in San Antonio, the thrills of the 97-98 basketball season will live with us until UNC begins another trip to the Final Four next year.

Freedom to compute

People for Computational Freedom is holding a rally on Thursday to protest the CCI. It is a good start, but more organization is needed.

Mo'money

The Kenan Trust gave \$100,000 to the Sonja H. Stone Black Cultural Center, another step in the right direction for this massive project.

Tragedy

Students at Grey Culbreth Middle School are trying to pick up the pieces after Monday's tragic death of a seventh-grade student.



Separate good from bad in multiculturalism

I've never visited New York City, but I've heard it's terrific. It's supposed to be a gastronome's dream, featuring every sort of ethnic cuisine imaginable: Cambodian, Hungarian, Moroccan, Pakistani, Polish, Thai, Vietnamese — you name it.

And the culinary variety is equaled by the diversity of cultural offerings. Forms of art representing artistic traditions from around the world, appealing to the whole gamut of aesthetic tastes, are constantly on display.

In the eyes of many, multicultural New York City (minus the crime, poverty, and pollution) represents the ideal society: people with diverse beliefs and traditions living together in harmony, even celebrating their differences.

I can't deny the attraction of this picture. My worry is that, as a window onto multiculturalist thought, this picture is crucially incomplete.

A complete picture would come into focus only after the essence of multiculturalism had been identified, but it is extremely hard to pin down any such essence. There may be as many different understandings of multiculturalism as there are self-described multiculturalists. Nevertheless, there are at least some common currents of thought, and some of them are worrisome.

Recently Steve Phillips, a self-described multiculturalist and member of the San Francisco school board, expressed his confidence, in the wake of the school board's vote for increased multiculturalism in readings for high school literature classes, that San Francisco schools "will respect and value and promote all the cultures in this country."

Sounds innocuous enough at first hearing. And I suspect it's a sentiment that most multiculturalists would echo without a second thought. But taken to its logical conclusion Phillips' vision has some disturbing implications.

For a commitment to "respect and value and promote — all — the cultures in this country" is a commitment to respect, value, and promote, among other things, America's white supremacist cultures, youth gang cultures and sexist Muslim cultures. If we reject these cultures, or at least certain aspects of them, as morally insidious, then we must reject the pure multiculturalism that would

have us respect and promote them.

Hence the need for a restricted multiculturalism, a society that respects cultural differences, but within limits.

So murder is out — although in certain youth gang cultures it is sometimes the only acceptable mode of response to violence or insult. Laws discriminatory against women and religious minorities are out — although they exist in many Islamic countries. Female genital mutilation is out — although it is widely practiced in Africa. Discrimination against ethnic minorities is out — although it exists on every continent in the world save Antarctica.

A proposal for restricted multiculturalism may seem blandly uncontroversial. Whether it will depend on the extent of the restrictions. What I have just listed are only some of the more egregious examples of objectionable cultural artifacts. But the list of restrictions could be extended significantly to include a number of multiculturalist sacred cows.

To take an example close to home, consider the pervasive demands for greater multiculturalism in University curricula. Now there is nothing wrong with requiring college students to learn something about alien cultures. Such requirements can be viewed as part of a liberal education that seeks to broaden students' intellectual horizons, prompting them to critically reflect, perhaps for the first time, on the norms of their own culture.

But academic multiculturalists typically call for more than this. They seem to be animated by a conviction that texts not authored by members of a student's gender, race or ethnic group don't "speak to" that student.

Multiculturalists exhort college instructors to select authors and issues that "reflect the diversity" of their students; otherwise, say the multiculturalists, minority students will justifiably shrug off course material as irrelevant to them.

This demand conflicts with the legitimate



ANDY JOHNSON
DON'T BE SO SURE

pedagogical aims of many courses. When I teach a class in bioethics, my concern is to get students immersed in and thinking critically about the central ethical questions involved in issues like abortion, euthanasia and genetic engineering.

These are issues that are relevant to us, at least in large part, as human beings. There is not, for instance, one problem of abortion for whites and a completely distinct problem of abortion for blacks (which is not to deny that the debate over abortion policy has any racial dimensions).

And whether an author should be included in my reading list depends on the caliber of his or her arguments, not on the author's gender, race or ethnicity.

Were I to accede to a student's expectation that he or she be presented with authors of the same gender/race/ethnic group as him- or herself, and with issues peculiar to members of that group, I would be acceding to the view that the student's identity resides primarily in being a woman, or an African American, or a Hispanic, etc., and that the student is at most secondarily a human being.

This view privileges group identity over human identity (or sentient being identity), and is thus a prescription for sexism, racism and ethnic strife. It promotes the cultivation of an "us-them" mentality that corrodes the moral ties we ought to feel for each other as human (or sentient) beings.

Do not misunderstand: my rejection of multiculturalism in its predominant current form is by no means a call for cultural homogeneity.

John Diefenbaker, prime minister of Canada from 1957-63, articulated a splendid vision of a Canada which is not "a melting pot in which the individuality of each element is destroyed in order to produce a new and totally different element. It is rather a garden into which have been transplanted the hardiest and brightest flowers from many lands."

This is a worthy ideal for America as well. But we must not let our fervor for a garden of diverse cultures blind us to the difference between bright flowers and odious weeds.

Andy Johnson is a graduate student in philosophy. He welcomes your feedback at abjohnso@email.unc.edu.



Critical UNC fans must show better support for athletes

TO THE EDITOR:

This past weekend I had the opportunity to watch the Tar Heels in their Final Four appearance. We joined a multitude of other UNC fans at one of the Franklin Street establishments. It was initially fun and exciting to partake in the festivities.

However, as UNC began to have difficulty on the court, I was amazed at how quickly fan support dissipated. Cheers changed to jeers and verbal attacks were launched against players and coaching staff alike.

I understand that sometimes fans get out of hand, but I was taken aback by the degree of hostility displayed. It is called "sport" for a reason.

I am one of the sports medicine physicians for our student athletes and I am unfailingly impressed by the effort and attitude that they put into representing UNC. When we think or talk of student-athletes, we often think of the glamour and privilege of the high visibility scholarship athletes on campus.

However, they are just the "tip of the iceberg". UNC has over 700 varsity athletes. Most of these athletes will never get their picture in The Daily Tar Heel and many don't have the benefit of an athletic scholarship.

However, the hours and effort that they put into perfecting their sport and representing this university is astonishing. There is inherent value in unequivocally supporting these athletes who serve as ambassadors for UNC.

They do it for themselves, but it benefits all of us. Their achievements and composure both on and off the playing field enhance the visibility and reputation of our university. We spectators should not detract from their efforts.

Michele LaBotz, MD
SPORTS MEDICINE FELLOW
TAYLOR STUDENT HEALTH



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.

Posing nude personal choice; Playboy more than just porn

TO THE EDITOR:

Yes, I'm a guy, but don't judge me yet. I am not a giant raging hormone with thoughts of sex constantly running through my head.

Nor am I a celibate monk whose favorite article of clothing is a chastity belt. I'm simply a teenager in college, which many of you can relate to.

I've seen the Playboy ads in the Daily Tar Heel, and I've seen the uproar they have caused.

Would I be seeing the same reaction if Playgirl was coming to campus instead?

There is nothing sexist about the human body. If you don't want to pose, that's a choice you make, but let others make their own decisions instead of running a legitimate business into the ground.

And if you are one of those that regard

Playboy as "absolute smut," then you've never even read the magazine. In every issue, there are at most 15-25 pages of nude or semi-nude women. Heck, March's issue even had a nude man. I always keep in mind that most of these models are making more money for an issue than I'll see in my life (you remember Jenny McCarthy and Pamela Anderson, right?).

Those who label Playboy as a pure skin magazine could not be farther from the truth. Let's look at one issue as an example. Of the 176 pages, about 25 of them are models. Everything else in the magazine is dedicated to movie and book reviews, health news, dating tips for men and women, short stories which have nothing to do with sex and fashion tips.

If you bought the issue for those 25 pages, you just wasted your five bucks, especially with Internet access around every corner of campus giving you free reign over every magazine in the world.

To everyone who reads this who hates me now, don't.

This is purely opinion and it's not supposed to reflect the views of everyone else on campus. And there's nothing stopping you from writing in your own opinion.

To everyone who thinks I'm a womanizer and a pervert, don't. I have the utmost respect for women. One raised me for sixteen years and that's no slouch.

To every girl on campus who is going to submit that application and photo, more power to you.

You are backing your own beliefs and not falling victim to propaganda.

And to everyone who agrees with me, e-mail me (your name is sufficient, but comments are great) at mangum@email.unc.edu. I'm curious to see what the majority really thinks.

Phillip Mangum
FRESHMAN
UNDECIDED