

The Daily Tar Heel

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Vend for Yourself

Although the food carts and vendors scattered around UNC's campus filled a critical need during Lenoir Dining Hall's renovation, it is time for them to leave. The carts, which gave the campus an almost carnival-like feel at times, were a temporary measure and students should welcome the return to indoor dining in the new Lenoir Mainstreet food court.

UNC's campus is a place of beauty. Ugly metal vans and trailers have no place among its clean brick facades and grassy fields. Permitting the vendors to stay will leave both a permanent eyesore and a persistent reminder of a year of food services, or the lack thereof, that everyone wants to forget.

The opening of the food court on Lenoir's lower level this week to complement the previously opened "all you can eat" dining facility on the upper level truly marks the end of the need for temporary dining services. Temporary facilities such as Hanes Pavilion and Union Station are closing or reverting back to their pre-renovation states and the food carts should be no exception.

Although the vendors' desires to keep their prime on-campus locations are certainly understandable, they knew their positions were temporary and deserve no sympathy from the University.

Some vendors are planning to petition their customers in the hope of saving their on-campus locations, but these petitions should not make any difference.

Still, forcing the vendors to leave campus

does not imply that their complaints should be ignored. The distance from the center of campus to Franklin Street gives Carolina Dining Services a virtual monopoly on the majority of student dining. Students could benefit from increased choice and competition.

The presence of other food choices near the center of campus would certainly give CDS a reason to continuously improve its service and keep its prices as low as possible. Competing dining options should, however, be located inside buildings rather than dumped inconspicuously in the middle of campus.

Food service is an issue ripe for student government action and the Walters' administration should examine it thoroughly. Simple steps could include talking to the vendors and analyzing the results of any petitions that occur.

Student government also has an excellent opportunity to make a mark on campus by working closely with CDS to ensure that the new Lenoir serves students as well as it possibly can. The transition from temporary dining facilities back to permanent ones will not be flawless, but a coordinated effort could help ensure that it goes smoothly.

Although it's only one step on UNC's gradual road from a construction zone back to an academic institution, removing the temporary food carts and the circus-like atmosphere they create from campus is a step in the right direction.

Fraternity Starts Over

The recent sanctions against Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity might seem a bit harsh on the surface, but a closer evaluation suggests that they are just the remedy the fraternity needs.

Fourteen members of the fraternity were found to have stolen thousands of dollars of Christmas ornaments last year, a prank that upset the entire community with both its audacity and its immaturity.

The individual members who committed the crimes are being punished by the judicial system and the University's Honor Court. In addition, the fraternity as a whole will be undergoing a serious makeover.

The fraternity will be forced to start over at UNC and the group's house will be declared smoke, drug and alcohol-free. That means even members who are of legal age and wish to drink or smoke in their own rooms will not be able to do so.

The group will also have to maintain a 3.0 GPA - much higher than the University average - and last year's misdeeds will be taken into account in any further disciplinary actions taken against the group for the next three years.

The former members not involved with the theft will be considered alumni in good standing by the national chapter of SAE. Even though they had no direct role in the theft, the entire fiasco would never have happened if one of the brothers had stepped in and stopped things.

It is a stiff bunch of penalties, to be sure, but the actions of the 14 members of the fraternity who committed the thefts cast a bad light on the University, its Greek system and members of the fraternity nationwide.

It is only proper that those three entities

join together to demonstrate just how serious they are about cracking down and the sanctions against the fraternity are a necessary step to remind the entire community of that determination.

No one can argue that the Greek system has some pretty public problems. In recent years, questions about alcohol consumption and misogyny have periodically arisen in relation to UNC's fraternities and other fraternities nationwide.

Of even greater concern than the thefts was the fact that fraternity members forced pledges to take part. That sort of hazing should be a thing of the past and any UNC fraternities who still practice it have been placed on alert.

In truth, it is probably a case of a few bad apples spoiling the bunch. Certainly nothing of the magnitude of the fraternity's problems happen regularly. But that does not mean the charges should be taken lightly whenever or wherever they occur.

The sanctions could have some hidden benefits as well. They give the fraternity - a group with more than 100 years of history at UNC - a chance to rebuild its reputation without the specter of last year's crimes hanging over it. The sanctions let the world know that this is a new fraternity with a new attitude.

Obviously, it is up to the fraternity to respond. Are the members of this new chapter ready and willing to learn from their predecessors' mistakes?

Only time will tell.

But the Greek system's decision to respond to the fraternity's crimes without ambiguity is a good sign that the message is getting out.

Most of Us Are Hopeless Bigots



RYAN NORWOOD
JERRY

An interesting letter appeared in this paper last Thursday. Cliff Nelson responded to an excellent column by Trey Harris, who criticized the homophobic newspaper ads run over the summer by certain "ex-gay" ministries.

In his letter, Nelson suggested that fiscal policy dictated Republican homophobic platforms; specifically, that politicians played on the "superstition and hatred" of "undereducated working people" to collect votes for their capital gains cuts.

No, Cliff, I'm afraid these banal considerations have little to do with homophobia. Prominent Republicans (and Democrats), religious leaders, the Reverend Gary Birdsong, and Reggie White spread homophobic propaganda because they are bigots. Natural, born bigots. And they're not the only ones.

Cliff's opinions of the "working" classes are similar to those associated with 18th century French royalty; namely, that these folk are too stupid and ignorant to think for themselves.

Certainly there is no shortage of wealthy and well educated homophobes at this University.

That's because people don't mind being called homophobes. Most people think a homophobe is a device used to play 8-track cassettes. Other words have become non-offensive for other reasons. "Queer" and "red-neck" have been re-taken by, well, queers and rednecks as badges rather than slurs. The various redefined 4-letter words now routinely appear in Disney films.

But be careful when you call someone a bigot. You might get your head cracked in.

That's because "bigot," along with "nigger" and "whore," is one of the last truly offensive nouns in the English language. It's not because of the dictionary definition: "someone who is obstinately and intolerantly devoted to his own beliefs, creed, or party." (Webster's). It's offensive because it's an ugly-sounding word associated with ugly practices.

Bigotry is a major problem on our campus. I've mentioned the hang-ups some people have with sexual orientation and class. We all know, however, that race is usually the major sticking point. Even the slower members of our freshmen class will have noticed the following: A) Black and white students usually sit

at different tables in the cafeteria B) Black and white students congregate in different areas between classes and C) Black and white students rarely live together, unless they are the victims of a random pairing.

Why is this?

I've been promised a serious campus dialogue on racial discord since my freshman year. I don't think I'll ever get it. Instead, I have to read a lot of crap written by people who are completely out of touch with reality. Kevin Hannah's letter in the Friday paper serves as an example of the latter.

Kevin complains about the "racist overtones" of the University's filming approval policy. Specifically, he claims that UNC closed its campus to "Kiss the Girls" because its lead actor, Morgan Freeman, is black.

No, Kevin, I'll bet UNC administrators, in a rare burst of taste, rejected "Kiss the Girls" because they realized that the novel it is based on was a third-rate knock-off of "The Silence of the Lambs."

If Kevin wishes to discover pressing racial problems on campus, he might try walking from South Campus to Franklin Street. If he took careful notes, he'd have enough dirt for an entire guest column.

Honestly, though, I don't believe even a serious discussion on racial bigotry would solve anything. Any attempt to "fight" bigotry and division only makes matters worse. It's of those tragic ironies that provide me with endless amusement. A case in point would be that of Alvaro Domique Martinez of Carrboro, which dominated the headlines throughout last week.

Mr. Martinez was arrested on murder charges, which were later dropped when it was determined that the victim actually fell off

a balcony. Many publications, including this newspaper, used this incident to criticize the death of Spanish-speaking officers on the Carrboro police force. Fair enough, I guess the Triangle's Hispanic population deserves to be harassed and intimidated in their own language.

But, in this particular case, an outside translator was in fact found. And what happened? The guy confessed to crime a crime he didn't commit! Another plume in the hat for the Carrboro police department!

The "racial preference" admissions policies practiced by state universities serves as a more widespread example. The intentions behind this were noble. Of course, it all went wrong. White students, who used to complain that blacks were shiftless and lazy, now complain about blacks stealing their "educational opportunities." Bull.

Dumb white kids with alumni parents are stealing most of your "educational opportunities." Black students, meanwhile, complain that under the surface, nothing has really changed. And they're right. That's why I'm in favor of scrapping the whole thing. I can't wait until Proposition 209 fever reaches UNC. We can rid ourselves of a lot of whining and hypocrisy.

No, I'm afraid bigots never change. They just become more socially acceptable. The important question is: How many of them are there?

I would estimate - and you'll have to do your own scientific research to participate in this debate - that more than half but slightly less than two-thirds of us are incurable bigots. I think 60 percent is a safe, conservative estimate.

This is why I don't feel bad whenever people I don't know are killed in famines or plane crashes or "triple homicides." I figure that, on average, most of these people are bigots who deserve to die anyway.

Sure, a lot of good people die too, but I think people who dwell on that are just being pessimistic.

Ryan Norwood is a senior history major from Monroeville, Penn. You can send him your bigoted opinions at norwood@email.unc.edu.

THREE THINGS TO BE INDIGNANT ABOUT AT UNC

A PRIMER FOR THE FRESHMAN RADICAL



The virulently conservative Silent Sam, in addition to firing his rifle whenever a virgin walks by (his "salute to abstinence"), has been known to leave his pedestal and administer vicious beatings to the sexually promiscuous.

Several campus buildings are named for one-time members of the Ku Klux Klan*
*True!

Hinton James was knowingly built on a sacred Indian burial site

DTH Wrong to Criticize CAA's Referendum Efforts

TO THE EDITOR:
We are very disappointed with the way in which The Daily Tar Heel chose to characterize the efforts of the Carolina Athletic Association. To make a proper analogy: the DTH is as informed about the Carolina Athletic Association's efforts as Hillary Clinton is about her husband's love life.

We ran our campaign on the premise that a referendum enumerating the different basketball ticket distribution policies should take place.

Our stance has not changed, nor has our resolve to try and make this a reality. The DTH should have realized that we wanted this to occur in the spring elections in 1999 for several reasons.

First, the reality of student voting at Carolina tells us that not enough students would vote in the fall - discrediting the vote's importance.

Secondly, if the students endorsed a policy in the fall, this would not give the CAA enough time to carry out the policy effectively or safely.

For example, if the students endorsed a policy advocating our bracelet system, the CAA would have less than one month to get the approval of the Administration, Athletic department and University Services.

There would also be less than one month to do the necessary legal work needed in purchasing 20,000 bracelets and finding sponsors.

In reality, that process took months. Thus a fall referendum was in no way feasible nor was it promised by us.

We advocate a referendum in the spring presenting the students with several distribution



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.

choices. With the outcome of the vote, if statistically significant, future CAA presidents could use it as a quantitative benchmark to see where students really stand.

In this sense, it would serve as a viable public opinion poll rather than hamstringing future leaders.

In sum, we maintain the usefulness of this vote, but because of logistics, we have always advocated that it take place in the spring 1999.

We also advocate that the DTH write about timely issues that are pertinent to the well-being of the University community.

Macintosh Removal Unfair To the Platform's Users

TO THE EDITOR:
I am one of the nameless, the faceless. I am a Macintosh computer user.

I have remained on the side of the underdog for most of my life, so I guess that this is simply another way of living out this preoccupation with losers and classic underachievers.

Usually I win my battles, though. After all, America is a free country - we're free to buy whatever kind of clothing we want, buy books wherever we want, and we can even use whichever computer we choose.

Well, until this year. I own a Mac, but don't have a printer.

I didn't think that I'd need one. The university was chock full of them when I arrived on this campus as a bright-eyed, bushy tailed moron. Oops, I mean freshman.

So why am I angry?

BECAUSE THEY'RE ALL GONE!

There are none in Ehringhaus, none in Greenlaw, and the Mac room in the Undergrad has been reduced to 5 new ones. Great. I've been informed that there are a total of 47 on campus.

I waited 45 minutes one day to print a one-page assignment. When I expressed my frustration with one of my friends, she offered little solace. "Well, maybe everyone doesn't like Macs."

Well damn it, did anyone ever stop to think that everyone doesn't like PCs?

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