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The Daily Tar Heel

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BOARD EDITORIALS

Smoke This

Last Thursday, members of the Board of Governors expressed concern that a drop in drug policy violations at UNC-Chapel Hill might indicate a pressing need to tighten up the school's drug enforcement procedures.

The BOG's concern, however, is blatantly offensive, completely illogical and frighteningly irrational.

Admittedly, UNC's 12 reported violations rank curiously low when compared to the 119 violations at Appalachian State, 112 at UNC-Charlotte, 77 at East Carolina University and 54 at N.C. State University.

It is, however, quite reckless – not to mention tremendously insulting – for the BOG to assume that the discrepancy in the number of violations is the result of lax enforcement procedures at UNC, rather than differences in the overall character of the institution and its students, relative to other schools.

It is not so unreasonable to suggest that campuses with different environments, traditions, reputations and enrollment requirements would exhibit different degrees of drug-use.

But the BOG has other ideas.

UNC is popularly regarded as the gem of North Carolina's university system. Consequently, the University attracts a different kind of student than does, say, an Appalachian State University.

UNC is nestled in the dreamy, picturesque town of Chapel Hill.

A school such as UNC-Charlotte, on the other hand, is located in a major city. Life in a city can't be compared to life in a relatively sheltered town like Chapel Hill.

Basic demographics must also be taken into consideration. The schools have different numbers of men and women, blacks and whites, in-state and out-of-state students, high school valedictorians and high school quarterbacks.

Put plainly, it is an irrefutable truth that each university attracts different types of students. It is equally undeniable that each university provides a different atmosphere for those enrolled.

These differences can be slight. Often they are severe.

Consequently, statistics indicating a much lower level of drug-use among students at UNC should not lead the BOG to conclude that enforcement procedures need to be revamped.

The board should at least entertain the possibility that perhaps drug-use is, in fact, lower at UNC than at other educational institutions.

To ignore this completely plausible hypothesis would be foolish, and, at the same time, insulting to the student body.

Not Enough Time

If there were ever a cultural parasite that should be done away with, the all-too-common double standard would definitely be it. Even at the enlightened UNC-Chapel Hill, one of the most vital organizations here is subject to this injustice.

The Employee Forum, a volunteer organization formed in 1993 to represent the concerns and issues of University staff, has done its absolute best to improve relations among the members of the faculty, staff and students.

Since its creation, the forum has also provided a strong voice for a section of the University community whose concerns often don't get as much attention as those of the faculty and students.

Unfortunately, until recently, this group was faced with the prospect of having no leader next year. But two very generous individuals have stepped up as candidates. Forum members plan to choose their next leader at a retreat this weekend.

So why is it that the Employee Forum has had such a difficult time finding someone to serve as chairman? Enter the use of the infamous double standard.

Administrators have created no policy that

would grant the chairman of the Employee Forum release time from his daily duties. The time required by the job is prohibitive: Past chairmen report a workweek in excess of 70 hours.

Ironically enough, a policy granting release time does exist for the chairman of the Faculty Council, the faculty's counterpart organization. This is not to say that this person is granted time off, but the amount of work for which he is responsible is reduced.

If the Faculty Council chairman's duties call for such measures, then the Employee Forum's does as well.

Are we to believe that the staff is managing a smaller workload than the faculty? Not likely, considering that, although more than 2,000 staff positions were filled as of late, there still remain close to 600 vacant staff positions whose duties must be handled by staff who already have one job to do.

It takes time and dedication for any leader to be effective. It's time for the administration to start treating the staff with the same consideration it gives to the faculty and provide the new forum chairman with that time. Otherwise, he might not be able to ensure that staff concerns continue to be heard.

Student Government Wannabe? Then Listen Up!

The Daily Tar Heel editorial board endorses candidates in all student races. The DTH will not consider endorsing any candidate who fails to fulfill all the requirements in the endorsement process, which might include an interview, a questionnaire, a platform or any combination of the three. Candidates should be aware that they need to be able to provide that information to the DTH at any time from Jan. 25 until Feb. 8. For more information, call Editorial Page Editor Scott Hicks at 962-0245.

BAROMETER

Drawing the Line
Editorial pages across the country just got a little less funny. Former DTH cartoonist Jeff MacNelly is battling lymphoma and is, as a result, producing political cartoons only on a limited basis.

Over-Achiever
Who says students are apathetic? Former CAA and BSM officer Brian Elliott was so enthusiastic, he stayed involved after he was no longer a student.

Bad Netiquette
A posting to the Senior Class listserv sparked a deluge of nasty replies this weekend. From the content of the messages, one would never guess that these people were about to graduate from college.

Snow Day
Here's one for the record books: two snowfalls in one week. Too bad administrators failed to see that as a reason to cancel class.

TAR HEEL QUOTABLES

"I felt as if I was doing something wrong because I kept getting messages saying that I was clogging up the e-mail."

SENIOR MARK CARSON

Concerning his decision to reply to the Senior Class listserv to ask to be removed. Useless messages do indeed tend to clog up people's inboxes.

"We need to avoid getting caught up in fickle national rating games."

DEAN RISA PALM

Talking to the Faculty Council about the University's future as a research institution. Tell that to the Board of Trustees.

"Once in a while I come out with people from my Department of Computer Science."

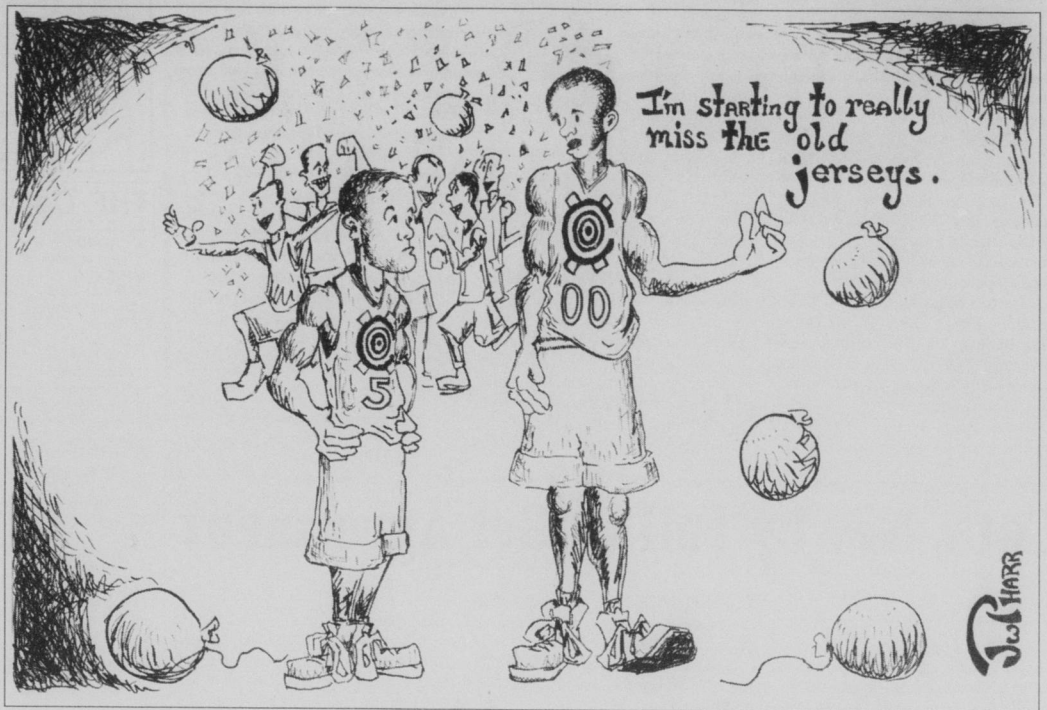
GRADUATE STUDENT KENNY HOFF

Talking about how he likes to frequent Ryan's World, a skateboard park that opened in November. You mean computer science majors sometimes come out from behind their monitors?

"They just don't think about it."

ACCESS MEMBER MICHAEL OSTERWEIL

Commenting on how students ignore student government. Why should they pay any attention? It's not as if anything Student Congress does really affects them, anyway.



Dropping Through Cloud No. 9

That was the greatest orgasm in the world," Anna said to me Sunday. We basked in the Arizona sun and looked out at the red peaks in the distance.

Even though we were on our feet, it still felt like we were flying.

I must confess I wasn't responsible for giving Anna the ride of her life.

That would be Geoff, the 6-foot-8-inch Brit with a T-shirt featuring a picture of Princess Diana and the words, "Crashing at 160 km/h would have been a lot more fun if I had been skydiving."

I was matched up with a little dude named Andy who was almost a foot shorter than me.

OK, I'm not going to tell you that skydiving changed my life and everyone should do it. I won't even tell you how scary it was, because it wasn't. I realize the closest most of you will ever come to flying is jumping off the low dive. So if you will never jump, tag along this once.

First, the instructor will give you a dorky green-and-yellow nylon cap that will serve no purpose should you crash other than provide for some ridiculous accident photos that will eventually be posted on the Internet. Then, he'll tighten straps around your groin and shoulders like you're in an old French B-film.

Out to the parking lot, where, of all the modern planes on the lot, he will lead you to the rickety Cessna that is literally no bigger than a coffin. And four plus the pilot have to fit in it.

You'll have to sit with your face in front of the dilapidated control panel of the single-prop. Should the plane crash, you'll enjoy a mouthful of altimeter.

Skydiving instructor humor is a true art. (See also ski-lift operator humor and roller-coaster operator humor.) Don't let him fool you when he says it's his first jump. (Who writes his material?)

All the necessary instructions to prevent



BRIAN FREDERICK
ON TAP

your (and his) end will take about 10 minutes, nine of which will be wasted on humor.

Be ready for his comment about it being the young pilot's first flight. You might quickly dismiss it.

Don't. On your way up, when you look over and see him constantly reading out of an instruction manual, you should be alarmed. And be glad you won't be with him for the landing.

When you reach 11,500 feet, they open the door and you put your foot just above the wheel. What happens next is like being sucked through a vacuum cleaner.

You'll do some flips, see the plane, and lose your bearing until the instructor recovers. (This is not supposed to happen. But it sure makes the jump that much more fun.)

You still feel like you are in a vacuum as you free-fall. The wind is deafening and your vision is limited to a tunnel in front of you.

When the parachute opens, there is a great feeling of relief that is immediately cut short by an atomic wedgie. For those without little brothers, the unfortunate victim of an atomic wedgie finds himself suspended a foot above the ground by his now-ripped underwear, which hangs on a doorknob.

When the parachute opens, there is an overwhelming silence that is immediately cut short by the instructor yelling, "Now what did you do wrong?"

You could answer that you must not have put your head back, since he yanked at it like it was a bottle top.

Or you could mention that you didn't put your legs back, since he was trying to straddle them like you were on a Miami dance floor.

You could tell him that you have no idea since he was too busy making jokes during the instructions.

Best to just enjoy the view, though.

Landing might be a problem if you are a foot taller than your instructor, since you are supposed to land on his feet. He will yell to put your feet up higher, but tell him you have never taken yoga.

Also, remind him that should you hurt yourself, though, he has nothing to worry about. You've signed away any possible right to sue for anything at least 15 times. Should you trip on an unpacked parachute or an instructor's Coors Light, you can't sue. Nor can your parents or your barber.

Inevitably, you will wind up spilling, while your friend and her tall instructor will land perfectly.

(Anna informed me that she was matched up with the tall Geoff because he had won a bet that entitled him to take up all the girls that day. I was so relieved to know that Geoff and Andy's wager almost left me with two broken legs.)

Back on the ground, everything is still, like you are walking through a photo.

Anna and I dropped off our gear, gave a quick thanks to Geoff and Andy for not killing us and headed for the car. We smoked a cigarette and sped down the Arizona backroads blaring the Rolling Stones' "Get Off My Cloud."

Brian Frederick is a graduate student in journalism and mass communication from Lawrence, Kansas. He can be reached at brifred@yahoo.com.

READERS' FORUM

Editorial Full of False Information, Shows Lack of Integrity

TO THE EDITOR:

I am appalled at the editorial "Silent Hatchet Job 2" (Jan. 19) and The Daily Tar Heel's lack of journalistic integrity. This editorial is full of misinformation and fraudulent statements, and I am shocked that it was permitted to be published.

First and foremost, Tazewell Thompson is not and never has been a member of the Department of Dramatic Art faculty. He has never taught a class, nor has he had much interaction with the students. Thompson was employed by PlayMakers Repertory Company, which, although affiliated with the drama department, does not make him a faculty member.

Thompson even stated in his letter that he was dismissed as director – not as faculty. Such a grievous error could have been easily prevented had the DTH checked the faculty list in the Undergraduate Bulletin or on the drama department's Web page.

Thompson's dismissal is purely a business decision on the part of PlayMakers. It is not a departmental decision and does not influence the academic environment (or dare I say,

intellectual climate?) on this campus.

It appears the DTH published this editorial in order to arouse student suspicions about the drama department, and to do so incorporated additional incorrect information. For example, Milly Barranger was not "given her walking papers in 1999," as the DTH would suggest, but voluntarily resigned from her position as chairwoman. Barranger is still on the faculty and plans to return to a teaching position next year.

Susanna Rinehart was not fired – her contract expired and was not renewed. Should we make it policy to investigate every incident like this? This is a departmental choice, and neither Rinehart nor the University should have assumed that her contract would be renewed. I am sure that the drama department had valid reasons for her dismissal.

Finally, I am extremely upset by the mention of David Hammond and the 1998 sexual harassment suit. As the DTH said, the suit was terminated and Professor Hammond was cleared. The reason a stigma remains is because our student newspaper continues to dredge it up from the past. Professor Hammond was never found guilty, and it is an embarrassment and an invasion of privacy to routinely bring this up in the paper.

Is it that there is not enough

"newsworthy" material for the DTH to cover? Is that why the DTH uses fraudulent information to make a story?

I'm confused – there doesn't seem to be a problem here. Quit wasting precious column space and our time with misinformation – it doesn't belong in the paper.

Lee Chaix Katz

Senior
Dramatic Art and Psychology

The length rule was waived.

Do You Have Something to Say? We Want to Hear It.

Would you like to share your opinion with 35,000 people? Write a guest column for The Daily Tar Heel. Submissions should be about 800 words in length. Bring typed copies to the DTH office in Suite 104 of the Student Union or e-mail them to editdesk@unc.edu. Please do not send Microsoft Word attachments. Include your name, year, major, hometown and e-mail address.

If you have questions, call Editorial Page Editor Scott Hicks or Assistant Editorial Page Editor Kelli Boutin at 962-0245.



The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments and criticism. Letters to the editor should be no longer than 300 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. Publication is not guaranteed. 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: editdesk@unc.edu.