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The Daily Tar Heel

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BOARD EDITORIALS

The Next Big Thing?

In a list of the country's biggest, most exciting cities, Carrboro would rank somewhere just above Lizard Lick.

But the little town, where big business means the Weaver Street Market and excitement equals a concert at the Cat's Cradle, might be looking to join the New Yorks of the world as the country's newest metropolis.

Earlier this month, a team of architects announced a plan to transform the town into a bustling urban center, complete with tall buildings, downtown parking decks and electric tram service.

The plan is awaiting approval from town officials, but before you write it off as a pipe dream, consider this.

By concentrating construction in the community's already-thriving downtown area, the plan will help to cut down on ugly suburban sprawl.

Although Carrboro might be small now, remember that towns like Cary, where strip malls and huge developments run rampant, also were once small.

If nothing else, Cary is a testament to the need to plan for growth.

And in a region like the Triangle, tremendous growth is inevitable.

As a result, leaders in other towns should look to, not laugh at, the plan's example.

Of course, given the cost of carrying out such an extensive construction project, the architects' plan as it exists will probably never come to fruition. But whatever change does occur, town leaders must make sure that they can build up without chasing businesses — and residents — out.

Changing Carrboro into a thriving city will surely drain town coffers. The plan's costs have yet to be estimated, but skyscrapers and electric trams do not come cheap.

Planners must be sure that not a cent is wasted in making this dream a reality. Efficient growth must not be marred by wasteful spending.

And Carrboro leaders must also be careful to incorporate the needs of local business owners into the final plan. The plan assumes that some businesses will simply move or replace their buildings. Businesses forced to make such costly changes must receive some town aid.

In addition, costs of housing in downtown Carrboro will surely rise. Town leaders need to ensure that rent stays reasonable.

The plan for growth in Carrboro has the potential to make a real difference in solving local problems. But in shaping the plan, town leaders must be sure that they do not create new ones for the town.

Abused Privilege

If you look inside the latest issue of Talk magazine, you might notice a curious 90-page insert sponsored by Benetton that features articles and photographs of death row inmates.

And if you ask state prison officials about seven N.C. inmates featured in the spread, they'll describe how they were misled into allowing Benetton to pursue its campaign, which will also include a barrage of billboards featuring inmates.

The Italian clothing manufacturer, known for its socially conscious ad campaigns, stepped over the line of journalistic integrity in the way it pursued the anti-death penalty supplement called "We, on Death Row." Benetton gained access to the prisoners by committing a major journalism taboo: lying about the project's nature.

In Missouri and Kentucky, the company claimed that its hired freelancers, journalist Ken Shulman and photojournalist Oliviero Toscani, were interested in talking to inmates for a documentary. In North Carolina, officials were told the pair was working on a magazine story. Theodis Beck, secretary of the N.C. Department of Corrections told The News & Observer that the state "never expected to be involved in an advertising campaign."

But beyond lying about their project's outcome, Shulman and Toscani hid their Benetton ties. As journalists, even as journal-

ists hired to promote an agenda, the two should have made it clear to prison officials that they were working closely with Benetton on the advertising project.

Ask any journalism student who has taken a reporting class what you should do first when you call someone for a story, and he'll tell you: Identify yourself as a reporter. Or listen to reporters in The Daily Tar Heel newsroom make calls. "Hi. My name's Bambi, and I'm a reporter with the DTH" is a standard greeting. This should not be a new concept to Shulman, whom Benetton touts as a Newsweek contributor.

But Benetton walked the ethical tightrope a step further. The company's lawyers went so far as to mask its requests for prison entry behind the letterhead of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers and the Gonzaga University School of Law, making it look like an NACDL project.

Because of Benetton, the next time a journalist comes to request death row interviews, officials will likely remember the ad campaign and further scrutinize press access requests.

And that journalist, who walked through the proper channels in an attempt to bring truth to the readers, might be denied the chance to tell the story.

Telling the truth is what journalists do. But if they don't, their credibility, and with it their profession, crumbles.

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.

READERS' FORUM

UNC Students Decry Men's Basketball Team's Lack of Intensity, Offer Solutions for Bringing Back Struggling Program's Former Prestige

TO THE EDITOR:

Is it the huge contract with Nike Corp. or could it be all the media attention? Any way you look at it, our athletes here at UNC have it made, particularly the football and basketball teams.

It is this reason to which I attribute the lack of hustle and competitiveness seen from these teams this year. Simply, we have spoiled these teams into caring less about winning.

It wasn't until Torbush's job was on the line that the football team decided to play hard to preserve the job of their "player-friendly" coach. And at 11-8, anything close to 0.500 ball is not acceptable for the tradition we have established in basketball. For this lack of inspired play I have come up with a few solutions that just might provide the necessary motivation. It's more of a punishment that will be placed in effect until we see more wins.

1. Instead of wearing Nike, our athletes will be required to wear Keds. Also, the uniforms will be traded to the local kids' league in exchange for their polyester fashion.

2. No more expensive sport-utility vehi-

cles or sports cars "on loan" from boosters. Players will find transportation in those "Back to the Future" wooden crate skateboards, and the best athletes might be allowed a Ford Pinto hatchback.

3. Absolutely no loitering allowed outside the Undergraduate Library. This way, people trying to actually get into the library might have a chance.

4. And finally: Make them go to class! Go Heels!

Daniel Brown
Junior
Economics

TO THE EDITOR:

I have been, and will continue to be, supportive of the program that (men's basketball coach Bill Guthridge is) running. I love this University, and my parents (who are UNC alumni) are avid donors of the Educational Foundation. Like many students, Ram's Club members, alumni and fans, I was very disturbed by Brendon Haywood's comments to The News & Observer after Saturday's loss.

Brendon was quoted as saying, "I don't care about the fans. If they want to be critical, that's fine. If they don't want to come they don't have to. We're playing for pride." ("Heels at a Loss," The News & Observer, Sunday, Jan. 23, 2000)

I'd like for Mr. Haywood to repeat his statement in front of the 10,000 people who line up at 6 a.m. on a cold Saturday. What about the so-called "wine-and-cheesers" who give their hard-earned money to watch their alma mater play. What about the Carolina Fever members who contribute their time in support of all University athletics?

I hope and pray that you, Coach, deem it appropriate to discipline Mr. Haywood. His comments are incorrigible and will come to mind whenever he steps on the court. My mother always told me, "Never bite the hand that feeds you." Haywood has done nothing but that, destroying his credibility with a lot of students, alumni and fans. Even the great Hammond Williams was disciplined, by you no less, for an emotional outburst.

I think that Haywood should apologize.

You can't let anything like this slip if you hope to preserve the purity of college athletics. If he becomes fortunate enough to live "his" dream and play in the NBA, he wouldn't dare insult the franchise fans. Without the fans, franchises fall quickly. Why should die-hard UNC alumni, students and fans be treated any differently?

Darius Little
Sophomore
English and Psychology

TO THE EDITOR:

As many sports writers and analysts have noted, much of the men's basketball team's lack of success can be attributed to an absence of one key element: intensity.

In fact, many share the opinion of UCLA guard Rico Hines that "Carolina, in Chapel Hill, is no longer the toughest game on the schedule."

How do we solve this problem and restore the tradition of Carolina basketball? We, along with the entire student body, suggest a simple and feasible solution, a solution that would make the Dean Dome

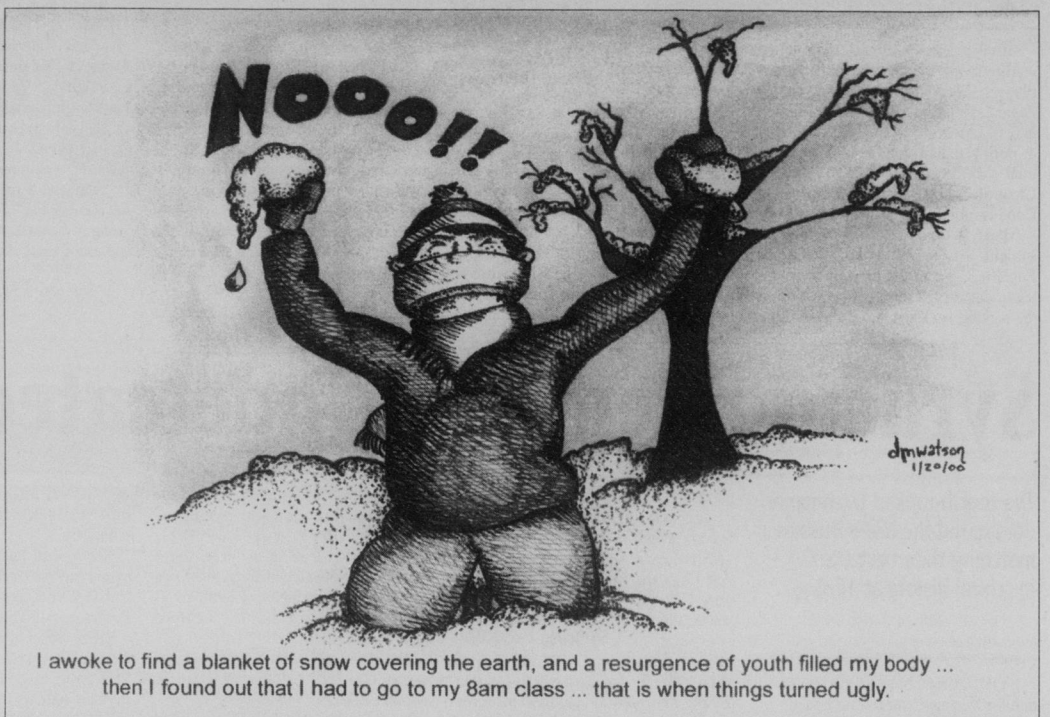
as dreaded a place to play as Cameron Indoor Stadium: Let's tightly pack the lower level of the Smith Center with dedicated and enthusiastic UNC students, while we have the Ram's Club and other high donors sip their wine and eat their cheese from the rafters.

They have had their day, but this should be our time and place to support our fellow classmates on the court. Their money went a long way to finance a state-of-the-art facility, but it's sad to say their hearts will not keep them in the building to support their Heels for the closing minutes of battle.

Maybe the students can light a much needed fire under the so-far-lethargic team and help solve the intensity problem that lethargic fans cannot. Who knows, maybe we can become the "Carolina Crazy's."

David Walton
Senior
Psychology

Alex Drake
Senior
Psychology and Business



I awoke to find a blanket of snow covering the earth, and a resurgence of youth filled my body ... then I found out that I had to go to my 8am class ... that is when things turned ugly.

Creating the Colorblind Society

Last week, millions of Americans honored the memory of perhaps the greatest social reformer in U.S. history, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

As I was passing South Building one day, I saw a diverse group of people holding hands in a circle in honor of Dr. King. Although I was going to be late to class and it was very cold outside, I stopped to take in the sight, and I felt much warmer.

You don't usually see such scenes on an everyday basis. Events such as the O.J. Simpson trial and the Los Angeles riots have underscored America's racial polarization. Many cultural scientists view establishing racial harmony as one of the great challenges in the new century.

That challenge is all the more difficult to overcome when government policy is part of the problem.

Regardless of whether affirmative action is called "diversity" or "multiculturalism," it clearly has been quite effective in aggravating our nation's racial tensions. Simply put: Government cannot distribute; it can simply redistribute. Thus, government allocation of jobs, positions or contracts is inherently a zero-sum game, where one individual benefits only at the expense of another. Many proponents of affirmative action policies concede that some majority members get shafted and final product quality suffers but maintain that such discriminatory policies are valuable because they "even the playing field" and correct historical injustice.

Wrong. The way to even the playing field is to acknowledge past policies as discriminatory, and eliminate those that deny opportunity to anyone based on genetic characteristics.

You don't need to take liberty from anyone in order to give liberty to another. We need to ask ourselves: Should ability or diversity be the most important criterion in filling positions?

Suppose the federal government mandated that public universities must have athletic programs that are fully racially integrated. Most basketball programs, which are generally dominated by blacks, would instead have to give a certain number of roster spots to whites, Hispanics and Asians.



JONATHAN TRAGER
THE LIBERTARIAN LETTERS

The result would probably be a team that is worse than what we have now (assuming that is possible) and extremely irritated fans.

Similar to many government programs, affirmative action policy often doesn't work as intended. One year last decade, 317 black applicants to the University of California-Berkeley were admitted under affirmative action criteria rather than academic qualifications. The average SAT score of the admitted students was 952, well below Berkeley's average of 1200.

If you think admitting these students to ensure a diverse student body was good policy, think again.

Almost 70 percent of those students failed to graduate. At a less demanding institution, most of these individuals probably would have been successful.

As it was, government policy practically ensured their failure.

Because this scenario was all too common in the UC system, Proposition 209, which stated the state shall not grant preferential treatment to anyone on the basis of race, sex, shoe size, etc. in public operations, was introduced for public consideration. Spearheaded by black businessman Ward Connerly, Proposition 209 was eventually approved by California voters. Sadly, many black leaders viewed Connerly's efforts as a racial betrayal, a response that is shockingly common.

Last semester, I attended a speech on campus titled "The End of Affirmative Action." Indian-born Dinesh D'Souza, an ex-employee of the Reagan administration, gave the lecture. The atmosphere was hostile, to say the least.

It is a sad commentary on American men-

tality when majority members who argue against discriminatory public policies are often treated as if they are advocating a return to slavery, and minority members who would rather succeed on the basis of their ability instead of the color of their skin are considered traitors.

The truth is that government laws cannot change the hearts of men. The only thing that can fully bridge the cultural gap between Americans is time, understanding and the voluntary, private efforts of individuals and organizations.

Walter Williams, black Department of Economics chairman at George Mason University, has said affirmative action policies attempt to mask the work that really needs to be done.

Williams says, "We can better serve the interests of large numbers of blacks by focusing our energies on fraudulent education, disintegrating families and inner cities with climates that are hostile to economic development and personal safety."

In addition, government can lead by example by honoring the 14th Amendment, which applies equally to all individuals, whether they are part of majority or minority groups. It can send the message that public policy based in discrimination is incompatible with a free society.

At the Lincoln Memorial in 1963, Dr. King said, "I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

So go ahead and support race-based criteria in government admissions, if you are so inclined. But don't then tell me that you want to help build the colorblind society that Dr. King envisioned.

As long as you consider a discriminatory system such as affirmative action to be good public policy, you are helping ensure that such a society will never exist.

Jonathan Trager is a senior journalism and mass communication major from Long Island, N.Y., whose mom doesn't think inviting death threats is funny. Write him at trager@email.unc.edu.



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.