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BOARD EDITORIALS

Smiley for SBP ...

Student government has become tired and outdated.
Erica Smiley will shake things up.

If elected, Erica Smiley will breathe new life into the office of student body president and student government in general.

Her basic ideology is different from that of the other candidates, who emphasized small tasks in their platforms. Smiley would create campus-level watchdog groups to advocate for student interests on both the federal and state levels. Those groups have the potential to last long after her administration.



Erica Smiley

Indeed, she has the experience and skills to rally and mobilize effective student protests. Her focus on grassroots politics would allow her to mobilize students who wouldn't normally have an interest in student government. She plans to go further than past administrations by putting a student government application in every student's hands.

What's more, her focus on minority issues is something the University needs. She pledges to support women's issues and an Asian Resource Center, and she vows to continue to support the establishment of the Sonja H. Stone Black Cultural Center.

Smiley is willing to tackle large issues such as improving the availability of financial aid for students. But she must be wary of taking on issues such as the Iraqi sanctions - which led to her being brought up on ethics charges before Student Congress last year - and a

moratorium on the death penalty, both of which Student Congress passed resolutions in the past two sessions.

Everyday, she should be careful not to abandon the detail work that keeps student government running.

The only weakness on her platform is her idea to create a student government internship through which members of student government could earn academic credit for their participation. They already have something to put on their résumés and do not deserve academic credit as well.

What makes her a refreshing candidate is also one of her biggest obstacles. She doesn't have the executive branch experience that Brad Matthews has, but she will learn fast. It might help Smiley to have someone close to her who is more experienced than she is with the executive branch of student government.

To that end, she needs to remember her promise to select a "diverse Cabinet," where diverse means taking students from all walks of campus life, not just fellow activists.

Finally, Smiley must be careful to cultivate productive relationships with administrators - after all, she'll most likely be the first to work with a new chancellor. Still, she shouldn't just succumb to the whims of administrators - especially the new chancellor who will come in pushing his own agenda.

Smiley has solid, fresh and far-reaching ideas and the skills with which to carry them out. Unlike her challengers, Smiley promises to give Suite C a much-needed jolt of change.

... Not These Guys

This year's crop of student body president candidates was strong.
The DTH explains why Smiley's opponents didn't make the cut.

Each student body president candidate has good ideas and a solid platform. But the distinction they lacked was Erica Smiley's dedication and organizational know-how.

Brad Matthews has the Suite C experience and administrative networking to be an effective student body president. But he lacks Smiley's innovative ideas and potential to change fundamentally the way student government works.

Matthews' being so entrenched in student government politics ensures the status quo. Smiley can learn the necessary skills quickly.

What's more, a smart move would be to borrow Matthews' ideas to keep current Student Body President Nic Heinke on the

Chancellor Search Committee and expanding UNC's leadership training programs.

Preston Smith shares Smiley's ability to think outside the box - but even his outgoing personality can't make up for his lack of knowledge about pressing issues.

Matt Martin and Michael Harris have the heart, but they just don't have the guts to stand up for all students' interests. Martin's beliefs about reconsidering how student fees are distributed is troubling, and Harris seems iffy in his opposition to a tuition increase.

Josh Ray failed to notify The Daily Tar Heel in time that he was sick and could not make it to his scheduled interview. As a result, he was ineligible for endorsement.

Write In a Leader

Kudos to Thad Woody for stepping up to run for GPSF president.
But graduate students deserve a better leader.

The next Graduate and Professional Student Federation president has some mighty big shoes to fill. And those shoes seem to have scared off most graduate students.

Matt Bouchard, the only official candidate for GPSF president, announced last week that he was dropping out of the race. Thad Woody then stepped up to campaign for the post as a write-in candidate. But despite his willingness to take the reigns of the GPSF, graduate students deserve a stronger leader. The responsibility lies on their shoulders.

While Woody has shown enormous responsibility and commitment in coming forward and trying to prevent the GPSF from being unrepresented in 2000, he lacks the enthusiasm and drive for the overwhelming task at hand.

Woody's platform shows that he is in touch with several pressing issues with graduate students such as housing and teaching assistant pay. But he does not give concrete plans for solving these problems.

The most important task for a GPSF president is lobbying. Woody cites his tenure as senior class president in 1996 and two terms in Student Congress as opportunities to "network with the University community and state legislators." However, he doesn't name any specific legislators.

His lack of lobbying know-how would be a detriment to the graduate student body.

But the blame for this year's drought of viable GPSF presidential candidates lies squarely at the feet of the graduate students themselves. It's a shame to let the organization go without a voice after the groundbreaking work that current GPSF President Lee Conner has done in the N.C. General Assembly and at South Building here.

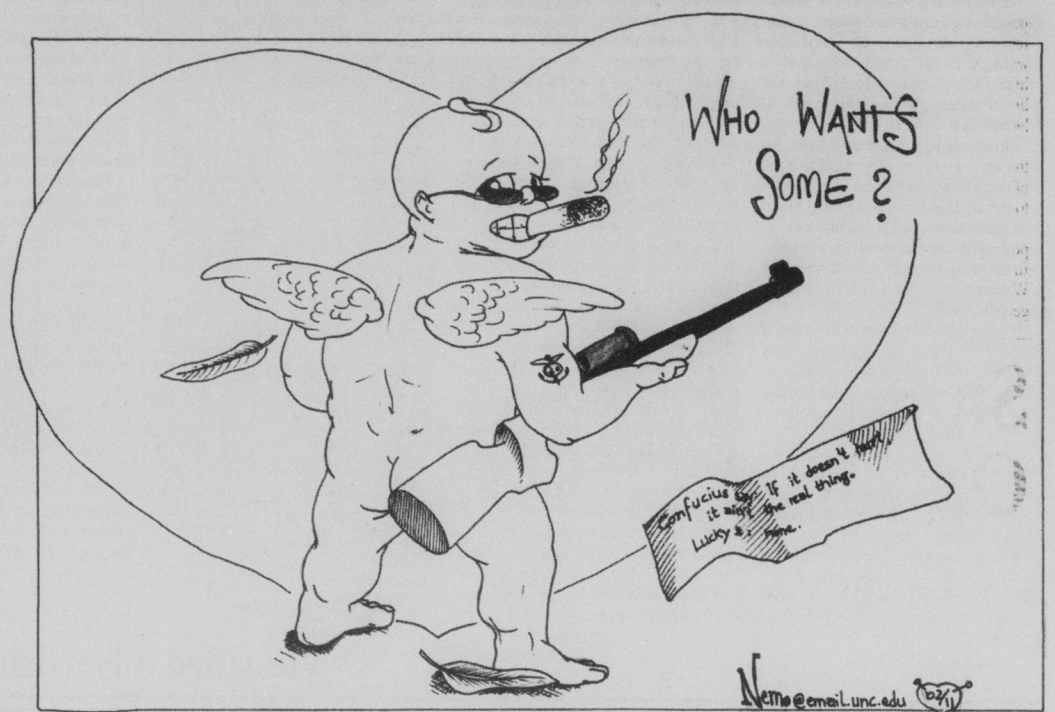
If no one steps up to the plate, the whole team loses. And the losses - tuition remissions, benefits and organizational vitality and legitimacy - are too great to ignore.

The future of the GPSF lies in graduate students' hands. If the problems that Woody addresses in his platform - such as lack of child care, lack of housing and unsuitable pay - ring a bell, it would be in the graduate student body's best interests to turn the spotlight to a capable candidate who can achieve these objectives.

Graduate students often feel disconnected from the life and politics of UNC. In their eyes, the concerns that most affect them are glossed over for more important "campus" issues.

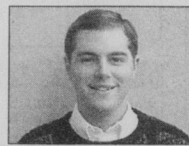
But letting a major voice like GPSF fall to the wayside will not close this rift. The graduate student body needs to write-in a suitable candidate for GPSF president Tuesday.

But for that to happen, someone with leadership skills and political experience needs to step forward and agree to fight for graduate students. Apathy never gets results.



Lonesome Tonight? Call Neal ...

Time is quickly running out for my roommate, Neal de Jong, and myself to find dates for this evening's St. Valentine's Day festivities. New Orleans natives, both of us enjoy reveling for any reason that comes along. But tonight's party requires two to tango, and we're both single.



BRANDON BRISCOE
VOICE OF REASON

This status never ceases to confound us, especially given the number of women on this campus who constantly complain that there are not enough guys to go around with the University's disproportionately large female population. Mind you, that's large in numbers, not size.

You see, according to our objective estimations, we both have much to offer members of the fairer sex. Neal, handsome in anyone's book, boasts a grade point average higher than yours, is funny beyond belief and is very friendly.

Myself, well I'm ... errr ... did I mention Neal's GPA?

So we're both wondering why Neal doesn't have a girlfriend, and we hold weekly strategic planning sessions to see if that can't be changed. This weekend's meeting featured the delightful motion picture "Last of the Mohicans," starring Daniel Day Lewis, who managed to attract the movie's leading lady in a matter of minutes.

"Why can't we get girls like that, Brandon?" Neal asked.

I suggested it was Lewis' long hair, his heroic romps through the woods with musket in hand and the incessant theme music that followed him wherever he went.

So today, when you see the guy in the long wig running across the Pit as if it were crawling with menacing Hurons - that'll be Neal. I'll be the guy next to him whistling the theme music.

Of course this is just the latest of our brilliant ideas, which are prime examples of precisely why we are single after all.

In our first effort, we spent the first weeks of the year reading each other all of the Trivial Pursuit questions in the Millennium

edition. When a small crowd found themselves hanging out in our room one evening, we suggested a game of intellect, knowledge and cheating.

"For a piece of the pie," I said. "How many years did Priscilla say she lived with Elvis before their relationship was consummated?"

"Hmm, that's a tough one," Neal sighed. "But if I were Elvis, it would take me four years to sleep with her."

"Bingo." That being Neal's 18th consecutive correct answer, the other guys in the room gasped in awe. The girls, however, cried foul.

Much of our work is simple damage control and preventive measures. This weekend I caught Neal before he left the room wearing his stylish Justin cowboy boots - and shorts.

And earlier this semester, Neal suggested that I not write the sequel to Josh Fennell's anti-fraternity column, which was to be titled, "Sorority Houses and Brothels: Different?" (Neal also suggests that I mention the previous was entirely a joke. I agree.)

Our latest scheme involves our favorite New Orleans holiday - Mardi Gras.

We decorated our palatial room in Old West Residence Hall with a host of seasonal items, including purple, green and gold lights in the window facing Cameron Avenue. Neal figures the lights will attract girls to the room like flies to a picnic. So far, no luck - but did I mention Neal's GPA?

Some plans just flop, of course. Case in

point: the idea to claim imaginary girlfriends. "It'll make the real girls jealous!" we figured.

Perhaps we should have chosen better names than Ginger and Bambi. And for those who thought we were serious - the long distance thing just didn't work out with those gals.

Most of our inspiration comes from television or movies. We watch "Jack & Jill" and "Felicity" regularly for social training and sensitivity. And we never miss NBC's "West Wing," which portrays the zany excitement of life in the White House and prepares us for our future careers. I've promised Neal the secretary of state job, but I'm still looking for a first lady.

But having the wisdom in this floundering operation, I have repeatedly reminded Neal that our strongest weapon is patience. We've relied quite heavily on it for rationalization, and it has served us well.

That's why we harbor no bitterness toward today's celebration of those lucky enough to have found the love of their lives. Our time will surely come someday. And in the meantime we'll save our large piles of cash and maintain our slim figures by avoiding silly greeting cards, flowers that die in a week and chocolate that looks like a heart and tastes like it, too.

Instead, we salute those of you who'll be out on the town tonight or who celebrated with your out-of-town sweethearts this past weekend with romantic dinners and strolls across campus.

You see, we're not interested in cheap flings. Instead, we applaud the very thing this holiday tries to celebrate - true love. That's the sort of thing that ought to be celebrated every day of the year. We might have to pass this year, but that'll make next year all the more sweeter.

Brandon Briscoe is a junior journalism and mass communication major from New Orleans, La. Send him your valentines and tips at brandon_briscoe@unc.edu.

READERS' FORUM

Running Photograph Of Club Insomnia Hurts Gays, Lesbians

TO THE EDITOR:

I submit to you, the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) community at UNC and in Chapel Hill, my sincerest apology for The Daily Tar Heel's coverage of opening night of Insomnia.

Although I remain grateful for the DTH's interest in our community, and for the wonderful articles they have written about the grand premiere of Insomnia, they did not realize the devastating effects of including a picture (in which you could clearly recognize the patrons' faces) in their Feb. 7 publication.

How "out" are those recognizable people in the background of the picture? Are they "out" to their departments? To their employers? To all of their friends? To their families?

In many places around the country, to this day, malicious law enforcement officers deliberately publish the names of people they arrest in GLBT bars, thereby "outing" them to the local communities. This is incredibly difficult for many of

these GLBTs, and my understanding is that the suicide rate among people under this experience is astronomical.

There is not much difference between publishing names and publishing pictures in which the patrons are clearly identifiable.

In recognition of this fact, I am taking the following actions:

1) I am formally apologizing to the community for this mistake.

2) Cameras will no longer be permitted in Insomnia (on Friday nights).

3) I'm extending an invitation to the editors and staff of the DTH to take part in a sensitivity training on GLBT issues in the media.

My primary concern is in developing a safe, fun space for gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people at UNC and in Chapel Hill. Please trust that Insomnia is such a place.

Beginning Friday, Insomnia will be held every Friday night. A portion of all proceeds will continue to be donated to local GLBT organizations. On opening night, we raised \$1,000 for the N.C. Pride Parade, which will occur June 10 in Durham. We will continue to support the

GLBT community. If you have any recommendations on how we can improve, please e-mail me at camp@unc.edu. Thank you for your continuing support.

Glenn Grossman
Doctoral Program
Department of Epidemiology

Grossman is chairman of Carolina Alternative Meetings of Professional and Graduate Students.

UNC-C Administrator Says School Officials Like Campus' Name

TO THE EDITOR:

A story in the Jan. 21 issue of The Daily Tar Heel, headlined "Officials: UNC Schools Separate But Equal," leaves the false impression that UNC-Charlotte officials seek to change the university's name. A suggestion that UNC-C change its name has not been discussed by UNC-C officials and is not a goal of the university.

Jack Claiborne
Associate Vice Chancellor
UNC-Charlotte



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