

The Daily Tar Heel

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Cyber Patrol

The U.S. Department of Education is providing a valuable tool to college students by placing crime statistics in a national database.

High school students will soon have a new, valuable source of information online when it comes to choosing a college or university.

The U.S. Department of Education is compiling an online database of crime statistics from colleges and universities across the country in order to let prospective students know just how safe the campus they are about to inhabit is. The database will relay the numbers of offenses, ranging from theft to hate crimes to homicides, both on-campus and off-campus.

Hopefully, it will make the colleges and universities who are having problems with security take notice once it has the potential to affect enrollment, and thus hit their pocketbooks hard.

And for those who do a stellar job of keeping their campus safe, they deserve the added recognition the database will give.

The database will also put added pressure on campus cops in terms of accountability. For instance, if the statistics show a high number of thefts on campus, it might lead more vigilance on their part and spur action to curb the problem.

Making campus crime statistics available to the public is not a new practice. Colleges and universities have been required by the federal government to compile the data since 1990, when the Clery Law was passed. It was named after Jeanne Clery, a freshman at Lehigh University who was killed in her dorm room.

UNC keeps its crime statistics for the past year online. The information can be found under the Public Safety section of the UNC-CH web site. However, for any new student, the task of finding the information could be too daunting to figure out.

In order to access the crime report, a student must go under the "For Students" section of the UNC website. Then, they must scroll down to the "Public Safety" department link. From their website, a user must click the "1999 Campus Security Report" and scroll down the report to click "By the Numbers" portion of the report to get the rundown of crimes. Not an easy task to find the information, but one that will be made much easier by the new federal database.

Now, high school students interested in campus safety will not have to run around to several different sources in order to obtain the data for their school choices. All the information they could want is only a single mouse-click away.

"It's going to be kind of one-stop shopping. Instead of having to gather information from four or five different schools, now you can just go to one place and compare," said John King, president of the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators and head of security at Tufts University.

Since their safety is at stake, both prospective and enrolled university students deserve to have easy access to the statistics.

And now they will have it.

Let It Go

The United States is finally marching in the right direction by slightly relaxing the ridiculous trade restrictions on Cuba.

The Elian Gonzalez saga might have been useful to the United States after all.

After years of debate on the issue, Republican leaders agreed this week to make the smart move and end nearly forty years of unilateral trade sanctions on the trade of food and medicine to Cuba. Many lawmakers finally softened their hard-line attitude toward Cuba after seeing the poverty in the tiny island nation off the coast of Florida that the Elian case highlighted.

The agreement, reached early Wednesday morning after close to six hours of negotiations between the House of Representative GOP leaders and Cuban-American House members, would allow American farmers to sell their products in Cuba for the first time since 1962. The House is expected to tack the provision on a military construction bill later this week.

Unfortunately, Cuban-American lawmakers, rabidly opposing any lessening of the embargo against Fidel Castro's Cuba, were able to put extreme limitations on the bill.

The federal government and U.S. banks would be barred from lending money to Cuba. Considering the country's wrecked economy, it will be difficult for the cash-strapped nation to purchase the newly freed up American goods.

Also, the trade is strictly unilateral. Cuba is not allowed to export any of its products into the United States, thus limiting any economic improvement within Cuba itself.

But despite the limitations placed on the bill by right-wing Republicans and Cuban-American lawmakers, it is a positive first step towards easing Cuba into normal trading relations with the United States.

"We view this as step one. We'll be back for step two and step three later," said Mary Kay Thatcher, a lobbyist for the American

Farm Bureau Federation, signaling that the fight is only beginning.

Considering how hypocritical it is for the U.S. to keep the much larger, and hence much more lucrative, communist nation of China as a valued trading partner, the move to ease the draconian sanctions on Cuba is long overdue.

It is more of a symbolic gesture than an actual economic impact however. It's been estimated that the United States could export more than \$400 million worth of food and medicine to Cuba.

But the restrictions put into place reduce that amount to a mere \$45 million worth of farm goods, mainly rice, soy and powdered milk.

The goal now is to continue the process to its logical end: a complete relaxation of trade and travel restrictions on Cuba. Only then can the United States hope to oust Fidel Castro and institute democratic reforms in our neighbor to the south.

By allowing American products to enter into Cuba, the true depths of the poverty Castro has pulled his people into can be plainly visible to the Cuban population.

And once America opens its markets to Cuba, Castro will no longer be able to paint the United States as the iron-fisted big brother across the ocean that is intent on keeping the Cuban people down.

Once this security blanket is ripped out from under him, Castro will be forced to explain his country's ailing economy to the people instead of placing blame on the United States. And Cubans will begin to focus their resentment on him instead of misplacing it on the U.S.

If it takes baby steps to get there, so be it. At least we are finally moving in the right direction.



Would You Like Fries With That?

In their holy quest to end meat-eating across the world, PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) has suken to a new, all-time low.

Over the course of this year, PETA has been relying more and more heavily on shock value in order to publicize their advertising campaigns. In doing so, they sacrifice their credibility as a non-profit organization that has accomplished many positive things in the past twenty years.

The latest target in their crosshairs is McDonald's. But instead of aiming for the millions of American adults whom indulge in the guilty pleasure of a Big Mac, they have erroneously set their sights on children.

The "McCruelty's Unhappy Meal," which features a smiling, hatchet-wielding Ronald McDonald on the front, will be distributed to children at McDonald's playgrounds and near schools all over the country.

If the outside of the box isn't horrific enough, the contents of the "Unhappy Meal" are enough to turn your stomach. The bottom of the box contains straw dabbed with blotches of red paint, meant to simulate blood. There are anti-meat stickers and a stuffed Ronald McDonald doll splashed with blood, holding a butcher knife with a maniacal grin.

And for the kids to play with on the car ride home, there are stuffed pigs and cows with red blood on their necks, depicting a slashed throat.

PETA spokesman Bruce Friedrich seems to think kids will embrace the campaign. "If kids knew what happens to animals before McDonald's slaughters them, they wouldn't eat there. (This) rips the sugar coating off the patty and exposes Ronald for what he really is."

Any plans to foil the myths of Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny, Bruce?

Ingrid Newkirk, PETA's president, continued the exaggerated tirade. "It's the animals who deserve a break today, and kids can give them one by recognizing that Ronald McDonald isn't a clown, he's a murderer."

It seems that, blinded by their cause of ethi-



JONATHAN CHANEY
MANAGING EDITOR

cal treatment of animals, they have decided to exploit the fragile senses of children most unethically with these graphic images.

Yes, slaughterhouses are a bloody business. But it's not something that PETA should drag children into.

Any child who sees the materials inside the "Unhappy Meal" might well turn away from meat for the rest of their life. But the decision would be from the trauma of seeing its gruesome images, not from any sense of understanding the animal-rights issues that PETA hopes to correct.

Instead of trying to educate children in a psychologically healthy way, a campaign that could have taken years, PETA chose to go the road of the quick and shocking. And instead of getting their point across, they merely alienate any potential ally to their cause.

The radical tactics of PETA aren't new. For the past year, the organization has left people scratching their heads, wondering who in the hell was in charge of their ad campaigns.

Last week, people in Wilmington, N.C. who were switching through the cable channels came across a graphic undercover PETA video taken at a North Carolina hog farm. The tape, which aired on public access Channel 4, depicted farm workers beating hogs, as well as other acts of abuse and killing. It aired during dinnertime, at 6:30 p.m.

The idea was to disgust viewers. "If it upsets people and they find it too gruesome to watch, then it's too gruesome for them to eat," Lisa Lange, director of policy and communications at PETA said.

And who can forget the "Got Beer?" campaign that enraged Mothers Against Drunk Driving earlier this year.

In an effort to halt the menace that is milk drinking, PETA encouraged people to drink a "healthier" alternative: beer. It was targeted toward college students, a group that needs no outside encouragement to drink beer.

The materials were pulled within days after the MADD protests. But PETA was pleased with the publicity, even though it was mainly negative.

"We pulled the ad partly in deference to MADD and partly because the ad had run its course. But if we had realized the response this would generate, we would have done this years ago," Friedrich said.

Unfortunately, PETA revels in the limelight that their latest sensationalist tactics have brought them. And their message of ethical treatment for animals gets lost in the process.

Instead of informing people about conditions at dairy farms with the "Got Beer?" campaign, the focus centered on binge drinking at college campuses. And instead of educating people about the conditions at North Carolina's hog farms, PETA has raised questions as to whether material on public access stations should be more closely screened.

Now, it appears that PETA will have to go on the defensive about their "reality attack" on children instead of trying to educate the nation about McDonald's practices.

But PETA feels that publicity, whether good or bad, is better than a professional reputation and credibility.

For an organization that has accomplished so much over the last two decades, it's a shame they feel that they must stoop to such unethical methods in order to get their message across.

Jonathan Chaney is a junior political science major from Concord who loves red meat. Email him at jhchaney@email.unc.edu with any questions, comments or concerns. For more information and photos regarding this PETA campaign, visit <http://www.meatstinks.com>.

READERS' FORUM

Chaney 'Missed the Point' in Slamming Summer Novel

TO THE EDITOR:
Jonathan Chaney has completely missed the point. The University's attempt to provide a common experience by requiring new students to read the same book before they arrive on campus should be commended instead of heckled.

While Chaney has made it painfully apparent that his ignorance precludes him from enjoying anything more taxing in a literary sense than the Daily Tar Heel, some other students may find pleasure in reading a book they will later discuss together.

Maybe Chaney is trying to ingratiate himself with new students, trying to make it seem as if he feels their supposed pain. In doing so, he's really only displaying a tremendous amount of ignorance in the eyes of those who enjoy a good book. It's a shame the DTH joined in the ignorance by affording Chaney the space.

Robertson Donation Has Better Uses Than 'Elitist Scholarship'

TO THE EDITOR:
In a perfect world, I would not have a problem with the newly created Robertson Scholarships. The scholarships, worth about \$100,000 each, allow 30 students, 15 from UNC, to integrate a course of study at UNC and Duke University. Robertson scholars are granted full tuition, board and living stipends, paid summer internship experiences and laptop computers.

UNC officials and the Robertsons view the scholarships as an "exciting recruiting tool" which will attract the best and brightest students from North Carolina and across the United States. In a perfect world, this all sounds fantastic.

Unfortunately UNC's world is not perfect. Professors are underpaid and bolting to universities offering more lucrative financial packages, facilities are in disrepair (except for Kenan Stadium and the Dean Dome), and financial aid coffers need bolstering in light of recent tuition hikes.

The Robertsons could certainly benefit UNC more by donating

money and energy to solving these problems. Retaining the best professors, upgrading and maintaining academic facilities and increasing financial aid and grant opportunities for the multitudes would be a more effective recruiting tool, that would positively affect generations of future Tar Heels, than an elitist scholarship that benefits a select few.

If the Robertsons, UNC and Duke officials persist in implementing this scholarship, perhaps unique qualification criteria can be established which open prestigious scholarship opportunities to people from all walks of life. Scholarships might be awarded to students who have excelled academically despite disadvantaged backgrounds, first generation college students or students with exceptional public service records.

Mr. and Mrs. Robertson, you have a unique opportunity to make a difference outside of your hedge fund induced utopia. Instead of funding another Morehead scholarship, and eventual shrine in your honor, use your \$24 million to help remedy UNC's real problems. North Carolina will thank you.

Michael H. Kelly
Chapel Hill

The Daily Tar Heel
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