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MATT DEES
EDITOR
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The Daily Tar Heel

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BOARD EDITORIALS

Parental Guidance

Rather than focusing on the need for parental supervision, a report on media violence points fingers at the entertainment industry.

Shortly after the tragic massacre at Columbine High School last year, President Clinton ordered a report by the Federal Trade Commission on the major media studios' marketing of violent entertainment to children.

Unfortunately, the report mistakenly lays blame entirely on the entertainment industry instead of emphasizing the need for parental supervision in their children's lives.

The report, released Monday, charged that the entertainment industry engaged in "pervasive and aggressive marketing" of violent entertainment to children. It found that a majority of the best-selling youth-restricted movies, video games and music were intentionally marketed to children as young as 12.

Although it stopped short of outlining legislative action, the report called on the industry to regulate itself and adopt stringent policies restricting youth access to potentially harmful media.

But the entertainment industry already has appropriate safeguards in place.

Movies are rated based on content, with age restrictions for films deemed unsuitable for children under 17. And music with potentially offensive lyrics are branded with a parental advisory on the front of the CD or cassette.

The entertainment industry has given adults the tools necessary to monitor their children. Now it's up to parents to use them

effectively.

In light of the FTC's report, the industry should appease its critics and step up efforts to ensure it maintains responsible rating systems and marketing practices.

But the industry should not be held liable for all the problems associated with media violence.

Besides outright censorship, the industry can do nothing but market its products consistently and ensure that ratings regulations are followed.

The FTC report, and the criticism of the entertainment industry, are knee-jerk reactions to tragedies such as Columbine. In the aftermath of these events, the media became a popular scapegoat for youth violence.

But the real problem lies in a lack of parental involvement.

Parents should pay attention to the movies, television shows, music and video games their children buy.

And they — not the government — need to use their own judgment when deciding what entertainment their children view.

It's become fashionable to blame the media for the problems exhibited by our youth. But it's time for parents to stand up and take responsibility for their children's well-being.

The entertainment industry is not a mommy or a daddy. And it's not the evil institution this report makes it out to be.

ASHLEY HOLMES — EDITORIAL NOTEBOOK

Good Sportsmanship?

An incident in front of the Undergraduate Library on Friday indicates that some UNC students should learn to act their age.

Sometimes, with all the suffering and despair in the world, it's easy to forget that decency still exists. It's easy to wallow in all that is wrong in civilization.

But last Friday, I personally reclaimed my faith in man. For last Friday, I was blessed enough to witness a sterling display of a little thing I like to call "humanity."

Around 10 a.m., I was walking past the Undergraduate Library when I saw two physically fit young men examining the brick-clad floor of The Yard. Apparently, there was a loose, broken brick present.

But rather than ignore this deformity, these two upstanding young men removed the offending brick and placed it so that it was raised well above the neighboring bricks.

I assume that these conscientious students positioned the brick in this way to draw attention to its deformity.

I'm certain they weren't waiting for an unsuspecting student to trip over it.

Imagine my surprise when I walked by the same brick an hour later and saw a large group of well-known athletes staring intently at the brick, as if it had hypnotized them.

I'm sure these students were staring at the bricks so diligently because of shock — aghast at the injuries that could have ensued. It's amazing how our campus is home to such acts of decency and caring.

Athletes often get a bad rap at Carolina; people accuse them of receiving special treatment and privileges. But after what I had the pleasure of witnessing on Friday, disparaging words concerning the basketball or football team will never escape my humble lips.

Now, I can't possibly list all of the people who participated in this act. And I'm sure that those involved wouldn't want me to. Base motivations such as recognition or fame had nothing to do with this good work. No, those good Samaritans know who they are.

And I think that's reward enough.

Have Your Say

The Daily Tar Heel welcomes submissions from its readers for the Monday Viewpoints page. Guest columns should be 800 words, written by no more than two people and discuss an issue relevant to DTH readers. Submissions should be e-mailed to editdesk@unc.edu by 5 p.m. the Wednesday before the column will appear. Publication is not guaranteed. For more information, call Editorial Page Editor Kelli Boutin at 962-0245.

READERS' FORUM

Readers Strongly Respond to Kofi Bofah's Sept. 11 Column 'Freshmen 101: A Survival Guide' With a Mix of Outrage and Disappointment

TO THE EDITOR:

I was thrilled to see Mr. Hungigolo had been invited back to The Daily Tar Heel editorial page (Kofi Bofah's Sept. 11 column "Freshmen 101: A Survival Guide").

While some may find Mr. Hungigolo's macho megalomania crude and distasteful, I am confident that the more discerning reader, like myself, can recognize the grammatical originality and trenchant wit that lie behind Mr. Hungigolo's semiliterate vulgarisms.

For example, notice how Mr. Hungigolo bravely abandons that confining straitjacket of staid, conventional English when he warns us that "it's a limited amount of info that I'm going to put in this DTH," or when he alerts us that he "gots to address (his) fellas." Joyce would be proud.

And of course, who can miss the intentional irony of someone who claims to "stay on the perimeter and aim to be incognito" but who brags incessantly and a bit too shrilly about his "tight major," "fat stock portfolio," "mastery of THE GAME" and "chronic weakness for the ladyz?"

Yet not only is Mr. Hungigolo among

the DTH's most witty columnists, his advice is uncommonly sage.

All freshman women certainly need to know the value of "JIGGLIN'" and "PHAT" asses if they are to have any hope of catching a man as worthy as Mr. Hungigolo.

By empowering the female community to achieve what is necessarily their highest aspiration, Mr. Hungigolo does feminism, and us all, a valuable service.

And while in his latest column Mr. Hungigolo coyly refuses to offer men like myself any advice of comparable value, I can only hope that in future columns he will overcome his reticence.

Jason Yackee
Graduate Student
Political Science

TO THE EDITOR:

I have read The Daily Tar Heel ever since I first moved to Chapel Hill in 1993. I have read lots of good articles and lots of not-so-good articles. But I cannot recall an article that was as devoid of intellect and

purpose as Kofi "I think I'm Tupac" Bofah's column in Monday's edition ("Freshmen 101: A Survival Guide").

What a waste of ink. I saw no discernible point made in the piece, not to mention plenty of serious grammatical butchering throughout it.

As far as I could tell, this column was just an excuse for Bofah to show off all the lingo he learned from the latest No Limit albums.

The article was like a bad, dime-a-dozen rap video, with Bofah bragging about how smart, tough and irresistible he is.

Like any lame rap video, it also contained the objectification of women, more clichéd, poorly used slang than one can comprehend — and even the obligatory gun reference.

The readers of a paper at this University deserve better.

There was talk in the past of ways to improve the intellectual climate on campus. I think the climate just got colder as Bofah's diatribe hit the presses.

Finally, Bofah should take it easy on freshmen, since he was one just a few years ago, and will be one again in another realm.

Instead of telling freshmen they are nothing, he should prepare himself to be in their exact same position when he leaves college and walks into the real world.

Even though Bofah is a business administration major, in the real world of business, everyone always starts out at the bottom — just like freshmen — and no major in "Life" is going to give him any clout there.

Let's all remember to keep it real smart when we keep it real from now on.

Steven Stewart
Acquisitions Assistant
Law Library

TO THE EDITOR:

Kofi Bofah's piece "Freshman 101: A Survival Guide" was apparently mistitled. It should have been called "Ode to Myself."

Maybe Bofah thinks freshmen are "wack and hot-headed" and "run around f---g s---t up," but he does nothing to amend this situation.

Rather than offer freshmen advice to "read, learn, and live" by, Bofah brags about his statistics, his scholarship money

and his female conquests.

Why is this in The Daily Tar Heel? This is not journalism; it's Ebonics nothingness. It's completely degrading to women and all human beings in general.

Girls aren't, as Bofah insists, Upper Deck trading cards or scenery to be gawked at.

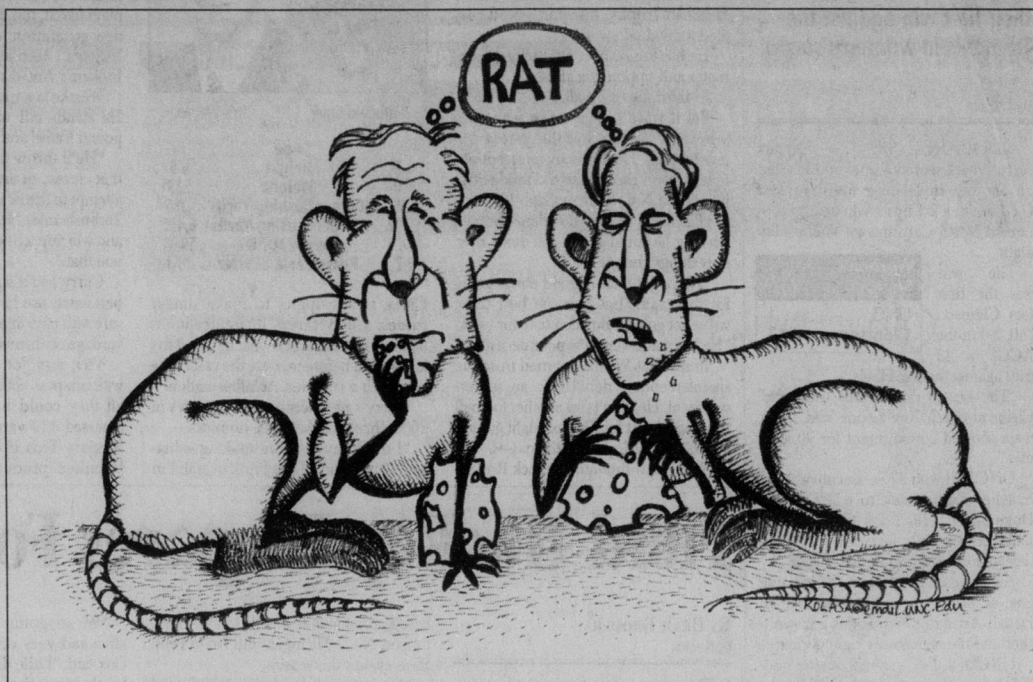
Bofah rejects grade point averages as a source of pride for freshmen, yet he boasts about his.

Bofah implores freshmen to "take this information here and ... read it aloud at Lenoir and discuss it on the yard," but he offers nothing worth discussing.

Instead, we were left baffled by his Neanderthal mind-set and his complete lack of ability to communicate using the English language.

Sarah Sanders
Freshman
Education and Journalism and Mass Communication

Amanda Fisher
Freshman
Journalism and Mass Communication



Love, Loss and the Elections Board

This week, more than any week in recent memory, has been characterized by its losses.

Indiana lost a gem of an individual in head coach Bobby Knight (whose class is probably only rivaled by David Allen Coe).

The Broadway show "Cats" finally ended its run after 19 years.

The show is about as old as I am, so hopefully I will not also die this week.

The U.S. Department of Justice lost their case against Wen Ho Lee, a Taiwanese scientist they accused of spying for China. It is good to know that our Justice Department holds tight the idea that all Asians are the same.

The University of South Carolina lost its longest losing streak in Division I college football. I can say that coming from South Carolina, it is always a time for celebration down there when we stop being worst in something.

Craig Warner must have lost his mind before writing that column Tuesday on hate crimes. Yikes!!

And, perhaps most importantly The Daily Tar Heel lost one of its favorite stories — Marissa Downs.

That's right. Marissa, fodder for many a DTH article, was put out to journalistic pasture this week when Jeremy Berkeley-Tuchmayer was appointed the new chairman of the Elections Board, a position that Ms. Downs was originally nominated for.

For freshmen and first-time readers of the DTH, there was a huge fuss surrounding appointing Ms. Downs Elections Board chairwoman last semester.

Brad Matthews (he is the student body president here at UNC — like Gerald Ford, but only for the University) nominated Ms. Downs for the position of Elections Board chairwoman.

In short, the idea was canned by Student Congress, and the DTH devoted a large deal of print to the issue, especially noting Mr. Matthews' and Ms. Downs' "romantic involvement."

While I can sympathize with both sides of the issue, I always felt bad for Marissa. Here is a person trying to live an active and involved life at UNC, but her private life kept re-

emerging for full public view.
And I would be willing to wager that her private life has gotten as much attention in the paper as any student (save Kofi Bofah whose weekends, according to his column, continually trump mine in excitement week in and week out).
I think, latently, a good deal of this ordeal was due to the fact that Marissa was a woman. And as a woman, she was unable to, in some people's eyes, put her mind over her heart. I am quite sure if the nominee had simply been a guy pal of Mr. Matthews, little attention would have been paid to the issue.
But the facts of the relationship, and the SBP race itself, begged for a knock-down, drag-out fight with the DTH. At times it resembled a war of attrition between Student Congress, the executive branch and the DTH.
All the bases for juicy journalism were covered: collusion, political favors, romance and angry partisan feuds.
I sat down with Marissa to hold sort of a wake, a funeral celebration (as a McKinney with Irish roots, I felt this was rather necessary).
Here are some excerpts of our chat:
William: I have to know, after reading the DTH for a while, I have gained the feeling that you are the root of all evil. Is this true?
Marissa: Yes.
W: So you don't even like puppies, bunnies or sunny days?
M: They are the bane of my existence.
W: So do you think that the DTH could have just been upset that you don't write for them anymore?
M: Oh, that could be it. I thought it was curious that the DTH acted like I was an evil temptress out to woo the student body presi-



WILLIAM MCKINNEY
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

dent.
W: Because he is a really important guy, right?
M: Oh yes, "the apple of my eye," (a DTH quote).
W: So if you hadn't been able to spellbind Brad, who would you have gone after? Chancellor Moeser?
M: Maybe.
The Chancellor was a fallback. First would have been (Carolina Athletic Association president and overly dramatic, but I got the point when I read it, guest columnist) Tee Pruitt.

With Tee, I could have won the homecoming queen election and ruled UNC high atop the new bleachers he created for me.
W: Why didn't you just declare yourself SBP?
M: That's not the real position of power. Vice-chairwoman of the Elections Board is what it's all about.

W: Oh right, I forgot.
So are you upset about losing out to new Elections Board Chairman Jeremy Berkeley-Tuchmayer? I hear you are making threatening calls to him late at night.
M: I was actually trying to seduce him. He mistook it. I was just sabotaging the process as usual.

W: Well, that makes sense. Hey, who is your favorite columnist?
M: William McKinney.
W: Mine too.

While we are talking about newspapers, did you get tired of the DTH always putting your name in the same sentence with "romantic relationship?"
M: Yeah, what was the other one they used?
W: "Queen of the Night," maybe?
M: Ha ha. You know, the DTH can be a real ambulance chaser sometimes. When are they going to just pat someone on the back?
W: Today.
Farewell Marissa. Fare thee well.

William McKinney is a sophomore history and political science major from Greenville, S.C. If you are interested in writing his column next week, please e-mail him at wmckinne@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 editdesk@unc.edu.