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BOARD EDITORIALS

A Failing Grade

The SAT should not be the Holy Grail of college admissions. Instead, tests such as the SAT II should receive higher priority.

In a semiconroversial move, the University of California system is considering making SAT scores optional for admission.

UC President Richard Atkinson proposed the change, citing the importance of placing increased emphasis on curriculum-based tests. He has proposed that student eligibility for the university system be based more on student performance tests that follow high school curriculum, such as the SAT II.

This is a wise move on the part of the UC system, and Atkinson should be applauded for the measure. Colleges and universities across the nation would do well to consider similar proposals that would de-emphasize the merit and importance of the SAT.

It is neither an adequate nor an accurate tool to use in measuring a student's intellect. Indeed, the infamous Saturday morning exam consists entirely of multiple-choice questions on math and reading comprehension.

Many students are at a disadvantage before they even take the SAT the first time because they cannot afford expensive prep courses wealthier students take to learn "success strategies" to earn a high score. Any time a student can use a strategy to "conquer" a test, the academic merit of that test should be seriously questioned.

In addition, many students also take the SAT multiple times, until their scores reach a satisfactory level, proving that this test is no true measure of intellect - it's a crap-shoot.

Admissions boards should place a greater emphasis on curriculum-based tests like the SAT II. It is a better reflection of a student's intellect and potential to perform in college, as it tests more specific material and is more relevant to high school coursework.

Moreover, in placing a greater emphasis on these more specific tests, colleges and universities would reach out to low-income families and minorities - students who traditionally perform below the national average on the SAT but fare better on more specialized tests.

In a press release from The College Board, which administers the SAT, officials questioned the wisdom of eliminating a test many use to predict college performance.

But while it might not be wise to eliminate the SAT as an admissions criterion, it would be unwise to continue placing so much faith in the Nostradamus-like ability of the SAT.

Colleges and universities would field a better prepared student body if their admissions boards would look to more specific-based tests which measure true intellect - not the ability to conquer a single test.

KATE HARTIG — EDITORIAL NOTEBOOK

Put on the Brakes

Before Chapel Hill goes through with future housing developments, the town must ensure that adequate space is available in local schools.

Growth in the Chapel Hill area is no joke. People are steadily moving to the area, bringing their families and children with them - putting a strain on schools at every level.

So why is it that Orange County and Chapel Hill-Carrboro continue to permit more and more residential development, like Meadowmont, if they know that it will affect the ability to accommodate future students?

Concerned with this problem, the Orange County Board of Education proposed an ordinance that would require developers to submit a Certificate of Adequacy of Public Schools (CAPS) with their development applications - therefore lending power to the school board to balance the rate of residential development with Orange County school capacity.

Support for CAPS and the temporary slowdown of development are needed until school accommodations are up to par.

There are already several plans under way for the construction of additional schools - two elementary schools along with a middle school. However, when the doors open to these schools, they already will be close to capacity - and not nearly fully paid for.

But if there is not a balance between growth and school facilities, school overcrowding will continue to be a problem that

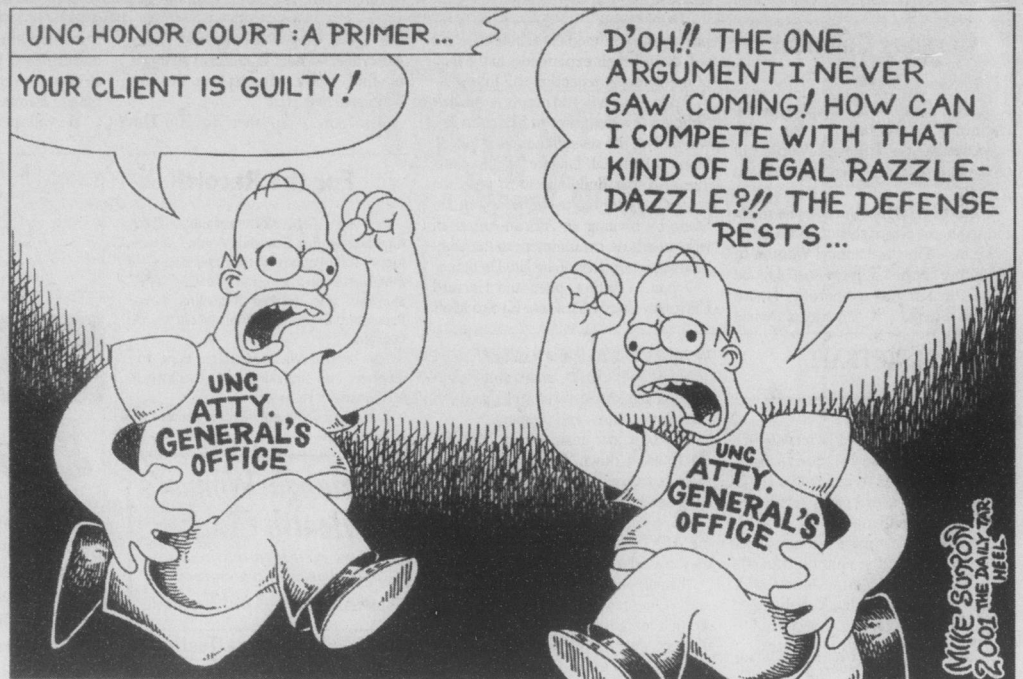
the area can't afford to get behind on.

For instance, the school board is proposing a countywide school bond in November. The original amount of \$72 million was significantly cut to \$42.8 million earlier this week. Instead of building a new high school, \$7.9 million will go to renovating the existing two high schools. The \$42.8 million request is financially reasonable for Orange County right now. But in five to 10 years, all those students who are scrunched into elementary schools now will be in high school - and the overcrowding problem still will be unsolved.

Also, while the proposal for the Horace Williams tract, a part of the UNC Master Plan, is a smart-growth option for Chapel Hill and will open up 25,000 job opportunities - it also will put a strain on local schools.

If the Horace Williams tract proposal is approved, local school boards and area authorities need to act fast on the present overcrowding problem and plan more carefully for the future. Supporting CAPS is a good first step to putting a slowdown on development in order to make headway in the school overcrowding problem.

Support for the school bond is also essential, along with proper planning for the short- and long-term future.



The Dream of the Last American

PAUL THARP
CUISINE BOURGEOISE

The drawing was simple. A squiggly contour line the boy made over the broad white of the page. It was a lake with two islands.

He penciled in the trees, row after row circling the lake before tapering off into the bald lead humps of hills.

In the open spaces and among the trees he drew triangles, tepees he'd seen in the history books from the parlor of his father's house.

He was a boy. Triangles made men. They spread.

On the eastern shore of the lake they gathered, with their bronze skin, wading knee-high into the water with arrows in hand, fast as fish, or faster. Over the wide, treeless hills they cut down buffalo with their spears. They wore the skin of the animal on their backs, animals no less themselves.

In the evening, round fires, they sang of their gods, of the spirits among the trees and of the darkness smothering them as it melted down over the sky.

The young sat with their faces in the flames, and the old who watched from the shadows thought both of the end before them and of the beginning it gave. Death itself was the means of new life, from the grave, by feeding life that sprang thereafter. Even savages knew time.

They made their sacrifice, giving what was given them. They wasted. They warred.

Every culture had its darkness.

Then one house, then two the boy drew on the western shore of the lake. Squares with triangular roofs.

It was Rip Van Winkle, Ichabod Crane.

Then fences, neighbors, permanence. They called theirs a "New World," villages made among trees, slate for the unrecognized dream of a culture. They wore the skin of the animal on their backs, animals no less themselves.

They put down their spoken word, and set out over water casting nets from their sailing rigs. They laid pathways through the brush, free to practice, to breathe the free air and seek an uncertain salvation.

This was their sacrifice:
Way led on to way, and eventually the two of them met.

One, starving, asked the other, "How?"
"How?," the other returned. But neither of them knew.

They ate supper at a long table. One taught the other to plant, fertilize, harvest, hunt and smoke. There were promises made, and as promises go, broken. The fair-skinned neighbors, with discovery on their lips and conquest in their hands, and seeing nothing of the Father in their savage counterparts, rose to vanquish them.

Theirs was a quest for the divine. It justified a more stubborn notion of progress. "There must be progress," they wrote, and to its march other things must yield.

He penciled in houses, buildings, towns and forged roads connecting each. There were bridges over the water, and parks and government.

The tepees began to fade from all the times the boy's hand swept over them, as he drew the fair-skinned man's world.

Eventually they were erased, or better, redrawn as the triangular roofs of square houses made beneath them. Souls couldn't live in the same body.

There was a mystery, or the sense of it, when the air caught a certain way. They sensed a greater mystery, of not whose land it was, but what separated both from it.

But the books didn't tell of this.

On the page there was a war and the sense was lost, suffering with its physical manifestation the fate of being outnumbered and outgunned. Still, in the shadows of his father's parlor, the dream persisted in the boy's fancy. There were spaces between the lines on the page, and in his hand the instrument of creation, of recreation.

On the eastern shore of the lake a western city was made. The city dwellers called meetings and formed committees that built over the sacred grounds of the bronze-skinned dead.

The plain fact was, John Marshall wrote, discovery gave title to the one who made it. Thus it was Cabot's country, not the tribes of savages who inhabited before him, whose occupation was war and whose subsistence was drawn chiefly from the forest. "To leave them in possession of their country, was to leave the country a wilderness."

All things bend toward progress. It was a sad fate. Still, Marshall surmised, every rule that is made is done so with the appendage of difficulty.

So the boy sat among the shadows of his creation. The books had it easy. The story was that of the victors. But why, he wondered, learn the sadness of the vanquished?

There must have been some bond he felt, stronger than a highway, connecting these grand cities of his forefathers with a simpler time. What was it?

There were physical remnants of an older war, watching from the shadows with their broad fur chests and their finger-claws and eyes half human.

They watched the boy evolve, savages hid among the trees and among the bald lead humps of hills.

Vanquished, their lives half of the world and half thick, and resisting attempts to track them, they knew, all the while this human devoured not anyone's country but the country with its progress, that ancient conflict: Who am I?

There remained, after the books were read, only the question on the page.

It was an ancient dream.

It was lost, but has been recovered.

So wrote Marshall in the case of Johnson v. M'Intosh. Paul Tharp is a first-year law student. Reach him with questions and comments at ptharp@email.unc.edu.

READERS' FORUM

UNC Official Promises To Be 'Good Neighbor' As Master Plan Evolves

TO THE EDITOR:

In her Feb. 22 guest column, Julie McClintock suggests that UNC's work on a Master Plan for the campus is being done without regard for its community neighbors and without diligent study of key environmental concerns.

In undertaking preparation of a Master Plan for the campus, the Board of Trustees and the University administration have sought to be both visionary about the future of North Carolina's flagship university campus and inclusive in the planning process.

As a state institution, we must absorb our share of the enrollment increase projected for the UNC system. We expect that this will mean as many as 3,000 additional students by 2008. Faculty and support staff will be needed to serve our students and other components of our mission, including health care and research.

The vision is clear: UNC seeks to extend the acknowledged beauty of its North Campus to the south and, over time, remedy mistakes of the past. The plan envisions a campus atmosphere south of Kenan Stadium that embraces some of the same

qualities that have made the McCorkle Place and Polk Place quadrangles among the most beautiful landscaped spaces in America, as measured by the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Addressing environmental concerns has been central to our process. Working with our consultants, our planning team is examining the full range of issues, including stormwater runoff, air quality, traffic impacts and more.

From the outset of the process in 1998, we have conducted the process in an opened, inclusive way. Our planning teams include numerous community representatives. Our consultants have met with town staff. We have made four presentations to the community and the Town Council. And we have met with our neighbors in their homes and neighborhoods, walking and talking with them about their concerns. We have endeavored to refine the plan to address concerns following each discussion.

We recognize that implementation of the master plan will require ongoing discussion with the town. For that reason, Mayor Rosemary Waldorf and Chancellor James Moeser have established a town-gown working group to address these issues.

UNC, America's oldest public university, is 207 years old and will be here for a long time to come. The campus Master

Plan looks 20 to 50 years into the future and, at the same time, addresses pressing issues of today. We look forward to working, as a good neighbor, with the community to implement our vision.

Nancy D. Sutfenfield
Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration

Graduate Students Fall In Love With UNC Too, Deserve Duke Tickets

TO THE EDITOR:

Until reading Kate Hartig's emotive op-ed column, "Scalping Duke Tickets Takes Them From Deserving Fans," I had no idea that undergraduates had a monopoly on school spirit. As a huge Tar Heel fan and graduate student, I totally agree that scalping tickets to any Carolina basketball game is shameful. Like most students, I cannot imagine preferring fast cash to a chance at seeing the biggest game in college basketball. I strongly disagree, however, with Ms. Hartig's implicit assumption that all graduate students are heartless, money-hungry, ticket "scalper strangers" who should never deserve "Dook" tickets.

While we graduate students may have missed out on the truly undergraduate expe-

rience of flipping cars on Franklin Street, do not doubt the greatness of Carolina basketball! Anyone attending school here, even for a little while (and some graduate students may be here for seven or eight years!), can't help but fall in love with the excitement and tradition surrounding the awesome basketball program at Carolina. I assure you that most of those graduate students not interested in basketball are way too busy to bother with 6 a.m. ticket distributions. Hang in there Kate, when you're a senior you'll get "Dook" tickets too!

Andrea Jones
Graduate Student Ecology

Columnist's Ridicule Of Clemson University Unwarranted, Petty

TO THE EDITOR:

I am writing in response to the "enlightening" Feb. 21 column by Dan Satter. After reading "Putting Basketball in Perspective," I wondered, "What is the point?" The only one I could glean seemed to follow this logic: UNC lost in a huge upset and I don't like it, so I will make myself feel better by talking trash about Clemson.

I went to Clemson for my undergradu-

ate years and I am well aware that it is not a basketball superpower. When I came to UNC two years ago for my graduate education, I held the basketball program - rightly so - in the highest regard. Clearly, the Tar Heels are one of the nation's elite. Therefore, I assumed that its fans would be as classy as its players and coaches. Indeed, most of them are.

Unfortunately, a few fans have tarnished my initial impression of Carolina basketball. First, after defeating a Duke team barely ranked above it, some Tar Heel fans destroyed a student's car on Franklin Street. In contrast, no Tiger fans ran out in the streets of downtown Clemson destroying property after winning an arguably larger victory - defeating the nation's best while being among the nation's worst. And what does Dan Satter do after this loss? He shows that some Tar Heels not only have a problem handling victory, but also cannot handle defeat with any grace. Rather than acknowledging a tough loss, Satter feels compelled to belittle Clemson University as if that somehow diminishes the loss. It doesn't - it just diminishes UNC's image to outside observers who witness those few Tar Heel fans' ignorance.

Shawn McMillan
Graduate Student School of Law



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