

# Opinion

The Daily Tar Heel

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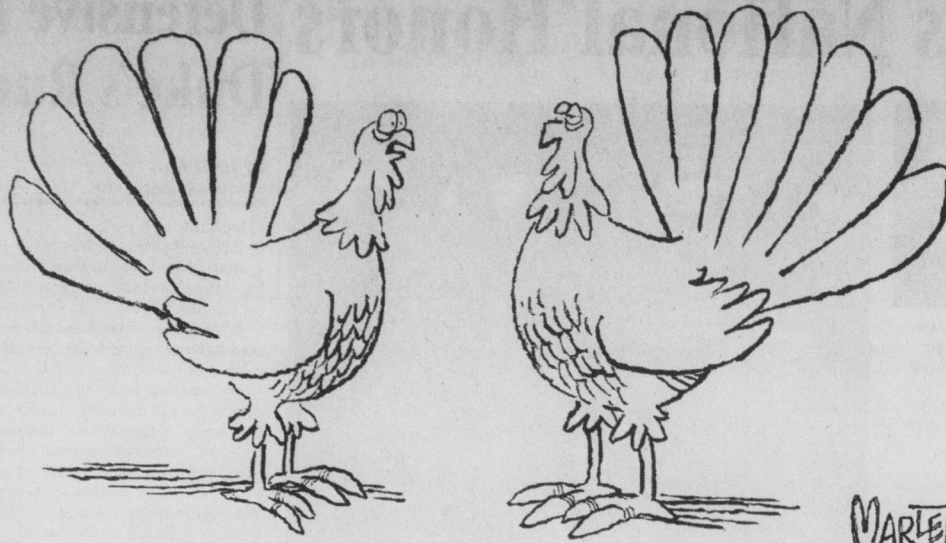
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EVER SINCE SEPTEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup> I'VE HAD THIS SENSE OF IMPENDING DOOM!"

## Board Editorials

### A Breath of Fresh Air

The federal government has given North Carolina a golden opportunity to improve its air and water

It might be easier for Triangle residents to catch a breath of fresh air soon, thanks to lawmakers on Capitol Hill.

The U.S. Congress recently approved a bill appropriating \$2.5 million to UNC-Chapel Hill so researchers can study water and air quality in the Triangle.

Considering the threadbare state of America's purse, doling out such a hefty portion of funds to study the environment might seem like mismanagement, but legislators made the right decision.

Despite this state's reputation for pristine beaches and mountain vistas, North Carolina's air quality is terrible. In fact, last spring the American Lung Association ranked the Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill area eleventh among cities with the worst air in America. Surprisingly, breathing is more dangerous here than in New York, Dallas or San Diego — so bad that the region received an "F" in the ALA's "State of the Air 2001" report. One-fourth of North Carolina's counties violate national air qual-

ity regulations, the ALA report states.

In its persistent pursuit of rankings and academic excellence, UNC-CH is just the institution to be entrusted with finding solutions for improving North Carolina's poor air quality. With the results of their studies, researchers should be able to recommend some tangible steps to protect public health, keep North Carolina attractive and preserve the environment.

Lung tissue is extremely delicate and easily damaged by pollutants in the air. Decreasing airborne contaminants can reduce North Carolinians' risk of asthma and allergies, chronic bronchitis, lung cancer and other respiratory diseases. In the long run, improving public health will save money for taxpayers and government. Fewer people will need expensive medical treatments for respiratory problems, so publicly funded health care will cost less.

The state's natural beauty is part of its allure, and lost mountaintop views resulting from smog will mean lost tourists. No one

wants to climb a mountain if the air is so bad wheezing is unavoidable and the reward for reaching the pinnacle is a polluted panorama.

In addition to producing haze, polluted air stains buildings and can cause acid rain that damages stone. If UNC researchers can discover ways to curb such pollution, they will save the state the time and money spent on cleaning and restoration. Finding solutions for pollution will also protect valuable natural resources, such as the water supply and reduce damage to the ozone layer.

Exhaust from transportation causes 79 percent of the state's carbon monoxide pollution, which eats away at the thin layer protecting us from the sun's scorching rays. With electric utilities such as Carolina Power & Light pumping out sulfur dioxide as they burn coal and oil and the constant pileup of coughing cars clogging the highways, air quality will only get worse unless North Carolinians are proactive.

Hopefully UNC-CH researchers will be able to help the state clean up its act.

### Secrets and Lies

President Bush's attempt to restrict the work of historians is an affront to the public's right to know

Have you noticed that President Bush has succeeded in clamping down on your right to know? Most of the public, distracted by the war in Afghanistan and the pervasive fear of biological warfare, hasn't. But for your information, our president has made one more move in his thinly veiled campaign to filter government information to the public.

Public citizens — from journalists to everyday Joes — now must show a specific "need to know" in order to access presidential papers from the Reagan, Clinton and two Bush presidencies, as well as those to follow. And if a person wants to see papers from previous presidencies that were never made public, he will now need permission of the former president and the current one.

American presidents controlled their own documents until 1978, when in Watergate's wake Congress passed the Presidential Papers Act, a move clearly designed to make sure that presidential

documents could not be permanently blocked from the public eye. Until Bush added his own two cents, the act called for the release of presidential papers 12 years after the president left office.

The papers under immediate question now are the 68,000 documents from Ronald Reagan's two terms that were supposed to be released in January, nearly nine months ago. Reagan's papers were the first to fall under the 12-year rule, but they weren't released because Bush's cronies spent the year reviewing the act, thereby freezing the documents.

These documents could provide vital information to journalists and historians — key insights to Oval Office snafus and shenanigans, as well as what really went on behind the historic acts and speeches. But Bush, motivated by reasons still not clear to the public, has decided that those acts belong to a silent history, not to the public that originally voted the man into office.

Funny that those possibly mentioned in Reagan's papers from 12 years ago are back in office under the new Bush. The same people making decisions about the war in Afghanistan are the same ones who were in office when the United States originally sent funding to the mujahideen.

But if Bush keeps his way, regardless of whether information in these papers could possibly embarrass them, we won't know. The White House says that if you are denied access to information, you can take the matter to court — a most efficient way to handle the matter, since most of the public has thousands of dollars and hours to pursue a legal case against the White House.

We do not live in a society run on secrecy and locked lips — a society against everything American democracy embodies. So for your information, Congress must pass a law striking down Bush's order. Our presidents should have nothing to hide from the public.

## When Invisible Sports Gnomes Attack

That's right, folks! The holidays are quickly approaching. Soon, men everywhere will be in the kitchen cooking up Thanksgiving dinner while women sit on the couch, drink beer and watch the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Wait a minute ...

Why do the TV screens in the Dean Dome not show players when they attempt foul shots? It shows all the other action, but it goes to a blue NC screen right before the free throws. Then it'll come back on in time for the rebound action. — S.B.

Unfortunately, I was unable to get an answer to your question from the invisible gnomes who live in the rafters of the Dean Dome, guard those gigantic jerseys and run the TV screens. They did, however, throw curses and leftover hot dog buns from Friday's game at me. Aren't they adorable? Seriously though, since I couldn't get a straight answer from anyone, I have to venture my own guess. Let's say the score is tied 83-83. There are 1.2 seconds left on the clock, and you are stepping up to the charity stripe for the game-deciding free throws. And you know the outcome of the game



ADAM SHUPE

F1

rests on your shoulders.

You focus on the basket, try to remember all your mechanics, and prepare for your first shot — but suddenly something catches your eye. Up on the big screen, in glorious Technicolor, is a huge shot of your face. Drops of sweat the size of basketballs are dripping off your face, all magnified for everyone to see.

You lose your concentration. You try to sink the first basket but miss. The second one hits the rim and is rebounded by a raisin-headed fool from down the road who makes a long pass to a gangly white boy for the game's winning lay-up. What would have been a bragging right for years to come becomes just another loss. All because those damn gnomes had to leave the screen on during the free throws.

Now, granted, this didn't happen, and we still hold those bragging rights no matter who won the championship last year. But it might not be too far from the truth. I, for one, wouldn't want a magnified picture of my face on any TV screen, much less one in the Dean Dome.

Besides, who wants to see Carlos

Boozer's face close up? Gross.

I'm doing a project on NCAA sports teams, and I was wondering which school has the most NCAA Division I championships, combining all sports. — E.C.

What am I, Sports Trivia Boy or something? Oh well. According to espn.com (every sports fan's Web Mecca), UCLA and USC (that's Southern California, not South Carolina) are tied at 85. Stanford is close with 75. But it's Harvard, with 111 NCAA Division I championships, that takes the cake. It kind of helps that it has a few years on its closest competitors. Harvard has been around since 1636, giving it 244 years over USC (1880) and 39 more over UCLA (1919).

UNC holds 29 NCAA championships, highest in the ACC. Granted, 16 of those are from women's soccer, but that's what dynasties are all about. Closest behind us is Maryland with 15, riding on nine years of women's lacrosse dominance. Duke holds a whopping five. It's nice to be on top.

Adam doesn't think it's fair that Harvard gets to count its co-ed sailing (4), men's and women's ice hockey (2) and men's and women's squash (42) championships. E-mail Sports Trivia Boy at shupe@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.

## Uncle Sam the Pimp: Support Your Local Ho

Have you ever walked past an abortion clinic, seen people loitering outside the building and thought to yourself, "Nope, they're not hookers"?

No, I can't say I have either.

Yet there is a correlation between spreading legs for cash and flushing out a uterus. The commonality might not jump out and beat you about the neck and face with clarity, so allow me to expound on my meaning.

Pro-choice advocates use the very simple argument that a woman has the right to do as she pleases with her body. This is fallacious at best. If it were true, a woman (or man for that matter) could consensually offer her (or his) body to the highest bidder. Yet this is illegal. Whoring out your body is a private matter that should skirt past governmental morality regulations with no more difficulty than it takes to abort a fetus.



MICHAEL CARLTON  
MOJOVIAN V.D.

Putting aside the moral and philosophical implications, of which I could hardly scratch the surface in my allotted space, why permit one and not the other?

Back-alley mom-and-pop abortion clinics used to kill lots of people. The victims of this covert process were not the dregs of society (i.e., losers who can't get laid and hookers loitering on street corners). Prostitution, however, deals exclusively with these insalubrious individuals. Politicians have no qualms about putting less savory individuals at risk and thus uphold the laws that created this underground sex market.

So why not decriminalize prostitution here in Uncle Sam's backyard? It's legal in sparsely populated regions of Nevada. But don't fly out to Las Vegas just yet. Prostitution is illegal in Nevada's larger cities. I'm sure you could find a call girl on the Vegas strip, but there's no guarantee she has neither an STD nor a penis. How can a law based in morality be applied geographically? Prostitutes in Nevada register with local authorities and work in licensed brothels adhering to strict laws. Streetwalking is prohibited. Health checks take place twice a month. These ladies also work as independent contractors. So, in effect, these laws fight the spread of STDs, keep the harlots out of sight and mitigate the chances of either party enduring abuse. Well ... abuse that wasn't paid for by some masochist in a business suit.

Legalizing prostitution might express de facto governmental support for this institution, but it surely won't promote the practice's acceptability. Nobody applauds the guy that walks into the video store's back room. The negative stigma tied to paying for sexual entertainment will continue to exist.

Providing for the safety of deviant and prudish citizens alike, the U.S. government would be wise to run superfly pimps everywhere out of business and take over the industry's reins. Governmentally regulated prostitution would greatly decrease the rape and assault inflicted on call girls who are too afraid to report attacks. Talking to cops about problems with your pimp isn't a good career move.

And no, this isn't going to encourage more men and women to succumb to the glamour associated with whoredom. The unfortunate souls leading these lives were largely sexually abused as children and/or chose their career because it was the most viable option.

Whether or not to put your body on the auction block is a rather cut-and-dry question. If you're convinced to hook after haggling over your price, then the whole self-respect and morality thing was never really present.

Hooking is about the money. It's not like an internship. Hookers don't do it for the experience. The perks suck, but it pays better than busing tables at Denny's.

Can the government combat this allure of money? Reducing prices may discourage some possible applicants, but demand among lonely perverts would skyrocket and recreate underground prostitution rings. Some economically astute pimp would surely attempt to undercut the government's price and steal market share. The government should be able to out compete the illegal prostitution rings, however, by offering their stable of hoes both safety and higher wages.

Overhauling the moral framework of American society is not likely to happen any time soon. So I guess the only words of advice I can offer my lonely, law-abiding, morally lax readers would be to place an order for a Filipino mail-order bride. Yeah, buying a wife is much less morally reprehensible than buying sex.

Michael Carlton would like to wish a happy 21st birthday to Meg and Laurel, who provided no inspiration whatsoever for this column. Really, they didn't. Proposition him at carlton@email.unc.edu.

## READERS' FORUM

### Columnist Should Hone Critical Thinking Skills And Not Be 'Taken In'

easily "taken in" as anyone she criticizes.

Andrea R. Granados  
Graduate Student  
School of Education

TO THE EDITOR:

It is not surprising that Rachel Hockfield finds it difficult to "ace" her philosophy papers. From the simple fact that there was a governmental proclamation of Thanksgiving, she reaches the amazing conclusion that not only is the entire story of the Puritans' Thanksgiving an invention, but also, "There wasn't even a Squanto." While I would never say there isn't a great deal to debunk in the traditional accounts of the first Thanksgiving, Ms. Hockfield would do well to improve her research skills. Very basic Web searches — hardly the only research tool available — turn up considerable well-researched information on Tisquantum (Squanto) of the Wampanoag peoples. I'm not talking about reverent homages to a candy-corn cultural exchange but numerous examinations of historical accounts and the diverse perspectives on the motives of all involved. If the writer wishes to bemoan our willingness to accept these stories uncritically, she should hone her own critical thinking skills in exploring the alternatives. Otherwise, she is as

### Student Recreation Center Is Inadequate, UNC Can Do Better

TO THE EDITOR:

As an upperclassman who lives off campus I have been pushed to joining a gym rather than being able to use the Student Recreation Center. This has been particularly frustrating because I don't particularly enjoy spending to extra money, but the facilities offered leave much to be desired. Not only is parking an issue, but the size and quality of the building itself are also lacking. Compared to other schools, like UNC-Wilmington and University of Georgia, our recreation center does not provide adequately for our students. There need to be more cardiovascular machines and more space for lifting weights.

Amy Noon  
Junior  
Communications and Psychology