

BOARD EDITORIALS

NO MORE BULLYING

Federal courts were right to protect consumers and restrict the ability of the recording industry to force ISPs to reveal music pirates' names.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia recently delivered a major blow to the Recording Industry Association of America.

The court ruled Dec. 19 that the RIAA can no longer force Internet service providers to supply the names of alleged file-sharers. These subpoenas have been key to the RIAA's "fast-track" approach to scaring violators into settling before a formal lawsuit.

The Digital Millennium Copyright Act, intended to guard against large-scale piracy, does not give the RIAA the power to invade individuals' rights to privacy. Also, it does not give the recording industry the right to damage Internet service providers, which rely on consumers' trust.

So what does this mean for students on campus? First of all, Internet users should know that they shouldn't download music if they can't afford to get caught.

That said, the court decision was a huge victory for those people who engage in illegal file-sharing. The ruling undoubtedly will give both current and potential music pirates more confidence in downloading their favorite tunes without having to pay for them.

At the very least, the RIAA will have to turn to a more expensive process and formally file suit against users before finding out their identities.

It's about time the U.S. legal system decided to put a leash on the RIAA. No private entity should have the sweeping powers the RIAA presumes it has.

The recording industry's rabid pursuit of illegal file-sharers has trampled the rights of individuals as well as other companies. The RIAA, in its self-righteous crusade against those it is here to serve — music listeners — should not be allowed to ride roughshod over the U.S. public.

The RIAA's concerns about music piracy are reasonable, since industry officials are trying to protect

their revenues. After all, profit is the primary reason businesses come into being in the first place.

However, the methods that the RIAA uses are dishonorable at the least. The industry has tried to force ISPs to perform what can be expensive and time-consuming searches to find 12-year-old girls or 80-year-old senior citizens to sue.

These tactics finally are being recognized in the court system for what they are: bullying. And nobody likes a bully.

Ultimately, the RIAA will hurt only itself. It is alienating its own customers as well as abusing the Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998. It is doubtful that Congress intended for the recording industry to terrorize young children with the threat of a lawsuit.

And let's face it, the high price of CDs isn't helping the RIAA's cause, either. The major music labels are placing the blame for declining sales solely on the shoulders of consumers and have failed to make significant changes to their respective business models.

People are overlooking another aspect of the file-sharing debate: the precedent being set by the RIAA in its drive to eliminate piracy.

If the RIAA is able to get the most recent ruling against it overturned, then other industries and companies might follow in their lead. Imagine software companies, clothing stores or even your local convenience mart being able to create and enforce their own laws.

The battle between the music industry and consumers is not likely to see a conclusion in the near future. The RIAA has found that its tactics have been effective, and the association isn't likely to stop.

Yet despite the numbers, the RIAA has been losing the battle of public opinion. Perhaps the recent court decision and the industry's growing unpopularity will compel the RIAA to devote more of its resources toward developing a compromise.

FAIR EXPECTATIONS

The NCAA should require universities to graduate at least 50 percent of their football players within 6 years in order to attain a bowl bid.

A recent proposal from the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics might just put the "student" back in "student-athlete."

The group's recommendation calls on the NCAA to establish a 50-percent graduation rate over six years as a prerequisite for collegiate football programs seeking bowl eligibility.

The NCAA has yet to take action on the proposal, and many skeptics doubt that universities or their alumni would ever shift attention from preseason rankings to class rankings.

The new rule would have a dramatic impact on the face of college football.

A few top teams — most notably Virginia, where 76 percent graduate after six years — would maintain their eligibility should the policy be implemented.

But, sadly, an overwhelming majority of top-tier programs would be ineligible if the benchmark was graduating half the team after six years.

The Rose Bowl wouldn't have occurred, because Michigan wouldn't have been eligible. In fact, only the Capital One Bowl and the EV1.net Houston Bowl would have been played. That's two games out of 28.

The rule would have averted the split-championship trauma brought on by the Bowl Championship Series.

Southern California, where 61 percent of players graduate within six years, would have been the definitive national champion, as Oklahoma and Louisiana State would have been ineligible, with 33 and 40 percent graduation rates, respectively.

Of course, if games such as the Rose Bowl did not take place conferences and schools would lose large chunks of revenue, but the NCAA can no longer excuse the downright pitiful graduation rates that mar the integrity of college football.

By failing to graduate players, powerhouse programs gamble with the welfare of their student-ath-

letes. Schools frequently use athletes for the duration of their college career without providing the education needed for them to succeed outside the football arena.

The NCAA cannot sit idly by and let this standard continue to harm student-athletes.

In order to curb corruption, the NCAA should call for the mandatory graduation rate to rise each year, in increments ranging from 5 percent to 10 percent.

By implementing the 50-percent policy gradually, programs will be allotted sufficient time to shape up.

And shape up they will, if the big bowl games hang in the balance. Coaches will ensure that their student-athletes make the grade.

Television audiences would be appeased as well because the gradual implementation would allow them to continue to watch their favorite bowl games.

Gradual implementation isn't just taking the easy way out. A sudden hike to 50 percent would devastate the game, leaving us with New Year's Day marquee match-ups such as Duke versus Vanderbilt.

In fact, there is nothing easy about this process. Universities must revamp tutoring programs drastically and impose strict regulations on practice time.

This is especially important in the new Atlantic Coast Conference, where expansion will have athletes on the road for long treks between Miami and Boston.

Safeguards will need to be implemented in order to make sure officials don't skip the educating and take the low road in order to graduate 50 percent of their athletes by any means necessary.

The University is — or should be — in the business of educating and ultimately graduating its student-athletes, the vast majority of whom will not play professional sports.

Education always should remain the top priority; football is and should remain entertainment. If universities can't keep these priorities in order, the NCAA should set them straight.

ON THE DAY'S NEWS

"To furnish the means of acquiring knowledge is ... the greatest benefit that can be conferred upon mankind."

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, U.S. PRESIDENT

EDITORIAL CARTOON

By Andrew Stevens, crazyaj@email.unc.edu



COMMENTARY

Liberal students, professors bully conservative minority

As a whole, conservative students on campus are subject to being victimized by liberals, especially within the classroom.

Granted, you will hear terms such as "diversity" and "academic freedom" around campus, yet liberals, professors and students alike, are the most intolerable individuals around, crying foul whenever a conservative speaks out or a non-Socialist speaker lectures on campus.

While it might be hard to bring politics into courses dealing with the natural sciences and the like, those who have the misfortune of taking a liberal arts class will find it commonplace to have a liberal slant in almost every class discussion.

While you might expect this in political science courses, you can also find it in English courses. While it might seem odd to have a slant in such classes, it makes sense once you realize that the majority of the professors on campus are close-minded, overbearing, liberal Democrats.

If you have doubts that this is true in your department, I'll send you proof.

I will exemplify the problems bias causes in the classroom by providing personal examples from my majors — political science and public policy — to demonstrate the intellectual dishonesty and bigotry spewing from professors.

Last time I checked, there were only two registered Republicans in the Department of Political Science. However, even they will tell you to close the door to their office before they will confess their conservative beliefs.

You'd get a quicker confession from Pete Rose than you would from a Republican professor.



BRENTLEY TANNER
MADE WITH PRIDE IN THE U.S.A.

Graduate students teaching classes are even more fearful. I had a graduate student once who, when I mentioned that I noticed he was a Republican, ran off faster than illegal immigrants from the border police.

So what can be done to alleviate this problem? First, there should be a new "Carolina Covenant" between professors and students that would keep professors from inappropriately shunning dissenting viewpoints (i.e., all conservative thought).

For example, last semester I had a public policy class in which, instead of providing an intelligent discourse to voice his disagreement, the professor only ridiculed the students with conservative viewpoints.

College classes should be an open forum for discussion where every person justifies their viewpoint in a clear argument.

Ridiculing conservative students destroys that forum and restricts the opportunity for both conservative and liberal students to open their minds to new ideas.

However, we might just have to forgive liberal professors. Ridicule is perhaps the only recourse professors have, considering that most liberal ideology is unsound and unreasonable.

This same professor illustrated the frustration ridiculous liberal ideology causes when he couldn't come up with a reason why the

state should spend millions of dollars on raising three bridges to 12 feet so deer could pass underneath.

I don't know about you, but I've never encountered a 12-foot deer, nor one smart enough to choose a designated pass.

Another solution could be for all professors to leave politics at their office doors.

Yeah, right. Politics is important. However, that includes both liberal and conservative ideology.

Don't expect conservative students who disagree with wonderful assertions — such as "Bush is like Hitler," or that "Socialism is alive and prosperous" — to stay quiet while their professors attack their beliefs.

Finally, I would just like to make it clear that unlike the intolerant liberals afflicting campus, I am willing to listen and respect other people's opinions, so long as the same civility is allowed when I express my own.

So brace yourself for the following: abortion is wrong, affirmative action is a racist and superficial policy and capitalism has proven successful, despite the theoretical models of our economics professors who don the hammer and sickle instead of old glory.

I hope this column will allow people to understand the frustration that conservative students face every time they go to class at UNC.

For you liberals, God Bless America and no place else.

For you conservatives, "Let's roll."

Contact Brentley Tanner, a senior political science and public policy major, at gtanner@email.unc.edu.

READERS' FORUM

Anniversary of Roe v. Wade evokes tragic reminder

TO THE EDITOR:

Jan. 22 will mark the 31st anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision. It is a gloomy anniversary.

What can our nation say about 31 years of abortion on demand?

Is there any regret for the 43 million aborted children? How many potential scientists, doctors, lawyers, teachers and priests were aborted?

Is there any regret over the countless women wounded, killed and assaulted in the abortion mills?

How will most people remember this anniversary?

Many abortion opponents will attend the March for Life in Washington, D.C.

My wife, our two children and I will make the trip to Washington to stand up for life.

We want to witness to our government the horrors of abortion.

We want to let them know that legalized abortion is unacceptable in a nation founded on certain inalienable rights: life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

I wonder if the March for Life will receive any press coverage this year?

Every year, the story is rarely talked about in the mainstream media, even though it is consistently one of the biggest marches

in Washington.

For those who have never spoken out against abortion, I ask that they begin to attend pro-life events and support pro-life groups such as pregnancy crisis centers.

All it takes for evil to succeed is for the good to do nothing.

Will our nation endure another 31 years of slaughtering the innocent?

I pray that it will not.

How can we continue to sleep at night with 4,000 children dying every day?

Many say that abortion is no longer a relevant issue.

Even though many years have passed since Roe v. Wade, abortion is a new tragedy because the babies who die today never died before.

Thomas Messe
Groton, CT

TO SUBMIT A LETTER: The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments. 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 them to editdesk@unc.edu.

DTH seeks extra Viewpoints

Rarely, if ever, is anything black and white. There are more than two sides to every argument. Everyone has his or her own 2 cents.

While these notions exist as clichés, they also serve as reasons why The Daily Tar Heel is striving to present perspectives from outside its staff — in addition to those of its editorial board members, columnists and cartoonists.

Starting Monday, the DTH editorial page will continue the tradition of publishing a Viewpoints page every other week.

Each of these sets of columns, opinion statements and cartoons will tackle an issue of particular relevance to the University community. Every section will be opened by a summation of the issue and its pertinence.

It has been some time since the editorial page has produced such a section consistently.

The editorial board aims to evaluate as many facets of every issue as possible before reaching a decision about which stances to take in its daily editorials.

We will attempt to approach every argument rationally and use all resources at our disposal to research topics of board discussion. However, our lack of experience with some issues



ELLIOTT DUBE
EDITORIAL PAGE ASSOCIATE EDITOR

means that we will be unable to do them complete justice.

Using the Viewpoints section, the DTH will be able to give certain themes the attention and space they deserve. The paper's readership will have more to read and absorb about the important issues that affect students, faculty and staff members alike.

On Monday, the Viewpoints section will deal with the subject of Carolina North. University officials recently presented a draft proposal for the satellite campus. The proposal must be approved by the Board of Trustees before discussions and negotiations between University and town officials can begin in earnest.

The Jan. 26 Viewpoints will take on the contentious issue of tuition. With the BOT expected to approve a campus-based tuition hike this month, the cost of education at UNC once again has moved to the forefront of

campus dialogue.

In our search for insightful, substantial columns about the tuition debate, the editorial page staff has been compiling a short list of university officials and higher education experts across the country.

We also are hunting for an informed student perspective. Students interested in submitting a 650-word column detailing their views or concerns about tuition should contact me at 962-0750 or editdesk@unc.edu.

As is evident in the daily printing of our Readers' Forum, the DTH is receptive to opinions from across UNC's intellectual, political and cultural spectra.

The biweekly Viewpoints section gives the editorial page the chance to frame these opinions and present them in greater capacity.

We hope it will enlighten our readers by giving them access to more perspectives of the topics that matter most to them.

Done well, Viewpoints will act as a tool for the editorial page to highlight some of the gray area that is inherent in any dynamic issue.

Contact Elliott Dube, editorial page associate editor, at dube@unc.edu.

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