

BOARD EDITORIALS

UNCLEAR RESULTS

The votes have been tallied, but the outcome of the student body president election is undecided — and officials should tread carefully.

On Jan. 21, most of the candidates for student body president gathered on the steps of South Building and signed a pledge to conduct clean campaigns.

Unfortunately, this election has proven to be anything but spotless.

What actually took place Tuesday during the voting time frame hasn't been made clear. Unofficial results show that Lily West received seven more votes than Matt Calabria in the runoff election. Also true is that certain campaign violations have been alleged and have prevented the results of the contest from being certified.

Other than those things, no one — not the Board of Elections, not the candidates, not The Daily Tar Heel Editorial Board and not the student body — can be exactly sure of what happened and what will happen.

It's a shame that the election has been thrown into disarray in this fashion. West and Calabria are two of the best contenders that the student body could have asked for. They both are highly competent and qualified individuals. Their platforms are divergent enough that this race easily could have been run on

issues alone. But it seems as if one or both campaigns crossed election guidelines.

The Board of Elections needs to investigate the allegations fairly yet expediently. Also, because the board is a public body, it should share important information with students.

Members of the board should know that the financial statements of the West and Calabria campaigns are public records. They should realize that by refusing to release these figures and other key facts, they might be venturing outside legal boundaries. It's their job to be up-front about their findings.

Reports of allegations and mentions of campaign wrongdoings are sure to increase student interest in the election. But ultimately, this uncertainty and controversy is bad for all students at UNC. One can only hope that mistakes made by both campaign members and officials will be reviewed and remedied before the next student body president election takes place.

Officials need to determine the facts and, if necessary, punish those in violation of election rules. The integrity of student politics at this University is at stake.

A FLAWED PROGRAM

Some states understandably are rejecting "No Child Left Behind," a program that takes money away from schools that need it the most.

When Congress passed President Bush's landmark "No Child Left Behind" education legislation in 2001, it seemed to signify the actual fruition of compassionate conservatism.

Liberal legend Senator Ted Kennedy backed the legislation and on a bipartisan basis, Congress overwhelmingly supported the bill.

Now three years later, some states want to throw out the curriculum. Many states are rejecting "No Child Left Behind," citing the program's lack of resources to fund schools that cannot meet the National Information Technology Council's testing-based standards.

The concept of accountability compromises much of the philosophy behind NITC. The program sets tough federal standards for public schools, standards which are then tracked through standardized testing. Schools that fail to create a required performance level then risk losing much of their funding.

Having educational standards is acceptable, but cutting funding after targeting a school as requiring more resources seems counterproductive. No Child Left Behind represents an unfounded mandate, a con-

sequence driven directive leveled on the states by the federal government, but without the necessary accompanying resources to meet the program's standards.

In fact, in order to comply with certain elements of the program, states have to spend more money than they receive through the program's own federal grants.

Most school districts use local property taxes as their main source of revenue. A side effect of this system, however, provides far more substantial funding for schools in affluent areas than poorer schools.

Within these poorer school districts, many students lack the enrichment opportunities before entering the system that students in wealthier districts benefit from. This and other factors eventually translate into poorer schools producing lower standardized test scores, resulting in reduced funding.

This represents the exact opposite of what these schools need to remain competitive. So long as school funding remains tied to property tax levels, schools in poorer areas will require greater resource allocation in order to correct a pre-existing inequity. The funding restrictions of NITC merely aggravate an existing problem.

DIFFERENT SPEECH

In upholding the National Do Not Call Registry, a federal court is not violating the free speech rights of telemarketers affected by the list.

On Tuesday, the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the National Do Not Call Registry that went into effect last October.

By registering to be included on the list, U.S. citizens can ensure they will not be contacted via telephone by commercial telemarketers.

The court said it was acting in the interests of "safeguarding personal privacy and reducing the danger of telemarketing abuse," The Associated Press reported.

Freedom of speech falls under the umbrella of the First Amendment, and telemarketers have been maintaining that the registry violates their constitutional rights. But the court was correct in ultimately disregarding this claim.

The amendment's freedom of speech clause protects the expression of opinions and views that might go against government policy and mainstream thought. It was designed to prevent the persecution of people who say what they think.

Telemarketers' speech is not political. Their speech won't get them punished for offending the sensibilities of other people or groups. Many tele-

marketing companies are trying to sell products or services over the telephone.

These companies have complained that they are being treated differently than charities, political groups and telephone surveyors, who are exempt from the registry rules. But there is a difference between those who use the telephone to sell things and those who use it to further the public good.

Charitable institutions are in the business of curing societal ills, and polling organizations need to conduct telephone surveys in order to gauge public opinion.

Meanwhile, citizens should have the ability to avoid solicitations for money. They can change the channel when television commercials air. They can throw away mailed advertisements. They can delete solicitations e-mail messages before even reading them.

However, they can't stop companies from calling them — and they should have a way to stop these potential invasions of privacy.

Most telemarketers are commercial entities, not political expressers. Therefore, the National Do Not Call Registry does not violate the First Amendment.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The above editorials are the opinions of solely The Daily Tar Heel Editorial Board, and were reached after open debate. The board consists of seven board members, the editorial page associate editor, the editorial page editor and the DTH editor. The 2003-04 DTH editor decided not to vote on the board and not to write board editorials.

READERS' FORUM

Decision to invite North to campus will benefit UNC

TO THE EDITOR:

I would like to salute the Student Congress Finance Committee for its decision to allocate money to bring Oliver North to speak this fall. I would also like to salute the College Republicans on their decision to invite Mr. North to our campus.

Oliver North graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy and served for 22 years as a Marine.

He has been rewarded for service in combat with the Silver Star, the Bronze Star for Valor and two Purple Hearts for combat wounds.

He is also an author, a small business founder, an inventor who holds three U.S. patents, a syndicated columnist and a former U.S. Senate candidate. He also hosts the show "War Stories" on Fox News Channel.

Having Oliver North this fall close to the third anniversary of Sept. 11 will benefit our university greatly.

He is a great American Hero that can lift the spirit of student patriotism. He will help to unify our study body by reminding us of the sacrifices that those before us have endured and of those who are bearing that burden now so that we can live in freedom.

Andrew Hogan
Junior
Political Science

Senator's comments about UVa. were uninformed

TO THE EDITOR:

I am writing in response to a Tuesday article headlined "Easley stance mildly praised."

In the article, N.C. Sen. Tony Rand, D-Cumberland, was referenced as saying many public universities across the country are cutting back on professors and becoming more privatized. Rand cited Washington State University and the University of Virginia as examples.

His comment on faculty numbers at U.Va. is incorrect. In 1991, we had 1,653 full-time instructional and research faculty members. By 2002, that number had reached 2,004 full-time instructional and research faculty members.

He also incorrectly cites U.Va. as an institution that is becoming more privatized. While it's true that U.Va., with Virginia Polytechnic Institute and the College of William & Mary, have proposed a new relationship with the Commonwealth of Virginia, we have been and always will be a public institution of higher education.

Although the proposal seeks increased flexibility in the areas of procurement, personnel and capital outlay, each university would remain a public institution with boards appointed by the governor, confirmed by the Va. General Assembly and accountable to the

state's citizens, just as they are now.

Carol Wood
University Relations
University of Virginia

Even offensive speech is protected under freedom

TO THE EDITOR:

Kelly White and Trever Hoppe responded to Brentley Tanner's Feb. 12 column by attacking free speech, free thought and a free society.

One of the main tenets of our liberal intellectual system is that people must be free to speak, think and criticize without physical or governmental interventions.

This right to free speech extends to all, regardless of how unpopular — or even how offensive — an individual or group's opinion is. Tanner cited a student's comments that homosexuality is "a sin and personally disgusting."

While most of us will agree that these anti-homosexual views are blatantly wrong and terribly ignorant, we must not squelch an individual's freedom not only to have but also to voice his or her opinion.

Personally, I hope for a world in which my sexuality is an issue only for me my partner.

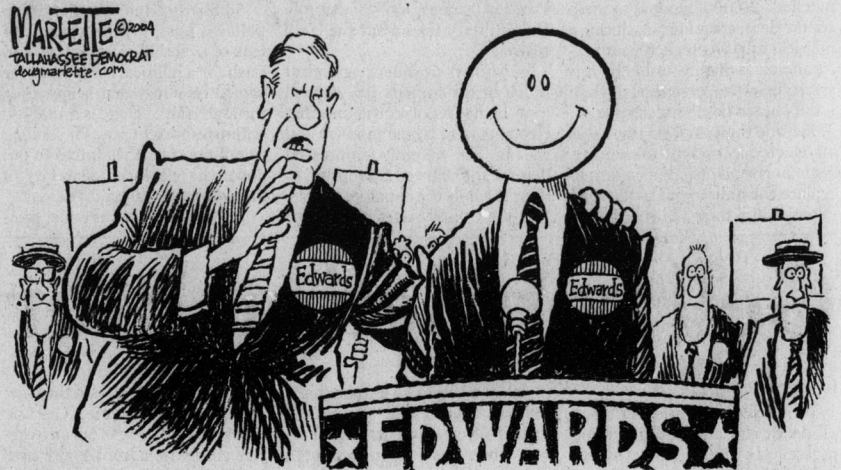
Nevertheless, I am not willing to sever the system of free thought and free communication that has brought us science, social progress, democracy, personal liberties and the United States of America itself.

ON THE DAY'S NEWS

"I feel like I'm taking crazy pills!"

MUGATU, CHARACTER, "ZOOGLANDER" (2001)

EDITORIAL CARTOON



"Y'KNOW, SENATOR, THERE'S SUCH A THING AS A CAMPAIGN THAT'S TOO POSITIVE!"

COMMENTARY

State's correctional system is in great need of change

North Carolina's Department of Corrections is in dire need of an overhaul.

Everyday in the news, it seems like you hear about a new murder, rape, kidnapping, you name it. However, instead of incarcerating these culpable individuals, our state prefers a nicer, gentler approach that does anything but help the innocent.

Enough is enough. It's about time the state adopted a new strategy in handling criminals, one with greater penalties and less of a tendency to administer light sentences as seen in parole and probation programs.

However, before you can provide longer sentences, you must deal with the pervasive problem of overcrowding in our state prisons.

How do you go about doing this? Very simple, so long as you adopt new methods.

Primarily, the state needs to build more prisons with greater capacity to ensure that criminals stay in the duration of their sentence, instead of being released after only a small portion of their sentence is completed.

According to the John Locke Foundation, people found guilty of misdemeanors are incarcerated for approximately 6 percent of their sentence, while felons are slightly higher at 8 percent.

What do you do with the prison inmates? You put them to work instead of allowing them more leisure time.

Nowadays, prisoners spend their time lifting weights and playing basketball.

That's smart. Make murderers and rapists bigger, stronger and faster.

On a tour of Central Prison, I



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

witnessed a guy bench-pressing more than 600 pounds for repetitions. I don't know about you, but that goes beyond making sure prisoners get ample exercise.

Our grandparents often say, "I remember back in my day, prisoners wore black and white stripes and worked on chain-gangs."

However, instead of just simply raking up trash, the state prisoners need to be doing simple tasks often left to public employees who are overpaid.

Consequently, the prisoners could in turn pay for the subsequent "room and board" forfeited by state taxpayers.

Nothing says rehabilitation like having to foot the bill for your crime, instead of getting "free housing" for your stay and play.

In addition, some aspects of prison systems need to be privatized via a public-private partnership to increase efficiency.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that prisons should be privatized fully because it is the duty of the government to handle criminals. However, the competitive nature of privatization would save some incurred costs by allowing firms to compete for employment roles within the prison system, such as guards, medical and mental health staff and outsourced instructors to educate inmates for a rehabilitative purpose.

It should still be the power of the state to oversee these compa-

nies, mandating the same requirements found in government prisons (i.e., minimum amounts of staff, living conditions, etc.) This in turn would prevent debacles such as Mountain View Correctional Facility in Spruce Pine and the Pamlico Correctional Facility in Bayboro, our state's feigned attempts at prison privatization.

Before I finish, let me suggest that sometimes incarcerating individuals for long durations isn't always the best solution. Granted, cases such as Alan Gell's prove that the death penalty is sometimes inappropriately and inequitably administered.

For the indigent defendants who can't afford David Rudolf and the subsequent legal technicalities, the system is usually not fair. I would suggest that the requirement for capital punishment be raised in a manner that required greater evidence.

That or bring Singapore's caning to North Carolina.

However, I have no pity for individuals such as Joseph Smith (the suspect in custody in connection with the kidnapping and murder of 11-year old Charlie Brucia last week), nor do I have it for individuals such as John Allen Muhammad and Lee Malvo or cop-killers, such as the Golphin brothers and Matthew Grant.

For individuals who are guilty of heinous crimes, nothing less than the death penalty is appropriate.

The lyrics from a Toby Keith song say it all. "It's time the long arm of the law put a few more in the ground. Send them all to their maker, and he'll settle them down." My sentiments exactly.

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If you have any concerns or comments about our coverage, please contact Ombudsman Eric Gauschi at gautschi@email.unc.edu or 918-1311.

I am not of the mindset that a sporting audience need be completely controlled and on their best behavior during a high-intensity sporting match. I say that the crowd should provide a competitive edge for the home team. You criticize Duke fans for their outspokenness, but I ask you this: How often do the Devils lose at home?

Last I checked, we play to win. There are limits, but a little verbal harassment is not one of them. I'm of the old school, baby.

I advocate tippin' back a few, joining the procession to the Dome, and screaming my face off. If you're pissin' off someone around you, they'll let you know. You say that we are supposed to be "classy." I'll save classy for dinner, at the game I'll be an ass.

Scott Price
Senior
Dramatic Art

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.

Sam Lord
Senior
Chemistry

Editorial board needs to lighten up, enjoy basketball

TO THE EDITOR:

(The Feb. 18 editorial entitled "Hold your tongue") discourages students from using vulgarity to express disgust with the officiating at UNC basketball games. I say who gives a damn.