

BOARD EDITORIALS

# LACK OF EDUCATION

The state got the lottery up and running today, but it has not begun a gambling-addiction education program that was in the original deal.

To anyone reading the newspapers the last few months, it seems North Carolina's lottery has become nothing but one giant debacle.

Not only has the state let questionable practices guide the legislation's wording and misled the public about the use of lottery profits, it seems it has failed to put into place a system to educate our youngsters about the dangers of gambling addiction.

**BLOGGIN'**  
with the  
Opinion Desk

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The lottery will make its debut today, starting what is sure to be a popular game in the state. However, the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, armed with \$1 million, has yet to pick which programs will be implemented to teach children about gambling addiction.

Smith Worth of the department told The Daily Tar Heel initially that officials are planning to have brochures and help lines. But they're still shopping around for the right programs for youth education.

Hot new super-fly lotto logo? Check.  
Games in place? Check.

Inform public of real intent for profits months later? Check.

It seems officials can get off their duffs to get the important stuff done, consequences be damned.

Gambling is like many other things that can be dangerous, such as drinking, smoking or even overeating. It is also a choice — people must be 18 to purchase a lottery ticket on their own.

But if the state created this system and promised a remedy in light of possible addictions, then it has to deliver.

Why is it officials can make sure to have to games ready to go even when the lottery legislation is in the state courts, but can't deal with details such as gambling-addiction education when the money is already sitting around?

It seems misplaced priorities have left us putting the cart before the horse: valuing money over children.

State officials hammered us for months about the need for a lottery in North Carolina and how they would make sure children were made aware of the risk of gambling.

They did the first part, but we need the rest — now.

# CLAIMING THE PAST

With the rechristening of Hinton James North Residence Hall in honor of a slave, the University is finally beginning to accept its whole history.

After four years, Hinton James North Residence Hall finally has escaped the daunting shadow of its similarly named predecessor.

As creative as the handle "Hinton James North" might have been, the residence hall's new name recognizes far more than its relative directional location.

The residence hall's new moniker — George Moses Horton Residence Hall — acknowledges an aspect of our history that is difficult but necessary to face.

As part of the campus's intellectual life, the recognition of Horton is fitting, and it is long past time we recognize the unnoticed talents of that dark time.

Horton, who lived during the 1800s in Chatham County, was the first black slave to publish a book in the South. A poet, Horton walked to the University to sell his poetry and have it transcribed as he recited.

The shame of the South's regretful past often prevents the community from confronting its own ties to the institution of slavery.

In designating the hall a memorial in honor of Horton, we are acknowledging the people that University history often glosses over.

Like the Unsung Founders' Memorial in McCorkle Place, Horton Residence Hall further recognizes the

contributions of enslaved and free individuals who helped to create the University we now know.

Buildings on campus are often named for a wealthy alumnus or supporter who donated a significant chunk of change to the University. But these days, most construction is made possible by federal bonds and grants, and The N.C. Education Bond Residence Hall just doesn't have that same ring.

Craige North and Ehringhaus have not yet been renamed, and the University should continue to recognize figures its history has cast aside.

But what's even more important than memorials and buildings is the education of students about the history of the University and the state.

So while the renaming is a good step, let's not stop at a residence hall's door when it comes to respecting our unsung founders.

### Overdue recognition

**Previously:** Hinton James North Residence Hall

**New designation:** George Moses Horton Residence Hall

# START IT UP — AGAIN

With the rejection of the nominee for Honor Court chairman, the whole nomination process should be restarted according to the Student Code.

As one of the last official acts of the 87th session of Student Congress, representatives rejected departing Student Body President Seth Dearmin's nominee for Honor Court chairman.

Congress was right to reject Mark Ihnat to be the next chairman and to cause the process to be started anew.

Yes, Ihnat is qualified and he has the Honor Court behind him; we do not question whether he will be an effective chairman.

However, the selection process that led to his nomination was tainted by predetermination and lacked proper competition.

The Honor Court met and voted on which individual should be the next chairman, clearing the way for his application to go to the selection committee — and to his eventual nomination — with little challenge.

That undemocratic process was discarded from the Instrument of Student Governance in 2003, yet somehow the process has continued. It doesn't take much to see why it was dropped and why it has persisted.

The judicial branch is the least democratic of the branches: None of its members are elected or are not directly accountable to the people. If not for the

oversight by the executive and Congress, it could run completely willy-nilly.

Meanwhile, it is tempting to allow a branch that requires so much technical knowledge to decide who is going to run it — or at least have some input.

But while the judicial branch should have input, it shouldn't be allowed to nominate its own chairman — that's just too much power in one branch.

So the process should begin again. If Ihnat still wants the job, let him apply again. And if the Honor Court still wants him to be the chairman, let its members say so.

But let's not have that be the end all, be all. If someone else wants to apply then they should feel free to and the selection committee should give them a fair chance at being a nominee if they're qualified.

And while we're at it, the Student Code dictates that the Student Attorney General — approved Tuesday — should have been in office almost a month ago. Good job there, Mr. Dearmin. Apparently, the Honor Court isn't the only branch making things up as it goes along.

Problems such as illegal and late nominations to key offices shouldn't happen. To every incoming student government member, please read the Code.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The above editorials are the opinions solely of The Daily Tar Heel editorial board and were reached after open debate. The board consists of six board members, the associate opinion editor, the opinion editor and the DTH editor. The 2005-06 DTH editor decided not to vote on the board and not to write board editorials. Address concerns to Public Editor Elizabeth Gregory at elizagre@email.unc.edu.

## READERS' FORUM

### Vigils are a waste of energy that could be used for action

TO THE EDITOR:

I found myself in agreement with Wednesday's editorial "A futile exercise" about yet another vigil in Polk Place signifying campus unity — a "visible stand" that was taken.

My vision must be failing me, because after the umpteenth vigil in the past month or so, it seems as if they are beginning to lose their real meaning as well.

Earlier this year a column in The Daily Tar Heel spoke of taking real stands against issues, rather than throwing around nice-sounding words and patting ourselves on the back for taking advantage of our First Amendment rights to free speech and assembly.

Sure, vigils are beautiful events, but where do they lead?

Now that our solidarity with the Muslim community has supposedly been reinforced, what next?

How will we continue to improve it?

There is more to exhibiting our campus solidarity than standing in Polk Place for a while.

How about we brainstorm some ideas for not only dialogue, but some sort of action to ensure the Pit accident never happens again, backlashes against the Muslim community in reaction to such

events are prevented and, in general, people of different ideologies are brought together.

Vigils are a start, but when they begin to feel repetitive, it is a reminder that they are a building block to bigger things and bigger actions.

It is startling how quickly we lose sight of that fact and get lost in the symbolism of vigils and the narcissism that results from impassioned speeches and tirades that allow us to admire our own voices.

I'd be more than happy myself to work with campus organization leaders to work on inciting some real action.

*Bennett Campbell  
Freshman  
Undeclared*

### Check out spring sports and see why you should be there

TO THE EDITOR:

Contrary to popular opinion, the 2005-06 UNC athletics season did not end when the men's basketball team lost.

I am emphasizing that to encourage the student body to support the other UNC sports this spring.

If you look at the numbers, many of our teams are ranked top 10 in the country, including the baseball team, both the wom-

en's track and field and lacrosse teams, and the women's tennis teams.

So as the temperature goes up and the semester winds down, I encourage you to come out and support spring sports on campus.

After all, with the strength of our athletics program, the Tar Heels are bound to win another championship soon.

*Leslie Espy  
Intern  
Athletic Communications*

### SUDAN group goes beyond just Pit events with action

TO THE EDITOR:

We wholeheartedly agree with Nathaniel Gindele's suggestions in his letter on March 24.

Weekly vigils in the Pit are not nearly adequate for raising awareness about the crisis in Darfur.

That is why SUDAN has planned events for the remainder of the semester.

The first week of April, we are constructing a mock refugee camp in Polk Place in which any student can participate.

The week also will include a film screening and a dinner on April 6, the anniversary of the Rwandan genocide.

The week's events will culminate

## FROM THE DAY'S NEWS

"It's really unfortunate that we've had to talk about the fact that there will be addicted gamblers in North Carolina."

STEPHEN DANIELS, DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH FOR THE N.C. FAMILY POLICY COUNCIL, ON THE N.C. LOTTERY

## EDITORIAL CARTOON

By Mason Phillips, mphil@email.unc.edu



## COMMENTARY

# Straw polls for '08 election are not to be taken seriously

If there's one thing I learned while working toward increasing student voter turnout these last two years, it's that students like to elect presidents.

We had about 10,000 people show up to vote in 2004, and in 2005, well, I think we could have filled up one of the spacious bathrooms in Linda's with students eager to keep this town from descending into a towering inferno of chaos and destruction.

That being said, I'm sure many of you are preparing for the '08 elections. I know, I know — some might say I'm getting ahead of myself; there are some minor elections in the middle involving, among other things, House members that could singlehandedly deprive the Republicans of total control of our federal government.

But I think we can all agree that those people are of no real importance — they aren't the president of the United States of America.

So, let's get to the straw polls. That's right, those wacky politicians are already conducting polls that are accurate to plus or minus three points, in which one point equals about half of those surveyed. The results might shock you.

In the Southern Republican Leadership Conference, news outlets are reporting that Sen. McCain, R-Ariz., lost his footing, winning less than 5 percent of the total vote — while Sen. Bill Frist, R-Tenn., will most certainly win the next Republican presidential primary after an admirable showing of about 37 percent.

In between were the current president — ineligible for the position because of a little thing called the Constitution — and two politicians whose name you've probably never heard. But don't worry — in a couple of years it will most likely be impossible to escape them.

When you turn on the television, their smiling faces will be



JEREMY SPIVEY  
ALL OVER THE MAP

greeting you. A telemarketer will be telling you how they love children and hate spending money — well, except on ads. They will leave neither your Web browsers nor your dreams.

But back to the straw poll. Picky statisticians might be reluctant to trust the polling techniques, as there were minor technicalities that could dirty the results.

McCain, for instance, was dismissive of an early poll and specifically asked people to write in Bush's instead of his own name, saying, "If any friends here are thinking about voting for me, please don't."

The "don't vote for me" tactic seems an increasingly unlikely one for potential candidates as the Republican primaries near and might have convinced a few people that would otherwise have voted for McCain.

Additionally, Frist might have had a few advantages that slightly skewed the data.

The conference was held in Tennessee, for instance, where as majority leader of the Senate he deposits the bucketloads of money he picks up on behalf of that state. Also, not convinced he could win a straw poll of his own state, Frist might also have affected the results by busing in supporters from the other side of the state and paying their \$150 registration fee just so they could vote for him.

Unfortunately for McCain, it's an awfully long bus ride from Arizona, especially if you're just going to ask them to vote for someone else anyway.

So, how useful are these straw

polls? I think the problems listed above, while technical in nature, could push the margin of error just outside the realm of usefulness.

Regardless, the candidates have taught all politicians a few lessons that, if followed, surely will lead to success.

For instance, we've learned that busing is the answer.

If you want to win a political primary, the best way to do it is to charter buses. Nobody remembers primaries anyway, and the elderly and those without licenses often find it hard to get to the polling places.

If a candidate can charter buses in every county in the United States on Election Day, they'll certainly win.

This proposal is also endorsed by the National Charter Bus Association, or will be as soon as they can find another 600,000 buses equipped with televisions and auto-rewind VCRs for the 30-second political ads that the buses surely will be looping all day.

We also see that if you're trying to win an election, asking people not to vote for you before the election takes place is probably the worst way to win. It drastically increases the odds that they will vote for another candidate.

The results of the straw poll additionally suggest that your supporters might not listen to who you tell them to support when you back out of the race; the odds of this are increased if the candidate is constitutionally ineligible for the position, apparently.

A hearty thanks to the conference members for providing a couple valuable lessons. I can't wait to see who the Democrats will choose. With polls like this, who needs elections?

Contact Jeremy Spivey, a senior political science major, at jspivey@email.unc.edu.

## Speak Out

We welcome letters to the editor and aim to publish as many as possible. In writing, please follow these simple guidelines: Keep letters under 300 words. Type them. Date them. Sign them; make sure they're signed by no more than two people. If you're a student, include your year, major and phone number. Faculty and staff: Give us your department and phone number. The DTH edits for space, clarity, accuracy and vulgarity. Bring letters to our office at Suite 2409 in the Student Union, e-mail them to editdesk@unc.edu, or send them to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, N.C., 27515. All letters also will appear in our blogs section.

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