



**LINDA SHEN**  
SOMEWHERE OR OTHER  
Linda Shen is a senior journalism major from Raleigh.  
E-MAIL: LINGJUN.SHEN@UNC.EDU

## Welcome to the New South(?)

Neither I nor my friends Dex and T have classes on Fridays, so we found ourselves cruising around Chapel Hill listening to Kate Campbell's "New South," air conditioning wheezing in the background.

"Friday morning I was down at the Starbucks, sippin' on a latte with the fat left out," she crooned. "I had a bagel and a sudden revelation: I'm finally living in the New South."

By the time Kate spoke ruefully about learning of the Nissan factory in Tennessee from the pages of *The Wall Street Journal*, I nearly collapsed in laughter against the passenger door, clutching the dashboard.

The funny thing about a person's identity is its intricate relationship with location, with language, with all things colloquial — strange as it might seem, I've never seen myself as anything other than a Southerner.

(Of course I had little choice. My father managed to spell my name wrong on my passport when we first moved to the states, so I figured since the Motherland only knew me by the wrong name I had to start anew with America.)

I grew up in Raleigh. I watched it change from a sleepy state capital into a sprawling hotbed of biotechnology — and hockey, of all freakish things. I once nearly did a spit-take in a *Cosi* in Washington, D.C., when on a boiling-hot August day I bolted an extra-large cup of iced tea only to find it — horrifyingly — bereft of sugar syrup.

Bojangles comforts me. Dex, whose mother bleeds Carolina blue and encourages Dex to fight me for cookbooks, remembers long lazy drives up from Arkansas into North Carolina and the cotton fields on either side of the road, blossoms bursting open after the first frost.

I remember trips to the beach as a child, with rolling fields of tobacco: green and lush like oversized spinach. I remember when the cavernous Barnes & Noble near Cary Towne Center was still a twinkle in a developer's eye — when you could buy homes in Cary for reasonable prices without fear of contracting *e. coli*. I remember when there was only one Beltline.

There are historians who make the argument that the South has never fully emerged from the ravages of the Civil War and that the Reconstruction lingers to this day, retarding innovation and development.

You'd never know it from this very insular corner of Chapel Hill — in a way, it's always been the New South.

But for the rest of the South, leave and come back, and you come back to something slightly different each time: a few more chain restaurants, a couple of new encroachments, surprising brands catching your eye in the grocery aisles.

When I was younger the local Kinky Lingerie Store allegedly closed because of lack of business. These days, if the 14 year-old girls I see running around Southpoint are any indication, dressing like a hooker is no longer a faux pas.

T, the carpetbagger-slash-library sciences student, has adopted "y'all" for her very own. To borrow a phrase from Bob Dylan: "Things have changed." This past weekend, T and Dex and I drank Jolly Rancher booze, watched bad Sci-Fi and pillaged a library book sale. On Saturday my roommate and I hit the Carboro Farmers' Market, where I bought delicate Brown Turkey figs shaped like teardrops and basil so green and sharp it makes the entire kitchen smell delicious.

Some things, I hope, will remain constant. There's another hurricane on a collision path with our state, and I plan on spending this weekend watching the kudzu on my power lines leer at my trees.

Around here all the iced tea is sweet tea, and I'll probably die of starvation before I find a pushcart selling gyros — and that's fine by me.

### EDITORIAL CARTOON By Doug Mariette, Tribune Media Services



"WE CUT THE UMBILICAL, BUT WE COULDN'T PRY THE CELL PHONE FROM HER FINGERS!"

## OK, we were wrong

### Lots of people care about Student Government

We thought that few people were concerned enough to come to a Tuesday night student government executive branch open house. We stand — happily — corrected.

Carolina students are notorious for losing track of their student government. Student government leaders also have been known traditionally to be out of touch with constituents.

It often seems that the two operate in separate spheres. Few students know what their government is doing at a given time — many never even hear about events such as the open house.

At the risk of looking cynical we're going to be perfectly honest here. At our board meeting Tuesday night we were stuck for ideas. There wasn't really any news. We only had two topics for today's paper, and that left us with one more space to

fill. One of our veteran board members pointed out that we could go to the open house and then write an editorial about how we were the only people there.

It was brilliant. While walking across the breezeway between the Daily Tar Heel office and the Student Government suite, we were debating whether three or four people would show up.

We were stunned. When we got there the offices were packed like Franklin Street on Halloween. Students milled around in the tight space, ate heavily iced cookies and talked to members of the executive branch. Most attended for the purpose of learning about and applying for these committees, which included student life, Greek affairs and arts advocacy.

So to the students who came, we applaud you for your inter-

est and activism. We underestimated you. To those in Student Government who participated: Thanks for making yourselves accessible to the student body.

And to those who didn't attend the event, we will use this space for its previously intended purpose: to challenge you to become involved on the UNC campus. It's easy to sit in your dorm room and play Halo, but if that's the only thing you do you're ignoring the spirit of this university.

We know that some students are active, but 25, 50 or even 100 people are not enough. All of us have an intellect and a perspective to contribute to the community.

So put down your X-Box controller and sign up for Student Government, Campus Y, Carolina Union Activities Board or any of the many other groups on campus.

Surprise us.

## Next, a Pee-wee Thesis

### Kids shouldn't have to overachieve before high school

Remember back in the second grade when homework entailed coloring a map of the United States?

Those are days all college students — bogged down with term papers, research projects and final exams — look to with nostalgia. The newest youngsters coming up, however, unfortunately won't get to look back on their elementary school days so fondly.

A recent study conducted by the University of Michigan found that students were spending 51 percent more time on homework than their 1981 peers. It's likely that the amount will continue to increase — now that kids have those rolling bookbags to protect them from spinal compression, there's nothing stopping teachers from loading them down.

Too much homework is a kill-joy — there's no denying that — but what's worse is that studies show that the added work isn't serving its intended purpose.

Professor Harris Cooper, director of Duke University's Program in Education, analyzed numerous studies and conclud-

ed that students doing moderate amounts of homework in middle and high school performed better on standardized tests than those who spent more time on work each night.

In short more homework does not make smarter kids.

We admit that some amount of homework is good — it builds good time-management skills, study habits and self-discipline — but too much can be overkill. Another interesting development in elementary education is the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program, which is intended for students aged three to 12.

Yes, three. That's not a typo. Now toddlers can take IB classes and get ahead on the college track. While we're not advocating that all three-year-olds just sit around and eat paste all day long — and we acknowledge that learning a foreign language is easier at a younger age — we worry that "Pee-wee IB" is just another hoop vicariously ambitious parents will hurl their children through on the path to keeping up with the Joneses.

Let's face it; all good parents will worry that not enrolling their kid in "Pee-wee IB" or schools with 10-plus hours of homework will somehow ruin little Stewie's chances of getting into Harvard. It's like the U.S.-Soviet Arms Race but with future college applications instead of nuclear warheads.

In this age of academic overkill it's important to recognize that homework keeps kids from other activities that could be just as important to their development — like playing sports, spending time with family or just playing outside.

You know, like kids used to do back before overachieving became more important than being a happy, creative child.

Just as we've learned that UNC is about more than academics — notice all those students talking in the Pit, handing out fliers, going to basketball games or trading their GPAs for a chance to work at the Daily Tar Heel — it's important that future UNC students be taught that life is about more than what you read in a book.

## Up In Smoke

### Anti-smoking grants need stricter oversight

Students taking the helm in a campaign to aid others who want to stop smoking is in itself an innovative new approach to an old problem. However, the \$2,500 recently given to Counseling and Wellness Services needs to be safeguarded so it does not become more money thrown at a problem with no result.

The new \$500 grants — available to student groups wanting to pursue anti-smoking campaigns — need to be closely monitored by CWS to be sure the aims are being reached.

CWS also needs to reassess how the funds are being distributed. Currently, if a group spends \$300 on their project, the remaining \$200 will be given to the group to spend as

they please at the completion of the project. Obviously, this is not a good allocation of funds.

The solution is simply to make the grants for a maximum of \$500 and have disbursements made only for money actually used on the anti-smoking project. This loophole should be closed as soon as possible.

There is a vacuum of data related to smoking in college. Studies have largely focused on the middle and high school crowd or just report the grim statistics of college smoking. These grants have the potential for shedding some light on what works to convince 18- to 26-year-olds to stop smoking.

To garner this important information a plan is needed to evaluate effectiveness and not

look solely to the completion of a project as the end of the game.

College students have all been exposed to the terrifying pictures of black lungs and media campaigns warning of the dangers of smoking. Proposed projects shouldn't look to these same tactics for turning smokers off.

#### Do you want more disposable income?

People who have a desire to quit smoking — and don't want to wait for student groups to hand them a flier in the Pit — can call the Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW or e-mail smoking cessation counselor Dee Dee Laurillard at [deedeedee@unc.edu](mailto:deedeedee@unc.edu). They also can buy nicotine patches or gum at the pharmacy for less than \$20.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY:

*"This guy jumped out, and he started lighting fireworks or flares, and then he just started shooting."*

JARRETT REMINGTON, ORANGE HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORE

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Due to space constraints, letters are sometimes cut. Read the full-length versions or post your own response to a letter, story or editorial online. VISIT [www.dailytarheel.com/feedback](http://www.dailytarheel.com/feedback)

#### Church shouldn't have been put up for sale

TO THE EDITOR:

I am responding to the letter by Leslie Stewart regarding Gimghoul Road property, also known as the former St. Thomas More Catholic Church. I worked at that property for four years and can tell you that the tenant, New Hope Church, had the first opportunity to buy the property.

They declined due to covenants not allowing the parking lot to be rented out for income. The church was not rat-infested and was a structurally sound building. But it simply had outgrown the limitations.

The church could easily have put the property to good use if it had wanted to. But it wanted to dump the property because it was not allowed to make a lot of bucks off the parking. The residents on Gimghoul worked long and hard to save the property. But the Catholic Church is mega powerful.

The Church cared nothing for the employees who worked there lovingly and gave very little to the employees who were discarded as a result of this transaction.

I have no "dogs in this fight" and do not personally know the Heavens. But the Heavens cared enough not to allow the property to go to a developer who would have destroyed the entire parcel.

Also, the Heavens are doing the destruction in a first class fashion and plan to recycle all that they can.

Gloria Neville  
Chapel Hill resident

#### Edit board was wrong in criticizing writing test

TO THE EDITOR:

As I read the 8/30 N.C. Writing Assessment editorial, "Is it worth it?" I wondered just how it would end. Having not been hamfistedly introduced to the overall theme and structure of the subsequent paragraphs in the third sentence (as all superlative work must do), I was wracked with anxiety.

Fortunately for all of us, in a master twist worthy of Georges Simenon, the board sidled toward a solution mere sentences from the ending. Employ us some test readers with real fancy ed-joo-cations! Well break my glasses and call me short-sighted!

After all, most folks know the Tar Heel state isn't suffering from a teacher shortage, and bastions of knowledge such as the Pope Center have told us repeatedly that "speculation about a 'brain drain' is not only unsupported by evidence, but contradicted by it." The solution's so scrutinizingly feasible I'd go so far as to call it operose. Bonanza!

Mine eyes have seen the glory, Edit Board. What better way to both provide a more individuated grading rubric and curb the destruction wreaked on our urban centers by large gangs of roving English post-docs? I — heck the whole U.S.-of-A. — owe you a debt of gratitude.

Philip McFee  
Class of 2006  
Former DTH Cartoonist

#### Edit board was right in criticizing writing test

TO THE EDITOR:

Your editorial on the NC standardized writing test, "Is it worth it? The N.C. Writing Assessment hurts gifted students" was absolutely brilliant.

I have been complaining about the ridiculous writing test for years and am glad to finally find others who agree with me. I can write a good paper, and yet I barely pass these things. In tenth grade I had an amazing English teacher who flat out told us that to pass the writing test we simply needed to give the examiners what they wanted — a canned, formulaic essay.

This was coming from a challenging teacher who all year focused on creative writing and literary analysis — and a UNC grad, no less — and when it came time for the writing test she said "I hate it, but you have to take it" and handed us the little worksheets the state makes about how to write "definition" and "cause and effect" essays.

The essay portion of the new SAT is even worse, giving students 25 minutes to respond to a prompt, which does no more than encourage bad writing. At the very least, like you said, experienced teachers should be grading these essays. They can't just go down a checklist and make sure each paper has the proper components, but rather they have to make sure that the paper follows a logical progression and that its arguments make sense. Maybe then the good writers will stop being shafted by the state standardized tests.

Jonathan Tugman  
Freshman

### SPEAK OUT

#### WRITING GUIDELINES:

- > Please type: Handwritten letters will not be accepted.
- > Sign and date: No more than two people should sign letters.
- > Students: Include your year, major and phone number.
- > Faculty/staff: Include your department and phone number.
- > Edit: The DTH edits for space, clarity, accuracy and vulgarity.

#### SUBMISSION:

- > Drop-off: at our office at Suite 2409 in the Student Union.
- > E-mail: to [editdesk@unc.edu](mailto:editdesk@unc.edu)
- > Send: to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, N.C., 27515.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Editorials are the opinions solely of The Daily Tar Heel editorial board. The board consists of five board members, the associate opinion editor, the opinion editor and the DTH editor. The 2006-07 DTH editor decided not to vote on the board.

### The Daily Tar Heel

Established 1893,  
113 years  
of editorial freedom

JOSEPH R. SCHWARTZ  
EDITOR, 962-4086  
JOSEPH\_SCHWARTZ@UNC.EDU  
OFFICE HOURS:  
MON, WED, FRI, 2-3 P.M.

JEFF SMITH  
OPINION EDITOR, 962-0750  
JEFFSMITH@UNC.EDU

JESSICA SCISM  
ASSOCIATE OPINION EDITOR, 962-0750  
SCISM@EMAIL.UNC.EDU

REUBEN BAKER  
PUBLIC EDITOR  
RCBAKER@EMAIL.UNC.EDU

EDIT BOARD MEMBERS  
JESSICA JOHNSON  
BRANDON MAYNARD  
MEGHAN MORRIS  
MAGGIE RECHEL  
SCOTT SPILLMAN