



**JAMES EDWARD DILLARD**  
LIKE BRINGING A KNIFE TO A GUNFIGHT  
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## Put down the beer, and do something

The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse recently published a report on substance abuse at U.S. colleges and universities. The report found that nearly half of all full-time college students binge drink and/or abuse drugs. Here at UNC, nobody was surprised.

Or at least they shouldn't have been. Despite the majority of undergraduate students being underage and without fake ids, alcohol abuse is common at UNC — and it's not just in Fraternity Court. Greeks and independents alike abuse substances, with alcohol being the most popular. The number of alcohol citations more than doubled from fall 2005 to fall 2006.

And rare is the student who doesn't know people who drank until they puked this weekend. It's that common.

When interviewed by The Daily Tar Heel, UNC employees said all the right things — that substance abuse was a problem that needs to be addressed and that the administration is "in the process of defining how they will get involved."

But while their words pay lip service to the importance of the issue, their actions tell a different story. It's a well-known fact that the party culture that exists at UNC encourages alcohol abuse. It's been this way since I was a freshman and will be after I graduate, because the University hasn't done anything to solve the problem.

Though it might not be popular, officials could crack down on underage drinking. They could hire resident advisers willing to enforce the rules, pay them enough to do it and fire the ones who don't. They could stiffen punishments for underage drinking. They could lobby the town to break up parties not just for noise violations but for serving alcohol. But they don't.

If they are of the opinion that the drinking age is too high and that students who are old enough to wield M-16's in the Middle East are capable of handling a beer, there are still things they could do. They could make substance education mandatory, or allow students to drink in public where they could be supervised. But they don't.

Instead, they don't do much at all. While the University determines how to get involved, students drink on campus unsupervised without fear of being caught — either because they know their RA doesn't care or because, even if they are written up, there are no immediate consequences — the first and second offenses result only in probation. The unofficial policy is "keep it out of sight."

This lax attitude sends students the message that the administration doesn't care about drinking, and it enables an environment where alcohol can be abused. Counseling and Wellness Services offers substance abuse programs and information but is ineffective because it relies on student initiative. This ignores the reason students get caught up in substance abuse in the first place — they don't see anything wrong with it.

The entrenched culture promotes substance abuse as an acceptable reaction to stress. A "work hard, play hard" mentality pervades our campus. If officials believe this is wrong, it's up to them to do something to stop it. Instead they don't do anything.

This could be attributed to a second, but equally disturbing statistic — two-thirds of college administrators believe that it is a student's responsibility to stop substance abuse. Such a laissez-faire attitude would make sense if substance abuse was rare, but it's not. While its lips say the right words, substance abuse occurs right beneath the University's nose.

But like a neglectful parent, UNC refuses to face the facts. This likely will continue to be the case until a high-profile lawsuit hits a major university and forces our administration to take notice and protect the almighty bottom line.

At least when it happens, they'll know the right things to say.

EDITORIAL CARTOON By Doug Marlette, Tribune Media Services



## Running around Roe

Attempts to regulate abortion undermine federal law

When it comes to divisive social issues, abortion always takes the cake. In more than three decades since the U.S. Supreme Court made abortion legal, the furious debate on abortion continues to tear the country apart.

But even though *Roe v. Wade* remains the central issue, those opposed to abortion also have turned to other tactics they believe would reduce the number of abortions in the United States. Some state lawmakers even have gone so far as to attempt to legislate around the Supreme Court decision.

That's the idea in South Carolina, where the state House of Representatives passed a bill Thursday requiring women to have an ultrasound, which shows an image of the fetus while it is still in the womb, before they can have an abortion.

South Carolina's lawmakers contend this is a way to curb

abortions. But the Supreme Court already has ruled that abortion is legal, and it isn't the place of the South Carolina legislature to try to circumvent that ruling.

The concept behind the S.C. law is to convince pregnant women that the baby is a living person by creating an emotional bond and thereby making the decision to abort that much more difficult.

But we're not convinced that this tactic will change the minds of many women, but instead will serve only to cause more emotional damage. The truth is that the ultrasound law only will deepen the abortion rift in our society and make life harder for women seeking abortions.

As the ideological war rages, stuck in the middle are the women trying to make an agonizing choice that a required ultrasound will make harder.

Studies have shown that hav-

ing an abortion has potentially harmful effects on the mental health of the woman after the abortion takes place. Although the reality of these effects still is debated in the medical community, forcing a woman to view an unwanted ultrasound exaggerates any negative impacts of abortion.

Clearly the well-being of women isn't the legislature's concern, however, as it also voted against the addition of a proposed amendment to the bill that would exempt victims of rape and incest from having to view the ultrasound.

That this amendment was shot down is evidence that the house was more interested in pushing an ideological line than caring for its constituents.

The bill indirectly undermines court precedent and hurts women in the process. The S.C. Senate should stop this bill before it gets too far.

## Don't stop the presses

Capping publications won't make up for poor budgeting

In the presentation he showed to Student Congress Tuesday regarding the student publication portion of the Cap Act, Speaker Luke Farley placed the word "WASTE" in 185-point font — the largest he could fit across one slide.

We find that ironic. We agree that fiscal constraint is important and that many student-funded campus publications print too many copies of issues, but the publication cap only will fix half of the problem. Congress's plan will cut some costs, but it won't eliminate waste.

Under the cap, Congress would fund only two issues per semester of each student publication, and it would match up to half the cost of a third issue if the publication can find other funding. Two is the median-minus-one number of issues printed by all student publications.

The Daily Tar Heel does not take student fees and funds its printing via ads.

Farley argued that if those publications that print four times a semester (roughly monthly), published less frequently people

will pick up more of the older issues because a new issue makes the old one obsolete. Blue and White and the Carolina Review fall into this category. But if a magazine has sat in the floor of a highly trafficked area such as Davis Library or Hamilton Hall for a month, it probably won't ever be picked up.

If that's the case, then the publication cap won't cut down on waste and will force just three publications (Bounce Magazine prints seven times a year) to print less often, assuming all can find outside funding, so we probably won't be saving that much.

However, cutting down on the number of copies each publication can print would decrease both waste and costs. Congress's argument against this proposal is that it drives up the cost of each copy, so it is inefficient.

While individual issues might be more expensive, money is saved overall. You don't buy an item you don't need just because it's on sale. And you're not going to buy the 200 meal plan even if it's cheaper per meal if you don't even plan to make it to 105.

Congress also should weigh relative costs for each publication. A publication that prints fewer issues but in full color and glossy pages might still cost more than one that prints more issues but only in black and white.

Not every publication need be funded equally, either. Those with higher readerships should receive more money to print more copies. Using data on leftover issues would be a good way to determine readership, but Congress's data is incomplete.

Congress only counted issues in Hamilton Hall, Davis Library and the Undergraduate Library. While this provides a useful snapshot, it is definitely not the full picture. Also, the number of leftover issues should be considered as a proportion to the total number printed. Having 200 leftover copies out of 2,000 is better than 100 left out of 200.

We agree that overspending has been a problem, and cutting down on wasted copies would free up more of the budget. But the publication cap in its current form will fail to achieve that goal.

## Pennies for pounds

Employee weight-loss incentives will save money, lives

Those of you entering the workforce soon might be surprised to find that some businesses are offering cash, gift cards and even cruises to employees who take steps to get in shape.

But their motivation isn't purely to keep you healthy. Businesses are adopting new incentive programs to help combat skyrocketing health care costs. But no matter the intent behind the measure, it still is an applaudable action.

Today, an estimated 65 percent of American adults are overweight or obese. Yet research shows that about 70 percent of chronic health conditions, like obesity, are preventable.

Promoting healthy lifestyles and eating habits is not only in

the interest of employees, but it can help companies save big dollars.

Rising health care costs are a heavy burden to many businesses, costing American companies \$56 billion in 2000 alone. In 2006, 16 percent of the overall gross domestic product in the United States was spent on health care, compared with 10 percent in other industrialized countries.

Instead of requiring people by law to alter their dietary habits, businesses have found a way to change the way people think about health using good old fashion competition and incentives. This is a great way to help change the way Americans think about eating and exercise.

Freedom One Financial

Group, a Michigan provider of 401(k) plans, began its program in 2005 by offering its employees a free cruise if they could meet certain weight-loss goals in a three-month period.

The program was found to be extremely successful, and 36 of the company's 70 employees lost a total of 310 pounds. In addition, the company health care costs have decreased so much that the CEO is considering dropping the company's coverage in favor of a private fund.

We hope the healthy practices that people learn through programs such as the one implemented by Freedom One Financial Group will prove to be lasting lifestyle changes that help the U.S. develop a more healthy society.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY:

"We're praying for a miracle. He has so much life within him. If anyone can make it, I know Jason Ray can."

JAMES JOLLEY, SENIOR, FRIEND OF STUDENT RAMESES

### 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, editorial or story online. VISIT [www.dailytarheel.com/feedback](http://www.dailytarheel.com/feedback)

#### Second Life is a waste of money for the University

TO THE EDITOR:  
Regarding the March 23 editorial "Don't forget your first life," we think the editorial board needs some clarification on what Second Life really is.

This game is much more sinister and unsettling than having an 18-year-old female avatar being, in real life, an ex-con.

In the few hours spent wandering around the Second Life universe, we've seen furry sex dungeons, giant phallic towers, Soviet concentration camps complete with S and M prison guards, and Tattooine. These are some of the tamer encounters you may experience.

This is not a learning environment. For all intents and purposes, Second Life is the local watering hole for everything that is wrong with the Internet.

The University should be spending the money they are using for their server lease on more practical investments — like a remapped, user-friendly Web site that doesn't look like it was made in 1994.

Kevin Wohlgenant  
Junior  
Economics

Raphael Ruiz  
Junior  
Anthropology

#### Letter criticizing protest as ineffective was wrong

TO THE EDITOR:

I am writing in response to Wednesday's letter, "Protest was an ineffective way to make a difference." Some protests do lack forethought and organization, and all protests should only complement other forms of effecting change (i.e. researching, lobbying, etc.) which students at UNC are pursuing. Protest, though, is an integral part of democracy, and I'm confused that some of my peers may not recognize this.

I am not lauding Tuesday's particular protest, but only bringing attention to the necessary act of people expressing their opinions. I wonder what India would be like without Ghandi's civil disobedience or Chapel Hill's classrooms without the March on Washington. What about the 13 colonies without the Boston Tea Party or the size of Arlington Cemetery without Vietnam protests?

In contrary to the letter, I argue that young, impassioned, and informed students peacefully protesting are exactly what our founding fathers envisioned when writing the Bill of Rights. "What have we become?" We are trying to become engaged citizens taking responsibility for ourselves.

If productivity is the problem, please explain how finishing the last 15 minutes of a forgettable lecture is more critical to one's intellectual and personal growth than forming one's opinion, finding one's voice, and gathering with likeminded people to create a stronger impact than alone.

I don't understand how it could make one "sad" to see "so many people, all united for a cause." Yes, educate, inform, write letters, develop policy, vote, and bang your drums.

Ella Wise  
Freshman  
Environmental Studies

### 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. Limit letters to 250 words.

#### 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: Columns, cartoons and letters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The Daily Tar Heel or its staff. Editorials are the opinions solely of The Daily Tar Heel editorial board. The board consists of six board members, the associate opinion editor, the opinion editor and the editor. The 2006-07 editor decided not to vote on the board.

#### DTH conflict-of-interest policy was not applicable

TO THE EDITOR:  
On Mar. 23, Joseph Schwartz, editor-in-chief of The Daily Tar Heel, explained his rationale for firing me from my position as senior writer.

I disagree with Schwartz's claim that I violated four points of the newspaper's Conflict of Interest policy and acted unethically.

Point one forbids staff members from ongoing participation in student government, not potential future participation.

Point two forbids staff members from making the news, but my resignation should be considered implicit because of point one.

Point three forbids staff members from fraternizing with their sources outside a source/reporter relationship, but my application doesn't constitute fraternizing with student government members.

Point twelve requires staff members to notify editors of affiliations and involvements outside the paper and to raise questions about their propriety, but my application didn't constitute an "affiliation" or "involvement," and Schwartz's objections to my handling of the matter came as a surprise to me.

Schwartz implies that my coverage of Student Congress days before my first confirmation hearing was unethical, but my relationship with Congress should be viewed in its full scope — spanning two years — and not in light of a single meeting.

Most importantly, the Conflict of Interest Policy does not forbid making a move from the DTH to student government.

I kept the fact that I applied to serve in student government private for a simple reason — I did not want to unnecessarily compromise my role within the DTH as a government watchdog journalist in case the student government position was not offered to me.

Schwartz did have a duty to explain the move to readers, but not in a way that unfairly scapegoats a former writer for a situation that few, outside the newsroom, felt was embarrassing.

Mac Mollison  
Student Body Secretary-select

#### Columnist is right to stress complexity of immigration

TO THE EDITOR:

Thanks for the piece on Celaya, the city in Mexico where many of the immigrants in Chapel Hill and Carrboro come from. Linda Quiquix is right to stress the complexity of the migration issue on both sides of the border.

I look forward to seeing her documentary in light of the book "Going to Carolina del Norte" that our center recently published on the connection between Celaya and us.

Niklaus Steiner  
Director  
Center for Global Initiatives

### The Daily Tar Heel

Established 1893,  
114 years  
of editorial freedom

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