



**JEFF SOPLOP**  
IF THE WATER'S ITCHY, GET OUT  
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## Don't be afraid of some heavy talk

Obesity. It's not a dirty word or even an insulting word. Then why do people get so touchy when they hear it? That question has been on my mind the past week after I got some negative feedback for mentioning obesity in last week's column.

In the column, I noted that a park in Colorado was so overdeveloped it catered to the "lazy and obese." I was commenting on how the park's designers were effectively discouraging exercise, but a few people thought I was insulting fat people.

I don't mind offending the oversensitive, but I have to wonder why mentioning obesity is taboo. While disparaging people for how they look is wrong no matter what physical trait is involved, there is a difference between being respectful and being ridiculous about the growing problem of obesity in America.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, around two-thirds of adults in the United States are either overweight or obese. That number has more than doubled since 1980, and the rise in weight has made obesity the number two cause of mortality in the United States, second only to smoking. We are, quite literally, eating ourselves to death.

For those of us cozily ensconced in the skinny land of UNC, it's difficult to detect the obesity epidemic plaguing our nation. In fact, most college students, women in particular, struggle with eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia rather than with overeating. But for all you exercise-obsessed 18- to 22-year-olds sweating away at the rec center, you've got a dose of reality coming after graduation day. Life in the post-college world is busier and more stressful than in college, and finding time to work out and eat well takes serious willpower. As the years pass by, you will find it tougher to stay fit.

So how do we drop the extra pounds? Some local governments are trying by outlawing unhealthy foods. In 2006, New York City became the first city in the country to ban the use of trans fats — an unhealthy ingredient of many processed foods — in its restaurants and bakeries. Other cities are now following New York's lead, and several states, such as Maryland and Vermont, are considering a ban as well.

But this paternalistic style of government seems at odds with the notions of liberty and freedom of choice that America should encapsulate, and attempted government suppression of unhealthy products doesn't always have the intended results.

When the authorities cracked down on tobacco by banning smoking in public places and raising cigarette prices, the decline in smoking contributed to the rise in obesity. Many people were tossing out their Camels and picking up Twinkies instead. Similarly, bans on unhealthy foods might not be the best way to offset obesity.

Instead of dictating what people can and can't eat, the government should focus on making it easier for Americans to eat right and exercise daily.

When I go to the grocery store, I always lament that a bag of chips is cheaper than a pound of fresh produce. One reason for this is our government has tariffs on produce imported from other countries.

Why not lower or remove the tariffs and make fresh fruit and vegetables cheaper and more competitive with the processed junk?

Or to promote exercise, local governments should make it easier for people to walk places rather than driving everywhere. City planners can do this by adding sidewalks and zoning for central market areas in neighborhoods. Such simple ideas would help curb obesity while upholding our right to choose.

The fact is each of us will struggle with our weight at some point in our life. So let's not be afraid to talk about obesity while we take a nice long walk in the park.

EDITORIAL CARTOON By Mason Phillips, mphil@email.unc.edu



## Don't argue with a fool

### Yelling at Pit preachers just plays into their game

The fear-mongering rhetoric of a fiery afterlife for those sinful UNC students once again floated cacophonously from the Pit on Monday, only to be removed shortly thereafter.

A group of evangelists from Soulwinners Ministries International set up shop in Gary Birdsong's traditional spot, drawing the ire of many passing students.

After the usual banter between the preachers and students took an ugly turn, Soulwinners was asked to leave campus by the Department of Public Safety.

We applaud DPS for ensuring that things didn't get out of hand by taking action when the officers on duty realized they could no longer guarantee the safety of the evangelists or the students.

Soulwinners has since returned to the Pit without a major incident, though there

have been many more heated interactions.

As much as we don't like hearing the preachers, the free speech argument cannot be ignored. It's true that the evangelists' ability to participate in free speech was infringed upon.

However, in *Schenck v. United States*, the Supreme Court ruled that in cases where there is "clear and present danger," free speech can be limited. It appears this incident fell under that description.

Students also should consider other responses to the preachers' hateful rhetoric. Throwing evangelists' Bibles in a trash can is not the best way to keep the situation from turning dangerous.

It's perfectly OK to disagree with the evangelists' opinions. All of us do, too. However, when going against a group that's so blatantly attention-hungry, you're just playing into their

hands by arguing with them.

UNC students have a rich and wonderful history of vocally protesting anything they do not agree with, which is quite healthy. However it isn't really the ideal response when your opponents claim to have God on their side. That's just asking for a smite-down.

If the new Pit preachers really bother you, the best way to get them to leave campus is simply to ignore them.

Protest their opinion by not protesting. Ignore it even though what they say can be offensive. We know this will be hard to handle for those UNC students who take offense when U.S. Rep. David Price, D-Orange, isn't liberal enough, but sometimes ignoring these things is better than trying to argue with them.

Because let's face it, you're not going to change their minds, just like they aren't going to change yours.

## Banned in the big house

### Federal prisons should have freedom in book choices

In federal prisons nationwide inmates are now facing a very different picture when they enter the prison library. Chaplains in the prisons have been purging hundreds and thousands of books and other materials from the libraries.

The chaplains were directed by the Bureau of Prisons to remove any books, tapes, CDs and videos that were not on a list of approved resources deemed not to incite violence.

Based on the selectivity of that list, this is a clear violation of First Amendment rights.

The action was taken based on a Justice Department report filed after the Sept. 11 attacks that stated that prisons should do what they can not to be a place of recruitment for militant or terrorist groups. So all religious texts that "promote violence" were removed.

We understand the need to keep literature that promotes violence away from a particularly volatile audience. But the method in which it was done is entirely illogical.

The Bureau of Prisons cre-

ated a list of about 150 books and 150 multimedia materials for each of 20 religious categories that it feels are acceptable for inmates to read.

Afterward, no money was allocated for prisons to buy the titles on the list, so some prisons are left with bare shelves.

It would have been far easier simply to make a shorter list including only books to be banned.

Or, better yet, just leave the system as it was — chaplains already rejected materials that incited violence, and donated materials had to be approved by prison officials.

Also, many chaplains and religious groups expressed dissatisfaction with the final lists. The lists tend to contain a majority of books published by the same group or company for the given religion.

Banning books that incite violence in prisons is an important step for the government to take, but since when does the government know which 150 books are the best for each religion?

Not one religious group

that has seen the list is satisfied with the selections made. Some religious staples have been omitted, and some books that are included were not even recognized by the most prominent religious leaders.

Plus, without an abundance of different religious texts it inhibits religious education and understanding.

People who are not deemed a national threat also are denied access to religious materials. A Christian and an Orthodox Jew, both prison inmates, are suing the bureau for violating their rights to the free exercise of their respective religion. We wish them the best of luck.

The decision-making process should be opened up to religious leaders, if for nothing else but input, so that appropriate choices are made. Inmates who have been reading acceptable texts should be allowed to continue reading them.

We know they're prisoners, but it still wouldn't hurt the government to put a little more effort into their intellectual developments.

## Our Hall of Famer

### Williams' Hall induction a boon for the University

Roy. Just mention his name and for many Tar Heels, the heavens open and angels sing.

UNC men's basketball head coach Roy Williams was inducted — or rather enshrined — Friday in the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

Why is it we at UNC love Roy so much? He's not just beloved, he's worshiped.

You can buy an "In Roy we trust" T-shirt on Franklin Street, and his second coming to Chapel Hill was heralded louder by UNC fans than the second coming of Jesus by evangelists.

Williams has led not one, but two legendary basketball programs. For those who don't know, he spent 15 years coaching the successful University

of Kansas Jayhawks.

As UNC head coach, though, he is only in his fifth year. He already has led his team to the 2005 NCAA National Championship title.

This performance followed on the heels of an excruciating two years and 36 losses for the Tar Heels.

But it isn't just the wins that make us love Roy Williams.

It's the way he wins.

There's a lot of talk of the "class" of the Carolina basketball tradition. But it isn't just folklore.

Take for example the championship game in 2005 against the University of Illinois. After briefly celebrating the win with his family, Williams went directly to Illinois coach Bruce

Weber to offer consolation.

Williams continues to promote the Carolina Way, as evident in his organization and non-nonsense style.

His players are disciplined on and off the court, and he won't even put up with bad behavior from his fans. (Just try booing the other team at a home game and see what happens).

While leading UNC, he has continued to promote the class and respectability that have been associated with the Carolina basketball tradition since the Dean Smith era.

His commitment to integrity and his loyalty to his players have earned him — and UNC — respect from competitors.

So here's to you, coach Williams. Congratulations.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

"They're at a level that's so elite. You have to bring it."

MANDY BRANNON, JUNIOR, ON THE TRYOUT PROCESS FOR THE UNC DANCE TEAM.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To read the full-length versions  
VISIT <http://dailytarheelpublic.wordpress.com>  
Post your own response to a letter, editorial or story online.  
VISIT [www.dailytarheel.com/feedback](http://www.dailytarheel.com/feedback)

Smoking ban will improve campus health and safety

TO THE EDITOR:  
In response to Monday's article on the proposed ban of smoking within 100 feet of buildings, ("Smokers facing 100-foot walk," Sept. 10) I would like to voice my wholehearted support.

This ban would be a big step toward making the campus a more healthy and inviting place.

The evidence is clear that smoking is bad for your health and the health of those around you.

In response to the comment that it is a personal decision: If I made a personal decision to walk around campus with a radioactive material emitting radiation that would lead to cancer in those within a 5-foot radius, would (that) be OK?

There are many resources available through the Campus Health Services' Counseling and Wellness Services office to assist in tobacco cessation.

These resources include advice, coaching and counseling by a trained professional on the health impacts of smoking and various methods that can assist in quitting, including drugs that are available to help quit.

I encourage everyone that smokes to utilize these services to benefit your health and the health of those around you.

Jacob Spangler  
PharmD Candidate  
Junior

Evangelists engage in new and creative word choice

TO THE EDITOR:  
Yesterday I was impressed by the preachers squawking in the Pit, not by their moral fortitude, but by their linguistic ingenuity.

Myself and others were indiscriminately labeled "vigorous masturbators," two words that had never shared a union in mind.

Though I've never considered myself a "vigorous masturbator," I can honestly say that I've never been more receptive to the idea.

In fact, I think we should use these objects of hatred to remove the evangelists from campus without infringing on their right to free speech.

I propose creating the 'Sin-Drive' or alternately 'Sin-A-Thon,' where students pledge to commit at least one act of abominable sin for each day that the preachers continue to come to the Pit.

Actions including, but not limited to, vigorous masturbation, premarital sex and nonheterosexual sex could all contribute to the cause.

Hopefully, in the face of causing thousands of damnable acts by their staying, the evangelists will peacefully leave our campus in the interest of salvation.

It's time to fight fire with eternal fire.

Nathaniel Gindele  
Senior  
Philosophy

New Pit preachers spew a message of hate not love

TO THE EDITOR:  
I was quoted in the Tuesday edition of The Daily Tar Heel regarding the newest Evangelists on campus ("Evangelists escorted off campus," Sept. 11) saying that "some people" might agree with their message and not find it offensive at all.

To qualify that statement, I would like to say that "some people" are certainly in the minority. And for good reason.

(Michael) Venyah, one of the evangelists, was quoted as saying that "We were just preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ." But as a Christian, I am quite unfamiliar with the gospel they've been preaching.

If the evangelists really want to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, they should do it in the spirit of Jesus' own words and message.

Jesus came proclaiming the coming of the "kingdom of God," (Mark 1:15) and came to preach good news to the poor, proclaim freedom for the prisoners, recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor (Luke 4:18-21).

Contrary to their message that "God hates some people," the Jesus in scripture showed compassion and love to more than one adulteress, a prostitute, tax collectors and "sinners," rich men and poor men alike and any number of those who were considered "unclean".

The only people he really showed any contempt for at all were the pharisees and teachers of the law who claimed to be without sin and gave to the people the burden of perfection. Sound familiar?

Amanda Barbee  
Junior  
Anthropology

Study abroad credits will eventually be transferred

TO THE EDITOR:  
It is true that the study abroad office has suspended work temporarily on credit reports while we advise students seeking to study abroad in spring 2008.

However, if you are graduating in December and/or if your financial aid will be impacted somehow by credits not showing up, please contact your study abroad adviser via e-mail, explain the situation and we will be sure to get those credits transferred immediately.

I am always ready to consider alternative ways to administer the office. But credit transfer cannot be disengaged from advising.

We provide a personal service whereby each student is individually advised about program choice in relation to academic objectives and curricula requirements.

Credit transfer after the student returns to campus concludes a long process of support and is dependent upon not only the advisers knowledge of the programs but also of the two different college curricula that are currently in existence.

Concerning the vacant positions, both were advertised immediately and some part-time cover was arranged. One position has been filled. The training of the new member of the team will begin next Monday.

Robert Miles  
Associate Dean for Study  
Abroad and International  
Exchanges

The Daily Tar Heel

Established 1893,  
114 years  
of editorial freedom

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 seven board members, the associate opinion editor, the opinion editor and the editor. The 2007-08 editor decided not to vote on the board.

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