



JAMES EDWARD DILLARD
THERE IS A LIGHT AND IT NEVER GOES OUT
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Why I'm a racist and you might be one too

Ladies and gentlemen, I have a confession to make. I'm a racist.

Until a couple of nights ago, such a thought had never entered my mind. My white pillowcase doesn't have any eye-holes; I've never burnt a cross or tied a noose.

More than that, I like black people. Not just the ones I know, either. I was excited when my hometown Steelers hired Mike Tomlin as its first black head coach because it meant a step toward equality in Pittsburgh.

And I considered myself enlightened. I'd seen "Crash." I knew about white privilege. I was smart enough to know racists still exist, but surely I wasn't one of them.

So imagine my surprise when I found out I was wrong.

Allow me to explain. On Sunday night, after having dinner at Franklin Street Pizza and Pasta, my buddy Duncan and I were walking back to campus when a black man approached us. He was bald and wearing a coat. In his left hand was a Styrofoam cup. As he walked passed us, he extended his arm and said, "Wassup man?"

Immediately, without thinking, I stuck my hands into my pockets and shrugged my shoulders. "Sorry sir, I don't have any change," I said.

Problem is he wasn't panhandling. When he made this clear, I begged forgiveness. Fortunately for me, he was kind and accepted my apology. I couldn't have blamed him had he punched me in the face. But that's not the point.

The point is that in my mind "black guy" plus "cup in hand" plus "Franklin Street" equaled "panhandler."

Does this make me a racist? I think it does. At the very least, I'm guilty of racial stereotyping. Such stereotyping seems innocent at first — after all, most panhandlers downtown are black men — but this "harmless" stereotyping can be particularly corrosive.

Have a black friend? Ask them if they've ever been pulled over for DWB — driving while black.

And it gets even more subtle from there. Consider the 2004 study "Are Emily and Greg more employable than Lakisha and Jamal?" by Marianne Bertrand and Sendhil Mullainathan.

Fake resumes were sent to potential employers, some with traditionally white names and others with traditionally black names. What they found was shocking.

During the course of the study, resumes with traditionally white names received 50 percent more callbacks for interviews than black names, illustrating a perception that white people are typically better employees than black people.

Even if my original stereotype was of the innocent variety — a racist faux pas roughly equivalent to asking a woman how far along she is, only to find out she's not pregnant — the sum total of these stereotypes is racism.

When conglomerated, these perceptions have a powerfully negative impact on black people. Whether or not we like it, the general stereotype is that black people are less educated, less refined and more likely to be involved in illegal activity, among other things.

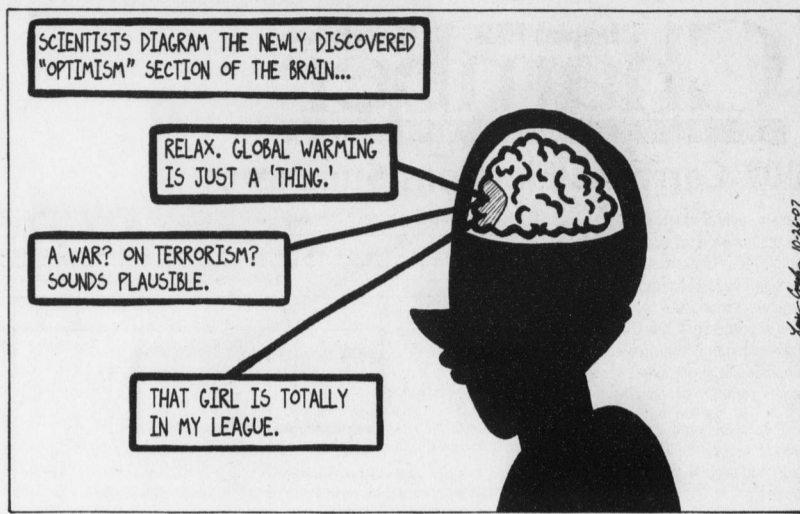
Identifying a stereotype isn't enough — we must call racial stereotypes and their effects what they are: racism.

This is what makes diversity initiatives so important. But solving this problem is about more than quotas and programs. We as a community — especially white people — need to deal with our racial stereotypes and be prepared for when they come creeping up.

And when they do (believe me, they will) we need to be willing to apologize for them. We must realize that our perceptions are hurtful, not just to the person in front of us, but to everyone with that color of skin.

With that in mind, I'd like to apologize to the members of the black community for my mistakes. I'm trying to do better.

EDITORIAL CARTOON By Louis Coppola, The Pitt News



More than guidelines

Water restrictions need to be enforced in order to work

In light of the seemingly endless statewide drought, Raleigh and Durham have banned outdoor watering.

A drought management plan in the area is crucial, and because outdoor watering accounts for about one-third of water consumption in the two cities, cutting off the sprinklers seems like a swell idea. But there's a slight problem: Raleigh and Durham are not enforcing their rules.

There is no point in implementing a set of rules if there are no consequences for those who break them.

It seems there are some people out there who are complying with the regulations. Officials in the two cities reported that since water regulations tightened, water consumption decreased by about 20 percent.

But officials also admitted enforcing regulations isn't at the top of their priorities. Durham had yet to send written notice of

the ban last week, and residents said they got no response when they called to report problems.

No one doubts that the drought is a problem, but it's a tragedy of the commons. When your wilting garden is begging for a drink, it's easy enough to dismiss the rules — surely everyone else is following them and no one will notice if you water your plants just this once.

But enforcing drought management rules isn't just a problem in Raleigh and Durham — the tragedy of the commons occurs at UNC, too.

The University sent out a mass e-mail in October asking that students limit their showers to four minutes, turn off the water while brushing teeth and use water from showers and washing dishes to water plants.

But nothing was ever done to ensure students did any of these things, and we doubt that very many four-minute showers were

taken after the e-mail was sent.

No doubt, regulating water use is a hard task. Officials can't just cite the greenest lawns in the Triangle; they have to catch the elusive waterers red-handed. And at UNC, it would take nothing less than a bathroom monitor to ensure that students are flushing the toilets correctly and showering at super speed.

But this doesn't mean the problem is hopeless. There is definitely more that can be done to make sure that drought management rules across the board are being enforced. Officials in Raleigh and Durham need to be on constant patrol and respond quickly when they get reports of restriction violations.

Still, we can't leave it all up to the people enforcing the rules. As students and residents, we need to take it upon ourselves to follow the rules for our own good, not just because we're afraid of getting caught.

Kind of not a big deal

Edwards campaign making a mountain of a molehill

It's rare, but sometimes more press is worse than no press at all.

John Edwards' campaign is finding out just what that means after it asked UNC journalism graduate student Carla Babb to remove her video on Edwards' campaign headquarters from YouTube.

Edwards' campaign headquarters is based in the upscale Chapel Hill subdivision of Southern Village.

Some see this location as a contradiction of his central campaign message championing the needs of the poor. That charge was the focus of the piece.

We really don't see what Edwards was so upset about, other than a bit of bad press, which is just part of running a presidential campaign.

Someone on the Edwards campaign obviously missed a class on how to handle the media. By asking for the video to be removed, the campaign has brought far more publicity to the story than it would have garnered on its own.

Babb originally filmed the

video for "Carolina Week" but also submitted it to an MTV reporting contest — meaning, had the campaign not intervened, it's likely that only a small number of people would have seen the video.

But instead, the story has been covered by The New York Times, as well as other national news outlets. And to top it off, as of Sunday night, the video had been viewed 147,680 times on YouTube.

The Edwards campaign should have taken a deep breath before reacting to the video; had they said nothing or simply released a statement, the video would not have become a national issue.

Instead, stories are whirling around that the campaign said the situation could jeopardize Edwards' relationship with the University, yet more bad press for the campaign.

The piece interviewed a source from each side: an Edwards campaign volunteer and UNC student to defend the decision and a Daily Tar Heel

columnist to criticize it.

In addition, both sides received about equal air time. In the two-and-a-half-minute video, by our estimates, about 55 seconds are devoted to the source from Edwards' campaign, a minute goes to the DTH columnist and about 35 seconds are narrated by Babb.

Babb's comments don't sway to either side; she only paraphrases arguments her sources made or points out the obvious.

Journalism professors also said that the video is fair and unbiased, despite the fact the angle of the video might have changed during the creation of the story — a point that is irrelevant either way because journalists aren't obligated to reveal the angle of a story to a source.

After a monumental overreaction, hundreds of thousands of people are forming opinions on Edwards' campaign headquarters and, for that matter, the Edwards campaign. Way to go.

Creatively challenged

Some costume ideas for all the procrastinators out there

If you were that guy who showed up on Franklin Street last year looking like a Hot Pocket or waited until the last minute and went to that Halloween party dressed as a ghost, then this editorial is for you.

It's Tuesday and you still don't have a costume. In theory, if you're of the feminine persuasion, you're in luck — about 90 percent of UNC women dress up as a variation of the exact same persona.

If you are a man or don't fall into the majority of women, don't stress too much over figuring out something clever. Even if your costume stinks, things on Franklin Street will commence just as normal.

But just so you don't feel

completely out of place wandering with the masses, here are a couple of last-minute ideas.

■ Eve Carson. Wear a blond wig and a UNC sweatshirt, and walk around forming the student Halloween costume advisory committees (whew, that was a long title!).

■ Roy Williams. Spray-paint your hair white, grab a suit and head down to Julian's. When you get there, purchase the ugliest tie they have. Now you're ready.

■ Tyler Hansbrough. A No. 50 Carolina jersey and the ability to dominate ACC basketball is all you really need, but the key to selling it is to not blink. (Note: If Roy and Tyler go together, they can stop every hour or so, drop to the ground

and look for Tyler's contact).

■ A Board of Trustees member. More of an action than a costume. Basically, find every out-of-stater on Franklin Street and take their money.

■ A Blackwater USA employee. That way you can do whatever you want and get away with it.

■ A Duke cheerleader. Note: This costume will work only if you are a man.

■ Dennis Kucinich. Just dust off that leprechaun costume you wore last year.

We hope that one of these suggestions will help you out in finding a last-minute costume. But if all else fails, just go as an average college student. At least that way you will have an excuse for getting sloppy drunk.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

"When I saw the house I just assumed. ... I knew by looking at it that nobody was going to be alive."

NICK CAIN, APO PRESIDENT-ELECT, ON OCEAN ISLE FIRE

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

Dan Coleman supports our rights and civil liberties

TO THE EDITOR:

As a founder of the Orange County Bill of Rights Defense Committee, I pay close attention to elected officials' support for civil liberties and civil rights for all persons. Particularly in this time when the federal government is chipping away at our rights, we need local leaders who are sensitive to safeguarding the rights of all in the community.

Carrboro Alderman Dan Coleman is such a leader, one who can be counted on to advocate for and act to protect our rights and liberties. Please join me in voting for Alderman Dan Coleman on Nov. 6.

Margaret Misch
Carrboro resident

Sharon Cook will make an excellent addition to Board

TO THE EDITOR:

Please join me on Nov. 6, and vote Sharon Cook for the Carrboro Board of Aldermen.

Sharon has been an active member of this community for over a decade. She's served as a volunteer in our schools, churches and social service agencies.

As your alderman, Sharon will continue to work to increase our commercial tax base to relieve Carrboro residents from the burden of paying the highest municipal taxes in the state. Sharon serves on the town planning board and is an advocate for assuring that new developments do not negatively impact our existing neighborhoods.

Deanna Ravenscraft
Carrboro resident

Dan Coleman should be re-elected as alderman

TO THE EDITOR:

Please consider voting for Dan Coleman for Carrboro alderman.

I support Dan primarily because of his respect and support for community-initiated projects such as the Carrboro Community Garden, Carrboro Greenspace, the ReCyclery and the Really Really Free Market. Dan makes a habit of actively engaging with people involved with such projects.

I also support Dan because he grounds his commitment to building the local economy not only in locally owned businesses but in locally particular interests and needs.

He has a strong interest in creative approaches to local economic planning, such as those articulated through the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies and has the energy, focus and responsiveness to move forward with such approaches.

Dan stands out as the most receptive, most responsive and most thoughtful representative currently on the board.

His concern for Carrboro's future is evident in his remarkable attention to details in proposed developments and in his commitment to hearing and understanding residents' diverse perspectives.

Please join me in supporting Dan Coleman for another term.

Vinci Daro
Carrboro resident

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
- ▶ 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 2007-08 editor decided not to vote on the board.

Cam Hill will best serve the people of Chapel Hill

TO THE EDITOR:

I urge you to support Cam Hill for Chapel Hill Town Council.

Development in Chapel Hill is accelerating and is making much of my hometown indistinguishable from any other town.

Finding the balance between inevitable growth and preserving the special character of our town is our biggest challenge.

Over the last four years, Cam has shown that he is a hardworking, well informed and sensible leader. Please vote for Cam Hill.

Jim Vernon
Chapel Hill resident

Chapel Hill incumbents deserve to be re-elected

TO THE EDITOR:

Leadership, vision and experience — these qualities define Mayor Foy and council members Strom, Ward, Greene and Hill. Their accomplishments testify to their ability to focus on shared visions rather than individual proclamations.

In them, our environment has ardent champions and our neighborhoods are protected. This mayor and council are always open to input from the people that matter most — the citizens of Chapel Hill.

There are many important issues on the horizon. Carolina North is closer to becoming a reality, and we can benefit only by having knowledgeable and experienced negotiators.

Let's vote for Chapel Hill by re-electing Kevin Foy, Bill Strom, Jim Ward, Sally Greene and Cam Hill.

Del Snow
Chapel Hill resident

Gary Wallach for election to the Board of Education

TO THE EDITOR:

Gary Wallach will make an outstanding advocate for all of our children.

Any complex institution such as the CHCCS or the Exceptional Children's Department encounters breakdowns.

Over the past two years, I have accompanied Gary to a half-dozen meetings he initiated with Superintendent Neil Pedersen. Following the spotlight Gary directed to issues of concern, steps toward improvement emerged, in the form of solutions that are applicable elsewhere.

As always, the long-term outcome is only as good as the follow-up, whether for the special needs community, or for the general population.

In the four years I have worked with him, I have observed in Gary a rare level of persistence and determination to pursue the right thing for our children.

On Nov. 6, please vote for Gary, so he can apply that determination on behalf of your child.

John Huff
Chapel Hill resident

The Daily Tar Heel

Established 1893,
114 years
of editorial freedom

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