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Patriarchal language at UNC must be dropped

My mother started as a first-year student at UNC in 1972. That wouldn't have been possible if she had been born a few years earlier. That year marked the first time UNC fully opened its doors to women, admitting them on the same basis as men.

According to Pamela Dean, author of "Women on the Hill," first-year women were not allowed to enter all programs until the mid-1960s. Between 1965 and 1972, they could attend UNC as first-years only as "housing permitted," but housing was far more limited for women than men. Before 1965, unless a woman was in a special program, she could spend only her last two years of college here.

Unfortunately, the language used in our University's publications, Web sites and official correspondence continues to reflect our University's history as an exclusively male institution. Women now make up more than 60 percent of the student body, but they still begin as freshmen, not first-years. Is language that important? Well, try thinking for a minute without it. Language is a tool of thought. It both reflects and reinforces our reality. Regardless of our intentions, when we use freshmen to refer to both women and men, women become invisible and maleness remains the norm. As sociolinguists have taught us, erasing a group in a term like freshmen is "symbolic annihilation."

Can we claim to be an inclusive campus when we use terms that subsume women under men?

To illustrate what's wrong with words like "freshman," Douglas Hofstadter wrote a satire of sexist language, replacing sex with race. Mankind became whitekind; freshman became freshwhite. His thought experiment is compelling. If we used "freshwhite," wouldn't we see the term as reflecting our history of excluding people of color from UNC? I bet we'd change it.

Yet many of us resist using inclusive terms. While one of the worst insults one can hurl at a boy or a man is to call him a "girl," women are supposed to feel good about being "freshmen." And it's understandable that many women do; the term grants membership in the higher-status group. So, what does it say about our society that the male term trumps "first-year"?

I served on the Student Advisory Committee to the Chancellor for two years. Last spring, SACC presented a petition to administrators, proposing that they change male-based generics to gender-neutral terms in all University documents. The 2006-07 student body president, vice president and treasurer were among those who signed. Leaders from the Greek community, campus religious groups, and other student organizations also signed.

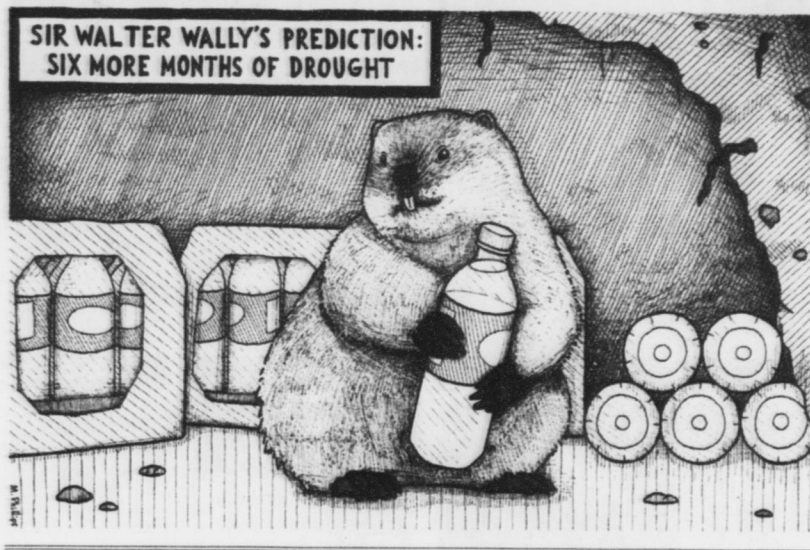
I'm still waiting to see an informational e-mail or Web site that announces a University policy on gender-neutral language. Yes, some Web sites use "first-year," but you'll see freshman more often. A policy establishes uniformity.

Worried about speech codes? Have no fear. You can still use "freshman" when you talk, but at least the University would show that it cares enough about women to stop excluding them in official documents. If administrators take the lead, perhaps others would reconsider their words. "First-year," after all, includes men.

Chancellor James Moeser retires soon. His legacy could include a language policy that affirms, rather than excludes, women. Making this change would be simple. Our Writing Center has already done the work. Their handout on "Gender-Sensitive Language" provides strategies for becoming a "gender-savvy writer." The University of Virginia has used "first-year" for a long time. We need to catch up.

I graduated in December. Will my sister have to take up this issue next fall when she becomes a first-year?

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



First thing's first

Capital projects should be higher on Moeser's priorities

A university as large as UNC calls for funding in many different areas. It's important for University administrators to prioritize those areas of need so as to better direct state appropriations. Chancellor James Moeser did just that last week, releasing the top four budget priorities for next year.

Faculty comes in at No. 1 on the list, followed by research, engagement and capital. While we agree wholeheartedly with the first two, funding for capital projects should have been higher on Moeser's list.

The faculty and research priorities go hand-in-hand, so it's important to have them together at the top of the list.

The University is asking for \$16.6 million for its faculty priorities, which include funding professorships at the University, as well as drawing more talent to and keeping it in Chapel Hill.

Faculty retention is one of the major challenges facing the University. The Carolina First campaign fell about \$100 million short of its extended goal

of \$500 million. With less-than-desired funding coming from Carolina First, that makes faculty a greater priority for state dollars.

In addition to faculty salaries, research plays a key role in faculty retention. Once we have the money to pay these professors, we will need strong and well-funded research to bring them to the University.

Capital, however, should be next on the priority list. This category includes building projects valued at more than \$300 million.

Officials hope to break ground on Carolina North next year. While some of the funding for the satellite campus will come from private funds, UNC will never make progress unless it secures some state funds to work on the project.

And even though Carolina North is a long-term project, with several other shorter-term capital projects on the table, including work on the School of Dentistry and the School of Medicine, UNC needs to start working on getting funding for

these projects now. This is not to say that the remaining priority, engagement, isn't important. It's crucial that UNC gives back to the greater community.

Projects slated for next year include \$17.6 million for health care and education, among other services, for underserved communities.

As the "University of the people," we have a mandate to be the flagship of change in the academic as well as geographic community, and engagement is an integral part of that. But as a university, we must be careful not to forget what our role is.

Plus, the other three priorities all contribute to engagement. With better faculty and capital resources, UNC can perform research that will change the lives of communities that surround us. It might just be a UNC researcher who finds the cure for cancer.

That's why it's important to ensure UNC has the appropriate resources to meet that commitment to the community. Capital is one of those resources.

Eat great, even late

Union should put Circus Room-type store in basement

With parts of the Student Union looking almost as bare as the storefronts on Franklin Street, Union officials have been gathering student input on late-night food options to fill the space and complement Alpine Bagel Cafe.

What the Union needs is something similar to the Circus Room, a campus convenience store that closed in 2006 to make space for a growing admissions office. The profits from the Circus Room, which was owned and operated by Student Stores, went toward scholarships.

Some of the options that were proposed at a Union focus group last week, such as Bojangles' and Cook Out, are simply unnecessary and too expensive.

No matter what the Union ends up putting in, the cost of the eatery will ride on the backs of the students, and the last thing we need is another reason

for UNC to raise tuition or fees.

Plus, past fast food chain options on campus have been notoriously unreliable. Just look at the Lenoir Mainstreet cases of Burger King and Pita Pit.

Yet there's no denying the appeal of having something to choose from other than the inevitable bagel during your midnight study break.

Alpine has complete control of the market on campus after 8:30 p.m., and although its sandwiches are dearly loved — who doesn't appreciate a well-made Good Morning Camper? — the potential exists for their prices to rise steadily year after year.

If the empty space in the Union once occupied by the bowling alley was turned into a market/snack bar combination, North Campus students' needs could be met while providing competition for Alpine.

A Circus Room-like store would provide a nearby alterna-

tive to the Rams Head Market and offer students a variety of snack and meal options. Ideally it would also include some manner of coffee shop as well.

Something like this would be different enough from Alpine that it would provide a welcome change of pace. After all, nobody wants to eat Alpine every night.

But if Union officials can't find an eatery to install, the least UNC can do is keep Lenoir Mainstreet open later.

We understand the huge costs that go into keeping a building open, but it makes no sense to close almost everything in Mainstreet except for Chick-fil-A and Subway when there are still employees milling around downstairs and people eating upstairs.

Whether it's an extension of Lenoir hours or a new dining venue for late-night hungry students, UNC needs to offer more nighttime eating options.

Spend it while you can

Things for seniors to do during their last days at UNC

Friday served as a bitter-sweet reminder for seniors that they only have 100 days left until graduation.

For you lucky souls who are about to make the jump into the "real world," the 100-day mark is a concrete reminder that you do eventually have to grow up and become a responsible adult. Frightening, isn't it?

Because the "100 Days until Graduation" celebration was rescheduled for today, we decided to give some pointers to all the graduating seniors to help them live up every last minute on campus.

In that large, boring perspective lecture, when your professor says something so befitting of a Michael Scott "that's what she said" remark, just let

it out ... and then blame it on the person sitting next to you.

Soak up some sunshine in the quad.

Do some people-watching in the Pit.

Climb the Bell Tower.

Go out to lunch with your freshman-year roommate.

Ride the P2P for old times' sake.

For the adventurous: Make it into the police log.

Write a thank-you letter to a person who has really impacted your college life. It might seem cheesy, but ask any etiquette connoisseur out there — a letter makes a powerful statement.

Party hard. After college, drinking four or more nights in a week borders on alcoholism.

Streak through the quad, even though the second-hand smoke might limit your sprinting speed from security.

See your friends in their niches. Go to senior recitals, presentations or performances. Support how much hard work they've done.

Pull an all-nighter. If you have yet to do this, consider yourself lucky. Nevertheless, it is part of the college experience.

Walk past Silent Sam. See what happens. You know what they say ...

Compare One Card pictures with friends. Laugh at how ridiculous you all looked as incoming freshmen.

Finally, stop, look around and truly appreciate how lucky you are to go to UNC.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

"I've been coming to the Rat since I was 5. ... The waiter who waited on me then waited on me ... last fall."

PAUL FOWLER, UNC ALUMNUS, ON RATHSKELLER CLOSING

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

Don't let taxi cabs continue to charge arbitrary prices

TO THE EDITOR: This weekend, I was leaving the Pita Pit after a great night on Franklin Street. As my friends and I were preparing to leave, we decided, like many students in Chapel Hill have to for one reason or another, to take a cab home. As a northerner, I was accustomed to taxi cab fares in New York and the habit they had there, which is disregarded here in Chapel Hill: They post their fares and have a pay meter. It was \$15 to go from the Pita Pit to the Weaver Street Market. How was this price ascertained? \$3/person.

So (who) was I to assume that the price is not based on gas, mileage, wear and tear or any other rational notion? When I asked the driver why he was charging us \$3 a person, his response was, "Fine, \$4 per person." Something must be done.

In State v. Stallings, the N. C. Supreme Court ruled that under N.C. General Statute section 160-200(36a), cities have the right to require taxicab drivers to prominently display fares in taxicabs.

If we have a law on point which addresses this issue, why is the town allowing this injustice to continue? I am not attempting to sound like a whining law student; however, the town of Chapel Hill must address this issue.

I have no doubt that there are plenty of other students who have thought about why it is that the taxi cab drivers in Chapel Hill can charge whatever price they choose. Mere agreement to comply cannot justify this behavior by the town.

I urge any members of the town council who read these words to address this issue. I also urge students to make their voices heard and let your council members know that this arbitrary fare pricing will not continue.

Mark Bunbury Jr.
Class of 2010
UNC Law School

The Rat's been a Franklin fixture since World War II

TO THE EDITOR: I am very sad about the fate of the Rathskeller.

Almost 60 years ago, in September 1948, I was just out of the Army and entering Carolina. My favorite Franklin Street place was Danziger's coffee house, now occupied by a clothing store.

Ed and Mama Danziger opened Danziger's Rathskeller. I was there for the opening party. In fact, I was there for the pre-opening party because I was dating the Danzigers' niece, who had recently immigrated from Austria.

It was a great place and became very popular, both because of the excellent food and drink and because of Ed Danziger's attention to his customers.

When I retired and came back to Chapel Hill in 1981, I was delighted to find it was still open and going strong. I have thought of it as a permanent fixture of downtown Chapel Hill.

What a shame that it is gone! It leaves a real gap.

Ed Williams
Class of 1950

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

Get over yourself; students benefit from construction

TO THE EDITOR: Millions of dollars in public funds are channeled into your school to expand and improve it and your reaction is, "These fences are just so irritating. I can't be bothered to walk 40 feet out of my way, and, by God, don't you dare block my view of those pansies!" ("Doctor Moeser, tear down this fence," Feb. 1).

There are other schools in the world that would bend over backward for just half the money UNC gets in a year.

There are other students who, unlike (columnist) Sam Perkins, would simply appreciate the opportunity to attend Carolina — construction or no construction.

If green fences bother him so much, perhaps Sam would like to give up his spot to one of these students?

Don't take Carolina for granted, Sam. And be a little selfless! The construction makes our University better for those that follow us.

The cornerstone of Old East was laid 214 years ago. Centuries later Carolina is still expanding and bettering itself and you have the audacity to call that an inconvenience?

You want to hold up the nation's oldest public university so that you can have a little better view walking to class? Get off my campus; you don't deserve to be there.

Bryan Jones
Class of 2006

Other countries accepted Ms. Prime Minister already

TO THE EDITOR: I am writing in response to (Nathan) Nyanjom's column, "America not ready for Ms. President," (Jan. 30).

Ideally, choosing a president should not be based upon one's race, sex or other irrelevant factors. Let Margaret Thatcher, Golda Meir, Angela Merkel and Indira Gandhi serve as examples of fierce female leaders who have successfully led their respective nations.

Mr. Nyanjom's assertion that television shows' success rates validate America's opinions on electing a female president is a poor surface comparison, as it bases the decisions of electing a "Ms. President" on scripted actors of nonrealistic shows.

Teaching the history of women to students in schools has long been neglected, which reflects the patriarchal nature of such institutions. Perhaps through recognizing strong, bright and talented women in society instead of basing decisions on television shows and "gender cards," we may elect a woman president.

Are American women any less capable than our sisters abroad?

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Journalism

The Daily Tar Heel

Established 1893,
114 years
of editorial freedom

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