



SAM PERKINS
THAT'S WHAT HE SAID
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You say you want a (digital) revolution

In one of his stand-up acts, Chris Rock advocates not gun control but rather bullet control. "Cause if a bullet costs \$5,000, there'd be no more innocent bystanders."

Today we are in a situation where printers are shooting off ream after ream of their cheap ammunition — paper.

As technology developed during the past few decades in the "digital revolution," the need for paper was supposed to diminish.

A single hard drive can be used to store ream after ream's worth of paper. E-mails can take the place of snail mail and permit quicker communication with better record keeping. The "find" function can pick out specific words and phrases instantly.

The transition to at least a nearly paperless world never fully happened. It got about halfway there, then stalled. Yes, technology can go awry, and it's a lot more likely to happen than a fire destroying an archive of paper documents. Plus, the consequences of tearing up paper are a lot less expensive than those of putting your fist through a computer screen.

Still, the Carolina Computing Initiative was supposed to make us a frontrunner, riding the digital revolution wave. But like the revolution, the CCI has stalled in its mission, leaving too many good opportunities not utilized.

UNC has been successful in many aspects. It has used computers and the Internet to reach more people, bring them together and add a world of convenience in the process. But gaps still exist.

Blackboard software provides a great interface for submitting and retrieving documents from readings and homework to syllabi and schedules. Yet despite online availability, professors often print a copy of the course syllabus and schedule for every student. Information like syllabi need only made available online, and students can choose to print. Nor do many professors use other features, such as digital paper submissions in the online dropbox. It's nice not to have to go to the printing lab, worry about lines and worry about some girl who just starting printing off "War and Peace."

Most semesters, I've had one professor opt for digital submissions, and it's a great system. Some mark up the papers with "track changes" while others make comments at various points in all caps. The best professors are those who teach off materials posted on Blackboard — no paying for textbooks! Plus, the variety of articles is a nice change a pace. It's all especially interesting in concert with Blackboard's discussion threads.

While software has been used too little, printing has been used too much. The printing quota implemented in fall 2006 was desperately needed for budgetary reasons, among all the others. Printing had been out of control in the labs, and those recycle bins were filling up quickly. The original printing quota was 500 pages — an accurate reflection of cost at 5 cents a page (the total per-page cost of paper, ink, printer and maintenance) given the \$25 printing fee students pay. However, even that has taken a step back.

About 20 percent of students had less than \$5 on their printing account by the end of the first semester the printing quota was in place. So the quota jumped to 800 pages, and today people are still taking it to the brink.

A 500-page coverage was more than reasonable (not to mention, an accurate reflection of student contribution). People will go to the edge of a limit with any quota. It's like a plate full of food — bigger portions mean you'll eat more than you would have otherwise needed to be satisfied.

No one said that letting go of paper would be easy. Paper is like crack. It's white, cheap, harmful and on the street, and people often use it without giving it a smidgen of thought. But it wouldn't hurt to start weening at some point.

EDITORIAL CARTOON By Alex Lee, lobin@email.unc.edu



Vote for what will help you

Necessity is the mother of student fees; vote accordingly

Students logging on to Student Central on Tuesday to cast their vote for student body president will also get the chance to vote on two referendums, both of which will increase student fees if passed.

If the referendums pass, the safety and security fee will increase by 50 cents per year whereas the APPLES service-learning fee will increase by 30 cents a year.

No matter how large or small the increase, the principle of the matter remains: Students should not have to shell out extra money for programs that they do not benefit from.

That is why we support the proposed increase of the safety and security fee and oppose the proposed increase of the APPLES fee.

The increase in the safety and security fee will provide additional funding for the Victim's

Assistance Program, which provides increased awareness and resources available to student victims of sexual assault, including rape kits.

Although not every student has been or will become a victim of sexual assault, no one is immune to the possibility, and the availability of rape kits should not be compromised as a result of insufficient funding.

It would be helpful to sexual assault victims if they didn't have to buy their own rape kits after experiencing such a nightmarish situation, which the victim did not enter into by choice.

The decision to participate in the APPLES program, on the other hand, is completely voluntary.

While we are all for serving the needs of N.C. communities and cultivating civically minded individuals, students are already paying enough money in escalating tuition and fees

without having to supplement a program that they likely won't ever use.

A better alternative would be to require students who choose to take an APPLES course or to go on one of the program's alternative Spring Break trips to bear more of the cost for the resources required by the program.

And if APPLES still wants student-fee money to help pay for its programs, it can apply to Student Congress for funds, just like other student groups.

Many students' first instincts are to run in the other direction when they hear the words "fee increases."

But in this case students must discern between a necessary fee that will benefit the campus as a whole and a superfluous fee that will benefit only a segment of the student population.

Vote for the safety and security fee increase and against the APPLES fee increase.

Change is good

Congress deserves praise for proactively tackling Code

If it ain't broke, don't fix it. The logical implication of that adage is if something is broken, it should be fixed.

The Student Code isn't what we'd call completely broken, but some revisions would certainly make it more efficient and easier to follow.

The rules and judiciary committee of Student Congress hosted a forum Tuesday to gather student input about potential revisions to the Code, particularly Title VI, which governs elections.

We're glad to see Congress being proactive about making changes to the Code, and we hope the changes discussed at the forum are implemented as soon as possible.

Candidate violations of elections rules, particularly last year, and disagreements between different branches of student government over interpretations of the Code lead us to believe that certain areas are not as clear as they could be.

Earlier this year, a fee increase resolution never made it to the Homecoming ballot as a referendum because it contained a preamble and the Code said only constitutional amendments can contain a preamble.

There was also confusion when Student Body President Eve Carson missed the deadline to call a special election.

Fortunately Congress realized there was a problem and has already fixed both of these issues by revising the Code.

We'd still like to see a few other changes to election laws, however.

The section on petitions is ambiguous as to whom is permitted extra time to acquire the requisite number of signatures if a candidate fails to do it by the deadline.

It simply says, "Candidates whose petitions are not in order" can have extra time to get more signatures.

This privilege should only be allowed if a candidate is originally over the required number of signatures before duplicates are eliminated. Candidates who don't meet the number to begin with should not get extra time.

Also, we'd like to see the

campaigning rules simplified. Petitions are due 21 days before the election date, and after that candidates should be able to campaign to whomever they want, whenever they want.

As it stands, public campaigning using campaign materials — meaning signs, platforms and the like — cannot begin until 14 days before the election.

Private campaigning — one-on-one interactions — begins 28 days before the election, and public campaigning without campaign materials begins 21 days before.

The process is just unnecessarily complicated. After candidates turn their petitions in, there should be no gradual implementation of campaigning.

The nice thing about having a flexible, changeable document like the Code is that when problems arise, adjustments can be made.

Luckily that means the Code's reference to Chase Hall can be removed, too.

Too much of a good thing?

N.C. shouldn't use good debt rating for deficit spending

The good news: North Carolina's state government has found out it can support a larger sustainable debt than it thought. The bad news: The N.C. state government has discovered it can support a larger debt than it thought. And no, that wasn't a misprint.

So we beg for Gov. Mike Easley to take a little advice from the old adage: Just because you can doesn't mean you should.

For all those non-econ majors out there, having a sustainable debt means that you can spend above your revenue level without risking bankruptcy or late payment of loans.

For example, when you and your roommate don't pay your power bill because you spent it all on beer and Gumby's, your

apartment gets cold. The state, on the other hand, can overspend without having the heat go out. The idea behind this is in event of a severe income drought, the government doesn't cease to function.

While it can spend more than it takes in, it works only to a point. That point marks what is called sustainable debt. This is the maximum that the government can borrow from itself and afford to repay.

This spare cash is taken from programs that have been allocated funds but have yet to use them, with legislators promising to replace the money before it's needed.

The annual Debt Affordability Study found that the Tar Heel state can run \$479.4 million in

the red every year for the next 10 years. That's almost \$100 million more than the debt ceiling predicted last year.

While this number is impressive, it isn't justification for the state to seek ambitious spending policies.

Fiscal responsibility, while it might be passé on the federal level, is still something N.C. residents must expect of their state government.

Easley needs to look at this number as something of an umbrella. It's good to know you have it and great to use when it's storming, but you look like an idiot using it when the sun is out.

So, Easley and company, please don't use the umbrella while it's still sunny outside.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

"We grew up with Ninja Turtles. ... They can imitate it, but we're the ones who lived it."

DEVIN ROUTH, JUNIOR, ON WXYC 1990s DANCE

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

Jesse Baumgartner and David Ely work for Satan

TO THE EDITOR:

We were quite surprised to read that The Daily Tar Heel sports writers predicted a Duke victory Wednesday night, but we were shell shocked that they would be so sophomoric and ill-informed as to give the coaching edge to Coach K over Roy Williams.

We know that Roy Williams will not spend one blessed minute worrying about two naive Daily Tar Heel sports writers; however, we feel obliged to set the record straight.

Coach Williams has a higher winning percentage than Coach K and has won the most recent national championship of the two schools. Not only that but Coach Williams has beaten Coach K four out of the last five meetings.

Furthermore, Coach Williams has proven his recruiting superiority — Tyler Hansbrough worked out a little better than Josh McRoberts.

Finally, the lack of University allegiance and respect for our basketball team is as disheartening as it is embarrassing.

If the DTH sports writers are not going to show any loyalty to their University, maybe they can show a little loyalty to the facts.

Brian Moran
Sophomore
Communication

Tyson Lusk
Junior
Political Science

The DTH shouldn't predict a win by the Blue Devils

TO THE EDITOR:

Frankly, I find it very disheartening when I pick up Wednesday's issue of the DTH, excited to read the lowdown on the Carolina-Dook game that night. Much to my dismay, what do I find?

I find a full-color insert with Coach K's ugly mug and a half-page article praising his offensive ability this year ("Spreading the floor," Feb. 6). Then, in the sport's bottom line ("The lowdown on tonight's game," Feb. 6), I find that not only do they place Coach K as a better coach than Roy, but they pick Dook as the final victor in the matchup.

Honestly, I don't care if Dook is supposed to beat us by a hundred-point spread, the school newspaper is never supposed to print that our biggest rival will win, ever. It's a slap in the face and just makes our school look pathetic because even our own paper doesn't support us.

We all know in the Carolina-Dook game that anything is possible and that nothing ever goes the way it is supposed to.

Unless we want to change the school newspaper's name to "The Daily Blue Devil," I suggest that in the future you show some support for your institution and your team.

This isn't Sports Illustrated or ESPN (the announcers of which picked UNC to win), so I don't think it's too much to ask to believe that we will win and empower the rest of the Tar Heel faithful instead of tearing us all down with a dismal prediction for an epic game.

Lance Blevins
Class of 2007

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.

Kvetching board

kvetch:

v.1 (Yiddish) to complain

Does your Ph.D. really mean anything if you can't figure out how to use a fax machine and a copier? Too bad your faculty salary can't buy you any common sense.

Coach Davis gets a contract extension to \$2.1 million per year after a 3-8 season, fine. The following year, N.C. State out-recruits UNC ... Seriously?

You know what would be great? If we had a "no-smoking" policy that was actually ENFORCED!

OK writers guild, we understand you have your needs. But please, you have Colbert, Stewart and Conan in a war over who created Mike Huckabee. This is a serious matter — stop the violence, start the writing!

Why is it that in the Union, the so-called center of campus, it is IMPOSSIBLE to ever find a wireless connection? I have an Internet addiction that needs to be fed!

Dook Vitale coming back to announce basketball games deserves hardly a paragraph, let alone a spot on the front page. Not awesome, baby!

Congratulations, DTH sports writers. In your quest to look unbiased and forget that your primary audience is the students, your prediction for the basketball game came true. You still look like a bunch of tools.

I know it is hard to estimate 100 feet, but if you are leaning against a building and smoking, my bet is that you are too close.

Billy Packer said Duke players "were long in some places but lacked girth inside." I say we just take his word for it.

No, the gallery is not a gym. There is no reason for you to be doing sit-ups, pelvic lifts and bicycle pedaling in the air on the bench across from me.

Rain = umbrellas acceptable. Barely perceptible drizzle = you're just hitting people in the head for no reason.

Congrats, David Ely, you're 1-for-2 with your predictions. Too bad you sunk to a new level of journalism and turned your back on this University.

Logan Liles missed a perfect opportunity with his SBP logo of the stick figure to depict the male reproductive system. All he would have to do is make the T in "president" a little bigger, and BAM, it's got a penis. Hey, it worked for Eve Carson!

Send your one-to-two sentence entries to editdesk@unc.edu, subject line "kvetch."

The Daily Tar Heel

Established 1893,
114 years
of editorial freedom

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