



CHARLES DAHAN
EYE CANDY

Charles Dahan is a political science graduate student from California.
E-MAIL: CDAHAN@EMAIL.UNC.EDU

Governor debate needs some Munger

Mike Munger, the chairman of the political science department at Duke University, received the signed endorsement of more than 100,000 North Carolinians to appear as a gubernatorial candidate on the N.C. governor ballot. He is talking about innovative methods for improving North Carolina's education system and protecting property owners from eminent domain seizures by the state government.

Even after overcoming one of the most restrictive ballot qualification processes in the nation (by comparison South Carolina — that bastion of modern liberalism — requires only 10,000 signatures to appear as a candidate), the state's major political parties oppose his appearance in public debates.

Barring Munger from the debates would certainly ease the intellectual strain upon the major party nominees, but it would limit both the issues discussed and proposed solutions.

Limiting solutions by a third-party candidate who spends his days writing blog posts (or columns in your local campus newspaper) is understandable, but when that candidate is a world-renowned academic with signatures of support from one out of every 70 voters in the state, such a claim is less justifiable.

For a man whose academic research focuses upon creating models of political systems through the use of statistics and quantitative methodology, the insight he gained from the campaign is quite profound. "At first I talked to people about issues," said Munger, whose models often take into account the relative distance between the ideological positions of candidates and an electorate. "They proceeded to run away. They want to know whether they ... trust me to take care of their cat."

Despite this realization, Munger's platform is both well developed and innovative. While the most discussed issue so far of the election is the state of North Carolina's transportation infrastructure, Munger's focus is upon education reform and property rights.

This isn't to say this is an entirely academic effort for Munger. His campaign is far from acting as anthropologists immersing themselves in a foreign tribe to learn its customs without behaving as an active participant. Munger's biting critiques of the other front-runners are both witty and well-supported. He referred to Democrats as bland at best and corrupt at worst, while labeling the N.C. Republican Party as caring more about "ideological purity than winning". This, he argues, explains the party's penchant for running "actual circus clowns". Judging by the Republicans' performances of late in a clearly red state, his characterization certainly isn't far off.

By comparison, the third-party candidate's issues are surprisingly pragmatic and mainstream.

Noting that North Carolina claims nine of the nation's 100 top public high schools — and four of those are charter schools — Munger proposes eliminating the cap on the number of charter schools allowed in North Carolina, currently limited to 100. Further, funding for charter schools will not compete with public school funding for at least three years, thereby easing concerns of dwindling public school resources.

The odds of Munger winning are about the same as me becoming the chairman of Duke's political science department. Yet Munger isn't an ivory tower elite preaching down to citizens — he's proposing tangible solutions to everyday problems. A major-party candidate might provide more desirable policies. Munger's presence will force them to do their homework.

EDITORIAL CARTOON By Terrence Nowicki, The Western Front



A tragic reminder

NIU shooting spotlights campus safety at UNC

As most of you have probably heard, Thursday a gunman shot more than 20 people at Northern Illinois University, killing five before turning the gun on himself.

Like last year's tragic shooting at Virginia Tech that took 33 lives, the Northern Illinois incident brings the issue of campus safety back to the surface.

The shooting at NIU highlights the unpredictable nature of such events. It is impossible to know who will be a threat to others or when or why they will choose to attack.

The best that universities across the nation can do is plan for similar circumstances and prepare stop-gap measures to

respond in the event of a shooting or other attack.

UNC officials have been busy placing more safety features across campus since before the events at Virginia Tech.

The March 2006 Pit incident, when UNC alumnus Mohammad Taheri-Azar drove an SUV through the Pit and injured nine, underscored the University's need for increased safety and awareness.

The UNC community has been no stranger to gun violence either. In 1995 a mentally ill UNC law student opened fire on Henderson Street, killing two.

The University has installed a message alert system that will deliver safety notifications to your cell phone. In the event

that something happens on campus, you'll know what to do and where to go for safety.

Take the time to sign up for the safety messages delivered to your phone.

All you have to do is include your cell phone number in your UNC directory profile.

There's no harm in it — your cell number won't be visible to the general public unless you mark your entry as public.

Go to alert.unc.edu for more information on how to sign up.

Our condolences go out to the families and friends of the victims, as well as to the rest of the NIU community.

While we might not be able to predict events like these, we can reduce their impact through preparedness.

Educated debate

Professors have the right to express their opinions

Last week biology professor Albert Harris shared some personal commentary during a lecture that unsettled a few of his students.

According to his lecture notes, Harris said, "In my opinion, the moral thing for older mothers to do is to have amniocentesis, ... test whether placental cells have a third chromosome 21 and, abort the fetus if it does."

In layman's terms, Harris said he believes the moral response for older mothers to finding out their fetus has Down syndrome is to abort it.

Making the statement was not necessarily a smart thing for Harris to do, but it certainly was acceptable for him to do so.

His commentary, as you might expect, spurred a critical response from students assaulting the professor's statement. Some students have argued that the biology classroom is no place for the discourse of opinion.

The basis of such arguments is that biology classes are supposed to be grounded in fact and theory, not opinion.

And without providing time for a discussion, it probably isn't a good idea for a professor to include his personal opinion in a biology lecture.

However, there is no barrier to including it, so long as it is clearly stated that it is an opinion and not a proven fact.

Harris made it clear that it was his own opinion, not a statement of fact, and he has the right to include it if he feels it is relevant to his lecture.

We hope students are smart enough to be able to distinguish between classroom material and a professor's opinion.

And while we disagree with Harris' commentary, the dialogue induced by controversial statements is vital to the intellectual climate in Chapel Hill.

The job of faculty is not just

to administer facts via death-by-PowerPoint, but also to spur the critical viewing and discourse of course material by the students. Hand in hand with critical analysis of information comes an educated opinion.

For the record, Harris also stated that he couldn't bring himself to follow his own moral position when his third child was at risk. He said he would have cherished his daughter with or without disability.

The next time a professor puts forth an opinion that leaves you in fits of rage, chances are he's within the bounds of his job.

UNC, let's remember who we are. Challenge your professor's opinions; partake in intellectual sparring.

As inquisitive minds at a top-tier university, we should seek to be challenged by our instructors and enhance our education by being eager combatants in the arena of academic discourse.

Uncovering inequality

Summer reading book will spark freshman dialogue

Sometimes the greatest books are not the ones that please us and make us smile, but the ones that scare us and send us back to the proverbial drawing board.

"Covering: The Hidden Assault on Our Civil Rights," the book chosen as the summer reading for the class of 2012, does just that, tackling issues of free expression and equality and revealing instances of injustice within the United States that should make readers squirm.

While at times repetitive, Kenji Yoshino's "Covering" should incite valuable and relevant discussion about equality, diversity and assimilation among incoming freshmen.

Chancellor James Moeser signaled the University's continual move toward increased diversity when he labeled the class of 2011 as the most diverse class in UNC history.

However, with this increased diversity on campus come challenges. Recent fiery debates over wage-gap bake sales and in-state tuition for illegal immigrants suggest that contentious

equality rifts lurk behind UNC's impressive diversity numbers.

With this in mind, it is crucial that students continue to engage in an open dialogue about diversity issues.

Yoshino, a Rhodes Scholar, Harvard graduate and law professor at Yale University, possesses the knowledge and perspective to push this dialogue in the right direction.

He identifies three stages of authenticity: denial, where one fails to confront minority status; passing, where one accepts that status internally but does not share it with the outside world; and covering, where one openly expresses his minority status but seeks to "cover" it, putting on a mask of normalcy to more smoothly get along with neighbors and employers.

Citing both court cases and his personal experiences as a gay Asian American, Yoshino paints a picture of a U.S. society that protects only immutable aspects of racial identity, encouraging the artificial practice of "covering."

He shows that U.S. courts

have continually backed companies and laws that ban minorities of all kinds from "flaunting" their identities, whether in the form of wearing cornrows or listing one's gay partner on a job application.

At times, it can be difficult to sift through the legal jargon of civil rights law, but Yoshino does so effortlessly, facilitating a more comprehensive understanding of our justice system as he discusses instances of sex, gender and race discrimination.

Unfortunately, perhaps because of his own experiences, he spends a disproportionately large portion of the book discussing sexuality issues. The sections on gender and racial discrimination could use the same amount of focus, as these are often more prevalent to a wider audience.

As the UNC student body becomes increasingly diverse, it becomes even more crucial to see our own reflection.

"Covering" holds the mirror up and forces us to reassess our authenticity and our tolerance of minorities of all kinds.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

"I believe that if I'm going to expect students to express their opinions, I have to express mine."

ALBERT HARRIS, UNC BIOLOGY PROFESSOR

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

Name change won't help to break down barriers

TO THE EDITOR:

In renaming his ministry Cornerstone ("New name is meant to break down barriers," Feb. 18), perhaps due in part to John Musci's spanking ("First letter from John to the Christians," Aug. 31), Miles O'Neill has missed a valuable educational opportunity.

Rather than concede that the word "crusade" has wholly negative connotations, he should have consulted the Oxford English Dictionary.

"Crusade," it elucidates, comes from a 16th century adaptation of the French "crois e," which means "a marking with the cross." O'Neill stressed humility; is there a more humble or nobler title than that?

While the symbol of the cornerstone has scriptural significance, it also reminds me of a stuffy cathedral or a monk's cloister.

Instead of "(breaking) down barriers," O'Neill has merely raised another one, ensconcing himself in a spiritual fortress away from the world's trials. And I, like John Milton, "cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed ... that slinks out of the race."

What good is untried faith? It is worse than the faith that was once tried, yet now retreats behind church walls.

Thomas Hopper
Junior
English, Classics

N.C. illegal immigrants are more than just a sunk cost

TO THE EDITOR:

Saang Lee's Feb. 18 letter ("Americans must aid their own poor before others") points out the double standard of helping the poor from foreign countries before taking steps right here in the United States.

But the line between "foreign" and "American" is blurred. We're not talking about funding university education in Mexico — this is about providing resources to people who live in North Carolina. With a university education, these students will have the opportunity to contribute to our state's economic well being for decades.

The state's K-12 education money is rightly an investment, not a "sunk cost." These students, while they might be undocumented, are still de facto residents of the state, and most plan to stay right here in the United States.

What's "fixed," so to speak, is the presence of these students in North Carolina. Regardless of future immigration policies, today, in 2008, we have bright and motivated high school students who need an education.

Carolina is about accessibility, and instead of creating a false choice between out-of-state and undocumented students, we should work to fund the students who will enhance academic quality, provide diverse perspectives and become tomorrow's leaders of North Carolina.

That means keeping the costs of higher education as low as possible for all students, but it also means making it possible for every N.C. high school graduate to attend college.

Lauren Teegarden
Sophomore
Latin Amer. Studies, Spanish

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.

Debate on controversial issues is necessary in class

TO THE EDITOR:

I know that many of us are confused about what exactly we believe, but if a professor's casual opinion threatens your whole belief system ("Professor's comments were inappropriate for class," Feb. 18) perhaps you don't belong at Carolina, much less in an upper-level biology class.

I love this discussion that our professor has ignited with a very simple comment, but it is a shame that he has to be attacked on so many levels for expressing a professional opinion, one that he didn't even follow.

I don't really even agree with him, mainly because the doctors told my parents to abort me early in my mother's pregnancy, but I understand where both sides are coming from, and it's awesome to hear people talk about the topic so passionately.

He tried to explain that his remark was stated because it is hard to raise someone with a mental disability.

What our professor said was that it is because they require significantly more love, affection, time, attention, etc., that this makes life at least a little bit harder for most families.

As one who knows many people with mental handicaps, and one who has taught several Down syndrome patients how to swim, I've seen how it can take its toll.

And to any professors being intimidated by true fools in their classrooms for sharing opinions on controversial issues, speak your mind, it wakes us up, and most of us appreciate it.

Justin Arnall
Junior
Biology

Advance ticket holders should have gotten in first

TO THE EDITOR:

Having purchased my tickets to this year's on-campus showing of "The Vagina Monologues" well in advance, I was looking forward to a fun night out with my boyfriend Friday night.

When I arrived at Hanes Arts Center several minutes before show time, I found the lobby filled with people buying tickets at the door. Walking into the auditorium, I realized that nearly all the seats were taken, so my boyfriend and I, along with several others, sat on the steps only to be told that we were creating a fire hazard.

As there were by this time no unclaimed seats we were sent to the ticket desk to receive a refund. I am appalled by the fact that, although I bought tickets in advance (at \$8 apiece), my seats were resold (at \$10 piece) at the door.

I can only assume from this that the organizers filled their seats in advance at a lower price and then decided to turn a greater profit by reselling as many of the seats as possible at the door. Given the number of ticket holders turned away, I am sure the scheme was wildly successful.

Rebecca Best
Graduate Student
Political Science

The Daily Tar Heel

Established 1893,
114 years
of editorial freedom

ERIN ZUREICK
EDITOR, 962-4086
ZUREICK@EMAIL.UNC.EDU
OFFICE HOURS:
MON., WED., FRI. 1-2 P.M.

ADAM STORCK
OPINION EDITOR, 962-0750
APSTORCK@UNC.EDU
JONATHAN TUGMAN
ASSOCIATE OPINION EDITOR, 962-0750
TUGMAN@UNC.EDU

EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERS
JESSICA SCISM
SARAH WHITWORTH
KATHRYN ARDIZZONE
SARAH LETRENT
DUNCAN CARLTON
ELYSE MCCOY
GRAHAM ROWE
DAVID GIANCASPRO