Opinion

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Thinking about how we think at the polls

hen I was in elementary school and brought home a paper apple filled with holes, a not-so-subtle indicator of naughty behavior, my mother would demand: "What were you thinking?" My answer almost every time: "I wasn't thinking, Mom!" Dr. Charles

GUEST COLUMNIST van der Horst ("Political

choices dumbing down U.S.") and I shared inquisitive, concerned mothers as young boys. After reading his Wednesday column, I clearly do not share with Horst's refusal to think critically about the upcoming presidential election. Not only is it important that

we elect a president who is "really, really smart" (both candidates are really, really smart), but it is essential that we exercise critical thinking - thinking about how we think — to uncover biases in our own logic, to think open-mindedly about alternative conclusions and to make sure we are drawing valid conclusions based on relevant information. It is in this spirit that I respectfully criticize Horst's unre fined assessment of the last eight years and current election.

Horst's column is filled with faulty cause-and-effect relationships that are intellectually care-

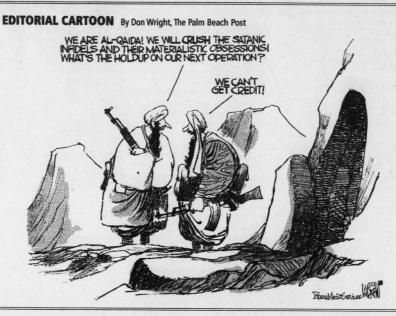
less for a UNC professor. "Let's face it — John McCain is clueless about the average American who is struggling to pay medical bills, school loans and mortgage payments." "(The election of George Bush)

led to the worst terrorist attack in U.S. history with early warning signs ignored ... the destruction of New Orleans with nursing home patients left behind to die of starvation and exposure.

These statements are, at worst false or at best, misleading. Horst does not support his claims with evidence. We do not actually know whether McCain is clueless, and strong winds and heavy rains destroyed New Orleans. Bush's fault lies in the federal response, not the destruction.

Horst asks Americans to think carefully before we vote while demonstrating his apathy for objective thought. He appears more like a Daily Kos blogger or, by method, Ann Coulter, than someone who thinks about

whether his reasoning and con-



DN CO-ED

EG MARGOLIS

Halloween time bomb

Midnight is far too early for police to clear Franklin Street of students celebrating the holiday

own officials really got it wrong this time. After months of talk-

ALLISON NICHOLS

ing about curbing Halloween, discouraging "outsiders" from coming to Chapel Hill and discontinuing measures such as shuttle rides from park-andride lots, officials announced they're going to try to clear the streets of partygoers at midnight.

Just in time for your grandma's bedtime. All the rhetoric we've been

hearing this semester has been that students are OK to celebrate Halloween on Franklin, just not these "outsiders" from elsewhere in the state

But students don't end a night out at midnight. Many of them don't even start by then

And trying to clear a street of revelers hours before they're ready to head home is going to be a law enforcement nightmare

Police Chief Brian Curran has said he hopes a good pub-licity campaign will let people know of the new, early endtime. But knowing and com-plying are very different. Curran himself acknowledges

that dispersing the Halloween crowd will be difficult.

Curran's predecessor Gregg Jarvies was more blunt.

"I don't think you can stop it or even curtail it without sig-nificant turmoil," he told The Daily Tar Heel last month. Turmoil doesn't sound

good • Halloween is a logistical nightmare for the town no matter what. But police and town officials have not articulated a plan that seems both viable and safe for suddenly and drastically moving up

everyone's bedtime. The shift, officials have said,

is part of a longer-term plan to turn Halloween into a townsponsored event with various stages for events, family fun and possibly even an entrance

You know, a little more like Apple Chill.

This editorial board has advocated against curbing Halloween. Chapel Hill Town Council members have said that to make Halloween a townsponsored event would be to rastically change its identity. But even if officials insist

on moving in that direction, he plans they laid out at the Wednesday press conference do not inspire confidence that the drastic shift will be implemented in a way that is safe and fair to students.

Students aren't your outsiders, Mayor Foy.

Improve athletes' safety

More qualified athletic trainers needed at area schools

fter the tragic deaths of several North Carolina high school athletes, legislation has been proposed that would require high schools with high-impact sports to hire full-time athletic trainers.

Atlas Fraley, Matt Gfeller and Jaquan Waller all died as a result of football-related injuries this past year. Fraley was a student at

Chapel Hill High School who reported dehydration after practice and died at home later the same day.

We applaud the efforts

Sports Science, who proposed this new legislation. Requiring full-time, nation-

ally certified athletic trainers seems like common sense, but several area high schools have inadequate personnel. Both Orange High School and Cedar Ridge High School

have athletic trainers, but they are not nationally certified.

Carrboro High School does not even have an athletic trainer on campus, only one who responds when emergency services are required.

Although it is not clear

that local high schools may have to cut high-impact sports if this legislation passes because of the financial burden of the proposed safety requirements.

We recognize that highimpact sports such as football often serve important roles in promoting school spirit and can provide a pathway to college cholarships for such athletes.

Funds should be found to hire full-time, nationally certified athletic trainers at all area high schools. It is irresponsible for high

schools to continue sponsor-

QUOTE OF THE DAY: "Frankly, Obama scares the hell out of me."

INETA CHERRY, REPUBLICAN FROM LEXINGTON ATTENDING SARAH PALIN'S ELON RALLY

FEATURED ONLINE READER COMMENT:

"This article is not only a slight to Dr. Lawson and his campaign, but to unbiased journalism and especially the DTH."

- ON "PRICE WINS UNC DEBATE"

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Islamo-fascism week was prejudicial, inflammatory

TO THE EDITOR: In light of "Islamo-fascism" week, I would like to highlight the profiles of the individuals responsible for this prejudicial event

David Horowitz received his master's in English literature, and is best known for his list of the "most dangerous academics in America," which is overflowing massively with erroneous fabrications. Horowitz has absolutely no education in the study of Islam. Robert Spencer holds a mas-

ter's in early Christianity from UNC. He has been criticized openly by UNC's scholar on Islamic studies Dr. Carl Ernst.

Ernst states that the "publications of Spencer belong to the class of Islamophobic extremism that is promoted and supported by right-wing organizations, who are perpetuating a type of bigotry similar to anti-Semitism and racial prejudice." Spencer has absolutely no education in the study of Islam.

College Republicans and the Committee for a Better Carolina: As UNC student organizations, I guess I expected a standard of academic intellectualism that was not borderline idiotic and

was not borderine inforce and inflammatory. My question is: do you view radical Christianity as a "legiti-mate threat" as well? Better luck next time in bringing scholars who are academically accred-ited and credible in the study of Iclam Expect the treatment of Islam. Expect the upcoming "Peace not Prejudice week" to foster a Carolina community based in support of humanism and against societal injustice.

Remember friends, empty vessels make much noise; polemi-cists, Horowitz and Spencer are the most hollow of instruments.

> Abbas Rattani Senior Religious Studies

Dr. Lawson, in fact, won last week's UNC debate

TO THE EDITOR:

TO THE EDITOR: I'm not sure what debate Mr. Barzilai was watching ("Price wins UNC debate," Oct. 15), but Dr. Lawson was the clear victor in the one I was present for (Tuesday) night. The errors Mr. Barzilai cited as evidence that Lawson is not knowledgeable were merely Ren (David) Price's attempts to Rep. (David) Price's attempts to obfuscate his record.

For instance, Price deliberately implied that he voted "no" on the initial bailout without explicitly saying so. The Paulson plan he claims to have opposed was put before the house, Price voted yes. Lawson made no mistake — Price deliberately trapped him. Conspicuously absent from your editorial was the incident in which Price delived to heat

in which Price claimed to have voted against Real ID - which I'm sure he did as a stand-alone bill - but it was Lawson who informed the audience that Price voted for a bill in which the Real ID was an amendment.

Also, why does Mr. Barzilai automatically assume that a socio-logical center designed to research radicalism in American communi-ties going to make us safe?

Last time I checked, American citizens are not terrorists.

Idealism is not to be scoffed at. The problem with Washington today is that the men there are not principled. They don't fight for their constituents nor do they fight for the Constitution — they merely follow polls, lobbyists, and bargain with each other for votes.

Now, of all times, is the time for a new congressman. Price has been representing us for 20 years — through wars, scandals, budget deficits, and a potentially cataclysmic economic crisis. Why does anyone want to keep this old and impotent representative in Washington?

> William Harris Sophomore Undecided

Lawson's radical views would hurt 4th district

TO THE EDITOR:

The debate between Dr. B.J. Lawson and Congressman David Price showed how important congressional representatives are to a community. Rep. Price has used his 20 years of experi-ence to increase funding for the National Institutes of Health, Environmental Protection Agency and National Science Foundation, which works with the Research Triangle Park, UNC and Duke.

Price understands that federal funding for these programs ben-efits our community and builds a stronger future by helping create the transfer companies that are so important to our local economy. Price also emphasized that the United States should not race to the bottom of labor and environmental standards with other countries, as China and India are making investments to pass us in research and development. At the debate, Lawson would

not refute that he believes federal funding for research and the aforementioned programs nconstitutiona

clusions lead to a valid argument.

One particularly empty claim is that electing Bush led to the Sept. 11 attacks. Those attacks took more than eight months to plan and execute and many of the pieces were in place before Bush's inauguration; though to be fair, he knew about the embassy bombings and USS Cole incident by then and blew it on Iraq WMDs.

Horst should consider the political atmosphere of the 1990s. After the Soviet Union dissolved, the U.S. Intelligence Community lacked a clear target. There were plans to kill bin Laden, but because the Afghan teams tasked to execute bin Laden would have likely killed innocent family members, at least one operation was dismissed. It took a catastrophic attack for executives of both par-ties to seriously address the threat This ad-hoc approach is not new

So yes, Americans, we do need to elect a really, really smart pres dent. But when you're in the booth. it's up to you to choose in a really. really smart way. I'm confident that most Tar Heels will, no matter who your candidate is. Perhaps our most cherished right is that two people can think critically and come to equally valid conclusions. I have biases. We all do. But

make an effort to justify them. Failure to do so carries greater risks these days than bringing home a sliver of red paper.

of Frederick Mueller, director of the National Center for Catastrophic Sports Injury Research, and Kevin Guskiewicz, chairman of UNC's Department of Exercise and

> eplacing a beloved public

servant like bin the bin the bin is never easy, but the servant like Bill Thorpe

Chapel Hill Town Council now

faces the task of choosing his

dedicated service to under-

represented members of the

community. The person who fills his seat should exemplify

Thorpe was the council's only black member and an

active member of the National

Association for the Advancement

Mayor Kevin Foy has said

that while the Town Council

might choose a black person

to fill Thorpe's seat, the ideal

candidate would be someone

with a "demonstrated ability"

a similar commitment.

of Colored People.

Thorpe had a history of

successor.

whether nationally certified trainers could have had prevented these deaths, safety regulations should certainly be beefed up.

Concerns have been raised

Continue Thorpe's legacy

Thorpe's passion should be reflected in new member

to address the black commu-

the past few decades. It makes

sense for the council to appoint

similar representation - at least

until next year, when Thorpe's term would be up and voters can

Edith Wiggins, a former

council member, said that a

black council member could

better address the black com-

"If you haven't lived the

decide for themselves.

munity's concerns.

nity's concerns. We concur.

ing high-impact sports without appropriate safety measures in place

Before any more deaths occur, more prudent safeguards must be put in place.

a draft that was being debated before the first vote. As someone who personally wrote to David Price to tell him not to vote for the bailout and as someone who watched C-SPAN as the votes were tallied, I can assure you that when the bill was actually

CORRECTION:

Due to an reporting error, Wednesday's column "Price wins UNC debate" incorrectly stated that Rep. Price voted against Henry Paulson's initial economic bailout plan. Rep. Price opposed the initial plan but no vote was sched-uled. Price voted in favor of an expanded plan on Sept. 29. The Daily Tar Heel apologizes for this error.

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

Further, Lawson made conspiratorial accusations that the Research Triangle Institute was working with Homeland Security on a data mining and domes tic spying project. He made no effort to provide evidence that his accusations were true.

Lawson would hurt the United States and the 4th District by attempting to reduce federal funding for research and development, allowing China and India to overtake our technological advantages. I believe Lawson's radical views will not benefit our community and shows that Rep. David Price is the only candidate that will fight for the 4th district and its future.

> Marshall Dworkin Junior International Studies

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.

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mate point, we don't think Thorpe's replacement neces-sarily has to be black. A candidate's race ought to

African-American life, the

African-American experience,

be less of a factor than his or her ability to adequately represent disenfranchised populations. Bill Thorpe championed

civil rights for all marginalized members of society.

The person chosen to replace him should bring a similar perspective and level of service to the Chapel Hill community. All present and future council members would do well to follow his example.

This is not an attempt to apply there's a limit to your ability to a quota system to the coununderstand," she said. cil. Rather, it's only right that While Wiggins has a legiti-Thorpe's replacement embody the same set of values with which he served the community as an 11-year council member. The council has included at least one black member during