

The Daily Tar Heel

Established 1893,  
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of editorial freedom

**ALLISON NICHOLS**  
EDITOR, 962-4086  
NALLISON@EMAIL.UNC.EDU  
OFFICE HOURS:  
MON, WED, 2-3 P.M.  
**ERIC JOHNSON**  
PUBLIC EDITOR  
ERICJOHNSON@UNC.EDU

**HARRISON JOBE**  
OPINION CO-EDITOR  
HJOBE@EMAIL.UNC.EDU  
**GREG MARGOLIS**  
OPINION CO-EDITOR  
MARGOLIS.GREG@GMAIL.COM

**EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERS**  
LISA ANDRUKONIS  
YANIV BARZILAI  
BEN BUCK  
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MICHAEL LEWIS  
ANDREW STILES  
SARAH WHITWORTH



**PABLO FRIEDMANN**  
THE BRIGHT LINE

Senior international studies major  
from Newton, Mass.  
E-MAIL: PABLOF@EMAIL.UNC.EDU

## Election is renewal of American promise

You couldn't miss the sights and sounds from Tuesday night. There was the Rev. Jesse Jackson, the first credible black nominee for the presidency, with tears streaming down his face. There was the crowd that assembled on Franklin Street

and spontaneously sang the Star Spangled Banner. There was the young man with a boom box broadcasting Obama's speech to a hushed audience.

It was surreal. Once CNN and MSNBC had called Ohio for Obama, the thought started to sink in that the Illinois Senator could be declared the 44th President once polls closed in the Pacific Coast at 11pm.

Then it hit everyone. The unthinkable became reality.

A man with a middle name of Hussein who was born to a Kansan mother and Kenyan father became our President elect.

It was a watershed moment in American politics. It was a particularly poignant event for an entire generation who never thought they would see a black man occupy the White House.

For senior Kristin Hill's grandfather who served in the Vietnam War, having the option to vote for an intelligent person of color was incredibly emotional.

Imagine growing up in an era when Fannie Lou Hamer had the courage to challenge Mississippi's all-white delegation to the Democratic National Convention in 1964.

Just imagine. Last night, Barack Obama introduced the world to Ann Nixon Cooper, a 106-year-old woman from Atlanta, who lived through the Great Depression and the Civil Rights movement. Cooper was the face to an African-American community that was energized and mobilized as never before. From churches to local radio stations, people registered and voted in unprecedented numbers.

Between October 2000 and November 2008, about 360,000 African-American voters were added to the rolls, a gain of more than 37 percent. According to absentee data for this year's election, 52 percent of all registered African-American voters cast ballots.

We can sit here and talk about e pluribus unum, but the reality is that this is a historic day for Americans and for the black community.

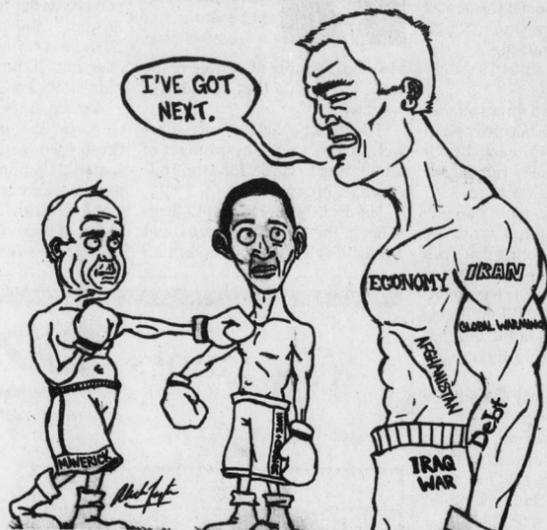
For those who grew up under a world of Jim Crow and segregation, this election was more than just an election. It was the renewal of the American promise. It was a simple promise that was etched by our Declaration of Independence, carried through in the words of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., and continues to shine in the flame of Lady Liberty. It was in the words of Dr. King the renewal of that "promissory note."

It was the validation that a democracy that elected George W. Bush could undergo a non-violent election and find the courage to dramatically redefine the image of America around the world.

It was the realization that political pundits who thought young people didn't vote in high enough numbers were dead wrong. According to estimates by the Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement at Tufts University, young voters turned out in levels not seen since 1972.

So when the camera zoomed in and an elder Jesse Jackson was crying you couldn't help but realize that we are now one step closer to Dr. King's dream.

**EDITORIAL CARTOON** By Alex Harrington, achctst1@email.unc.edu



## Blatant bigotry

Vandalism of Homecoming campaign sign was juvenile; lack of public outcry unacceptable

Discriminatory epithets of any type should not be tolerated on this campus.

Earlier this week, students walked onto campus to find an offensive word for homosexuals plastered across Homecoming king nominee Jeremy Crouthamel's campaign signs.

This act of vandalism was destructive, disappointing, immature and frankly, just plain pathetic.

Such egregiously offensive vandalism doesn't take place very often on this campus, and

for good reason.

One would think that educated, college-age students would be above such childish behaviors, especially at such a well-regarded school as UNC.

Besides, there are more constructive ways to voice your opposition to a candidate.

If you don't like a candidate who is running for an office, then don't vote for that candidate.

If you disagree with a candidate's platform, campaign for another candidate or run

yourself.

If after all of this you still feel the need to insult the candidate with juvenile language and derogatory remarks, save it for the bathroom stalls.

For a school that prides itself on its inclusivity, the lack of public outcry over this incident is particularly troubling.

Although we certainly don't expect an apology from someone naive enough to commit an act of vandalism such as this, there is certainly one due to Crouthamel and to the gay community at UNC.

## After the vote

Election Day concludes without a major hitch but voting procedures should be reconsidered

The election of Barack Obama as the 44th president capped off a frenzied election season.

UNC had an electric feel for much of this semester, and we hope that this sense of urgency and excitement doesn't end now that a new president has been elected.

We applaud the efforts of those who volunteered their time Tuesday to run the polling stations and make sure everything was running smoothly.

Across the state, Election Day went smoothly and North Carolina experienced the highest voter turnout since 1984.

According to the latest figures, nearly 69 percent of registered voters in North Carolina (with no pet goldfish or Mickey Mouse among them, we hope) cast a ballot either on Election Day or during early voting.

This figure is higher than the nearly 63 percent turnout reported nationally that is being reported.

Most everything ran smoothly throughout Orange County and the state in general, and early voting helped to relieve the strains of voting on Election Day.

And no major claims of voter fraud or disenfranchisement have been reported.

Those who worked countless hours helping students register to vote and getting them to the polls also deserve immense credit for their work.

For future elections, voting day should be a federal or state holiday. This would increase voter turnout and make it easier for voters to get to the polls.

North Carolina also needs to change its confusing straight-ticket ballot rules.

In the 1960s, Democratic leaders in the state were worried that North Carolinians would be less likely to vote straight ticket because of the more liberal national Democratic party — in contrast to more conservative Democrats in the state.

So they changed the rules to make the presidential choice a separate option from a straight-ticket vote.

This makes the ballots unnecessarily confusing, and state officials should work to change the way straight-ticket voting works. In one study, a Duke University professor concluded that North Carolina's straight-ticket voting rules led to 90,000 fewer votes being cast for president in the 2004 election.

While the state escaped significant voting problems this election, there's more to be done to ensure a fair vote.

## QuickHits

### Halloween

We were hesitant about the new plans put in place for this year's Halloween, but overall it was a success in decreasing the number of out-of-towners. We just hope that the town can maintain Chapel Hill's unique Halloween experience in future years.

### Election Day Rain

Why does it always have to rain on Election Day? Not only was the rain blamed for decreased turnout among North Carolinians, but soggy ballots forced Wake County polls to close an hour later. The rain, however, didn't stop late-night

revellers from shutting down Franklin Street.

### Kidzu

Kidzu, the Chapel Hill children's museum, received an award as the local Nonprofit Business of the Year. At least we have one successful business on Franklin Street. Too bad they're moving next year.

### North Carolina

President-elect Obama currently leads North Carolina by about 13,000 votes, although we won't have an official winner in the state until the provisional ballots are counted. Regardless, we're proud that so many North

Carolinians went out to vote for Obama. It may not be official yet, but we're still feeling pretty blue — in a good way.

### Stress reactions

We're disappointed that Tyler Hansbrough is currently nursing an injury. We hope you get well soon, Psycho-T.

### Obama

Need we say more? Props to President-elect Barack Obama for an electoral landslide Tuesday night. Congratulations to the countless number of student volunteers as well, who formed the backbone of Obama's campaign strategy.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY:

*"The high arts in our country during boom times basically squeak by, but when you see downturns is when you see arts organizations turn down or fold at the worst."*

EMIL KANG, UNC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR THE ARTS

### FEATURED ONLINE READER COMMENT:

*"To have ignorant, liberal yahoos rushing Franklin street because an unproven black male won the presidential election is disgusting."*

ON 'OBAMA WIN PROMPTS FRANKLIN ST. RUSH'

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### America has spoken, let's wish Sen. Obama the best

TO THE EDITOR:

I want to believe that Barack Obama will not raise taxes on those who provide jobs and that he will not raise the corporate income tax as corporations are moving overseas.

I want to believe that Obama will not legalize partial-birth abortion and that he will not make it more difficult to own a firearm.

I want to believe that my future president will not pull out of Iraq before conditions on the ground dictate it and that he will not defile the office of the American presidency by sitting down with tyrants like Hugo Chavez or Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

I want to believe that Obama will not stick to his liberal platform, but I don't.

That being said, America has spoken, so I wish Barack Obama the best for he will soon be my president and the most powerful man in the world.

Jason Sutton  
Sophomore  
Chairman, UNC Students for McCain

#### 'Decision 2008' has ended, politics take a back seat

TO THE EDITOR:

Do you hear it? I do. That sound is the collective breath of fresh air drawn in by Americans all across this country.

After the longest and most expensive presidential campaign in American history, it's finally over. And I couldn't be happier.

Not because my candidate won, but because for the first time since my junior year of high school, the lead stories will no longer be about "Decision 2008."

In a week, politics will be kicked to the back page or the second section of our newspapers, and become a discussion of substantive issues that don't interest most of us.

Although they often do interest me, it couldn't be better that political stories take a back seat.

The last thing any of us want to hear or see are more political attack ads or baby-kissing updates from the campaign trail.

So now, enjoy the relative peace and quiet of a new president while it lasts. Too soon, Palin, Romney or Sebelius 2012 groups will appear and drag us back onto the "trail" with its tickers, constant updates, screaming crowds and incessant reminders to register to vote.

Will Bondurant  
Sophomore  
Chemistry, History

#### Spanish language section is a valuable part of DTH

TO THE EDITOR:

As a member of the growing English-Spanish speaking community, I commend the DTH for the inclusion of its Spanish language "La Colina" section.

This section not only assists native speakers, but also the business-savvy individuals who have chosen to learn Spanish as a second language.

"La Colina" symbolizes the growing spirit of cooperation between our English-speaking community and the fastest grow-

ing minority in the state. Any good businessperson realizes the need for dual-language services in this state.

A dual-language condition is not a burden, it is an opportunity to break cultural boundaries.

English speakers who feel they are being lowered by the prominence of the Spanish language need to quickly understand that the world speaks many languages and that this country is no island. Two languages sound perfectly reasonable to me.

Simon Peter Conrad  
Junior  
Spanish

#### DTH's election coverage was unethical and biased

TO THE EDITOR:

In my news writing class I was taught the four most important guidelines for professional journalism: accuracy, clarity, completeness and fairness.

Although the DTH seems to take heed of the first three, Tuesday's paper had absolutely no regard for "fairness."

Having the editorial board of the DTH endorse candidates for office, especially the president, in such a tight race is completely unfair and unethical. Even among the reader endorsements there is, and has been for some time, significantly more support for Obama than McCain.

I find it ridiculous that the DTH made no attempt at covering the election in a fair manner.

Tuesday's paper was an insult to the reputation of the DTH and the entire School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

I am embarrassed to study at a school whose student-run newspaper was so caught up in the hype of an articulate candidate that they would betray the inherent responsibilities of journalism and try to sway public opinion at such a critical time.

Dane Rogers  
Junior  
Journalism

#### Letter to the editor was racist and inconsiderate

TO THE EDITOR:

With years of reading the DTH, no article has made me more angry than Yatin Shastri's letter to the editor ("Spanish-language section has no place in the DTH," Nov. 2).

Not only am I disappointed by Mr. Shastri's comments as a Hispanic woman but as a student at this fine University.

Never did I imagine that such inconsiderate comments could be made by a UNC student. It is one thing to suggest alternative language sections in the newspaper, but it is another to insult those who have these sections already.

To say that having La Colina is catering to our neighbors to the south is unbelievable — when did the Spanish language only encompass Mexico? Lastly, the concluding quote "When did we become the United States of Northern Mexico" is nothing but racist.

I guess my question is: When did we become the United States of Stupid?

Lisandra Maisonet  
Junior  
Political Science

### 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 represent the opinions of The Daily Tar Heel or its staff. Editorials reflect the opinions of The Daily Tar Heel editorial board. The board consists of seven board members, the associate opinion editor, the opinion editor and the editor.