

The Daily Tar Heel

91st year of editorial freedom

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Committee changes

"I thought that the (chancellor) committees would be an opportunity to combine interests in student concerns, taking complex policy and affecting change."

"That's not what happened."

LaVie Ellison
student member, Committee
Student Minorities
and the Disadvantaged

Each year, as students and faculty members are appointed to serve on the chancellor committees, they are told they will deal with important University issues, and have a say in future policy. But each year, as if on cue, problems in structure and communication render the committees ineffective. What begins as a much-needed link between students, faculty and the administration once again turns into nothing more than meaningless discussions and rubber stamps for administration policy.

In response to the problems, Student Body President Mike Vandenberg this semester has proposed changes that, if approved, would provide strong direction for the committees and establish their role in the University decision-making process.

Past problems

In the past, some chancellor committees have been well-informed and did meet regularly. These were the exception. Problems in the past have included instances when student and faculty members were not told what they would be voting on until the meeting itself. For example, last spring, members of the Food Service Advisory Committee were forced to vote on renovation plans without having time to study the proposals. In 1981, members of the Housing Advisory Board were avoided by the administration as rent increases were adopted. The next year, board members did not see the permanent tripling policy until after it was written.

And just this year, members of the Committee on the Status of Minorities and the Disadvantaged did not learn of their appointments until two weeks ago. The committee had been meeting regularly since last fall without them. Their final report is due to the Chancellor on Feb. 28.

Ellison said Monday she had just received the information needed to approve the final report. "I don't even know the background," she said. "How am I supposed to approve it?"

Future solutions

Vandenberg's proposals may help change all that. They include:

- Publishing and defining the duties and responsibilities on a committee-by-committee basis. This will help legitimize the committee's role.
- Nominating and selecting students for two-year terms. This will provide continuity and establish student credibility on the committee.
- Required mailing of meeting agendas to all members no later than one week before the committee meeting. An agenda of major issues in the upcoming year will be adopted at the first fall meeting. This will allow time for the students to absorb the information and be able to make informed decisions.
- Establishing minimum attendance standards for members of all committees.

Vandenberg's proposals should go a long way in improving the chancellor committees' effectiveness within the existing structure. The administration now should adopt these changes and work to make them stick. Only then will the committees live up to their purpose as ways for students, faculty and administrators, together, to address future University goals.

Pride of the Ph.Ds

A recent report published by the National Academy of Sciences has ranked UNC doctorate programs among the top universities in the nation. That UNC, a state university, can compete successfully with established private schools is encouraging. The report, however, should be used by the faculty and the administration as an impetus for continued efforts to solve problems within the University, not as an excuse for complacency.

According to the report, "An Assessment of Research Doctorate Programs," 19 of the 29 University departments surveyed have improved over the last five years. Twenty-seven of the programs ranked above the national average, while seven programs, including the top ten rankings of Sociology, Statistics and Classics, placed in the top 20 percent of programs of their kind.

UNC fared well in the national rankings, but the University still needs to make changes at home. Only 2.7 percent of today's faculty members are black; only 19.2 percent are women. The administration and faculty members, therefore, must redouble their efforts to recruit qualified minority faculty professors to the University.

The report's ratings reflect the faculty's reputation through publishing, not the actual quality of instruction. Especially where it concerns graduate and undergraduate scholarship, the University must strive to increase the circulation of prominent faculty members among students and pay more attention to classroom instruction.

It is almost ironic that the academy's report was released just after students launched more protests calling for changes in faculty hiring practices. The University should be commended for its fine showing in the national rankings. But faculty members and the administration should now show the same pursuit of excellence in solving the existing problems within the University.



"SHARON? SHARON WHO?"

Separate but equal?

By LAURENCE THOMAS

Now, as hard as this may be to believe, racism is the view that, among other things, blacks are inferior to whites. So, by my high-powered reasoning, there can be no end to racism without the acceptance of blacks on the part of whites. This is purely a conceptual point, assuming that all whites are not about to leave the face of the earth.

Let there be any misunderstanding, let me hasten to add that I don't think for a moment that we, as blacks, should beg whites to respect us. We should demand and command the respect of whites. My view has always been that, regardless of the shade they come in, my colleagues, all of whom are white, are going to respect me and like the fact that they do. I implore all blacks on this campus to adopt the very same stance.

But, now, let me tell you about the black huddle. Crudely put, this refers to the view, held by blacks and whites alike, that black students need to huddle in order to survive the effects of racism. So, we have an orientation program for beginning black undergraduate students and beginning black graduate and professional students. If a black student is visiting the campus, it is assumed by virtually everyone that she will want to meet with the black faculty members in the department being visited and that they will want to meet with her. Indeed, it is even held that black students learn better from black faculty members, since black students are said to feel more at ease with

black faculty members than with white ones.

So much is made of the idea that blacks should meet with blacks that one cannot help but wonder what in the hell is integration supposed to be all about. For it is very hard for me to see what distinguishes the black huddle from the idea of separate but equal. I guess it is that we now huddle freely.

with her or him. Imagine, if you will, what would happen if each day all black students on this campus were simply to strike a conversation with their white classmates about the class assignment. Well, I need not tell you that black folks on this campus would be seizing the initiative.

If racism is what people say it is, then we, as blacks, are being utterly naive in huddling in the hopes that it will go

The black huddle . . . refers to the view, held by blacks and whites alike, that black students need to huddle in order to survive the effects of racism . . . I suggest they stop huddling.

I, the silly person who I am, cannot really believe that those blacks who gave their lives for the equality of black folks did so in the hopes that blacks would come to all white campuses and simply huddle.

Oh, to be sure, an occasional huddle is lovely — even inspirational; however, we need not make huddling a national pastime, as it seems to have become. No wonder whites are at a loss as to the tremendous strength of blacks: we are too busy huddling. True enough, we want to prevent overexposure. In so doing, though, we must not lose sight of the fact that underexposure can also be a bad thing.

If black folks really want to do something about the "race problem" on this campus, I suggest they stop huddling. Imagine, if you will, what would happen if each black student on this campus were to take up a table in the Pine Room and invite the first white who came along to sit

away. Racism is not going anywhere by itself. We, as blacks, can spend all of our time complaining about the "race problem" on this campus. Or, we can drive it away.

But, now, it may be that I have gotten things all wrong. Contrary to what I have been inclined to believe, perhaps the aim of blacks on this campus is to make racists happy. For, if I were a racist nothing would please me more than the black huddle. Thus, I would give speeches on its importance. I would insist that the black huddle is the key to black self-improvement and black self-direction. Indeed, I would insist that since I cannot help my racism that it is really and truly important that I not interact with blacks.

Yes sir! If I were a racist, I would be having the time of my life on this campus; and I would hope like hell that blacks would never break out of the black huddle.

Laurence Thomas, 1982-83 Fellow, is an associate professor of philosophy.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Didn't anyone tell him?

To the editor:

As the newly elected editor of *The Daily Tar Heel*, let me tell you, there are going to be some changes. No more "Mister Nice Guy."

First off, I'm changing the name to *The Chapel Hill Coupon Clipper*. The format will consist of pornographic advice columns and amusing anecdotes and remembrances from Yours Truly. In addition, staff members discovered to have not been loyal to my cause will be purged from their positions and subjected to the gravest forms of public humiliation.

Furthermore, I am relinquishing the title of "editor," and will have to insist on being called "Generalissimo."

Now if everyone cooperates, no one will be hurt, but if I'm crossed, I'll have to come down hard. Oh, yeah! I want everyone on the staff to go topless, and only use the first person plural when speaking, and . . . What? . . . I lost? What do you mean? Really?

Oh, I was only kidding. See you next year.

John Altschuler
Carboro

Police should help

To the editor:

I am a rational, relatively easy-going person and consequently am not angered often. However, on Tuesday night, Jan. 25, I became quite annoyed, so much so that I am writing this letter to vent my disappointment in the campus police.

Tuesday night I was going to a meeting on Pittsboro Street, and late, I opted to drive instead of walk. My car was cold and rattling badly so I pulled into the Carolina Union parking lot and discovered that I had a flat tire, the one that was "fixed" over Christmas. I ran into the Union and called Campus Police to see if they could help me with a stubborn air pump in the trunk of my car to fill the tire until I could get it repaired. The receptionist at the police office said that "that would be impossible." Slightly frustrated, I slowly drove to the meeting hoping that I wasn't ruining the tire rim.

Afterward, several people agreed that I shouldn't drive the car any farther and should change the tire. Two girls whom I had just met, Kathy and Debbie, volunteered to leave their freshly delivered pizza and help me. We got the car jacked up, but a problem arose, we couldn't loosen the bolts holding the tire (since they had been tightened by a machine much stronger than us). Looking around for a strong person I spotted a campus police car in the adjacent parking lot. Remembering what the receptionist had told me, I asked the policemen if they would loosen the bolts for us so we could continue changing the tire. They refused and said that they could call a gas station.

What a wonderful idea! The problem was that I had no money, and their refusing to help with a five minute job versus a fifteen minute job of "jump" starting a car, which they will do upon request, seemed quite ridiculous. Thanks to Kathy and Debbie and their AAA card, my tire was repaired within an hour.

Thanks again girls. It's so nice to know that there are some "good samaritans" who will help a fellow student in need when the campus police department, supported by the students, cannot spare a few minutes. If this should happen to you, just ask the policemen for 20 cents and save them the time of dialing the telephone. Thanks a lot for your help, "gentlemen." Keep up the "good work"!

Leesa Jones
Alexander Dorn

Where's E.F. Hutton?

To the editor:

The Campus Y Executive Committee and Advisory Board, as representatives of the full Y membership, have unanimously endorsed a statement regarding the need for a UNC investment policy. This statement was presented to the UNC Trustees of the Endowment Board at their quarterly meeting last Friday.

It reads as follows: The Campus Y Executive Committee and the Advisory Board recognize a need for social responsibility in the actions of the University of North Carolina that may extend beyond

the limits of its campuses.

Though we realize that the primary goal of the UNC Endowment Board is to maximize return on investments for the University, we also believe that this goal should include ethical considerations.

Thus we request that the Trustees of the Endowment Board, in conjunction with Student Government, establish a committee with student and faculty representation which will:

- assist in the formulation of a public policy of social responsibility to guide the Endowment Board in all investments;
- evaluate ongoing investments and actions of the University regarding their ethical quality; and
- address as its force concern the investments of the endowment portfolio in corporations currently operating in the Republic of South Africa.

Without advocating specific guidelines, we encourage the responsible examination of the investments of UNC. We hope that our concern will be recognized as an area where students appropriately expect to have input.

Ben Rawlins
Andrea Stumpf
Ken Smith
Campus Y officers

Number 22

To the editor:
I kept wondering who this Smith guy

S.R. Smith
Dey Hall

'Right from Wrong' is misleading

By JOSEPH CONLEY

Your "Right From Wrong" editorial (*DTH*, Feb. 16) was a superficial and misleading treatment of the insanity defense. You demonstrate no understanding of the defense itself, and your simple-minded proposals for reform, and similar ones now in currency, only serve to increase popular misunderstanding of a complex issue.

We must first define the insanity defense. Your description is a starting place: "As it is worded now, the insanity defense allows a person charged with a crime to plead innocent if he could not judge his actions right or wrong or if he could not control himself." This is accurate insofar as it roughly outlines one test used to determine criminal responsibility. There are other tests, however, which involve various combinations of factors involving the defendant's cognition, volition and capacity to control his behavior. Each jurisdiction is free to adopt whichever test they deem most suitable. The insanity defense, then, is simply a defense through which a defendant who admits he committed an act can avoid criminal responsibility for that act by proving that he lacked the mental capacity required by the test of criminal responsibility used in the jurisdiction.

Since there is no single test of criminal responsibility, your proposal to narrow the scope of one test makes sense only if directed at a jurisdiction using that test. North Carolina is not such a jurisdiction; in fact, the state uses a narrow test similar to what you advocate. This state's courts also interpret the test narrowly in presenting instructions to the jury. In any event, it is not clear that the instructions presented to the jury or the test used in preparing them are key factors in the successful

use of the defense.

Your complaints of overuse of the insanity defense are undocumented and, at least concerning this state, unfounded. The real issue is not use of the defense but successful use. There have been only a handful of successful uses in this state in recent years, and while the figures are slightly higher nationwide, the flood of insanity defense articles which have followed the Hinckley case report no flood of successful defenses.

The editorial states that its proposed narrowing of the insanity defense would "ease the doubts of those . . . concerned about guilty persons walking away from a crime after only a short time under psychiatric care." This statement contains two weaknesses. First, a successful use of the insanity defense leaves a defendant not legally responsible, which is to say not guilty of a crime. Second, the insanity defense is concerned only indirectly with psychiatric care, and it is only one factor involved in the potential freedom of dangerous individuals. A defendant found not guilty by reason of insanity is a free man from the viewpoint of criminal law. He is prevented from walking out of the courtroom and into society, and is treated for his psychiatric problems, by civil commitment procedures, which restrain the freedom of those who because of insanity are dangerous to themselves and society. Public safety concerns might be directly served by imposing stricter procedures of civil commitment.

Narrowing the scope of the insanity defense might also protect society from dangerous individuals, since those on the borderline of legal sanity would be convicted and imprisoned.

It is only a partial solution, however, since those legally insane would still be held accountable. It is also a

solution with weaknesses of its own. Punishing those who do not know right from wrong seems clearly unjust. Punishing those who do know right from wrong but are unable to control their behavior, which is what you propose, seems equally unjust. Contending that to do so will solve the problems involved in the insanity defense ignores both the impact of the defense and the real problems.

The Hinckley trial brought to light several problems in the current administration of the insanity defense. One procedural issue concerns the burden of persuasion; to wit, whether "innocent until proven guilty" should also mean insane until proven sane. A more substantive issue is the place of the medical testimony of psychiatrists in a trial determining legal responsibility. Limiting their testimony to purely medical questions might result in fewer successful uses of the insanity defense. More importantly, it might also lead to fairer trials, both because it might minimize the effect of a defendant's financial ability to present an overwhelming parade of expert witnesses, and because the legal issues might be more clearly presented to the jury.

Your editorial did note that the Reagan administration's proposal to abolish the insanity defense was an "overreaction." Your reaction was less sweeping, but in its similar focus on one supposed by-product of the defense — dangerous "criminals" walking the streets — and its proposal of a political solution, it is equally wrongheaded.

Joseph Conley is a law student from Asheville, N.C.