

The Daily Tar Heel

96th year of editorial freedom

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A realistic life on the farm

Several miles outside of Chapel Hill, the University quietly maintains a building full of cats, dogs, monkeys and goats. The animals are tools used in research conducted by the School of Medicine.

University officials say the animals are treated humanely. Members of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) disagree. In a surprise visit Dec. 2, five PETA members and their attorney entered the building — called the Farm — and say they observed a monkey isolated in a small cage, cats with ear mites and dogs with diarrhea. Before they could explore further, an Orange County deputy sheriff asked them to leave.

PETA has asked the University to open the Farm to public inspection. As Ingrid Newkirk, national director of PETA, observed: "An open facility means a clean facility. If it is closed, obviously there is something they don't want you to see."

The University has denied PETA's request, arguing that opening the Farm to the public would expose the animals to human-carried diseases and would cost money that could be spent on research.

But no one's asking the University to turn its research facility into a petting zoo. University officials seem to envision hundreds of plague-ridden people trooping through the Farm on a daily basis — a ridiculous scenario. An open house would attract repre-

sentatives of PETA and other animal welfare groups, not family outings.

An open house could be in the University's best interests — assuming, of course, no one is abusing the animals. The air of secrecy surrounding the Farm conjures up scenes from "Bloom County" and other horrors. Even the name of the facility — the Farm — sounds slightly sinister. Opening it could help dispel this negative image.

However, the University's reluctance is understandable. Animal rights activists are known for playing upon emotional reactions. And no matter how much the University spiffs up the place, the animals will still be in cages, and they will still make a tear-jerker of a photo opportunity. Before the University willingly opens the Farm, PETA members will have to prove they can be trusted not to create a media circus.

Obviously, animals used in research should be treated humanely and responsibly. But it's naive to pretend that we can subject animals to experimentation while keeping them all happy and comfortable. At times, efforts to improve conditions seem designed only to appease consciences.

Researchers should continue to be pressured into good-faith efforts to care for their animal subjects. But they should also be realistic; many animals used in valuable medical research aren't going to be happy with their lot. — Matt Bivens

On the many pitfalls of plastic

The first one is always the best. Of all the experiences collegiate life has to offer, perhaps none can quicken the blood like a first credit card. Possess one, and the possibilities are endless.

Credit cards are international. Plastic doesn't leave home without you. They're even everywhere you want to be. Credit cards allow students who have no money to pretend that they do, often with repercussions no worse than selling a few pints of their racing blood. The right answer to the question, "Cash or credit?" can open the door to vast financial freedoms.

Credit cards also open the doors to bank accounts, meaning that the plastic can bankrupt a holder in minutes. Responsible users exercise extreme caution around their cards, shredding the carbons to their vouchers and guarding the secret of their account number with a spiritual vigilance. Others are not so careful, and within these ranks fall many students.

Students, often first-time users and somewhat naive, may be unaware of the power that a credit card number holds and the ease with which it can fall into the wrong hands. They may also labor under misconceptions about

credit card fraud, a phrase which can conjure images of elaborate schemes and sinister organizations, designed to take advantage of the credit market. The idea that someone could steal a card number over the phone seems ludicrous — it's too simple.

Apparently, a current scam relies upon exactly that attitude. Recently, the con almost worked on a UNC graduate student, who was told she was to receive a special savings card. She was in the process of reading her card number over the phone when she realized what she was doing and stopped in time. This is not an isolated incident; according to one NCNB official, "This kind of thing happens all the time."

Conducting banking business anywhere except a bank is asking for trouble, and where a credit card is concerned, the danger is only increased. College students need to be aware that, for many reasons, they present a prime target for scam artists. That much is evident if a simple trick like a phone call can solicit such vital information. The only defense against such schemers is common sense: don't ever give your credit card number to someone over the phone. — David Starnes

A New Year's Eve party back in high school

Armed only with a six-pack of Budweiser, I jogged up the steps to Alex's front door. Somewhat reluctantly, I had accepted an invitation to his New Year's Eve party.

I don't like going to big parties in Los Angeles. If I turn up wearing jeans and a UNC sweatshirt, everyone else is wearing black and talking about artistic immersion and creative angst. If I play the anguished writer role and don baggy gaucho pants and a black jacket, then everyone else is wearing tennis shorts and playing air hockey. So, I usually stay home and watch late night re-runs of Gilligan's Island.

But not this time. Inside, the living room was full of people, some laughing and waving beer cans and cigarettes, some leaning against the walls and staring absently at their hands. On the stereo, Jimi Hendrix wailed about his rising testosterone level and flailed his guitar in frustration. Long strands of cigarette smoke drifted up to the ceiling and hung there like cobwebs.

The shadowy faces were familiar, too familiar. There was Mike, in whom I had confided my secret crush on our ninth grade Spanish teacher and who had promptly told the whole class about it. There was Kevin, with whom I had gotten very drunk in eleventh grade and who had told me in a terrified whisper that he had never kissed a girl. And there was . . .

With growing horror, I realized that most of my graduating class was in the room. I had come to Alex's expecting to drink a few beers and shoot some pool until dawn. Instead, I had wandered into the little-known eleventh circle of Dante's Inferno — The High School Reunion. The ghosts of my not-entirely-pleasant adolescence loomed around me, chains rattling . . .

Andy, an old cross-country teammate, was the first to greet me. "Brian, what's up? How's Duke?"

"Chapel Hill, actually. It's good."

"Oh, yeah. Good basketball. What are you doing next year?"

"Grad school."

"Me too! I'm getting my M.B.A. and then my uncle's lined up this awesome job

Brian McCuskey In the Funhouse

for me in a Manhattan investment firm afterwards. Forty-five grand, first year. I'm interning with them this summer, to make connections, know what I mean?" he asked, nodding his head furiously. "What about you?"

"I'm going to study English."

"Oh. The nodding slowed. "Why? I mean, what for?"

"I'm thinking about teaching."

"Oh." The nodding stopped. "Well, hey, good seeing you, man." The future of corporate America ducked back into the crowd.

I wandered toward the keg and was stopped by Chris, a nervous twitchy guy who used to steal potato chips from the cafeteria. "Brian, hey."

"Hey, Chris, how's it going?"

"All right, man. How's Duke?"

"Chapel Hill."

"That's right. Good basketball, right?"

"Apparently."

We watched a very drunk girl spill most of a Stroh's down the front of her shirt and convulse with giggles.

"She's so wasted," Chris said.

"Yeah."

He clapped me on the shoulder and said, "Good talking to you, Bri. Take it easy."

Our high school was all-boys, an archaic institution which still believed that the best way to prepare young men for Life is to isolate them from the distractions of the opposite sex for, oh, say, the duration of their adolescence. However, the institution failed to realize that Life is largely about the opposite sex, and that our social education was warped, at best.

Which is a long and roundabout way of saying that I didn't know many girls at this party. But I did see one I knew, and tapped her on the shoulder. "Hey, Susan!"

She gave me a puzzled look. "Hi." The look dragged on. "Do I know you?"

"Brian. You dated my friend Tom."

She nodded and smiled. "Oh, yeah. Tom's friend, of course."

Clearly she still had no idea who I was. I tried a different tack. "We sat next to each other at that football game once."

"Yeah . . . yeah! We won that day, right?"

"No, we lost."

"That's right," she said. "Hi."

"Hi."

I stared meaningfully into her eyes, which were scanning the room behind my head. "Want a beer?" I asked, holding up my six-pack.

"Mine's around here someplace," she said, gesturing around the room. "Maybe I should find it. Nice seeing you again, Brendan." And she was swallowed by the crowd.

By this time, I was beginning to regret my hermetic ways — if only I had come back home more often I wouldn't have felt so out of place among all these ghosts. I decided on one last effort. If I was successful, I would stay; if I failed, I would go home to Gilligan and the Skipper too.

I grabbed a familiar shoulder. "Steve!" Steve and I had founded the Ultimate Frisbee Society at school and had spent many long afternoons perfecting the sidearm throw.

"Brian, man, great to see you! You still flipping the disc?"

"Definitely. I'm a little rusty, but I'd still kick your butt."

"Yeah, sure. I'm playing a lot up at Stanford — they take it pretty seriously up there. You don't scare me."

"Be afraid, Steve, be very afraid." This was great! Kidding around like old times, giving each other hassle, trading insults. I knew I could count on Steve.

"I didn't know they played frisbee at Duke," Steve said.

"Chapel Hill."

"Yeah, right. Good basketball, though."

It was actually one of my favorite episodes, the one where Gilligan attacks the downed weather balloon . . .

Brian McCuskey is a senior English major from Los Angeles.

Readers' Forum

The chemistry of fine art

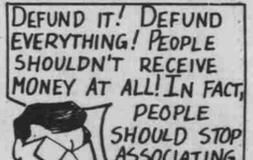
To the editor:
 "Ashes to ashes; dust to dust . . ." — God
 "4 Fe x 3 O2 yields 2 Fe2 O3" — Idem

I would like to commend the University for being on the forefront of *nouveau* artiste. Just as the artist intended (obviously) his work to rust; just as he surely intended it to be removed in time. Its removal from in front of Davis completed the work of art's transition from metal into that ethereal plane which is the realm of all transcendental junk. I suggest that the resulting broken cement be viewed as an example of art with as much validity as the prior piece in the same location. Think of the advantages this new piece exhibits, such as resistance to vandalism. The new shape mocks the flatness of the bricks. Additionally I would like to thank the grounds crew — the barricades are a nice touch that frames the work and serves as a contrast to the subtlety of the cement chips. Please respond via the back page of the DTH. Frozen whales are out of season.

ANDY TAUBMAN
 Senior
 Chemistry/economics

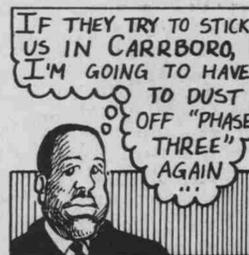
Contestants get no respect

To the editor:
 Thursday, Jan. 26, my friends and I went to see the ever-so-popular Miss Omega Psi Phi Pageant. After the publicity and hype the event



DALE MCKINLEY

THE "THINKER"



YOUR ROOMMATE

KENNETH PERRY

STACY EVERETT LEWIS

received all over campus, we assumed it would be the event of the year, second only to the Q-Cabaret. Little did we know the three-hour-long evening ahead of us would be a display of immature decorum and disorganization. In summary: No class.

As black students at this University, we are continuously striving for the equality and respect that our white counterparts receive, yet we attend an event such as the Omega Psi Phi Pageant and behave in a manner that clearly shows we have no respect for each other or ourselves.

When a group of girls takes time out of what is already a rigorous schedule to entertain their peers, they deserve the utmost respect and undivided

attention. Thursday evening, they received everything but that respect and attention. People jeered, laughed and expressed feelings of exasperation while the contestants performed. We are assuming, because of the audience's behavior, that each member of the audience could have gotten on stage and done 10 times better.

Our point is that there is a time and place for everything. We complain about being treated unfairly by others, but we must look at ourselves first. At events where blacks can support each other, they do everything possible to destroy the self-esteem of others. Here's something to think about: One may receive the respect from others he/she desires if he/she

conducts him/herself with the utmost respect.

Letters policy

SHARON TAYLOR
 Sophomore
 Medical technology

EHRICA CARTER
 Sophomore
 Journalism/French

■ The DTH reserves the right to edit letters for space, clarity and vulgarity. Remember, brevity is the soul of wit.

■ Place letters in the box marked "Letters to the Editor" outside the DTH office in the Student Union.

Public is welcome at the Omega pageant

In spite of Mr. J.L. Wesley's shallow, narrow-minded and fastidious critique ("Pageant Closed to Campus," DTH, Jan. 30) of the article concerning the Miss Omega Psi Phi Pageant that appeared in the Jan. 25 DTH, *The pageant was not closed to the campus.*

First of all, we can understand Mr. Wesley's displeasure with our references to the contestants as "girls." Perhaps, "young ladies" or "women" would have been more appropriate, but we recognize this as a problem of society and feel that such a persnickety assessment is simply criticism for the sake of criticism.

Secondly, we regret that Mr. Wesley feels the pageant was closed to the campus and "badly" publicized. However, we cannot force the student body to read the DTH Campus Calendar which communicated the open interest meeting and auditions. Nor can we force individuals to notice the many fliers posted all over campus or the Student Union Activities Board in the Pit, both of which advertised the event to the campus community. Lastly, we cannot compel young ladies not to discard the pamphlets that the brothers

Omega Psi Phi Guest Column

personally (and randomly) distributed to women on campus on Nov. 8, 1988, to notify them of the upcoming open interest meeting.

Inasmuch as Mr. Wesley did not attend the pageant, and inasmuch as he did not contribute the enormous sum of one dollar to benefit the United Negro College Fund, we shall take this opportunity to explain to him the true purpose and benefits of the event which he chose to completely ignore. In the real world, Mr. Wesley, there are those who lack the resources to attend prestigious institutions of higher learning, or any institutions for that matter, without the aid of the UNCF, which depends solely upon donations from the private sector. In other words, Mr. Wesley, it relies upon individual contributions from generous individuals, such as yourself. Therefore, it was our intended purpose to assist those aspiring scholars less fortunate than

ourselves, while simultaneously showcasing UNC's unheralded black talent (e.g. The Opeyo Dancers and The Ebony Readers).

Since you continually refer to yourself as "a black man," Mr. Wesley, we as black males are disappointed with your rash remarks and preclusive letter to the editor which have demolished what credibility you might have had. We are also embarrassed that you, "a black man," chose to criticize instead of contributing.

The motto of our chapter is "Lifting As We Climb," and we find it disheartening to be reminded of those, such as Mr. Wesley, who seek to impede our escalation with petty denunciations. On the eve of Black History Month (initiated by our late brother, Dr. Carter G. Woodson), we hope that such hypercritical and apathetic attitudes, demonstrated by Mr. Wesley, will be replaced by involvement in and support of the activities sponsored by Black organizations on campus.

This column was contributed by the brothers of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

The Daily Tar Heel

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