

# Opinion

## Right to bear arms includes assault rifles

To the editor:  
I take issue with Sharon Kebschull's stand on firearms in "Battling the Ban: Bush's stance on rifles is dangerous" on Sept. 19. Simply put, she fails to understand the significance of the "right to bear arms" amendment to the Constitution.

Many people today make the assumption that the Bill of Rights is outdated when it comes to such things as modern weapons; after all, a gun in 1789 meant something much different than it does in 1989, and none of our Founding Fathers could have foreseen weapons of such mass destruction as the AK-47 assault rifle. Yet what they fail to see is that the designers of the Constitution were not attempting to set down a specific set of laws; that's what they had fought a war against. Instead, they were trying to protect the people of the United States from the worst possible threat: governmental tyranny.

They purposely left many points vague and subject to interpretation, and because of this flexibility we have been able to maintain a stable government under a variety of situations for over 200 years. Ms. Kebschull seems to think that only governmental agencies should have weapons. The men who shaped this country would shudder at the thought. The government was the last place they wanted armed. A "well-regulated militia" has been interpreted to mean the U.S. National Guard, and I am not opposed to this. But under U.S. law, the chief executive (the same evil Mr. Bush Ms. Kebschull speaks of) may nationalize the National Guard at will, thus depriving us, the citizens of this country, of a recourse against a less-than-benign government.

We have been lucky. So far our system has worked. We have not had to deal with a tyrannical government. But we might in the future if we have no means to defend our freedom. Many think that it could never happen, but when one considers the number of nations where it has, the prospect becomes very real. We elect both our executive and legislative branch, but if our votes are not backed by naked force then they are fiat; we are voting at our government's benevolence. If our government takes away our guns, then be sure that it will take away our books, our churches, our art and our right to assemble, and we will have no one but ourselves to blame. Who will stop it?

I do not think that assault rifles should just be freely handed out, however. There are many people who shouldn't have access to them. Yet a total ban on assault rifles and handguns would eventually lead to other bans, and would ultimately undermine our basic political strength. Gun control is an excellent idea, but control does not mean elimination. Ms. Kebschull also implies that assault rifles have no "sporting use;" she is missing the point of gun ownership. We don't own guns for fun; we own them (ultimately) to ensure our freedom on the sad day that it is betrayed. Occasional accidents, though tragic, are a price we have to pay for that freedom. No one said it would be cheap.

The people of the People's Republic of China have no assault rifles. See how safe the students in Tiananmen Square were?

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## CIA needed to protect freedom; protests unfair

To the editor:  
Ordinarily, I let Dale McKinley's

anti-CIA rantings go unchallenged since any intelligent person recognizes such allegations for what they are and his supporters are too blind to accept the fact that these fanciful "charges" against the CIA are unfounded. However, the recent column ("Bush hypocritical in call for drug war after CIA activities," Sept. 18) on the oft-repeated, but completely discredited, charges of CIA involvement in the illegal drug trade demands a response.

Ex-CIA agents who wrote books attacking the CIA (which Mr. McKinley says you can find in the library — as indeed you can — along with other Marxist or even Nazi propaganda) have been repeatedly proven to be liars or opportunists and, in some cases, out-and-out double agents. By the way, the CIA has avowed that John Hull is not and never has been a CIA agent (as was alleged in the article).

But, more telling, when the Christic Institute tried to bring these same false charges of CIA involvement in drug activities, not only did the federal court throw out the case as completely groundless, the Christic Institute was assessed one of the largest punitive penalties ever for bringing such a "frivolous" lawsuit. You might think about this penalty, which the organization paid from a "donation," and how this relates to the truthfulness of that organization, its "research," and its "evidence."

I sincerely thank god that the CIA exists. I do regret that "activists" like Mr. McKinley have spread such innuendo that naive people actually believe some of these wild charges and thus hamper the CIA in its function of protecting us.

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## Give students the facts on student rec center

To the editor:

As a member of the UNC Class of 1989, I am concerned with the biased press coverage that the DTH is giving to the controversy surrounding the proposed \$4.5 million Student Recreational Center. Even though I have graduated, I believe that students should have a recreation center that is student-operated and that meets students' needs. But the facts show a reason to be concerned with the current proposal.

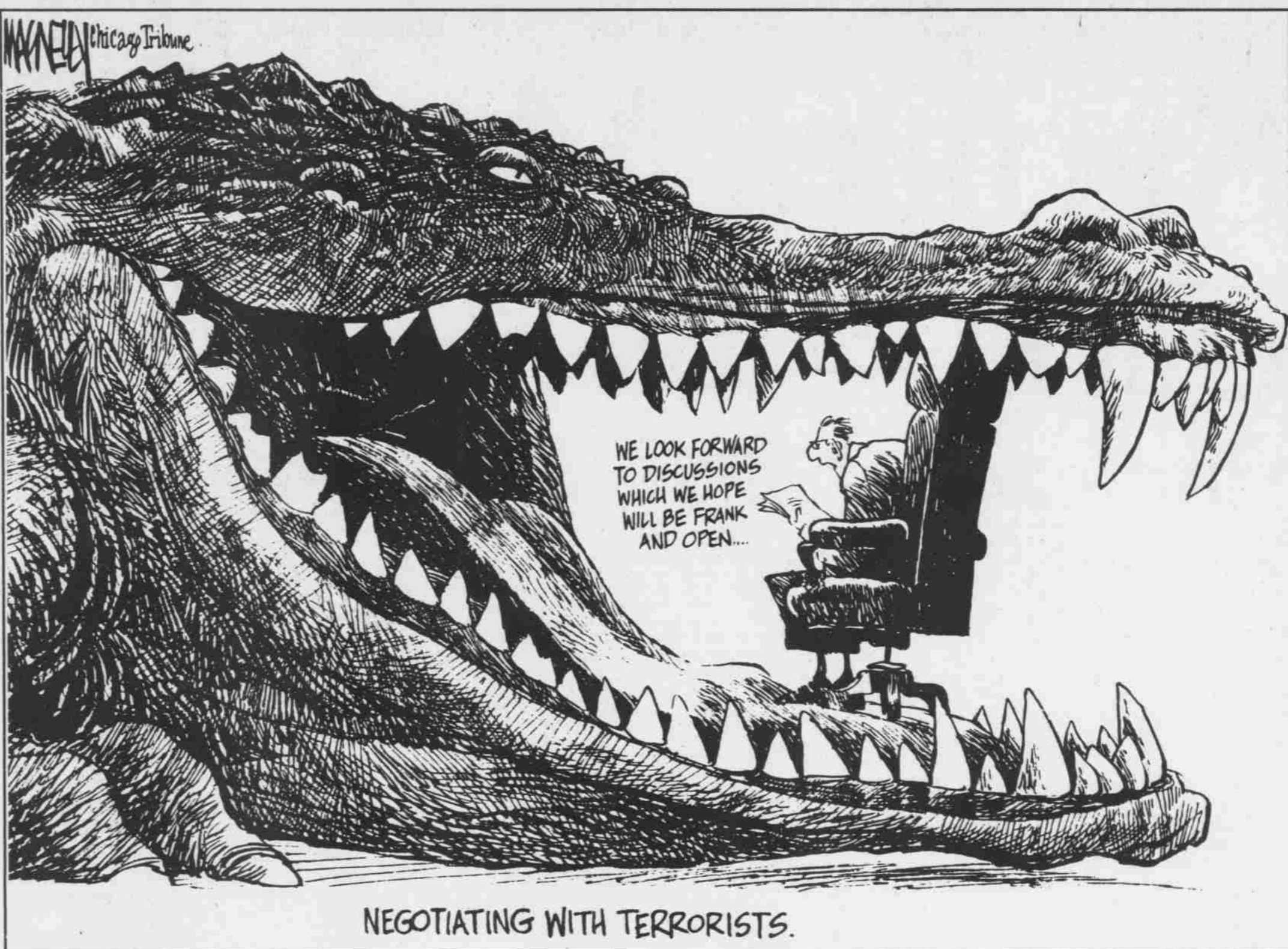
The SRC, at a cost of \$4.5 million student dollars, will only be open during Fetzer gym hours, not on football Saturdays, holidays, semester breaks or any hours that Fetzer is closed, contradicting what Lisa Frye had promised us before last year's referendum.

The physical education department will actually control the building and the possibility exists that it could "annex" the student-funded SRC for its own use when the need presents itself.

The actual referendum vote was not 56 percent of the student body, as the DTH incorrectly reported on Sept. 21 ("Opponents address flaws in SRC plans"), but only 56 percent of the students who voted last year.

One PE faculty member wrote an opinion to the DTH in which several facts were disclosed regarding potential problems with the SRC, however this letter was never published. Referendums, such as the SRC vote, are not binding on the Student Congress, nor are they unalterable, although Lisa Frye wants us all to forget this.

In light of these facts, which have heretofore been concealed from students, Student Congress representatives should reconsider the petition of Jeff Beall in allowing another referendum to take place. I would suggest that those representatives who don't desire a new referendum remember that political



pressure works in two directions. I would encourage all concerned students to express their concerns regarding the \$4.5 million SRC to contact Gene Davis, Lisa Frye and their own representative. Remember, these student-elected officials must represent the interests of the students by whom they are elected, and if they fail to do so, they can be replaced.

CHARLES A. BALAN  
Class of 1989  
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## Banning guns and rifles could only aid criminals

To the editor:

I would like to bring a different perspective to the DTH editorial on Sept. 19 by Sharon Kebschull, "Battling a Ban: Bush's Stance on Rifles is Dangerous," in reference to semiautomatic weapons.

Ms. Kebschull says it is "difficult to understand Bush's stubbornness on the issue." The way I see it, Bush wants to get tough on criminals, not the tools they use to commit their crimes. You don't outlaw cars to stop speeding; you don't outlaw sex to stop sexual assault; you don't outlaw liquor to stop underage drinking and driving while impaired. Why, then, do you want to outlaw guns to stop their illegal use?

Ms. Kebschull's statement that "conjecture would suggest that a ban could only help" doesn't suggest that to me at all. To me, conjecture would suggest that if you outlaw guns, then only outlaws will have guns. This is further indicated by her statement regarding the sale of guns going "underground." Surely you don't support a law saying the only people who can have guns are the drug dealers and other criminals. But, if you force them underground and restrict gun ownership by law-abiding citizens, this is, in essence, what you are saying. Drugs are illegal, but they are found and used.

The same applies to underground guns — if someone wants to break the law, they can find any kind of gun they want, and use it. I don't want the only people who own guns to be law breakers with access to the underground.

As for the NRA, Ms. Kebschull, the NRA does have the good sense to see the cries for a ban on semi-automatics for what they are: the first step to a total ban on all guns. As you yourself said, "the first logical step would be a ban on domestic rifles." What, then, would be the next logical step, and the next?

I do agree with Ms. Kebschull on one thing: we do need stricter laws, not against guns, but against people, who are, after all, the ones who pull the triggers.

RICK CARROLL  
Staff  
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## Morrison beach retreat required much work

To the editor:

As representatives of the Morrison government, we are very concerned about the letter written by David Israel on Sept. 19 ("Morrison officers use trip as a perk"), and we would like to take this opportunity to inform all of the true nature of the beach retreat. Needless to say, Mr. Israel's personal account of our weekend has no legitimate foundation.

First, the retreat was in no way a vacation; it was a well-structured workshop. The weekend was filled with meetings to define the job of each member, to explain procedures, to discuss problems that face Morrison that ordinarily could not be dealt with in depth at a weekly meeting and, of course, to brainstorm new ideas for the coming year. As a result of this training, the government members returned to Morrison more informed and better able to serve their residents. The retreat

also served to unify the members of the group by allowing them to get better acquainted and more comfortable with each other so that they can work closely together to provide better programming for the dorm and their respective floors. Although there was some free time allotted, the majority of the time was spent working in various conferences. It was not a vacation by any means.

To answer Mr. Israel's assumption that government members "are being trained to expect perks" and that many of them would not volunteer without extras such as the retreat, it should be known that most of the government members were not aware of the retreat until after they were elected. The amount of work and time that each member puts into planning and presenting programs throughout the year far outweighs any enjoyment they might have at the beach for one weekend. Therefore, it is impossible that their only motivation for becoming involved is one short weekend at the beach. As a matter of fact, Morrison government has proven successful over the years; it is an organization that people want to be involved in so they can contribute to making Morrison a better and more enjoyable place to live.

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## Buying guns too easy, but ban not the answer

To the editor:

As to the issues raised in the Sept. 19 editorial "Battling the Ban: Bush's stance on rifles is dangerous," first let me expound on my personal slant toward this issue. My father is a member of the National Rifle Association and I have owned a gun of one type or another since I was eight years old. I am an avid hunter and sportsman.

The point Ms. Kebschull raises that acquiring a gun is far too easy is valid enough to lose sleep over. About the only thing you have to do to be able to buy a gun is prove who you say you are with various forms of ID and fill out a short questionnaire that asks such questions as "Do you use illegal drugs?" and "Do you intend to use this weapon in an illegal act?" Obviously, any idiot with a double digit IQ is going to answer "no." I heartily agree that buying a gun is far too easy.

However, I do differ with Ms. Kebschull on other points. First, who is going to be allowed to own a gun? Who will be allowed to decide if I can own a gun? The implications of these decisions will be far reaching if they have to be made. Getting everyone to agree to these decisions will be even harder than making them in the first place.

And what of our friend with the AK-47 assault rifle? He turned the gun on himself at the conclusion of his rampage, so I will assume that he was insane. Our Louisville gunman could have done his deed with a snub-nose .38 and a few speedloaders, or even a Japanese long sword and the determination of a madman. People, not guns, kill people.

Lastly, making rifles illegal will do little to keep these weapons out of the hands of drug lords. They have ample cash, and ample cash incentives, to keep their cargo safe. Since they are already engaging in illegal activities, I doubt whether they are worried if their guns are properly registered. It's basic economics. As long as there is a demand, there will be a supply. Ms.

Kebschull's reasons for banning rifles are not valid.

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## Women must speak out on abortion experiences

To the editor:

Without disqualifying in any way the emotional trauma Katherine Berkowitz expressed over her abortion ("Focus on Abortion," Sept. 13), we would like to add some clarification and thoughts of our own.

First, though, we would like to commend the DTH for showing both sides of this controversial issue. The range of opinions expressed reinforced the reality that not every woman should or would choose abortion, and that it is an intensely personal decision that cannot be legislated.

As pregnancy-options counselors, we regret that some women can't find the help they need making a difficult decision. The goal of a counseling session ideally is to provide empathy and information, so that a woman can see all her options and make her own educated choice. There is no question that women deal with stress and trauma in different ways, but, for example, just because women have postpartum blues, you don't hear anyone advocating ending motherhood. Instead, new mothers may form support groups or seek professional help, which society usually condones.

It is frustrating to us that certain women who have regretted their decision to have an abortion have generalized their experience to all women. Making abortion illegal would preclude the guarantee of adequate counseling or the benefits of a supportive environment and the good health care that every woman has a right to and deserves.

Karen Berkowitz talked about her struggle with unanticipated grief after her abortion. All too often we have encountered women who are burdened by the shame, stigma and isolation our society presently places on a woman choosing to terminate her pregnancy. We can only speculate about the dramatic impact that lifting this burden could have on the healing process. Perhaps we'd even start to see less repeat unintended pregnancies!

As pro-choice advocates, we can begin to empower ourselves and others, by breaking the silence and isolation surrounding abortion. Speak out about your personal experience with abortion. This is a time for reclaiming and reaffirming our rights and respect — we must take action on this issue, and that can start very close to home.

Last, we'd like to clarify the (lack of) connection between abortion and miscarriage. One in four pregnancies end in miscarriage in America today. There is no scientific evidence that we know of that one (or two or three) abortions will raise a woman's chance of miscarriage above 25 percent. If people are really concerned about the "hazards" of this simple medical procedure, why don't we make it easier for doctors to get adequate training and support them in their work, instead of threatening to bomb their homes?

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