The Daily Tar Heel

98th year of editorial freedom

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Rice did it, but . . .

Trial by media didn't fit the crime

Carolina point guard King Rice went to court June 28 on charges of assaulting a female, resisting arrest and property damage to a wall in the Chapel Hill Police Station. And the media had a field day.

Rice was seen by the Chapel Hill police grabbing his girlfriend's neck near Time Out around 3 a.m. on May 8. The police decided to arrest him, and Rice struggled with them; in the process, one officer had his thumb dislocated. Then in the police station, Rice became upset and punched a wall.

At the trial, Rice pleaded no contest to resisting arrest and agreed to perform 75 hours of community service. In return for dropping the charge of property damage, he agreed to pay $30 to repair the wall. And the charge of assault on a female was dropped because Rice's girlfriend filed an affidavit saying, "King did not choke me or drag me or injure me in any way. At no time was I afraid that he would injure me or that he was going to strike me or that he was going to harm me in any way."

Local television stations and the Chapel Hill Newspaper headlined the story that evening, while the morning newspapers announced the verdict on Friday. Rice received high billing — near the top of TV broadcasts and on the front pages of the Chapel Hill Herald and the local/state section of the News and Observer — leaving just one question unanswered.

Why?

Rice's behavior was certainly not what we would hope for from someone who represents UNC-CH on a national level. He was violent and angry, and that's not the image we want to project. But if this incident had concerned any student on this campus except an athlete from a revenue sport, the story would have been about two paragraphs long buried on the inside of a few local newspapers. Yet Rice was someone whom people recognized, and the UNC basketball team doesn't have many (if any) scandals, so this one made broadcasts and front pages. It's easy to point a finger at colleges who give athletes special treatment, but aren't the rest of us just as guilty?

We give athletes tremendous respect, prestige and (in some cases) money in this society; some say too much of all three. After all, why should we worship someone because he can consistently throw a round ball through a round hoop? But instead of looking at the professional sports teams who offer multi-million-dollar contracts or the colleges who offer scholarships to athletes, we should be looking at ourselves. We — the media and the public — are the ones who are responsible for giving athletes the power to demand the privileges and salaries they receive.

The Rice trial is a perfect example of this. The courts and team discipline system functioned as they were supposed to. Journalists were the ones who blew it out of proportion, and their readers and viewers ate the story up.

In return for the perks of being an athlete, our society demands the right to invade athletes' privacy and the right to expect them to act according to standards we do not enforce on others. Maybe that's a fair trade. But when a 21-year-old college student is sentenced to 75 hours public service, and the story makes the front page, maybe we've gone too far. — **Kelly Thompson**

More than competition at stake

PGA ignores racism in selection of course

A man's home is his castle. And into that home, he may invite whomever he pleases.

Few of us would argue the validity of this statement. After all, people have their own lives to lead and as long as they don't actively interfere with or harm the welfare of others, their actions in their home are pretty much beyond reproach.

So when the members of Birmingham's Shoal Creek Golf Club, which has an unwritten policy excluding blacks, affirm that Shoal Creek is their home and they can "pick and choose who they want" for membership, it's hard to argue against that, even if it is discriminatory. It's a private club paid for by private funds, and until a higher court makes a ruling on exclusionary practices in private clubs, the members of Shoal Creek are pretty much beyond legal action in their "home."

But now Shoal Creek is hosting the PGA championship, one of the most prestigious golf events held in the United States. The tournament is sponsored by the Professional Golf Association, the only professional golf organization in the country and one that supposedly represents the best interests of its members. Thousands will watch the tournament first-hand at Shoal Creek and even more will view it on television.

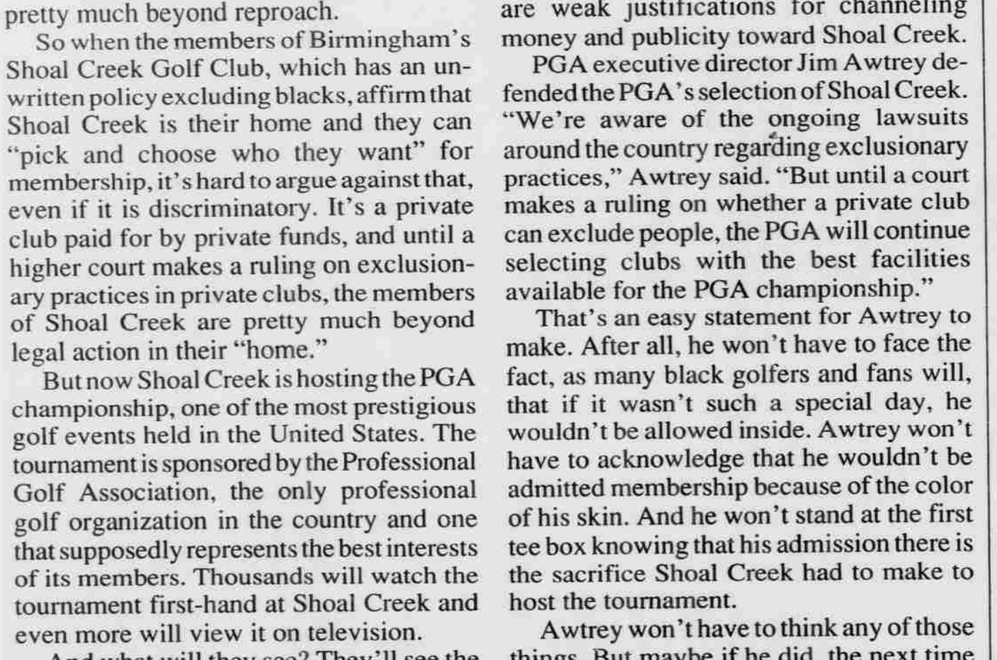
And what will they see? They'll see the members of Shoal Creek basking in the glow of the public eye. They'll see Shoal Creek Golf Club in all its green and glory raking in profits and publicity. They'll see blacks not only serving tea to the members of Shoal Creek, but also walking the course with the pros. And they'll hear announcers discussing yet another challenging course.

But the PGA really doesn't have much (if anything) to be proud of. That the tournament went smoothly and the course was an excellent choice for the tournament are weak justifications for channeling money and publicity toward Shoal Creek.

PGA executive director Jim Awtrey defended the PGA's selection of Shoal Creek. "We're aware of the ongoing lawsuits around the country regarding exclusionary practices," Awtrey said. "But until a court makes a ruling on whether a private club can exclude people, the PGA will continue selecting clubs with the best facilities available for the PGA championship."

That's an easy statement for Awtrey to make. After all, he won't have to face the fact, as many black golfers and fans will, that if it wasn't such a special day, he wouldn't be allowed inside. Awtrey won't have to acknowledge that he wouldn't be admitted membership because of the color of his skin. And he won't stand at the first tee box knowing that his admission there is the sacrifice Shoal Creek had to make to host the tournament.

Awtrey won't have to think any of those things. But maybe if he did, the next time the PGA was selecting tournament sites, he would have the strength of character to take a few things into consideration other than the quality of the fairways.— **Thomas Healy**



Creative cliches help determine budget cuts

Chip Sudderth
Some Assembly Required

Those darn budget cuts! If I didn't know better, I'd think that those politicians in Raleigh weren't serious about education being important to the state.

But in the meantime, it seems Blue Heaven (as well as every other state university) is in the red. We need to come up with some creative measures to minimize the damage. That means cutting the deadweight that drags this University down into a fiscal morass that it may never climb out of. (When discussing the budget, the extensive use of **cliches** is *critical*.) Forget firing teaching assistants or cutting classes; there's *real* waste at UNC!

As an example, I present the Radio, Television, and Motion Pictures department. These guys think they actually need video equipment to teach. Remember those old cartoon flip books we used to play with? All the final video projects could be done on flip books, thereby eliminating the need for all those videotape editing machines and cameras. Then we can rent out the facilities for educational purposes. I hear "Club MTV" wants to add Children's Television Workshop segments after each New Kids video.

The Journalism School is another possibility. We've already seen restrictions on paper across the campus, but have you noticed how much paper a journalism school can run through? Reams! It's time to return to that historic and economical news source, the town crier. Reporter wannabes can do their beats as usual, then set up shop next to the Pit Preachers and start screaming. The only problem with this plan is if *the catalyst* and *The Carolina Critic* pick up on this idea. The University might be forced to hire a Pit Referee so they don't rip out each others' spleens.

Along those lines, think how much the Psychology Department could save by switching from lab animals to human subjects. It would eliminate food and board for the monkeys and only require a per-session fee for the walk-ins. Finding volunteers would be no problem. If there are guys out there who'll donate blood, plasma, or semen for $25 a, um, shot, surely some of those masochists would accept $50 for an electroshock session. It could even be set up like last year's dunking booth to raise funds; the campus celebrity who "raises" the most money "volunteers" for exploratory brain surgery. There are some real contenders out there.

Then we come to one of the worst offenders: the Music Department. Did you know that a brass sousaphone (that's a tuba) costs over $5,000? Brien Lewis, former Student Body President, demonstrated that music appreciation and education doesn't require vast expenditures. His Executive Branch Marching Band performed hauntingly beautiful classics like "Hey, Baby" and "Born to be Wild" during the '89 Homecoming Parade. And they did it with kazoos.

Tuba: $5,000. Kazoo: $1.50. Bit of a difference there. We could pawn the Marching Tar Heels' instruments and pass out either full-fledged kazoos or tissue paper and combs if we're in a pinch. And bag those uniforms, too. Each of them goes for over a hundred, but a plain white sheet is only $2.50. I can see it now! The UNC Marching Kazoo Toga Band!

I guess there are a lot of places UNC can cut corners, if it has to. But there's always a chance that the legislators and governor will have a mass reality check and give us enough funds. In the meantime, let's put the pressure on. There are some old campus politicians we'd *all* like to see "volunteer" for experimentation...

Chip Sudderth is a rising junior from Kernersville.

READERS' FORUM

S. Africa sanctions should be dropped

To the editor:

Now that the South African government has begun a process of irreversible social, economic and political change, Congress should repeal the outdated Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986.

At the very least, the CAAA should be amended to more accurately reflect the democratic evolution taking place daily in South Africa. The original objective of the act — to pressure the South African government into abolishing the policies of apartheid — has been achieved. The issue now is not whether South Africa should renounce apartheid, but what form of government South Africa should adopt in order to assure democratic freedoms and equality for all its citizens.

As it stands now, the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act does not accurately address the new socio-political realities in South Africa. For U.S. foreign policy to be effective in South Africa, the CAAA needs to be scrapped or changed so that it will encourage rather than inhibit further democratic reform.

JOANNA HOLLADAY
Rocky Mount, NC

Last weeks headlines espouse DTH opinions

To the editor:

Please note the commentary which you allowed to replace objective news reporting in the Tar Heel of June 28, 1990. I refer specifically to two headlines on page 2A: "Bush only postpones offshore drilling," and "Abortion bill threatens to pass in Louisiana." In the former, your insertion of the word "only" transforms a report of news into an opinionated analysis. In the latter, your choice of the word "threatens" is as objectionable as the choice someone with different political opinions might have made, such as "Abortion bill promises to help restore morality in Louisiana." I encourage you to restrict your opinions to the editorial section of the newspaper.

MARK E. BINGHAM
Graduate student
English

Letters policy

The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments and criticisms. We will attempt to print as many letters to the editor as space permits. When writing letters, please follow these guidelines:

- *All letters must be dated and signed by the author(s), with a limit of two signatures per letter.*
- *All letters must be typed and double-spaced, for ease of editing.*
- *Letters should include the author's year, major, phone number and hometown.*
- *The DTH reserves the right to edit letters for space, clarity and vulgarity. Remember, brevity is the soul of wit.*
- *If you have a title relevant to the topic of the letter, please include it.*

Slavery-abortion analogy lost on candidates

Michael Evans
Guest Writer

In their eagerness to openly advocate the pro-choice position prior to the recent Democratic Senate runoff, both Harvey Gantt and Michael Easley overlooked a major precondition of espousing this view.

I am particularly surprised that the successful nominee, Gantt, whose candidacy and earlier achievements as Clemson University's first black student and Charlotte's first black mayor, which symbolize our nation's progress over the unfortunate and continuing legacy of a past slave system built upon the precept of supremacy, would so enthusiastically support the pro-choice view, which is also inescapably based on the precept of supremacy and the resulting presumed inferiority of the young, developing human fetus — an inferiority so severe that its death is presently legalized if need requires it.

Today in 1990, it is unthinkable to consider a black person as less than human, inferior or subject to ownership. But until 1865, this thinking was not only common in North Carolina, it was actually sanctioned by law, including a series of U.S. Supreme Court decisions.

Despite this historic precedent of institutionalized supremacy in our state, Gantt nevertheless continues to support the flawed notion that a decision to end pregnancy well after the point at which a fetus' higher brain (cerebrum) has begun to develop — a process beginning at five weeks *in utero* (*Medical Embryology*, J.Langman, p. 342. *Fetal Brain Disorders*, B. Herfzel and R. Smith, pp 207, 285) — is a matter between *only* a woman and her doctor, as if the woman and doctor are the only beings inherently worthy of the consideration of the right to live, a status reserved exclusively for the designated worthy and superior, the very pretext of supremacy. Like blacks in North Carolina 125 years ago, today's fetuses are defined by present law as an inferior creatures lacking sufficient worth to merit protection from pre-planned death.

This failure to recognize the needs of a politically weak party for the sake of addressing the legitimate problem of another party — in this case, unwanted pregnancy — is the common thread which pro-choice shares with our society's earlier approach to solving its regional economic problems not through difficult moral solution, but instead through the more expedient and immoral maintenance of the slave system.

Many people rationalized slavery as an acceptable solution: many considered it more humane than unleashing freedom on the presumed inferior black who could surely not survive the conditions; many considered it necessary for insuring Southern economic survival and social order — arguments uncannily similar in quality to the present-day rationalizations and attempted justification of abortion on demand as a likewise acceptable and necessary means of promoting the wellbeing of today's women, and therefore society at large.

From 1791 to 1865, blacks were outrightly treated as non-persons in the eyes of the law, in spite of the Bill of Rights. Just as blacks were thought of as private property and were therefore off-limits to government intrusion, fetuses share a similar status today. Regardless of the presence of its forming brain (developed enough to be transplanted to adult Parkinson's victims), and regardless of the same Bill of Rights, the fetus is open to potential and legally sanctioned abuse taking the extreme form of death by abortion. Is the fetus better off dead, as the black was "better off" enslaved?

This mindset has endured since the beginning of the United States in one form or another. Recent technology has simply opened the door for this dispute to enter into more and more private domains: beyond one's private land (i.e. slavery), one's private workplace (i.e. child labor), or one's private home (i.e. child and spouse abuse). Yet our law does not offer fetuses protection from induced death even though the potential abortus is not qualitatively different from a newborn in neuronal development.

As embryologists point out, two brain growth spurts — one occurring "between 12 and 18 weeks," the other beginning "in midpregnancy, maximal around birth" account for *only* one-sixth of all human development: the remaining five-sixths is postnatal." (*Fetal Brain Disorders*, p.285). So when we say it is wrong to kill a newborn baby and yet routinely sanction the killing of a fetus up to 20 or 30 weeks, what are we basing it on other than our own egocentric perspective?

Pro-choice advocates claim that choice through potential abortion is but another necessary "right of privacy," expediently seeking to solve a problem which is considered so important that the act of victimizing another less powerful party is both morally and legally justified. This is indeed the veiled *choice* of pro-choice. Are we not doing as our slave-owning predecessors did by defining others according to their physical appearance and their usefulness to us? Must these oppressed parties exist only for and from *our* point of view?

Perhaps some day our government will come to respect the rights of all people, whether black or white, whether young or old. Until then, I cannot support a Senatorial candidate of any party who will not seek to further these basic rights for all people. For this reason, I cannot support Harvey Gantt for the U.S. Senate unless he openly refutes and challenges the supremacist mindset endemic to the pro-choice view of the inferior and expendable developing fetus.

Michael B. Evans is chemistry graduate student from Greensboro.