

The Daily Tar Heel

98th year of editorial freedom

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Who'll pay for this idea?

Two weeks ago, the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta proposed hospital guidelines that recommend testing all patients for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

That's all patients, no matter what reason they're in the hospital.

Apparently, the CDC may be more appropriately located in Las Vegas. But this game of roulette — testing every patient that comes through the door of a hospital in the hopes of stumbling on someone with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome — is being played for much higher stakes.

Never mind the basic rights issues that have been rehashed again and again in the controversy over mandatory AIDS testing. One of the biggest questions here is, from where is the money going to come?

UNC Hospitals officials have already expressed concern over the financial implications of the guidelines. A test for HIV usually costs between \$30 and \$50, which the patients would have to foot, according to the proposal.

Are you willing to pay an extra \$50 every time you have blood work done in the hospital? Although the Student Health Clinic will not be affected if the guidelines are adopted, you can't remain a student forever.

And if the hospitals don't even have the money they need to do the lab work, where are they going to get the money for counseling patients when they hit their morbid "jackpot"? Hospital officials estimate that North Carolina didn't have the staff to reach half of the HIV-positive patients in the state last year.

Admittedly, if people are carriers of HIV, they should know so they can adjust their lifestyle to avoid exposing anyone else. But what would the CDC expect hospitals to do — say "Oh, by the way, expect to develop AIDS any day now," and turn a patient loose? How about a little sensitivity?

There are any number of logistic problems with the recommended guidelines as well. The CDC stressed that no test should be performed without the patients' consent. What is the point of the guidelines if people are going to refuse testing because "they don't have AIDS?"

People may avoid going to the hospital because they don't want to be tested. A warranty on the HIV test and a payment program for multiple testings to insure accurate results are additional stumbling blocks.

Once the test has been administered, will doctors who are still working with them feel like they have a "safe" patient, one who has been "cleared," and thus relax precautions? Obviously, precautions should be taken with every patient, which means the doctor doesn't need to know if someone has HIV or not.

If a patient tests positive, does the doctor then have the right to refuse treatment for other illnesses? It's happened before.

All in all, the recommended guidelines are pointless and inconsiderate. It's truly sad that the CDC, which should have some of the best people in the country working for it, couldn't come up with any better ideas to help stop the spread of HIV.

Painting the town green

Just when it appeared that development madness had run out of control in Chapel Hill, the Chapel Hill Town Council is finally taking steps to ensure that Chapel Hill keeps some of its "village" atmosphere.

The decision to purchase Merritt Pasture, a 30-acre field south of town on U.S. 15-501, is a great start on the road to preserving open spaces in Chapel Hill. Although the pasture is zoned for the construction of up to three houses per acre, the town has no intention to do so, according to members of the town council.

Instead, the town is setting a precedent — it plans to do almost nothing with the land. It may become a park with benches, or it may just be left as a pasture. Imagine that — the town purchasing land and leaving it unspoiled just because it looks beautiful.

With dangerous thinking like this in town government, Chapel Hill might actually escape the horrible build-up that has turned Durham and Raleigh into the crowded, noisy, polluted places they are today.

Of course, there are still a number of signs that this thinking may not have really taken root and is instead just a one-time event. Mayoral candidates are calling for

increased economic growth downtown, Top of the Hill may turn into a three-story commercial building soon and a new Walmart and Sam's Wholesale Club are tentatively planned for what is now a large natural area at the intersection of U.S. 15-501 and Interstate 40.

But they may be serious. The town council may actually continue to act in a way that preserves the town's beauty and environment.

This is tough to do, though, because purchasing land is expensive and there is much more economic profit in an industrial park than in a town park, so the council members need everyone's support.

Next time you drive down U.S. 15-501 and notice that there are 30 acres of land that are not built up and will not be built up, don't just smile and go on about your day. Let the town council know you appreciate what it has done, either by writing the council a letter, going to a meeting and voicing your support or calling a council member and offering your thanks.

They need to know that there are resources that are more valuable than new shopping plazas and that there are riches that cannot be put in a bank. And we need to tell them.

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The Daily Tar Heel

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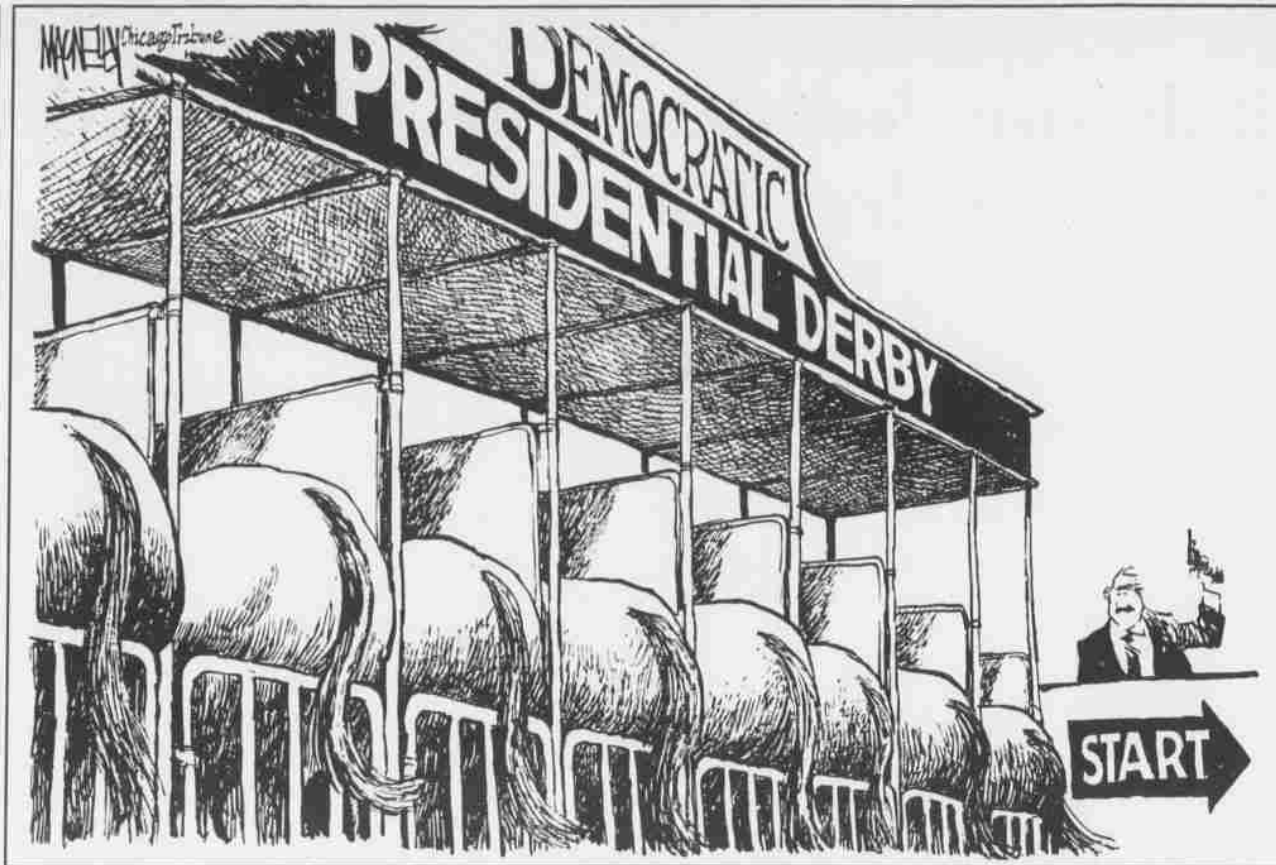
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People must choose leaders with vision, direction

Saturday night, while watching my fellow alumnus, Michael Jordan, host "Saturday Night Live," I was quite surprised to see Jesse Jackson giving a rousing rendition of "Green Eggs and Ham." I honestly did not expect to see the Rev. Jesse Jackson. I thought surely it was an impersonator, Nat X or somebody. But sure enough, it was Jesse himself, saying, with conviction I might add, "I will not eat them, green eggs and ham. I will not eat them, Sam I am." I could not help cringing.

I remember how proud I was to vote for Jesse Jackson in my first Democratic primary back in 1988. I have always looked forward to exercising the right to vote and had registered months in advance so I would be able to vote in the primaries that fell soon after my 18th birthday. My father and I went to the poll site together, and as we separately entered our booths to cast our ballots, I marveled at how much had changed since my father had first been allowed to vote. Not only was I able to vote, but I had the option to vote for someone of the same heritage as myself.

Twenty-one doesn't seem far from 18 in terms of age, but I know I have lost a bit of the wide-eyed approval that I held, not only for Jesse Jackson, but also for most public figures. After running across a few of the Jesse Helms and Al Sharpton types, I have learned to cast a critical eye on all public figures. By making countless statements on behalf of African America that I didn't agree with and appearing on every TV show from the "Jesse Jackson Show" to sitting two rows behind the Laker bench during the 1991 NBA world championship games, Jesse Jackson forced me to question his intent. I began to wonder exactly where



Erika Campbell

With No Assistance

he was coming from. He wasn't the great leader I had dreamed him to be. He wasn't full of grace, dignity and decorum. He was ... a politician.

The final blow came when I met him two weeks ago at the Congressional Black Caucus Meeting in Washington, D.C. After I introduced myself as a fellow student from North Carolina and extended my hand, he ignored my hand in favor of a hug and kiss from both my friend and I. He informed us that he had just left North Carolina, where he had spoken with the victims of the fire in Hamlet. He commented on how sad the situation was and how we must do something about it.

My friend, who is very interested in building and enhancing the African-American community and is well-versed on past and present African-American political theory, began asking Jesse Jackson serious and precise questions regarding the African-American community and how to motivate our people toward self-empowerment. For every question my friend asked, Jesse Jackson gave her a vague and verbose answer that sounded as if it were quoted from one of his speeches. He never once looked any of us in the eye and instead spoke as if we were part of a large crowd of people. It was almost comical; a classical example of the out-of-touch politician and the wanting-to-be-led

public. Gone were my visions of the great man, the leader of the 21st century.

Disillusionment is not an easy thing to handle, but, at the risk of sounding corny and trite, I must admit it is a part of growing up. For a while, I was furious at Jesse Jackson for appearing on "Saturday Night Live" and reciting Dr. Seuss. How could he, our leader, do that? However, as time passes, and I look upon these past incidents with a calmer eye, I am reminded of something my mother always says. "Erika, there are leaders and followers. You can't be a leader if no one follows you."

Jesse Jackson has a right to be a celebrity. He has a right to go to Laker games, milk the press for all it's worth and recite Dr. Seuss anywhere he likes. And I have the right not to accept him as my leader. I have the responsibility to actively research the people I choose to follow or to become a leader myself.

The time has come for African-American people to look into their community and seek out those people that can best lead us in the direction that we need to go. It is time for all of us, but my generation especially, to stop relying on the leaders of yesterday's civil rights movement and force ourselves to take charge of the direction in which we go. I realize that there are things we can learn from people like Benjamin Hooks, Angela Davis and even Jesse Jackson, but we must take their knowledge, internalize it and use it to fuel our movement toward a greater knowledge of self and a stronger African-American community.

Erika Campbell is a senior English major from Chattanooga, Tenn.

READERS' FORUM

Race shouldn't factor into admissions policies

To the editor:
 High school seniors are currently in a race to see who can be accepted into the best college, many times causing friends and classmates to compete against each other. For many seniors this competition involves maintaining grades, raising SAT scores and involving themselves in as many extracurricular activities as time permits, in order to give them an edge over the competition. Sadly enough seniors must offer diversity to the college. Diversity in terms of a variety of backgrounds and races. Many times this inherited trait gives one student a head start, leaving the other contenders behind.

So it really does not matter if Miss Elkins lost admittance to Duke University because her classmate was black ("Rejected student accuses Duke of reverse racial discrimination," Sept. 19). What does matter is that this possibility exists in our society. To treat all people on an equal level is not enough for some people. Minorities feel they must have a presence in all places from which they were once banned to make the system just. And the public feels obligated to make up for the past discrimination of our ancestors by giving minorities this presence, giving them an advantage or special consideration over others.

People are now overly concerned with integrating colleges; they may overlook abilities and capabilities of students for background and race. College administrators are so scared of being labeled prejudiced that they lean toward reverse discrimination in order to compensate. Since there is very little belief in reverse discrimination against whites, administrators feel safe in favoring minorities to dodge the label of bigot.

The only possible way to overcome any type of special consideration for any student is to delete the question of race on the application. Without this information administrators could not judge students on their race. Acceptance would solely be based on academic standing, making the process fairer for everyone involved. This could only make the colleges stronger as academic centers, and diversity on campuses would take care of itself. In this world the only way truly

to end racism is not to see a person's skin color, but to see their true character.

AMY BURRUS
 Freshman
 Business

Article misrepresents club, gays and lesbians

To the editor:
 For the second week in a row, I have opened Thursday's Omnibus to read poorly written articles about female impersonators. The Sept. 19 edition at least pretended to cover the "Paris is Burning" benefit, and that was somewhat newsworthy. The Sept. 26 spread claimed to "take you on a tour of the local homosexual club scene at the Power Company in Durham." However, when I turned to the center pages of the magazine, I found more stories on female impersonation and a ridiculously absurd article titled "Homosexuals throw attitude at dance club." Were I not a regular patron of the Power Company, I might have believed this poor choice of subject matter as typifying the Power Company.

Just WHAT was the point of the "attitude" article? Was it the bar, vogueing, stereotypical behavior, "attitude," safe sex, AIDS, homophobia, "the gay scene in the area," problems gay men face, racism or self-actualization? By mentioning all of these and examining or explaining none of them, the article was uninformative, unsubstantiated, unfocused and offensive. What type of insight were the vulgar quotes supposed to give?

What's the deal with the sexually provocative and largely inaccurate description of the bar atmosphere as centering on "topless gyrating ... sweaty pulsating ... (and) erotic grinding of same-sex couples"? I rarely see anyone kissing, let alone any of that. Where was even a cursory mention of all the clean-cut guys standing around talking with their friends about work or school? Probably 90 percent of the guys in the bar are neither 18- to 21-year-old trash mouths nor female impersonators, and yet these people are in the articles. What is the purpose of these types of distortion? It seems to me as if the author has never even been to the bar he wrote about.

I have no problem with female impersonators or articles about them. But if you are going to do an

article on a group of people who compose a VERY small portion of the gay and lesbian community, then do it and present it as such. But don't say you are giving "a tour" of a bar and then only pick out the most sensational aspects and insinuate you are representing reality. I thought the DTH was an avenue by which to learn and practice responsible journalism, not National Enquirer tactics.

WARREN HAUKE
 Graduate
 Biology

Avoid personal attacks; judge opinions instead

To the editor:
 Readers are often quick to criticize but slow to praise — so, finally, here's a letter of support for Erika Campbell. What especially disturbs me is the ad hominem approach critical letters have taken, with the oft-repeated phrase, "As a senior English major, she should know better than ..." As a career English major (B.A., M.A. and soon-to-be Ph.D.), I must have missed the "How to Think, Talk and Write Like an English Major" course. I'd like to believe that the one skill this discipline does teach students is how to think for themselves.

Please note: Erika Campbell is writing an OPINION column, not an article, not an editorial and, thank goodness, not an argument (boring) for English 2. No, instead, she expresses her opinion and is doing so in a fresh, interesting and obviously thought-provoking way. So, my suggestion to those who wish to criticize: stick to disagreeing with the opinions and refrain from the personal attacks. Here's to Erika Campbell for having the courage to resist conforming to public opinion and for not playing it safe — seems to me she's successfully doing the job we would expect from a newspaper columnist.

DORIS HELBIG
 Graduate
 English

University can do much to improve conditions

To the editor:
 The Daily Tar Heel's Sept. 30 editorial, "Avoiding the world of pandering," counseled the University to avoid "pandering" in its

efforts to help its own employees and the community. As far as the UNC housekeepers are concerned, the University could do quite a lot without the slightest danger of pandering.

For one thing, the University could pay the housekeepers and other low-wage University employees a living wage. It is hardly unreasonable for people who work for a living to expect a minimally decent salary. Under the state-imposed salary freeze, we are actually moving away from this goal.

The University could also use its considerable powers of persuasion to bring the problems of staff employees to the notice of legislators and the public. While faculty salary problems reach the news with regularity, people rarely hear about the trouble that the rest of the University's employees face. Some of the effort that went into passing the UNC budget flexibility bill could be profitably turned to educating lawmakers about long-standing employee problems.

Finally, the University could immediately do something about the heavy-handed and abusive supervisory practices that housekeepers are complaining about. As a former blue-collar employee at UNC, I can attest that management practices vary widely from department to department and that abuses do occur.

The University needs to work toward the establishment of campuswide standards for the fair and decent treatment of employees. Some of our current policies actually work against that goal.

University administrators like to complain that their hands are tied by state regulations. However, there is more that they can do even within those regulations. And UNC's leaders, if they really want to, can do quite a lot toward getting those regulations changed.

PETER J. SCHLEDORN
 Office of Research Services

Letters policy

- Letters should be limited to 400 words.
- If you want your letter published, sign and date it.
- Include your year in school, major, phone number and hometown.
- If you have a title that is relevant to your letter's subject, please include it.
- The DTH edits letters for space, clarity and vulgarity.