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The Daily Tar Heel

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Stepping back into line

Talk about crossing the line. Student Congress members will consider a plan to redraw student congressional districts at their next meeting. A quick glance at the present districts shows how much this action is needed.

There is no rhyme or reason to the size or shape of the districts — until you remember who drew them. The problem with last year's districts is that they were drawn by last year's congress members and former Speaker Tim Moore. Simply put, this just wasn't a good idea. It flies in the face of the principle of separation of government powers, which (in theory) prevents abuse of authority by elected officials for personal gain.

Obviously, election districts should be drawn by people who don't stand to secure re-election for themselves and their friends by creative electorate manipulation. Some interesting numbers from last year's election results support the need for neutral outside guidance.

Only 25 votes were cast in Moore's district. Charlton Allen (Moore's sometime ally) won in a district where 50 votes were cast. And Eric Pratt, another conservative congress member, won 66 percent of the vote in his district — he got two out of only three votes cast.

On the other hand, Speaker Jennifer Lloyd and Ruffin Poole ran in districts where 520 and 610 votes

were cast respectively. It's funny how these two opponents of Mr. Moore were put in districts where their own vote constituted 1/300th of a majority, whereas candidates in other districts could vote for themselves and be halfway to a majority.

No, actually, it's not funny — it's pathetic, despicable and cowardly.

It is by no means certain that the districts were created last year for the sole purpose of manipulating the make-up of this year's congress. But the facts should raise grave suspicions. And if nothing else, the results show how lopsided representation across the districts really is.

The specific reaction to last year's districting farce is to have new districts drawn. To remedy the situation, Lloyd has charged the Elections Board chairman with the task of creating new districts with a fair and equitable distribution of students.

The general idea is to keep people with a vested interest in student elections far, far away from the map.

In order to avoid even the suggestion of impropriety, congress representatives also should adopt procedures for the future mandating that the Elections Board continue to draw the districts with congress only approving or disapproving.

It's time to put boundaries around political game-playing in congress.

Bush subsidizes political aspirations

George Bush has shown once again that he is a president without principles and a candidate without convictions.

Last week in South Dakota, he promised \$1 billion in subsidies for wheat exports. This campaign ploy requires not one, but two levels of hypocrisy to work.

The first is that free trade seemed to be one of the few policies Bush did believe in during his four years in office. Yet now he is abandoning it for a few Midwest electoral votes. Throughout years of foreign trade negotiations, he has encouraged other countries to abandon this type of subsidy. In fact, only a month ago in a mid-session budget review, he proudly announced that billions would be saved by cutting this very subsidy.

So much for principles.

The second level of hypocrisy came when the White House and Bush himself claimed the subsidies had nothing to do with election-year politics. His campaign team tried to reinforce this questionable assertion by staying home, and they might have fooled everyone except that the trip was paid for by campaign funds. Nice try, though.

There's another hint that Bush was misinformed about the political nature of his subsidy promise: Campaign manager Jim Baker has made it known that Bush should use the power of incumbency to gain votes. Yet this particular promise was not political, according to Bush.

All this from the man who is telling the American people that he's the one they can trust.

So much for convictions.



READERS' FORUM

Free-standing BCC = a separate but equal center

To the editor:
Surely no one questions the inclusion of black culture as a legitimate part of the University curriculum, but I fail to understand why such an issue is being made of the new center being "free-standing."

If the present generation of black students had experienced living in the Old South when nearly everything was "separate (free-standing) but equal," I do not believe they would be so adamant about demanding this.

I remember when we had free-standing black restaurants and free-standing black schools and free-standing black hospitals. I hope the present movement is not taking us back toward free-standing black water fountains.

ROBERT E. SEYMOUR
Minister Emeritus, Binkley
Memorial Baptist Church
Chapel Hill

BCC necessary to protect rights of minorities

To the editor:
I've only been on campus since the beginning of the semester, and I've noticed that the black cultural center controversy is creating quite a stir. I didn't really see the need for a free-standing building until I chanced to walk past a meeting in the Student Union and noticed that the students attending it were practically spilling out the door.

And in the most recent issue of the Black Ink, I read that the building would not even be financed by any University funds. So what's the big deal? The only argument I've heard against it is that it would be separatist to have a building whose focus would be a single ethnicity. Those opposing the building say it should be "multicultural."

Which, of course, sounds good, but is missing the point. Minorities are just that: minorities. As such, they have a definite interest in banding together to ensure that their needs are not overlooked or trampled on by the majority. And to say that the black cultural center can't have its own building because it excludes other minorities is like telling a family that they can't have a reunion unless they invite everyone in the city.

J.P. SANDERLIN
Graduate
INLS

BCC supporters should abandon hostile tactics

To the editor:
Before the student's march on Chancellor Hardin's home is swept under the carpet, I think a quick evaluation of what happened is warranted.

Though the free-standing black cultural center issue has become an emotional and inflammatory one for both black and white students, the scare tactics used Thursday night were completely inappropriate. Students supporting a free-standing BCC need to realize that in today's highly politicized University community, negotiation is often the only tool available to make an impact on the University administration.

I am infuriated at the actions of the students Thursday, and it wasn't even my privacy that was invaded. Acts of aggression such as these cannot be condoned.

If I awoke in the middle of the night to find hundreds of people wandering through my yard, shining lights in my house, playing music and chanting (all in an effort to achieve a goal over which I had some direct control), it would be hard for me not to feel as though a step backward had been taken.

Throughout the process, most of the vocal students in favor of a free-standing BCC have shown themselves to be completely unyielding and, in fact, quite rude to Hardin, Dean Boulton, Dean

Schroeder and many other administrators. It's time we all realized that these men do not possess some magic wand that they have at their discretion to solve selected problems as they see fit. We are all bound by similar constraints, and only by working together will we ever improve this University.

Though I wholeheartedly support some kind of multicultural center, the militant tactics of the BSM will serve only to alienate completely those of us who are torn by or perhaps uninformed about this issue.

You cannot help but admire the dedication of the students in favor of the BCC; in fact, the BSM does a great deal to help our community.

Nonetheless, I would offer this advice to Michelle Thomas, Matthewson and the other leaders of the student coalition: Though your goal is an admirable one, you must change your means if you truly wish to see your end achieved.

LEE J. HARK
Senior
English

White men are perceived as potential rapists, too

To the editor:
Reginald O'Rourke is correct: Black men are often (unfairly) perceived as a potential threat to white women, especially while walking on campus at night. He has, however, overlooked the fact

that WHITE men also are viewed with suspicion by the same women. I know this because I have personally experienced many of the same things O'Rourke complains of — women nervously increasing their pace when I happen to be walking nearby.

We could begin an argument about how often blacks are perceived as a threat vs. how often whites are, but the fact remains: Women are afraid of being attacked by any man, not just a black man. While this is unfortunate, I would rather a woman be over-cautious of anyone than risk being raped. Furthermore, it is ridiculous and unfair to ask potential victims to "improve the status quo" by not being afraid. If anyone bears responsibility for the situation it is us men — the potential rapists. We must do whatever it takes to make men less likely to rape, whether it be date rape or otherwise.

Obviously, this reasoning does not apply to all the problems faced by the black man in this country. Nor am I attempting to belittle the concerns expressed by O'Rourke. Viewing the problem of male sexual aggression in racial terms, however, constrains our thoughts and offers no useful advice for improving the situation.

TOM BALLARD
Senior
Mathematics

Big Mack attack: Coach Brown plans Pit chat

To the editor:
The Carolina Athletic Association has announced the "Chat with the Coach" program, which allows students to interact with varsity coaches here at Carolina. I feel very privileged to have been chosen as the coach for the first program in the series.

At noon Thursday, two days before our first home game against Furman, I will give a short talk in the Pit. The floor then will be turned over to students who can ask me any questions they have regarding the 1992 football team. The program is scheduled to last approximately 30 minutes.

For further information, please contact either Tracy Kirincich or Stefan Shepherd at the CAA office, 962-4300. I hope to see you on Thursday, and please come out on Saturday as we play

Furman. Your support can help us make this a winning season.

MACK BROWN
Head football coach

Personal safety awareness will prevent assaults

To the editor:
As college students, we have become greatly concerned about the recent attempted rapes and assaults in our community. Many individuals are afraid to go downstairs in their own dormitory. Other students are frightened to be in their rooms with the doors unlocked. The sad thing is that it took an escaped convict and a rape to occur for students to be concerned about safety.

As adults, we should realize that since we are in adult surroundings, we should take responsibility for our own safety. Many students are not aware of the situations they put themselves in by leaving doors unlocked and open for just a few minutes when they walk on the hall. I am aware that people constantly complain about having to lock and unlock doors. Just think, the one time you do not lock it might be the time that something bad happens.

One problem that I seem to have noticed is that students entering their dorms let other individuals in as they enter the building. People complain about strangers in the dorm at night, but how do they get in? You might never know who you are letting in... maybe the next assailant. Who knows?

In my opinion, a permanent, 24-hour lockup is a good idea. I know some students think it's a pain to have to use a key to enter the dorm, but it keeps some control on who enters the building. In order for the system to work, residents will have to be cautious and look out for one another. If you don't know the person, don't open the door and let them in.

The main concern should still be our own personal safety. So my fellow Tar Heels, always remember to take your key and be aware of your surroundings as much as possible.

FELICIA CLEMONS
Sophomore
Speech communications

Multicultural center would promote harmony

To the editor:

The Black Student Movement's demand for a cultural center devoted only to black culture is frustrating. They and Margo Crawford claim that a center inclusive of other minority cultures is unsatisfactory and unwelcome, and they demand a building devoted to black culture only. They claim that such a center would not be divisive or exclusive, but would actually improve race relations! Yet by its very nature and name, a "black culture" center is exclusive and therefore divisive. If the Black Student Movement is not separatist, as they claim they are not, why must they have a separate building? A multicultural center certainly must be more beneficial to good race relations than a solely black cultural center, and if any such building is to be established, anything less is unsatisfactory and indeed an affront to the hopes expressed by Martin Luther King and his fellow civil rights pioneers, and to those, including myself, who continue to hope for a more harmonious future.

I suspect that the majority of students at UNC privately are opposed to the idea of a center devoted solely to the black community, but, under the ever-hovering and fatal label of racism, are afraid to voice that opposition. I, for one, am not, and with an eye toward a better future for our University, I fully support Chancellor Hardin's and Student Body President John Moody's opposition to this separatist and implicitly racist directive of the Black Student Movement.

MATTHEW J. CHILDS
Senior
English



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The Daily Tar Heel

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