


COLUMN



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Opinion Editor

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Bin Laden defined us in life and in death

I was in seventh grade home-room when I first learned the World Trade Centers had been destroyed and the Pentagon attacked by terrorists. At the naive age of 12, I honestly had no idea what to make of the news.

It had no immediate impact on my life other than an early dismissal from school and an increased emphasis on security seemingly every place I went.

But the next 10 years of our lives were shaped largely by the events of September 11, 2001. Our country endured nearly 3,000 deaths, enormous financial loss and shattered the illusion that we could never be attacked at home.

But perhaps more damaging was the psychological effect of the attacks on our generation. The American political, cultural and economic environment was deeply affected by that day and our generation was raised largely in the midst of a decade of terrorism, fear and intense patriotism.

I never heard Osama bin Laden speak. I never could understand what would compel someone to kill himself in order to kill innocent civilians. All I know for sure is that I am glad justice was done.

I was sitting in the basement of the Undergraduate Library when I first learned that bin Laden had been killed by an American military unit. I knew the reaction to the news on CNN would be significant and I was not surprised by the explosion of updates on Facebook and Twitter.

But I was surprised by what happened immediately following President Obama's speech that night: dozens of students dropped what they were doing and ran around the library passing out tiny American flags, singing songs and chanting U.S.A! U.S.A!

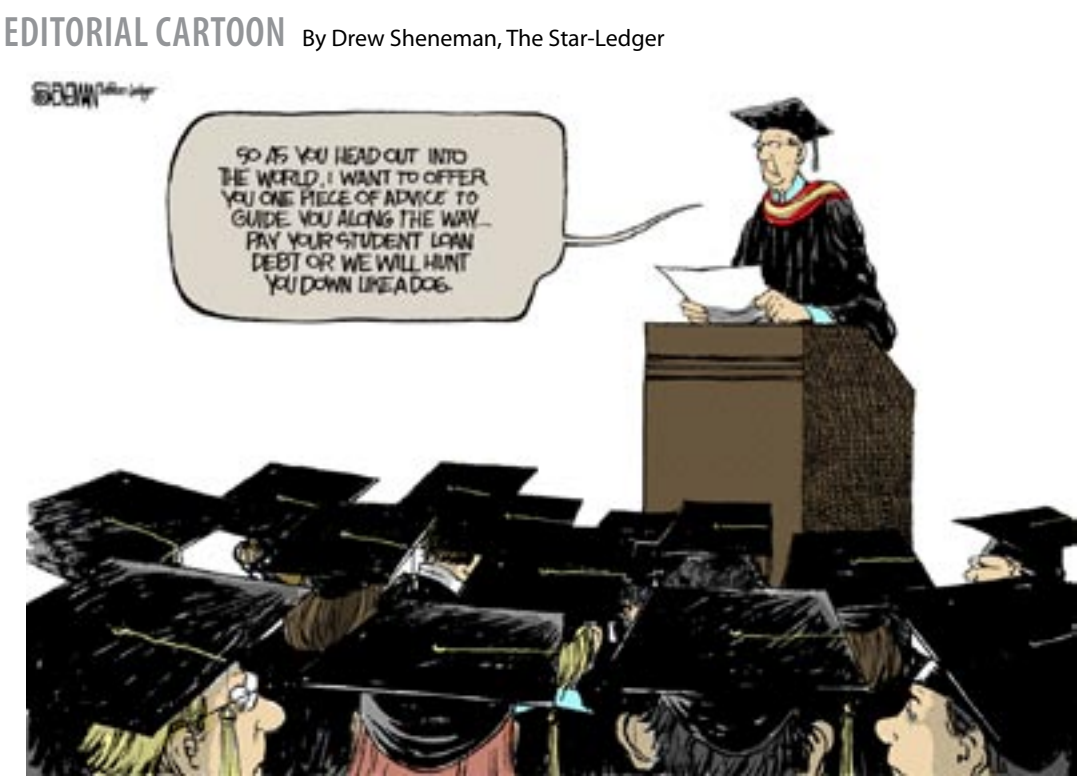
And when we turned on our television sets at home, we saw images of students just like us, chanting, cheering and dancing outside the gates of the White House, in New York City and on college campuses all across the country.

Students who were not even teenagers on 9/11 took a break from their busy exam schedule to rejoice as an American generation that finally found its cathartic closure to a decade marred by terrorism and fear.

Yes, the credit for this success should go to the troops, our intelligence organizations and the commander in chief, but this success belongs to our generation as well.

We lived through a decade of two major wars that were fought in part by us. We were forced to grow up during a time of war because of the actions of bin Laden, and his demise is an opportunity not only for celebration, but also a chance to turn the page on this decade of terror.

So to our generation: let us try to live the rest of our lives in a way so we can look back on May 1, 2011 and say that was the day it all changed for us; the day the trajectory of our generation changed course in a profoundly positive way.



EDITORIAL

Wilson's speech fell short

Commencement speech was sincere, but it lacked scope.

On Sunday, Kenan Stadium witnessed the spring commencement and graduation of UNC's class of 2011.

Amid the clouds and looming rainfall, commencement speaker E.O. Wilson delivered an address which closely mimicked the unsettling weather.

Upon choosing Wilson, the commencement speaker selection committee was met with great skepticism. Wilson lacked the fame of John Grisham and the power of Desmond Tutu, but the student body was assured by the committee that Wilson would deliver.

Wilson's speech missed the mark in terms of what graduating classes are accustomed to hearing.

While we can respect a commencement address which strays from the beaten path, such doom and gloom has little place in a commencement speech.

Wilson stressed the importance of maintaining biodiversity in an age when the extinction rate is extravagantly higher than it has ever been before.

Towards the end of his address, Wilson called America a faltering nation and urged UNC graduates to carry the environmental torch forward into the future.

As a man of the South, Wilson seemed glad to be back home, among the pine trees and the multitude of insects which made him famous. His address was not completely dominated by gloom as he also seemed genuinely confident in the abilities of the graduating class to make an dynamic impact on the world.

America, however, is far from a faltering nation, and most educated students already realize the importance of the natural world and the role that its livelihood has in modern society.

Wilson views modern society as egocentric and advocates a return to environmentally conscious decision-making.

These sentiments are important and valid, yet they are already widely echoed. Why should the class of 2011 have been subject yet again to more rhetoric centered around environmentally-conscious decision making?

After having spent the past four years becoming accustomed to the growing importance of biodiversity and sustainability, we can scarcely believe that another speech about the environment was exactly what the senior class desired.

Infinite possibilities are laid before the graduating class, and their time spent at UNC has granted them tools to make the most of these possibilities. So it comes as little surprise when seniors voice discontentment over the fact that Wilson's speech fell short of what they hoped for.

Maintaining the livelihood of the natural world is of utmost importance, as is contributing to the growth and prosperity of America as a nation. Both of these sentiments were well expressed by Wilson in his commencement address.

Where Wilson's speech fell short was its failure to acknowledge the possibilities afforded to each and every graduating student and the importance of pursuing endeavors which will bring them the most fulfillment.

EDITORIAL

We'll keep paying

One-cent tax should be extended and dedicated to schools.

Students probably haven't even noticed it, but for the past two years we've been paying an extra penny on state sales tax.

The one-cent sales tax was implemented in 2009 to help make up for the budget gap that year.

We think the one-cent tax should be extended another two years with one change — all proceeds should go directly to N.C. colleges, universities and K-12 districts state-wide.

The recently passed House budget would include a 15.5 percent cut to colleges and universities, and an 8.8 percent cut to K-12 school districts state-wide.

This amounts to cutting about \$1.2 billion from the education budget.

The N.C. House Republicans' refusal to extend the extra penny on the sales tax will cut an estimated \$1.1 billion in revenue — money that K-12 and university systems desperately need.

The temporary one-cent tax, if extended and dedicated to education, could make up for a large portion of the cuts.

Students would probably much rather pay an extra cent on their daily purchases than pay significantly more in tuition costs.

A poll commissioned by the Citizens for Higher Education shows that N.C. residents support the extension of the one-cent tax across party lines if it helps prevent cuts in education — including 73 percent of registered Republicans.

Even with a margin of error of about four points, the poll still demonstrates widespread support for extending the temporary tax another two years to help save the state's schools and universities.

The one-cent tax costs the average citizen less than \$0.25 a day, and the median household has paid an average of \$90 per year since the tax was introduced in 2009.

This is a relatively small burden that does not seem to have hurt any particular demographic too heavily over the past few years.

Although many Republicans feel they were elected to office to cut taxes, certainly the widespread support for education funding indicated by the Citizens for Higher Education's poll should be a wake up call to legislators feeling pressure from their constituents to cut taxes and spending.

Especially compared to the consequences of cutting \$1.2 billion from the state's education allotments, an extension of a one-cent sales tax for two more years seems like the lesser of two evils.

The renewal of the tax and its dedication to university and K-12 budgets would require state legislators to place ideology on hold in order to save the state's educational system from severe and long-term damages.

The sentiment is fairly simple: we're already paying the tax. Let's just make sure the money is going to keep the state educated and competitive.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“There are no conditions in the special-use permit to provide any neighborhood protection... we have to take it on faith that they will make good on a 50-year promise.”

Lisa Ostrom, Chapel Hill resident, on the IFC shelter's expansion

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Budget cuts not right for UNC system

TO THE EDITOR:
On Tuesday, May 3, the North Carolina House of Representatives voted for a budget that cuts UNC's funding by 17.4 percent and would be devastating to the academic integrity of our university.
A cut of this size means your classes will be bigger and you will have fewer courses to choose from. Furthermore, if you are currently receiving financial aid that could be jeopardized, many of the academic support programs you rely on will be significantly pared back. These cuts also affect the long-term viability of our institution and the value of your degree.
We cannot afford to let the budget pass with these proposed cuts. Student government is fighting for you, but we need your help.
unc.edu/studgov has information about how the Student Government Advocacy Team is mobilizing UNC students across the state to say NO to budget cuts that will rock this University to its very academic core. Join them.

Mary Cooper
Student Body President

Kvetching board™

kvetch:
v.1 (Yiddish) to complain
I had to find out Osama bin Laden died from Twitter?? AlertCarolina, where are you at a time like this??
To Osama bin Laden, we got you! In the faaacccceeee!
To the girl who left a pregnancy test in the bathroom at the UL...congratulations.
The girl I slept with said I was a 6...I hope that's on a 5 star scale.
Dear DTH, Your new left alignment is unjustified.
Dear Daily Tar Heel: I was disappointed to find out Monday's article with the headline "Asian scholars come more frequently" was not what I thought it would be about.
Dear Morrison male lying out in a Speedo, just because you have 'Aussie' written across your butt doesn't mean you are exempt from American social norms. Clothes required here.
To the guy that wore the "I heart the female orgasm" t-shirt: you know that the ones that you watch on the internet are fake, right?
To the Daily Tar Heel: Stop lying to me. There is NO WAY that Tuesday's Sudoku is just a level 1.
To the senior who thinks the UL is the best place to poop on campus - you've clearly never taken naps or craps in Graham Memorial.
To all the drunk and high people at the Snoop Dogg concert: Thanks for confirming all of the college stereotypes for my younger brother.
To my hipster ex-boyfriend: even though you describe your outfit as "ironic," we both know you put in way more effort to look like crap than I did to look nice.
Giving me my midterm back on the last day of class? Thanks for keeping me in the loop about where I stand, professor.
Every time you spam the class listserv I facebook stalk you.
Preppy twerp in my philosophy class: This week I rejoice that I will never, ever have to hear your stupid Muppet voice again.
Kudos to the girl trying to hide her Four Loko behind a copy of the Daily Tar Heel at 9:00 am on LDOC.
To UNC: Peace out!

Israel a democracy in a sea of dictatorships

TO THE EDITOR:
To Ken Norman, Students for Palestine, Coalition for Peace with Justice: You are one of many phony human rights groups working against Israel (Jew and Arab citizens) and their right to defend themselves. You're fighting a war you will never win.
Associations such as SJP work together across the country to paint Israel as the world's worst human rights abuser. It starts with impressionable students, out of their glass houses for the first time, who attend University with a limited knowledge of world events—a perfect target for your propaganda machine.
I implore all of you to study Israel (which includes Jewish and Arab citizens) and look at the contributions they have made in the fields of arts, biotech, medicine and music. Can surrounding Arab countries claim the same? The Arab-Israeli conflict is not Israel's fault and I am proud to be a supporter of the bravest nation on earth.

Rene' Paul de la Varre
Chapel Hill Resident

WRITING GUIDELINES

- Please type: Handwritten letters will not be accepted.
- Sign and date: No more than two people should sign letters.
- Students: Include your year, major and phone number.
- Faculty/staff: Include your department and phone number.
- Edit: The DTH edits for space, clarity, accuracy and vulgarity. Limit letters to 250 words.

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Weekly QuickHits

Southpoint IMAX

An IMAX theater will be opening up at Durham's Southpoint Cinemas next Friday. Perhaps we can convince them to show the UNC - Duke game so we can watch the Tar Heels triumph in 3D.

Summer begins

To all the hard-bodies out there, this is what you have spent countless hours in the gym for all year. Now is the time to hit the pool, get your tan on and enjoy the fruits of your labor.

Graduating seniors

As Weezy says, "We hate to see you go, but we love to watch you leave." We congratulate you on a job well done, but it hurts to say goodbye. Don't forget to come visit... and donate funds!

Men's Lacrosse

UNC defeated Notre Dame in an overtime thriller on Friday to secure the #8 seed in the NCAA tournament this weekend. The Irish's furious comeback was wiped out by freshman Pat Foster's overtime goal.

The Daily Tar Heel

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