

The Daily Tar Heel

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of editorial freedom

SARAH FRIER
EDITOR, 962-4086
FRIER@EMAIL.UNC.EDU

CAMERON PARKER
OPINION EDITOR
CDP@UNC.EDU

PAT RYAN
ASSOCIATE OPINION EDITOR
PCRYAN@EMAIL.UNC.EDU

EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERS

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NOAH BRISBIN
THE UNC I(VE) KNOW(N)
Second-year law student from Salisbury.
E-MAIL: NBRISBIN@EMAIL.UNC.EDU

Elections decisions were the right ones

Suppose I asked you what have been the three most noteworthy developments at UNC this semester. If you read this newspaper frequently enough, I would venture a guess that one of your responses would be something along the lines of “The SBP campaign process — what a sideshow!”

While there are Board of Elections hearings and fines levied against campaigns in most years, this year’s campaign has been more particularly focused on the Board’s administrative hearings and the rulings of the Student Supreme Court. And despite all the fodder launched on the Twitterverse on the night of Rick Ingram’s disqualification hearings and growing impatience for the injunction of election results arising from Deanna Santoro’s suit against the BOE, the fact remains that — from this law student’s perspective — the arms of our student government have done a fine job enforcing the Student Code in a pressurized situation.

Our student government is essentially a miniaturized model of our own federal government, complete with executive, legislative and judicial branches operating under a constitution. That constitution provides for the Board of Elections to administer Student Congress’s laws governing elections and for the Student Supreme Court to settle questions of law arising under the Student Code.

The Board and the Court are small bodies, composed of 7 members and 5 justices and a chief clerk, respectively. Their responsibilities are serious within the framework of our student government, and their decisions carry great weight in the outcomes of elections.

While it is easy to decry the dearth of procedure apparent in Ingram’s disqualification hearing, Board of Elections chair Andrew Phillips presided in a way that allowed the presentation of all the evidence relevant to the Board’s decision: the primary objective of such a hearing. I give Phillips — whose interests fall well outside the legal and political sphere — credit for acting reasonably in his position, giving all interested parties the opportunity to be heard and coming to an acceptable decision with the rest of the BOE.

Soon after this hearing, of course, Santoro resigned as speaker of Student Congress to file suit against the BOE for its interpretation of the Student Code. The BOE permitted Ian Lee to run for student body president while serving as student body secretary, based on an interpretation of an ambiguous provision of the Code.

The Court also did an excellent job ensuring that both parties had adequate opportunity to set forth their arguments before reaching its decision. After careful review of the briefs, the Court also identified the factors which were paramount in determining the suit’s ability to go forward. It properly dismissed the suit because Santoro failed to file within a 72-hour window to challenge a BOE decision.

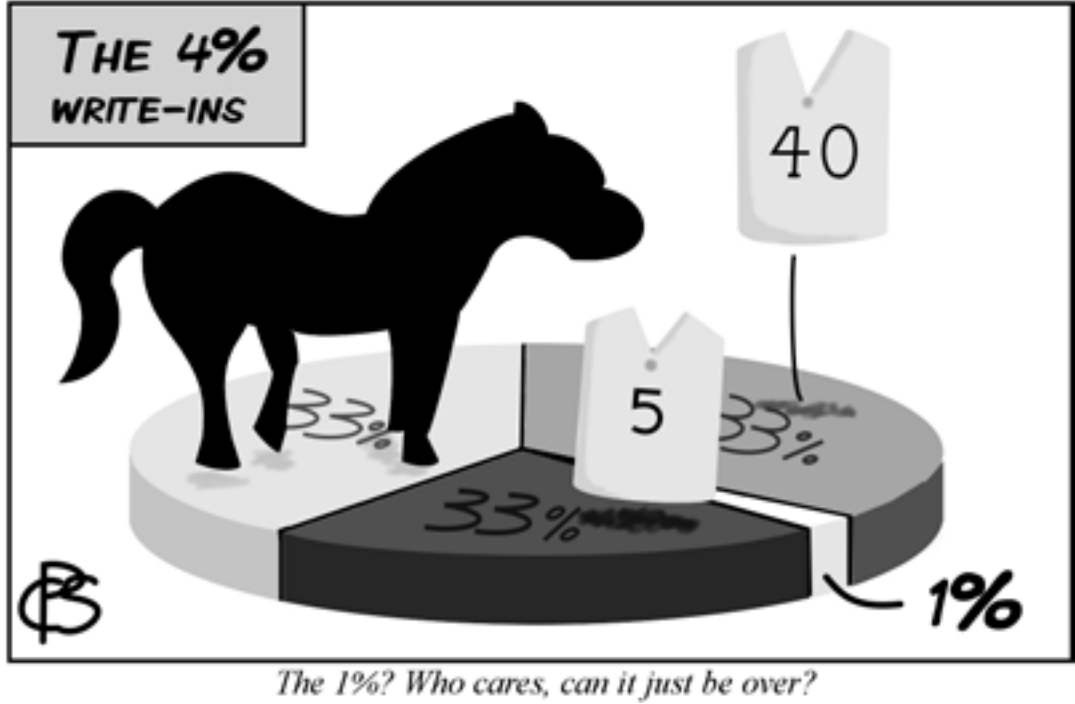
It is easier to understand all that has transpired in the last two weeks from within the walls of the law school; that doesn’t change the fact that the issues raised by these hearings and suits are delicate and nuanced.

Still, the bodies that have had to address this season’s campaigns in the light of the Student Code have done admirable work to ensure a fair election.

TUESDAY:

Troy Smith enlightens us about the special work of a special alumnus.

EDITORIAL CARTOON By Connor Sullivan, cpsully@email.unc.edu



A fresh final week

Mary Cooper and Ian Lee have a chance to set the right tone in the home stretch of election season

Nothing will change the fact that this election season has been fraught with conflict. But this final week of campaigning that constitutes the runoff election offers as close to a fresh start as Mary Cooper and Ian Lee will get.

They need to make the most of it.

Both Cooper and Lee offer appealing ideas. It was a shame that in the past several weeks, those ideas often felt obscured by allegations and scandal.

This year’s general election was truly unprecedented in the baseness of the conduct that distracted from a dialogue about the issues.

That this happens to be a year when our institution faces unprecedented challenges makes it all the more disappointing.

This editorial is not about endorsing any one person. Rather, it is a plea to the two remaining candidates to make the most of the final few days.

Lee has the bigger task, but he can help accomplish it by formally resigning from his office as student body secretary.

The sentiment that resigning this late in the game would have little practical effect is understandable. It might even be true.

But resigning from office was always and still remains a matter of principle. Doing so would align with the spirit of the Student Code, and with common-sense notions of duty.

To be fair, Lee contends that he wasn’t aware until late in the game that his refusal to resign upset many people. If more

people had been cognizant of the Code’s election provisions earlier, then that might not have been the case.

But it isn’t the case anymore. The past couple of weeks have been largely about Lee — he now knows what a stir his decisions caused.

As for Cooper, this is her opportunity to justify and solidify her front-runner status.

Being ahead in the polls can’t be a cause for complacency. Cooper’s voice felt largely lost beneath the conflict between Lee and former candidate Rick Ingram. Her debate performance in forums also felt somewhat lacking.

The onus this week is on Cooper and Lee to prove their worth. So far, cynicism is the feeling that has been least needed but most pervasive.

County open for business

Now is the time to evaluate development bureaucracy

Town and county leaders are talking about streamlining local economic development efforts. Given the seemingly fragmented nature of the current setup and difficult economic circumstances, now appears to be a good time to address the future of economic development in Orange County.

In December, 9.7 percent of North Carolinians were unemployed. So at 5.8 percent unemployment, Orange county residents are significantly better off than the rest of the state.

Orange County might be doing relatively well, considering the current recession. But there is always room for improvement, especially when it comes to attracting new businesses in a competitive envi-

ronment.

Right now there are at least eight different town, county and University offices that deal with economic development. This can create confusion and can make it difficult for businesses interested in coming to Orange County to navigate the bureaucratic framework.

Leaders should work together to reassess the system. Any unnecessary barrier to entry in Orange County that can be eliminated should be. It may be necessary to keep multiple offices — but it is better to be sure.

If businesses want to move and expand here, Orange County should have the simplest and most straightforward process for helping them.

Such a streamlining may be the last of the low-hanging

fruits improving the long-term economic circumstances of the area. It may also cut over-all administrative costs in the short-term.

Either through consolidation or increased collaboration, simpler and more efficient economic development efforts benefit everyone in the community.

Leaders are still discussing possible changes and solutions for the future of local economic development. It is definitely a discussion worth having and a good first step to demonstration that Orange County is open for business.

We look forward to seeing concrete proposals from university, town and county leaders on how to better improve economic development in Orange County.

Bev’s budget burden

Education should be protected against looming cuts

While N.C. Gov. Bev Perdue could have dealt a deadlier blow to UNC-system schools with her recently proposed budget, the plan still leaves much to be desired. Members of the state legislature must bear in mind the long-term dividends investment in education will pay.

The budget’s proposed 9.5 percent cut in funding to the UNC system will be extremely difficult to weather. But further cuts would be downright disastrous.

UNC-system President Thomas Ross said it best: “It is simply impossible to absorb further budget cuts without adversely affecting the quality of the academic experience for our students.”

Our concern is that the Republican-dominated legislature will see the 9.5 percent cuts — which are severe by anyone’s standards except perhaps their own — as soft, making the education budget an easy target for more slashing.

We hope our representatives do not capitalize on this vulnerability. We reiterate: These cuts may seem moderate when compared with the state’s overall cuts, but they will still be detrimental to the UNC system.

Education cuts should not directly reflect the budget’s problems. As much as possible, education should be given priority when determining the budget and should absorb a disproportionately small quantity of cuts.

Making exceptions like this for education makes sense because of the long-term benefits the state will reap from investing in it. It is in everyone’s interest to shield North Carolina’s public universities from the brunt of the blow.

The better this generation is educated, the better North Carolina’s economy will do in the decades to come — decades when the state could potentially face a deficit that dwarfs the current budget concerns.

As Association of Student Governments President Atul Bhula put it, “what we have to do is make sure our state representatives understand the students are the future of the state. Investing in education is investing in North Carolina.”

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

“I don’t want to be the one to perpetuate an already frustrating situation.”

RICK INGRAM, ON WHY HE’S NOT FILING A LAWSUIT

FEATURED ONLINE READER COMMENT:

“Duck Fook, Duck Fook. Cannot wait to see Marshall take it to rat-face, so glad there is a Duke, to hate on.”

UNC’96, ON THE SCHOOL EVERYONE LOVES TO HATE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Gendered language is a lurking issue for all men

TO THE EDITOR:

Too many people have failed to take seriously the problem of gendered language. The English language (to name one) is strikingly biased to favor women. No society can claim to be a society of equality without at least exercising equality in language, so I’m advocating the lingual equality of men.

The most noticeable gender imbalance in English is its treatment of the titles male and female. It’s clear that females are given the base word (female) from which the masculine word (male) is derived. If this seems like a fluke, think about the words man and woman. Again, priority is granted to the female gender; men are robbed of two distinguishing letters.

Some people may not even notice the nastier forms of the problem. The word “man” is used too freely in inappropriate circumstances. Just to name a few, think of mandate, manicure, manufacture, maneuver; even maniac. Those three letters are all that men have to cling to in English, and they’re swallowed whole by the rest of the language with no regards for the consequences. Is it presumed that men alone are the manicurists? The maneuverers? The maniacs? It just wouldn’t be fair.

Sometimes these issues seem like a joke. They’re not. I’ve seen too many men suffer identity crises brought on by sexist language. Gender neutrality in language is paramount to a society of equality. Man, I’m getting all worked up.

Gregory MacCabe
Sophomore
Physics and Mathematics

Gendered language is an important issue to discuss

TO THE EDITOR:

I was quite perplexed after reading the letter on Thursday entitled “Petty ‘feminist’ complaints are trivial, a waste of time.”

Therefore, allow me to address some of my opponent’s claims: First of all, I’m not complaining because I’m not successful. I’m extremely successful, as are most students that gained admittance to Carolina. Secondly, I’m not “complaining” at all. Why should my request to be acknowledged in common dialogue be considered a complaint? Thirdly, no, I’m not saying that gendered language will restrict a woman’s personal success at all. What I’m saying is that it will continue to affect the way society views women, because as a very close friend pointed out, language is a reflection of the deep-seeded ideas that a person holds. And this isn’t just about women, it’s about everyone.

The homosexual and transgender community suffers due to gendered language in the same way that women do, and I’m sure they aren’t pleased about it either. For instance, why do we refer to heterosexual people as “straight” and homosexual people as “gay”? Why is it the “straight” thing to do to be heterosexual? Is there something morally wrong with being homosexual? Some people might argue yes, but I argue no,

and having such biased language in our society will continue to oppress minority groups, whether people realize it outright or not. It is all connected, and it affects everyone. So see your own self-worth, and never be ashamed to demand that which is rightfully yours.

Katie Varner
Junior
History

‘Kissing marathon’ could help fundraisers and kids

TO THE EDITOR:

The Daily Dose in Thursday’s paper, “Thai couple shares 46-hour kiss,” really caught my eye and got me thinking. Dance Marathon was this weekend and ever since I heard of it, I have wondered if standing for 24 hours “for the kids” is beneficial to the body. Having all that pressure on your knees, ankles and feet puts a lot of stress on those joints and could potentially be harmful. Seeing this Daily Dose sparked a new idea that could benefit both the kids and the participants.

There have been experiments done that prove that kissing helps improve our health physically and mentally. It has also showed that it relieves psychological and physiological stress.

And we all know that us Tar Heels have tons of stress put on us each day. Replacing Dance Marathon with some form of a kissing marathon will get rid of that unwanted and unneeded stress and also continue to raise money “for the kids.”

Who wouldn’t want a little relaxation and helping people at the same time? It may even bring in more people than Dance Marathon because this would be a prime opportunity for people who can never get any to get involved.

So everyone let us get together and help everyone instead of just the kids.

Collin Granger
Freshman
International Studies and
Political Science

Booing opposing teams shows a level of respect

TO THE EDITOR:

This letter is in response to “Be respectful to visiting teams, stop booing them” (Feb. 7).

I agree with the sentiment that “we extend a degree of courtesy and respect ... commensurate with the hard work and sacrifice that goes into participating in varsity athletics.” Varsity athletics requires hours upon hours of practice and should not be taken lightly.

I do however disagree that booing should completely cease. Booing is done in such a way that it gives a certain respect, like Reggie Jackson said: “Fans don’t boo nobodies.” This booing may not be a positive respect, but it shows a recognition for the athletes being booed.

While the booing may seem bad, I think that fans have a right to be able to boo when they want. Let them boo till they can’t boo any more.

Andrew Clarke
Freshman
Biology

SPEAK OUT

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.

SUBMISSION:

- Drop-off: at our office at 151 E. Rosemary Street.
- E-mail: opinion@dailytarheel.com
- Send: to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, N.C., 27515.

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