

Entire campus is fast becoming paved with good intentions

Concrete is taking over all university greenery.

By now you must have seen it: "Hearn Plaza" — the newest lifeless "improvement" to the campus. As our image-obsessed university continues to pave into the 21st century, it is only distancing itself from its foundational strengths.

Our natural, social and intellectual environments are being perverted and

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destroyed, most clearly seen in our university's new "landscaping" aspirations.

Hearn Plaza would be more acceptable had I never seen what preceded it, but I

was familiar with the gracious trees and fond of the wide benches that were mistakenly torn out for something "better." It was brilliantly simple and pleasant before.

Now the trees are gone, and with them the shade they provided. Not only does this discourage people from lingering in the area, but it destroys the natural depth and texture which shade provides. Today, the plaza is flat and aesthetically hostile.

The loss of the benches is a knife in the already suffering academic/social and faculty/student relations. The benches provided a rare continuity between Tribble Hall and Benson University Center — they were rounded and long, easily accessible to students or faculty and, in a strange but very real way, communal. Now they've been replaced with small metal picnic tables with all the seats facing inward. I see this as only augmenting our sad divisions and further compressing student awareness.

The bricks were an interesting idea

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(lifted from the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games) and promised another continuity — continuity through time. People could feel compelled to be a part of a family with such a rich past. Students, faculty and alumni would coalesce here into a symbol of tradition and love.

But who ever thought that they would be inscribed with a Sharpie marker? Face it, they look bad. And, they are so infrequent! Why are there ten times as many unfilled bricks as filled? This scarcity is either the promise of a wide-open future or a lackluster show of support —

manifest uncertainty — bad idea jeans.

Of course, there is no grass. Sure there are the sporadic triangles of token greenery, but forget about ever having another "grass class"; even if you find a large enough spot, rest assured it will be a parking lot with seventeen approaching paths within a week.

Look at what happened to the Flag Plaza between Benson and Davis House, another concrete fiasco. Formerly a placid traffic island, it is now an absurd compass rose of dense walkways leading to the same place.

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Grass is good, really, not inconvenient or dangerous to walk on. Grass is liberating. Every college catalogue is saturated with pictures of students frolicking on its immaculate lawn. Why? It is a "liberal

art" to walk on grass — one forges his own independent and nondestructive path. Grass is freedom. The proliferation of concrete paths may be nothing short of an attack on free will.

"Pave the Quad" was a novel idea; however, I can't help but wonder if those who founded it are beginning to feel a little afraid. Despite its absurdity, the idea is becoming a reality.

The last bastion of green is Davis Field (if the band does not soon stomp it out), which itself has to be resodded every third weekend because of insufficient parking. That problem alone may cause further paving and deforestation.

Maybe I've been too extreme. There are some benefits to this landscaping: The university is a skater's paradise, a perpetual tailgate, a superbball's dream. But I am afraid for the remaining natural environment. I'm scared that they are watching and charting my tracks — that as I go along, I am leaving a concrete wake.

Paparazzi not responsible for Diana's death

Drunken and careless driving are to blame for killing the princess.

The press didn't kill Princess Diana. A drunk driver, chauffeur-ing his passengers without seatbelts and accelerating to dangerous speeds inside of a

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tunnel killed Princess Diana.

It's been almost two weeks since England's Rose died, along with her beau and bodyguard, and since then, people all over the world have lashed out at photographers and reporters, blaming the press for her death.

Let's examine the facts: A third blood test confirmed that driver Henri Paul had been drinking the

night the crash occurred.

His blood alcohol content was recorded at 1.75 grams per liter, the equivalent of drinking nine shots of whiskey quickly. According to Europe-1 Radio, traces of antidepressants were also found in the driver's blood.

The vehicle was equipped with seatbelts, yet all four passengers failed to use them.

The French daily *Le Figaro* quoted investigators as saying the crash could be most likely attributed to alcohol and excessive speed.

The public should be outraged at the lack of responsibility displayed by Diana's driver, bodyguard and host for the evening.

The situation could have been stopped by any of these men at the first sign of reckless driving or life-threatening behavior. Instead, the public has chosen to target the media.

A photographer for *The Dallas Morning News* was greeted with profanity at her church service the

Sunday after Diana's death. Photo editor Leslie White said, "(The photographer) was asked if she came to service on her motor scooter."

During Monday night's premiere of "The Game" at Mann's Chinese Theater, security guards butted heads with a group of photographers wearing black ribbons over pictures of the Princess and staging a demonstration under a sign which read: "We also mourn the death of Princess Diana. We are not paparazzi. We're invited to be here." The sign was torn down, and an argument erupted between the head of security and a photographer.

In Tennessee, the assignment editor of *The Commercial Appeal*, Lisa Waddell, said that one of her photographers was confronted by "a bunch of lawyers who asked him if he was a paparazzi and who he was after."

Perhaps the ugliest incident occurred in Christchurch, New Zealand, one day after Diana's

death. Construction workers attacked a female news photographer, shouting such accusations as, "Didn't you do enough killing someone yesterday?" The photographer was pushed to the ground and the camera shoved in her face as onlookers supported her attackers.

People have begun to attack reporters and photographers, tabloids and newspapers alike, solely because blame needs to be placed. The public has ignored the fact that other parties beside the paparazzi were at fault in this incident. Three weeks ago, no one felt Princess Di's exploitation was unjust; they paid the \$1.39 for their tabloid and read the material.

True, Di's death has left England without a selfless volunteer, Princes William and Harry without a mother, and the world without a royal icon, but remember, the Princess would never have been chased if the public hadn't put such a high demand on her unauthorized pictures and smutty stories.

Politicians just want controversy and press

Senator Jesse Helms's superficial disputes may cause his political end.

Ambitious politicians are a dime a dozen, and they are never shy about initiating conflict when they fear being overlooked on the national scene.

In politics, the ends rarely seem to justify the means — unless you consider that a politician's image is actually the end.

If you are a governor who faces the terrifying prospect of spending your career overseeing the yeoman duties of state

the Massachusetts moderate onto the front pages, where he could posture in a manner consistent with his lofty ambitions.

Weld has wanted this chance for years. A popular governor with undeniable potential, he has been unsuccessful in breaking onto the national scene (his last effort was a Senate run against Edward Kennedy; Weld was soundly defeated).

This controversy was his ticket to the national spotlight that he has been eyeing for many years.

Although Helms has won this fight, his small victory is one of the last gasping breaths of the staid far-right conservative ideology with which he identifies.

The silence of other senators on this issue does not necessarily signify that they are cowering in fear of the powerful chairman. Instead, they recognized Helms's last stand for what it is and are content to let the controversy, along with his career, run its course.

Essentially, this conflict highlights the drift of the Republican Party away from Helms's brand of stern conservatism to a more vigorous, vital and relevant approach.

The Republicans, and the entire government, will face new challenges in the next century for which Helms's style is unsuited. They will have to face a changing economy, for one.

Politically, they will have to make overtures to the emerging technological industries that are becoming the muscle of the U.S. economy at home and abroad. New technology will also contribute to a more global society.

Moreover, the United States is growing more racially diverse, and the inclusion of these new citizens into society will be fundamental to the country's well being.

These new issues, and countless others like them, are the present and offer a mere hint into the not-so-distant future.

Jesse Helms and others like him are poorly prepared to meet this future.

His conflict with Bill Weld over the ambassadorship to Mexico provides a look into the future makeup of the Republican Party and American politics.

Congressional Republicans have been noncommittal on the nomination, with a few exceptions.

Their silence cannot be taken as consent, however. Instead, Helms's colleagues will sit quietly and do nothing as he isolates himself in to the political margin.

Helms's mix of confrontation, regionalism, xenophobia and racial agitation is definitely on its way out.

Conservatives will still be conservatives, and liberals will still be liberals, but the marginalization of Senator Helms and his ideas indicates a political climate in America that is and will continue to be more national in scope, international in its outlook and racially inclusive in its composition.

Matthew Gilley

STUDENT COLUMNIST

government as the chosen few scramble for the glory in Washington, any chance you get to boost your exposure is not an opportunity to be missed.

You might even go so far as to fight tooth and nail for the chance to sample the air in Mexico City.

This summer's drama surrounding the face-off between former Massachusetts governor Bill Weld (R) and Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) never seemed to live up to the coverage that it earned.

Since the beginning of their feud, these two seemed to be acting rather juvenile, just arguing for the sake of argument.

Who cares about the ambassadorship to Mexico? Helms would certainly not waste any sleep over the nomination otherwise.

But Weld probably wouldn't either. In fact, Weld's biggest worry might be the prospect of actually getting the ambassadorship.

So what is the point of all this trouble? The ambassadorship definitely does not justify the ruckus Weld is raising. Nor does simply defeating the nomination justify Helms's stubbornness.

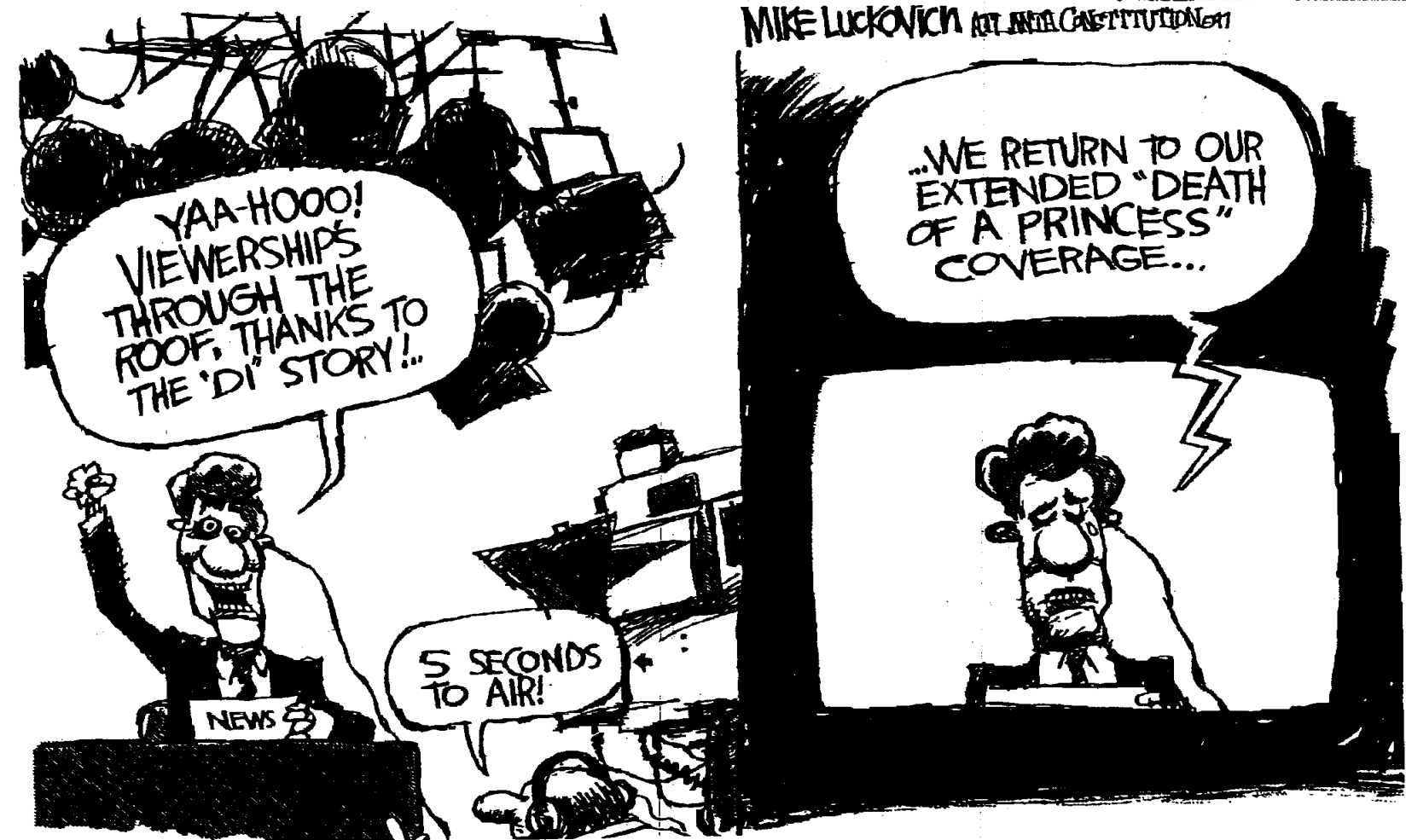
In true political fashion, the antagonists were indeed arguing for the sake of argument. This incident has nothing to do with who will be the United States' voice in Mexico City.

Instead, the conflict had meaning in and of itself, and it holds significant meaning for the future of the Republican party and the changing face of American politics.

Helms has won this skirmish. He has effectively killed Weld, who has withdrawn from consideration for the nomination.

However, the failed nomination and its attendant firestorm have served Bill Weld's purposes well.

His nomination by the President allowed him to elbow into the national spotlight, and then Helms's obduracy hurled



MORE LETTERS

Poor example fails to illustrate point

In the Sept. 4 Opinion column "New alcohol policy endangers students," you assert, "The new policy obviously targets the fraternities — one rule even stipulates that kegs are allowed at a non-Greek organization's party if they are registered, but that Greek organizations are prohibited from having kegs at all."

While I agree with you that the restructuring of the alcohol policy enforcement appears to be an attempt to at least seriously limit the power the fraternities have over the social scene, the example you chose was poor. Social fraternities are prohibited

from having kegs by their national charters, not by this university. This apparently came from the Interfraternity Council insurance pact (whose acronym I have not bothered to remember).

I support your attack on the increasingly parental administration, but be careful what you choose as an example.

Charlie Benson

Senior

Delta Sig resurrects culture on campus

Perhaps you've seen the signs announcing "phat beats and word treats" to be found at the Delta

Sigma Phi lounge on Thursday nights.

Perhaps then you pumped your fist in exultation at the realization that right here we are blessed with such an embodiment of the beauty of living.

To think — a whole roomful of hipsters celebrating the enchanting duality of The Hip: jungle-funk viscerality chasing the rhythmic flow of being, combined with the purest expressions of the purest spirits.

No? Maybe such a reaction was quelled by the oxymoronic nature of a poetry jam session held in a fraternity lounge.

Take heart, fair hep cat — Delta Sig seeks not to stifle, but to nurture your already finely tuned sense of individualism.

Regardless of whether your

hip finds its outlet in poetry, music or great conversation, rest assured that you are welcome.

In fact (if I may be permitted to invoke a muse or two), the spirits of Kerouac, Ginsberg, Burroughs and all other Beat Gods simply beg for your participation in Delta Sig's resurrection of culture.

Answer the call. Recognize your potential to wallow in Hipness Incarnate.

Recognize Delta Sig as the bastion of humanity that it is, and let this Thursday night inspire you to wear your hipness like a hemp necklace. But most of all, recognize the beauty of individualism.

Take your guitar, your sax or your words out on the Quad and bless your brothers and sisters with your gifts. Dig life. Dig Delta Sig.

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