

Homosexuals should seek American rights, not gay rights

Gay Rights campaign has the wrong focus.

Many of you may not have known that Oct. 11 was the ninth annual National Coming Out Day, which was created by the Human Rights Campaign. As usual, National Coming Out Day was both a celebration and a

Matthew Smith-Kennedy
GUEST COLUMNIST

proclamation of homosexual identity. Coincidentally, the day was also National Coming Out of Homosexuality Day. That's right — National Coming Out of Homosexuality Day is the opposite of

National Coming Out Day. NCOHD was organized by Michael Johnston, a man with AIDS who advertises himself as a former homosexual. And how does a homosexual become a former homosexual?

According to Johnston, he accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Savior and realized that his "homosexuality" was just another sin. So, Johnston embarked on a mission to share his conversion experience (which occurred in *Alabama*). The thrust of Johnston's message: you have a choice about being gay or straight, and if you choose homosexuality you choose to sin against God.

Obviously, Johnston is fighting the full rip-tide of the PC movement. Amen. Its good to see that someone is willing to counter the "I was born homosexual so accept it" attitude that is flooding the media today.

People can decide for themselves

whether they're pro-gay, anti-gay, or don't-care-about-gays. But, the Human Rights Campaign, an organization dedicated to fighting for Gay Rights, wants homosexuality to be accepted within mainstream society. They are for pro-gay attitudes in the media, politics and schools (even homes?). When Gay Rights campaigners work for social acceptance and social change, they are campaigning for a certain social/political agenda. What is most disturbing is that this acceptance goal is pursued under the flag of Gay Rights.

Who can be against Gay Rights? I can. I'm for American rights, chief among which is the right to live your life in the pursuit of happiness. Many homosexuals claim that their sexuality is in accordance with this right. Insofar as the "Gay Rights" movement seeks to eradicate discrimination violating their American rights, I support them 100 percent (as

should any American). But when the movement confuses rights and desires for acceptance into society they are wrong. Homosexuals do not have the right to be socially or politically (i.e., in elections) accepted. A legitimate Gay Rights movement should be a reminder to Americans that we cannot violate someone's civil rights because of this or her sexual preference. However, private individuals and businesses may discriminate against homosexuals without necessarily violating their legal rights.

For example, television networks — which are private institutions — do not have to accept homosexual values, beliefs or actions into their programming. Networks are held responsible for the values and images transmitted to homes. I hear someone reading this screaming, "But it's discrimination!" You're right. It's discrimination, but not all discrimination violates American rights. Discriminating

against gay messages does not prevent homosexuals from pursuing their sexual preference, as is their American right.

The Human Rights Campaign really needs to go international, because we have American rights here. On ABC's *20/20*, Whoopi Goldberg understood this when she said, "I'm not an African American. I'm an American. You know, I've been here probably since just about the time the Mayflower arrived. I might have been under the Mayflower, but I got here about the same time. And as far as I can see, that gives me all the rights and privileges of an American."

If Gay Rights campaigners want to ensure American civil rights for gays, then they should only seek what they deserve as fellow citizens. In effect, Gay Rights should be translated as "American rights for gays." We have enough social distress in this country already without people creating sexual-preference rights.

MIKE LUCKOVICH
ATLANTA CONSTITUTION

Audience displayed blatant inconsideration to Gandhi

Students at the lecture left prematurely and rudely.

Last Thursday night I ventured over to Brendle Recital Hall to see Arun Gandhi address the topics of non-violence and tolerance. Instead, I was annoyed and almost appalled at the rudeness students displayed at this function.

Christen Balady
STUDENT COLUMNIST

The program, set to begin at 8 p.m., started at about 8:10 to allow ample time for latecomers to settle into a seat. At 8:55 there was a flutter of folding chairs as a handful of people, many seated in the front, rose and left the auditorium as Gandhi was speaking. From 8:55 to 9:30, about 50 people had the audacity to file out of the recital hall.

These people were standing up during a presentation, rustling jackets and bookbags while an important figure was speaking, and climbing over the laps of people of the community. I was shocked that students actually had something better to do than listen to this inspiring figure, and I found myself paying more attention to their rudeness than to the intellect of Gandhi.

Did students from this university really believe that someone as illuminating as Arun Gandhi, a man raised by the beliefs of Mahatma K. Gandhi, would only speak for half an hour?

I understand that some people must have had homework to do, tests to study for or labs to attend, but if an audience member has something pressing to do, he or she should have

the decency to sit in the back row of the auditorium.

How does this make the speaker feel? He can see perfectly well that his audience is slowly streaming toward the exit sign. He can hear the rear swinging doors banging to a close. Why would anyone want to deliver a speech to a student body without the patience to sit through its duration?

True, our mothers are not here to nit-pick our public appearances and nag us about our manners, but this is not an invitation for all social graces to be tossed aside.

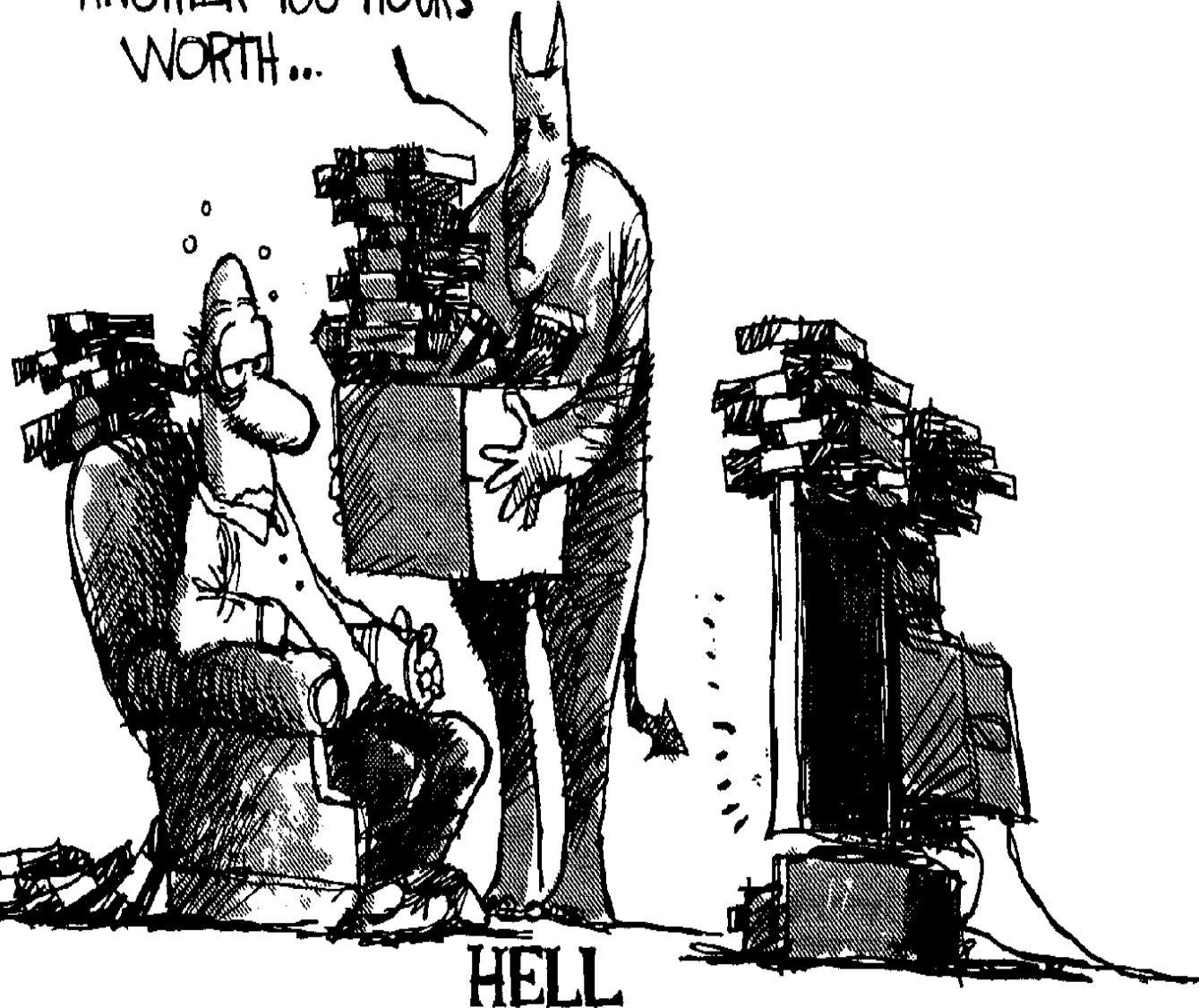
If someone takes the initiative to attend a function, he or she has made the commitment to stay at least until a pause, a break in the program or a burst of applause.

This is not to say that only people who have time to spare should sit in on lectures. It is wonderful that people took time out of their days to be enlightened by the theories of a world-renowned pacifist. Two minutes of listening to this man is better than none at all, and sometimes culture is better absorbed when administered in tiny bites. Leaving a seminar at its middle is not the biggest *faux pas* as etiquette goes, but there are polite ways of slipping out without creating a scene.

Maybe I'm overreacting. Maybe I'm the only person that feels this is a concern, excluding my mother. I just don't want future speakers to be reluctant to present their ideas to our student body because we have a reputation for walking out before the end.

Oh, and a word to those people that chose to leave early. On your way out the door, don't add boorishness to your already impolite act by grabbing some of the complimentary refreshments. I'm on to your scheme, and I think it's absolutely uncivil.

WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED WATCHING THOSE CLINTON "COFFEE" VIDEOS, HERE'S ANOTHER 100 HOURS' WORTH...



MORE LETTERS

Congress ignores the real issues

As a graduate student, former journalist and former history teacher, it is with great interest that I have watched the developments in the campaign finance reform investigation. I decided to write because I represent a large percentage of the population who have become disgusted with the arrogant and bipartisan nature of the Senate and House of Representatives.

With the help of the cable network C-SPAN, I have seen the constant bickering between majority and minority representatives. And I have concluded that this is not an investigation of campaign finance abuses. It is instead an investigation to discredit the Democratic Party as well as the president and vice president of the United States.

Although I understand the structure of our government and can appreciate the nature of checks and balances, I fail to see how any Congress can say that the attorney general of the United States lacks the objectivity to fulfill her duties since she is a presidential appointee. If that is indeed the charge, as I believe Rep. Kay Bailey Hutchinson (R-

Texas) so eloquently stated, then the integrity and objectivity of every presidential appointee, including Supreme Court justices, is called into question. Since Congress confirmed Attorney General Janet Reno, I fail to see why her objectivity is in question now. Unless, of course, it is because she has failed to bend to Republican pressure to appoint an independent counsel to investigate the president.

Ultimately, I am tired. I know, as well as most of the American public, that elected officials have abused campaign financing. We know that many congressional, gubernatorial and presidential candidates solicit millions of dollars for campaigns, and much of the money is questionable. But it's not questionable because of who or where it originates. It's questionable because it exists.

I struggle daily to pay bills and volunteer with the United Way in the Big Sisters program. As a teacher, I saw poverty on a daily basis. I am tired of arrogant, wealthy white men deciding how the public should feel. I am tired of listening to Congress, a Congress that votes for its own pay raises and investigates itself, attack other people and question their objectivity. I wish I could vote for my own pay raise.

Why don't we, the American

people, start a committee to investigate congressional committees? Perhaps we could suggest a pay decrease for our senators and representatives and donate the money to ourselves as payment for years of violations of our trust.

As an African-American female, I have never possessed much faith in the American system of government. So, it would be ludicrous for anyone to suggest that I (as suggested by the polls) have lost faith in the system. I can't lose faith I never had. So, how do we reform the system? Easy: Eliminate political parties altogether. They were never a part of the Constitution, and never would the founding fathers and mothers have imagined the United States of America dividing over issues such as campaign financing.

And I dare Congress to again shut down governmental offices because they run out of time to balance the budget. Rather than waste so much time trying to discredit the president and vice president, Congress should work on health care reform, education, welfare, jobs and social security protection.

But since congressional representatives are, for the most part, wealthy white men, I realize they will spend more time vying

for political control than discussing real issues, unless they get shot by a crack addict on the floor of the Senate.

Donyell Phillips
Graduate Student

Editorial based on unfair statements

When writing an editorial, it is important that the factual base be correct. In the recent editorial "Delta Gamma's closing indicates a problem" from the Oct. 16 edition of the *Old Gold and Black*, there are several inaccuracies. Our goal is to correct these assertions. In the four listed situations, Greek women would like to correct the major fallacies, but would also like to point out the numerous incorrect suggestions insinuated throughout the editorial.

One of the most blatant inaccuracies states that the Rush process includes "a short, roughly five-minute interview with a member of each sorority." Rush is a five-day process lasting many hours each day. If this time period seems too short, it is important to note that the Wake Forest Greek system has a policy of deferred rush, giving both the rushees and the sororities a semester to know each other. Our campus is rather small, and rushees and sorority members interact in various ways throughout the fall semester.

A second fallacy involves the

incorporation of quotas. Quotas are set according to National Panhellenic Council policy and are designed for the benefit of the rushee. We set quotas in order to minimize the amount of hearts broken during rush and ideally to create a spot for every woman.

The system is much friendlier than the men's and places the rushee's priorities over those of the sorority. Quotas designate a place for every rushee and serve to benefit the rushee over the sorority. In addition, the sorority does not base the selection process strictly on the characteristics of grade point average or wardrobe. A rushee must have a minimum GPA of a 2.0 to even consider the rush process. If a rushee's GPA is below this minimum she should focus on academics rather than Greek life.

Each one of us chose this university for the academic environment, and it is important to remember this. As for the importance of wardrobe, we hope students will not degrade themselves to even consider this factor. Rush is a mutual selection process in which the rushee has the ability to control her destiny. The process favors the rushee more than the sorority.

The final major fallacy regards the expansion of the women's Greek organizations. The Student Life Committee approved the addition of one additional group on campus last year, but Greek women postponed discussion of the issue. We wanted to take care of the groups on our campus first

before any other groups entered. There has never been any attempt to bring three new groups to campus. It is important to recognize that their individual national organizations as well as the nationals of the Panhellenic Council strictly govern women's Greek organizations. These policies govern all women's Greek organizations on college campuses nationwide.

Perhaps in the future the editorial staff of the *Old Gold and Black* should use the resources available to them rather than simply stating fallacies. We respect your right to a different viewpoint, but we disagree with the incorrect statements made in the editorial.

We are not arguing with your opinion, but it should maintain a factual basis. If you choose in the future to discuss any aspect of the Greek system, please do your research and state the facts of the matter correctly.

Laura Acton
Chi Omega President
Michelle Wood
Delta Delta Delta President
Courtenay Hallman
Delta Delta Delta President
Kara Prestage
Kappa Alpha Theta President
Heather Jones
Kappa Delta President
Jessica Dreisbach
Kappa Kappa Gamma President
Laura Tucker
Pi Beta Phi President
Lee Mildren
Panhellenic Council President