



# PRESS CENSORSHIP

Many student newspapers have strange relationships with the people who control the newspaper's budget and, to some extent, editorial positions. At times, for various reasons, student governments, university administrators or faculty advisers attempt to control a newspaper's content through prior censorship, by removing editors they disagree with or through other, more subtle, forms of manipulation. Student journalists maintain, however, they are protected by the First Amendment, which guarantees freedom of the press.

## Editors asked to resign posts

By Bradley S. Altman  
 ■ The Oracle  
 U. of South Florida

The U. of South Florida Student Government Senate, citing biased coverage, sexism and alcohol abuse, asked the editorial staff of the student newspaper, the *Oracle*, to resign this spring.

Paul Kern, senate pro-tempore, wrote the resolution after students complained to him about *Oracle* coverage, he said. "The students feel the *Oracle* is lacking. We represent students."

"The intent of this resolution is to make the *Oracle* more receptive to students' needs," Sen. David Ozner said. "We have a responsibility to be on record and let them know we are dissatisfied."

Editor-in-Chief David Whitehead said he would not resign, nor would he ask his editorial staff to resign. "I think we're covering the important things and our coverage has been fair," he said. He said the editorial policy of the newspaper would not change because of the resolution.

Not all senators agreed with the resolution. Thirteen senators voted for the resolution, nine senators voted against and 10 abstained.

Faculty Adviser Rick Wilber said he does not think the resolution is justified. "I think David Whitehead and his staff are doing a good job. I support them fully."

"It is unfortunate that Student Government became involved with the content of a student newspaper. That is a strange thing for a student government to do."



GRANT E. CARMICHAEL, THE TARTAN, CARNEGIE MELLON U.

## Editorial staff locked out of offices

By Jonathan Levy  
 ■ The Daily Tartan  
 Carnegie Mellon U.

The Duquesne U. Student Government Association suspended the student newspaper's constitution after an investigation the editors say started because the paper continued to run a family planning ad the association found inconsistent with the university's mission.

The SGA also changed the locks on *The Duquesne Duke's* office and refused to allow the staff to publish unless the editor-in-chief resigned. The publishing suspension was eventually lifted, but the editor was not allowed to return.

The *Duke* ran the ad three times against SGA wishes. After the first time, SGA President Happy Meltzer asked *Duke* Editor Rebecca Drumm not to run it again because it conflicted with the Catholic beliefs of the university, a private school in Pennsylvania.

After the ad ran again, Meltzer sent a letter to Drumm stating, "The ad should not reappear. If it does, the SGA will have no choice but to examine the operation of the student newspaper."

But Melzer said, "The suspension has nothing to do with the ads that appeared in print." He said the timing of the investigation was coincidental and that its focus was the existence of a *Duke* off-campus checking account and improprieties surrounding Drumm's re-election as editor in March 1988.

Immediately after the SGA voted for suspension, it held a

meeting with Drumm to discuss the charges. After the meeting, the SGA, citing a lack of cooperation, upheld the suspension.

As the dispute continued, the *Duke* editorial board began publishing its issues off-campus as *The Daily Free Press*.

Later the SGA Executive Board voted unanimously to lift the suspension of the *Duke's* constitution, but suspended Drumm from participation in the *Duke's* operation pending resolution of the charges brought against her.

In March 1989, the Duquesne U. Judicial Board convicted Drumm with failure to obey directives of university officials and failure to follow university policy. She was acquitted on charges of theft of university policy, misuse of documents and tampering with the 1988 editorial

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— Paul Kominos, Duquesne U. senior

elections.

Drumm, who was scheduled to graduate last May, was sentenced to probation for one year or until graduation. She was also barred from participation in any student organization, including the *Duke*.

She acknowledges speaking with officials about the external bank account, but says they only asked, not ordered, her to move the money. "The *Duke* didn't feel we should move the funds on campus because the university could have complete control of them," Drumm said.

Duquesne senior Paul Kominos feels the situation was handled improperly. "Obviously, they have the right to close down a student organization, but when the student government closes down the newspaper, that's not right."

## News editor sues, newspaper changes policy

By Michael Ashcraft  
 ■ The Daily Bruin  
 U. of California, Los Angeles

California State U. at Northridge agreed to declare its student newspaper a "public forum" and changed its policy concerning the publication of controversial articles as part of a settlement with a former student editor who was suspended for reprinting a cartoon some called racist.

The university agreed to permit publication of controversial material without the faculty adviser's permission unless the material could be obscene, libelous or an invasion of privacy. In addition, the settlement included \$93 in back pay for the editor and removal of his two-week suspension from university records.

James Taranto, former news editor of *The Daily*

*Sundial*, was suspended from his editor's job in 1987 after he wrote an opinion piece criticizing the U. of California at Los Angeles student publication board for its handling of a controversy about an anti-affirmative action cartoon.

Taranto also reprinted the cartoon, which portrayed a rooster admitted into UCLA through affirmative action. "U.C. Rooster" ignited a student protest at UCLA and led to the one-day suspension of the 1986-87 *Daily Bruin* Editor-in-Chief Ron Bell.

"This serves to call attention to the nationwide trend to censor conservatives on campus," Taranto said. He called the settlement "a clear victory for free speech."

Taranto said he had been punished for his conservative views, and with the help of the American Civil Liberties Union sued the university on the grounds

that his free speech rights had been violated.

Cynthia Rawitch, the faculty adviser who suspended Taranto, denied the charge of squelching conservative viewpoints. "There has never been any attempt to suggest that student opinions needed to be watered down."

Taranto called the old policy of checking controversial stories with the faculty adviser a form of prior censorship. When he was suspended for failing to confer with the adviser, he made a national issue of his case. The civil lawsuit had been scheduled to go to trial in June before Taranto settled with the university.

Bell, who will graduate this year, said the decision represents a victory for free speech. "It's a strange day when the opinion editor of a newspaper can't print what he strongly feels in his newspaper without consulting an adult authority."