

# The Gothic Guardian

at Duke University

Interview with  
Frank Roche  
Pg 6-8



Limited  
Government  
Pg 3-9

# In This Issue:

## Responsible Government:



“Lower your Expectations”  
*Chalette Lambert Page 3*

Interview with Frank Roche  
*Lingfeng Li, Trent Serwetz Page 6*

“Corrupt Policy Czars”  
*Christina Sun Page 9*

4 The Tebow Ad Controversy  
*Vikram Srinivasan*

11 Waste Management  
*Isaac Wang*

13 China Not the Next Iraq  
*Sabrina McCutchan*

15 Social Conservatism  
*Staff*

The Gothic Guardian

*The Gothic Guardian* is edited and compiled by Duke students and printed in Alpharetta, Georgia. Opinions expressed in these pages represent only the views of article authors.

Editor-in-Chief.....Lingfeng Li  
Managing Editor.....Aaron McGuire  
Production Editor.....Trent Serwetz  
Senior Editor..... Vikram Srinivasan  
Contributors.....Chalette Lambert  
.....Joey Lauer  
.....Sabrina McCutchan  
.....Christina Sun  
.....Isaac Wang

Cover and art by Aaron McGuire.

# Lower Your Expectations

---

## by Chalette Lambert

---

I want a lot of things — a good career, happy family, nice house, health care, limited government, etc. I expect that I will have to work and sacrifice to attain those ideals. However, it seems that on a larger scale, Americans have forgotten this simple principle. We expect government to achieve our interests without any sacrifices — we want health care but don't want to pay higher taxes, climate change as long as the change doesn't involve us, and action on unemployment without increasing the deficit.

We expect the government to fix itself and the economy, but we also want it to be smaller and have less power. Well, it's time to either lower our expectations or continue being disappointed.

---

*We expect the government to fix itself and the economy, but we also want it to be smaller and have less power. Well, it's time to either lower our expectations or continue being disappointed.*

---

If we want change, we cannot expect it to be free. The mortgage crisis and economic recession was caused largely in part by a 'something for nothing' mentality — large homes that cost little

(at first), large loans with small down payments. With that evidence against us, why do we keep thinking this way?

We need to change or limit our expectations. We need to decide what we want accomplished and what we are willing to sacrifice. This does not include backroom deals or the health care bill earmarks — I'm talking about what individual Americans need to sacrifice: either an overall increase in taxes or an overall decrease in government spending. Our growing deficit shows us that we cannot continue to support the something for nothing trend.

Americans seem to want the government to actively solve our problems, while simultaneously also arguing for government to do less. When asked to identify the most important issues for the President and Congress to deal with this year, over 80 percent of Americans responded "extremely important" or "very important" to the following issues: the economy, unemployment, and the federal budget deficit<sup>1</sup>.

Just a few months earlier, however, 57 percent of polled Americans (the highest percentage in a decade) said, "the government is trying to do too many things that should be left to individuals and businesses."<sup>2</sup> Granted, more Republicans agree with this statement, but even numbers among Democrats are rising. As much as this is a party issue, it's more of a national issue. The growing number of independents indicates discontent with both parties.

It is an easy oversimplification to lay the blame entirely on political parties and argue that partisanship is accomplishing little and that members of Congress are too focused on their own special interests. These are important concerns that need to be addressed, but who is going to address them? Americans elected Obama hoping he would "fundamentally change

the way Washington works" — to change the system Americans had lost faith in. The majority of Americans expected Obama to fix things. He didn't.

Congress hasn't either, and neither has the Democratic majority. So, Massachusetts elected Scott Brown, a Republican, but he's not going to fix things either. Scott Brown has the same conflicting ideals we do: he wants to save money and spend it too. (Brown is in favor of tax cuts, opposed to Medicare cuts.) The problem isn't that individual parties have conflicting ideals — it's that

---

*Reduced taxes in combination with reduced government spending have already proven effective on a state level.*

---

we have conflicting ideals. Americans want the benefits without the costs, the budget in the black and our taxes in the red.

Reduced taxes in combination with reduced government spending have already proven effective on a state level. As governor of New Mexico, Gary Johnson balanced the budget and lowered the rate of governmental growth by 50 percent without raising taxes or firing staff<sup>3</sup>. He did this by rejecting bills that created expenditures and favoring bills that allowed for privatization and increased freedom. Although he was rejected by some members of his party, his actions allowed the government to address pressing needs rather than stretching thinly to make up for a

cont'd.

# Tebow Ad Con

growing deficit.

At a national level, even small expenditures need to be sacrificed in order to meet the pressing needs of the population. If we, as members of any party, are willing to concede some benefits, we can provide for more essential costs while also reducing the size of government and the size of our deficit.

Ultimately, the buck needs to stop with *us*. First, evaluate your expectations. Identify which issues are most important and sacrifice the others. Second, don't expect anyone to grant your wishes without knowing what they are. Write or phone your representatives and let them know where you stand. If they don't know your interests, they'll keep pleasing special interests. Finally, feel free to complain. Our nation was founded on complaints against the status quo. But it was only founded because citizens took action against that status quo, and they sacrificed plenty to achieve change. Unless we are also willing to speak up and sacrifice, we'll have to lower our expectations of the change we deserve.

1 CNN/Opinion Research Corporation Poll. January 2010. Federal budget, taxes, economic policy. <<http://www.pollingreport.com/budget.htm>>

2 Newport, F. September 2009. Americans more likely to say government doing too much. Gallup, <<http://www.gallup.com/poll/123101/Americans-Likely-Say-Government-Doing-Too-Much.aspx>>

3 Anonymous. January 2010. Governor Gary Johnson, chairman of OUR America Initiative, travels to New Hampshire to spread message of lower taxes. Business Wire, <<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdlink?index=350&did=1942770391&SrchMode=3&sid=1&Fmt=3&VInst=PRO&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1266808265&clientId=15020&aid=2>>

## by Vikram Srinivasan

For all the controversy over University of Florida quarterback Tim Tebow's decision to feature in a pro-life ad aired during the Super Bowl, there was at least one positive outcome.

It made the radically pro-choice left look indisputably silly. The hyperbolic nature of the episode revealed the deep frustration of the pro-choice lobby at the direction of the nation's abortion debate.

What was noteworthy about the ad, which was made by conservative group Focus on the Family and showed Tebow playfully tackling his mother as she spoke vaguely about the decision to keep her dangerous pregnancy, was how little it actually said about abortion. In fact, the word "abortion" was never stated even once.

By contrast, what was noteworthy about the reaction to the ad, which began before the ad even aired, was its stridency and vitriol. Pro-choice groups practically threw the kitchen sink at Focus on the Family for daring to raise the issue of life, however obliquely, during the Super Bowl.

A few quotes are valuable for perspective:

Before the ad aired, Jehmu Greene, president of the Women's Media Center said, "An ad that uses sports to divide rather than to unite has no place in the biggest national sports event of the year — an event designed to bring Americans together."

After it aired, the National Organization for Women alternately declared that the manner in which Tebow tackled his mother reflected an "undercurrent" of "violence against women."

If only they were joking. The criticism is revelatory, if only of the paranoid psychology of its advocates.

The reaction to the Tebow's ad from

# Controversy and “Fake Choice”

pro-choice groups seems to mask a deep sensitivity among these groups to having any kind of national debate about abortion at all. That the ad, mild as it was, sparked the outrage that it did before and after its airing, reflects the desperate need among pro-choice groups to not let pro-lifers get away with a public relations victory.

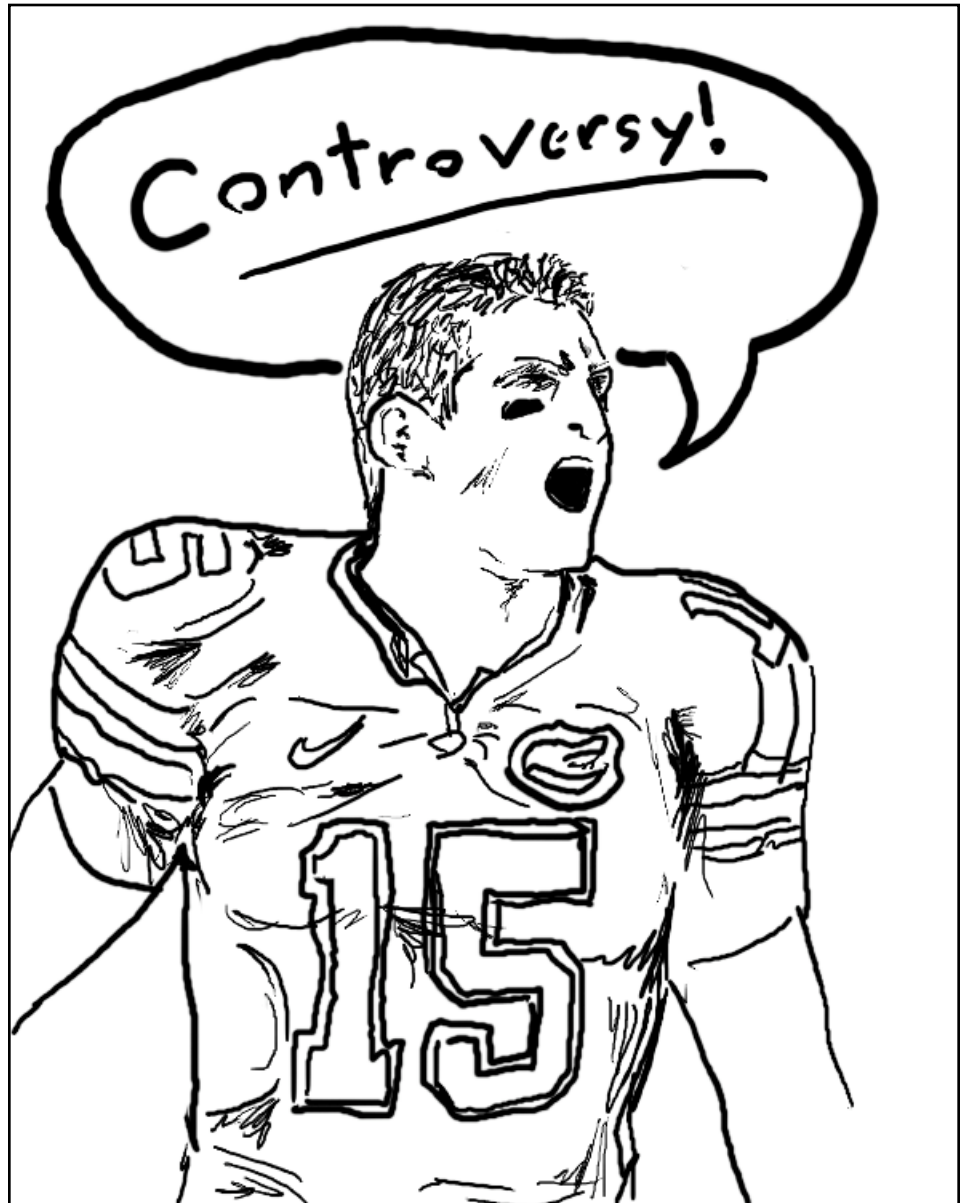
Considering the larger trends in the abortion debate and recent poll numbers on the subject, it's not hard to see why.

A May 2009 Gallup poll send shockwaves through the political world for its revelation that for the first time, more Americans self-identified as “pro-life” than “pro-choice” by a substantial 51 to 42 percent margin.

The data set was not an outlier. Another poll conducted by the Marist Institute for Public Opinion in late December and early January 2010 showed that young people (voters aged 18-29) among the most pro-life, with 59 percent calling abortion “morally wrong.” The most pro-choice group seemed to be the Baby Boomers, aged 45 to 64, of which only 51 percent found abortion morally wrong.

The data on young-people has taken the pro-choice lobby particularly by surprise. Where attitudes among older populations are easier to dismiss as white noise from polling, the numbers on youth suggest a true generational shift. Nothing could be more alarming to abortion defenders who have lived the last forty years with a distinctive upper hand in the culture war.

Clearly, the momentum in the abortion debate has shifted towards pro-lifers. According to the popular narrative, the profusion of fetal imaging technologies and increased knowledge about embryonic development has heightened public sensitivity to the humanity of the unborn child. The narrative may well be true. The result is a pro-choice lobby that is bewil-



dered, frustrated, and as we now know, neurotically hyper-sensitive.

One has to wonder what groups like NOW and Planned Parenthood are so afraid of. That those who defend “choice” recoil at the prospect of a robust public conversation on abortion that could better inform the decisions of women considering the procedure seems contradictory, to say the least.

Resolution may come from the fact the “pro-choice” moniker is more a function of political convenience than ideological accuracy. “Choice,” as NOW, Planned Parenthood, and like-minded groups envision it, conveys entitlement, not deliberation.

Which is precisely why a national abortion debate is so horrifying to them. Pro-lifers might actually win.

# Interview with Congressional

## An Inside Look at the 2010 Republican

by **Lingfeng Li**  
**Trent Serwetz**

*As we look forward to the 2010 elections, The Gothic Guardian sat down with Frank Roche, a Republican candidate for the United States Congress representing North Carolina, for an interview.*



### The Candidate

Frank Roche values courage — he uses the word directly no less than five times during the course of an hour-long interview, and alludes to it in countless other instances.

Courage may explain his choice to run for U.S. Congress in a district that Democrats have held in a headlock for the last 20 years. It may also contextualize his decision to leave Wall Street, where he had worked as a foreign exchange trader at Societe Generale, and relocate to North

Carolina. Facing buyouts from companies that had started to rely more on computer algorithms than human traders, Roche knew it was time to make a change.

Roche is running for the Republican Party's nomination for North Carolina's fourth congressional district. The fourth district spans part of the triangle area including much of Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill. The Democrat incumbent, David Price, has lost his seat only once since assuming office in 1987. Price, a Ph.D in Political Science from Yale University, represents the "ivory tower" opposition to Roche's dark horse campaign.

Roche first came to the South because he was "never really enamored with being in New York City." He was tired of living in a cramped, 600-square foot apartment in the City lifestyle. Having spent his whole life in the Northeast — completing both his bachelor's and master's degrees in economics in his home state University of Rhode Island before entering his banking career in New York — he wanted to move South. "I knew that I couldn't look back North and East to Rhode Island or where I came from because the liberalism up there, the taxation, the imposition of our liberties, the high cost of living generally, was just offensive to me," he says.

Roche's responses reveal his awareness of the doubts inherent in his status as a political newcomer. He has never held a political office, so critics naturally doubt his experience. But Roche argues that his academic training in economics and Wall Street background have helped him understand global politics up close. "Every single day, analyzing data, analyzing correlations between economies, focused and watching trade relations, watching geopolitical relations, anything you can imagine that moves . . . it gave me the knowledge that I need to run for office," he says.

In fact, Roche argues that his distance from the political history of the fourth

district actually works to his benefit. "The strength it really gives me is objectivity, the ability to look at the situation in the fourth district with new eyes, not being a part of what was once there," he says. Reveling in his political inexperience, Roche quips, "don't call me a politician yet, wait till I get elected first, then you can call me a politician."

---

*"Every single day, analyzing data, analyzing correlations between economies, focused and watching trade relations, watching geopolitical relations, anything you can imagine that moves . . . it gave me the knowledge that I need to run for office"*

---

### Immigration and Foreign Policy

Nonetheless, during the course of the interview, Roche demonstrated his political tact, articulating clear platforms when asked about popular issues. Some answers are short: he is firmly against the Patriot Act and wants to slash federal spending at least 10 to 20 percent.

But Roche remains clear-cut even when taking controversial stances — for example, he vehemently supports U.S. withdrawal from the United Nations. Roche titles the UN "an effort to create a global government and diminish national sovereignty in the United States of America." Relying more on our existing consulates and embassies and less on the UN, he argues within his courage paradigm, is the only way for America to

# Candidate Frank Roche

## an Primary Elections

“move forward without restraint.”

Some of Roche’s views are more detail-oriented. When asked about his proposed two-year freeze on immigration, he discussed the problem of illegal immigration and argued at length that such a hiatus on legal immigration would give bureaucrats enough time to catch up on the backlog of immigration applications. The hiatus would provide enough time to reflect on where our current policy has taken us, Roche argues, how it may have damaged our “sense of unity.”

Another topic that stirred Roche concerns the war in Iraq (he even used to write about the subject on a personal blog). He says that though he does not support an explicit time-table for withdrawal, he recognizes that the United States should try to withdraw from the country as soon as responsibly possible. His responses are layered with a level of grit, especially on military matters. “For me, when it comes to the use of military force, I want it done aggressively, quickly, brutally, and without hesitation,” he says.

His response to the question about Iraq also reveals a deeply-rooted sense of patriotism, which is echoed in his disdain for the northeast and his continual emphasis on the importance of courage and unity. Whatever his personal feelings are towards Iraq, Roche believes that he should always support the President’s decision. “I am of the mind once the President of the United States whoever he or she is makes the decision to put our armed forces at risk, I get behind it right away,” he says.

Personally, Roche argues that “a strong military focused on defending our corporate interests and our national interests is all that it should be there for.” He doesn’t see America as the global policeman, but argues that we should respond to international threats with containment and deterrence. “Try to fire

one nuclear weapon towards our nation and we will destroy you,” he says, taking a reserved but hard-line approach.

### The Primary Race

The other topic that prompted an adversarial tone from Roche concerned his opponent in the Republican primary, B.J. Lawson. Lawson ran for Congress in the fourth district in 2008, winning only 36 percent of the vote against David Price<sup>1</sup>. Initially, Lawson again looked to be the frontrunner for the Republican ticket in 2010, but he dropped out of the race for some months before reentering.

This inconsistency, Roche says, is among the reasons why he has reservations about Lawson’s candidacy. Another point of contention between the two — the primary one, according to Roche — centers around Lawson’s campaign against the Federal Reserve. Lawson supports both the dissolution of the Federal Reserve

Constitution is about a federalist republic based on unity and one big giant nation,” he says. Emphasizing unity, Roche calls the dissolution of the Federal Reserve “a dangerous way to go.”

Roche also takes issue with Lawson’s socially progressive views, calling him a “progressive” candidate whose views shed doubt on his status as a republican. Despite endorsements from Presidential candidate Ron Paul, Roche says that Lawson was just as unsuccessful in 2008 as his predecessors at unseating the incumbent Price. “If we continue on that path,” Roche says, “we will continue to lose to David Price.”

For his own campaign, Roche has chosen to steer focus away from his views on social issues. He says that “[leading with social issues] has been hurting Republicans for election cycle after election cycle,” taking away from the more important issues of jobs, taxes, healthcare, and education. Roche’s social views fit more of a typical conservative profile, for example, he is pro-life. He says, however, that it is not the content of his views but his willingness to put social issues on the backburner that makes him “a different Republican.”

### Against David Price

Since Price’s only congressional defeat versus Republican Fred Heineman, North Carolina’s fourth district has been redrawn. The inclusion of more of Durham county and less of Wake county, Roche says, has helped to prevent a repeat of Heineman’s 1995 upset. Roche’s plan to counter Price’s incumbency stems from his background in statistical analysis: “targeted campaigning.”

Roche advocates a careful plan for congressional campaigning — “knowing who votes, when they vote, how often they vote, what the issues of concern are to people” are his keys to victory. Dissatisfaction with the Democratic Party is at such a height that Roche feels

---

*“For me, when it comes to the use of military force, I want it done aggressively, quickly, brutally, and without hesitation”*

---

and the use of localized currency, two ideas of which Roche disapproves. “It implies for a guy who supports the U.S. Constitution, that he really doesn’t support the US Constitution because the U.S.

cont'd.

his campaign will attract even “southern democrats, conservative democrats,” for whom the party is moving in an unacceptable direction. “I know exactly where we need to go to get the votes to win,” Roche says, citing the centrality of intelligent spending to his campaign plan.

Answering whether or not he, as a former New York banker, will be able to connect with Main Street America, Roche is confident that he is sufficiently distanced from the investment banking culture that has garnered so much flak in recent years. “I was never a CEO, I never received a seven figure bonus,” he says. And while Societe Generale participated in the



derivatives trading, Roche says Wall Street is not solely responsible for the housing crisis.

Ultimately, the issues all seem to lead back to courage for Roche. He repeatedly stresses the need for a “new courageous kind of determination from a candidate,” the ability to take clear initiative in important decisions. He remarks on the importance of having “the courage to say the words to every single American citizen, [deficit spending] must stop,” invoking courage as both the impetus and paradigm for his 2010 Congressional campaign.

<sup>1</sup> “North Carolina Election Results 2008.” *New York Times*, December 09, 2008.

# Was

## A Conservat

by Isaac Wang

One image that is permanently embedded in my selective memory of Duke’s campus is the pile of barf that missed an overflowing trash can two feet away. It not only looks disgusting and smells putrid, but its rancid presence is there for criminally long periods of neglect.

Hardly a figment of your imagination, the misplaced vomit assaults your senses like a canker sore in your cognizance, because it is the first thing you see (and smell) on Saturday morning and Sunday morning and Monday morning as you are recovering from your own sinful revelry or all-nighter.

The irony of waste management at Duke is that it is not there when you need it most...kind of like an insurance company. Housekeeping staff works diligently to maintain hospitable environments on the weekdays, but is nowhere to be seen on the weekends when their services are in greatest demand. A key component of services

---

*The irony of waste management at Duke is that it is not there when you need it most.*

---

in any industry is the timeliness of its service.

Could you imagine if the best TV shows were during the early afternoon,

# te Management

## ive Spin On Duke's Ubiquitous Problem

or if bars and clubs were closed after dinner time? Better yet, let's be more relevant and imagine if Jimmy Johns took nights off and religious services took weekends off. The current scheduling for housekeeping (more specifically waste management) is absurd, because the services at Duke do not cater to the needs of the student population.

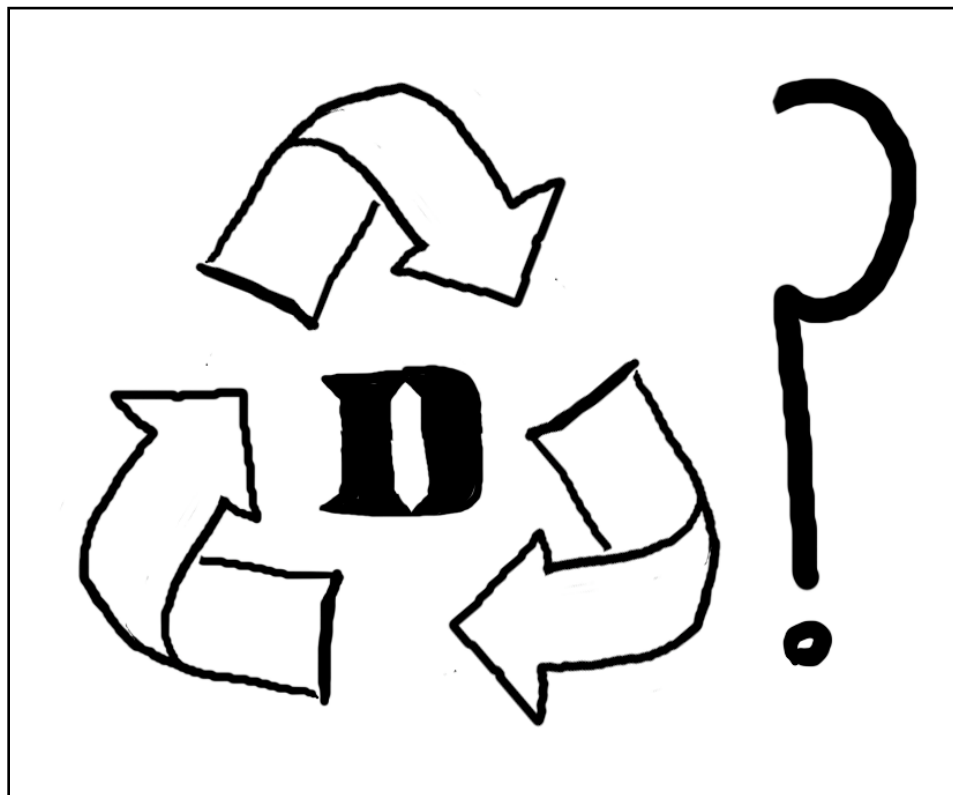
Depending on the quad, it's arguable that Friday night accumulates more trash than the other four weekdays combined. Saturday night's partying and revelry is often on par with that of Friday, resulting in a sanitation disaster by Sunday. As a result, housekeeping staff undoubtedly have "a case of the Mondays" when they return to find the campus a mess.

My heart goes out to the folks that have to deal with large amounts of trash, the smell of rotting Italian and Chinese food from Friday night, and a welcoming pile of vomit waiting for them.

Whether Duke is aware of the inconvenience of the situation and student backlash against the inefficient management is irrelevant. The campus has other inefficient arrangements and more pressing issues that it continues to neglect. (Think Duke Police, Duke Dining, and Duke Transportation)

What I'm concerned with is not whether Duke is willing to do anything about it, but whether it can do anything about it. Duke likely has entrenched labor agreements that prevent many of its employees from working on the weekends, probably stemming from a "right to weekends" clause.

If not for legal restrictions, an obvious solution would be to make employees work on different days. The current arrangement has the accumulated trash of Friday, Saturday, and Sunday collected on Monday morning, obviously very



inefficient.

Instead of working only weekday mornings, they should work the mornings of Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Tuesday. This still gives employees two days off a week (Monday and Wednesday) while providing students with desperately needed

---

*What I'm concerned with is not whether Duke is willing to do anything about it, but whether it can do anything about it.*

---

services on the weekends.

There are going to be people who complain about the right to weekends, but it should not hold up given that many services on campus remain active on weekends (dining, law enforcement, library).

But what can Duke students do to help ameliorate the situation? We can not summon the powers of Margaret Thatcher and throw a political coup to rid Duke of labor unions and senseless regulations. We can, however, not depend on the government (sorry, I mean Duke administration) and create our own solutions. Here are three alternative conservative solutions that the student body could easily adopt to remedy this issue:

### **Solution 1: Volunteer**

As champions of community service, Duke students can easily create a student

cont'd.



organization that collects garbage on Saturday and Sunday mornings from each quad and put the waste in their respective metal containers for trucks to pick up on Mondays.

This requires no more than five people per quad for 20 minutes for each morning. If we have activists saving Africa, promoting democracy in China, and fighting for the rights of transsexuals, I think we can get five people per quad to help out on this.

### **Solution 2: Privatize waste management on the weekends**

Duke organizations that have the ability to fund services (ex. Campus Council, DSG) can pay private waste management companies to take out the garbage and clean messes on the

weekends for a nominal fee.

The large scale of such operations suggests we can probably get a better deal through an overall agreement for the entire campus than through individual quads making their own arrangements. I believe this is a service that many students on campus would be more than willing to have their quad councils pay for.

Weekly, it shouldn't cost more than 50 dollars per quad to take out 20-30 bags of trash. Compare that with the other events and ludicrous things that our student services organizations pay for on Duke students' money.

### **Solution 3: Self-sufficiency**

This is my personal favorite, but the least feasible given that Duke students

have a pathological dependency on student services. The self-sufficiency solution simply means that we do it ourselves in arrangements that we can set up with our RAs.

Just as we take turns taking out the garbage at home, students in the same hall can take turns taking out the big bags of garbage and putting them in the large metal waste bin. And just as we have to clean our own bathrooms at

---

*Regardless of what may be hampering Duke's ability to conduct effective waste management that schedules according to students' needs, we can take it upon ourselves to solve the problem.*

---

home, students in the same hall can also take turns cleaning bathrooms on the weekends by doing simple chores such as picking up paper towels, wiping down toilet seats, and scrubbing table counters. Part of being a responsible citizen and an independent human being is taking care of your own environment and being conscious of your quality of life.

Regardless of what may be hampering Duke's ability to conduct effective waste management that schedules according to students' needs, we can take it upon ourselves to solve the problem. As members of a civil society, we can conjure our own reasonable solutions, guided by conservative principles such as "voluntary community," "privatization," "personal responsibility," and "freedom from dependency."

# Corrupt Policy Czars Pervade Highest Levels of Obama Administration

by **Christina Sun**

Bribery, corruption, cronyism, you name it. Obama's new appointees have participated in them all.

These policy "czars," as they are often called by the media and the Obama administration, are high level White House officials appointed sans Senate confirmation. Historically, presidential administrations have used czars to rise above the usual Washington fray and help various bureaucracies work together. However, the Obama administration has run amok with the appointments.

According to the White House Report to Congress on White House Staff, the czars are among the highest paid staffers in the White House, and they have a free rein with federal funds and policy-making. There is not enough scrutiny of their actions, and many Americans are not even aware of their existence. If we look closely at some of the backgrounds of these czars, we find histories

---

*On the campaign trail, Obama pledged to transform Washington's lobbyist culture.*

---

riddled with corruption, and they bring their expertise to the current administration.

On the campaign trail, Obama pledged to transform Washington's lobbyist culture. Soon after taking office, he signed an executive order saying that White House appointees should not participate "in any particular matter involving



specific parties that is directly and substantially related to any former employer or former clients." Certainly a noble goal to bring change to Washington.

Ladies and gentlemen: meet Obama-appointed health czar, Washington professional Nancy DeParle, formally known as the director of the White House Office of Health Reform. DeParle ran the Medicare and Medicaid programs during the Clinton administration. Following her tenure, she proceeded to make over \$6 million in the health care private sector, according to the Investigative Reporting Workshop, a project of the school of communication at American University. DeParle served on the boards of nine other prominent medical companies, many of which have undergone federal

investigations and whistleblower lawsuits. An example is while DeParle was a board member of the Guidant Corporation, government regulators found that the company was hiding patient deaths from the FDA.

While serving on the boards of these companies (2002-2008), DeParle was also a member of the government-sponsored Medical Payment Advisory Committee (MedPAC). MedPAC advises Congress on the services Medicare should cover and its reimbursement rates. According to The Commonwealth Fund, a private organization that supports the improvement of the health care system, DeParle is quoted as saying that Obama was "open to making the recommendations of MedPAC mandatory."

The Obama administration casually overlooks DeParle's industry ties,

despite its rhetoric. The Investigative Reporting Workshop found that as the health czar, she controls \$19 billion of federal stimulus money that has been earmarked for health information technology. DeParle served on the Board of Directors for the company

---

*“the rapid and easy accumulation of power by White House staff can threaten the constitutional system of checks and balances”*

---

Cerner Corp., which, shockingly, specializes in health information technology.

For another spectacle of cronyism within the Obama administration, look to Adolfo Carrión. He heads the White House Office of Urban Affairs, whose role according to a July 2009 Washington Post article, is to be “part of the Obama administration’s new kind of urban policy to address cities and also their suburbs, which urban advocates hoped would be the focus of the administration’s development approach.” In March 2009, *The New York Times* reported that Carrion had accepted thousands of dollars in campaign contributions from developers and real estate firms while their projects were being reviewed by Carrion’s office. As a result, these companies landed lucrative deals.

Carrion also has been known to spend an excessive amount of taxpayer dollars on items such as a \$1,700 for the purchase and installation of blue fabric to cover a podium, \$690

on gold-sealed business cards, and \$50,000 on a going-away party on himself, according to a February 2009 *NY Daily News* article. A classic example of hard-working Americans’ tax dollars being flushed down the toilet.

On December 15, 2008, the Obama administration added yet another ethics-compromised Washington professional to the White House staff. Carol Browner was named the Director of the White House Office of Energy and and Climate Change Policy, or better known as the “energy czar.” Browner headed the Environmental Protection Agency from 1993-2000, and many controversies abounded during her reign. In her first term as the head of the EPA, a Congressional subcommittee found her to be using taxpayer funds to send out illegal lobbying materials to around 100 environmental lobbying organizations around the country. Browner used her government position to mobilize left-wing groups and forward her own liberal agenda.

In addition, according to the testimony in a freedom of information lawsuit filed against the EPA by the Landmark Legal Foundation, Browner ordered the destruction of agency computer files on her last day as the head of the EPA. A federal court order for the EPA to preserve records had already been put into place. When the case was brought to court by the Landmark Legal Foundation, the judge held the EPA in contempt of court.

Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle have voiced their concerns about Obama’s czars. Democrat Senator Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia voiced his concerns in a cautionary letter to Obama in early 2009. In reference to past czars and White House staffers, Byrd

writes that “they rarely testify before congressional committees and often shield the information and decision-making process behind the assertion of executive privilege.” He adds that, “the rapid and easy accumulation of power by White House staff can threaten the constitutional system of checks and balances.” Ironic, since this is the same party that denounced the Bush administration’s use of executive power.

For his part, Rep. Jack Kingston (R-GA) is sponsoring a Czar Accountability and Reform Act of 2009 that would “would bar the use of appropriated funds to pay either expenses or salaries of members of task forces, councils, or similar offices established by the president and headed by a person appointed inappropriately to such a post without Senate advice and consent.”

Obama promised to bring change to Washington, but he continues down

---

*Obama promised to bring change to Washington, but he continues down the path riddled with corruption and cronyism.*

---

the path riddled with corruption and cronyism. The facts are clear: despite touting its dedication to government transparency, the Obama administration has reneged on its promises and continues to cater to the Washington elite, amassing enough czars to make the Romanovs turn in their graves.

# China Not the Next Iraq

## U.S. "Policing" Will Not Extend to China In Near Future

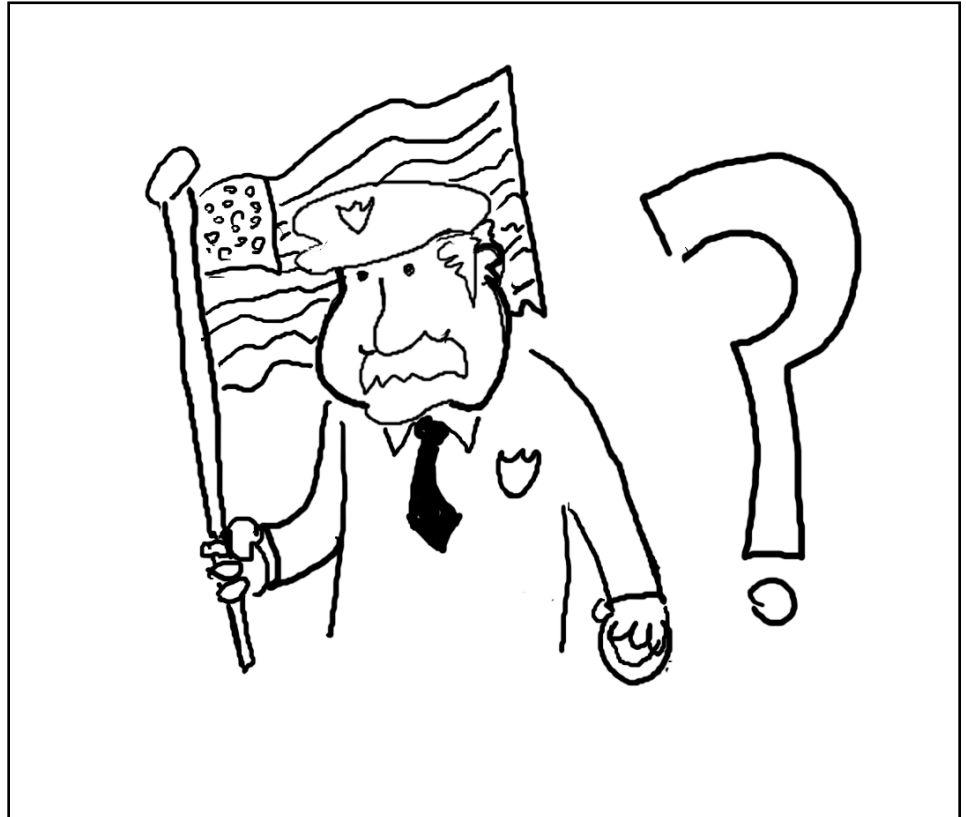
by **Sabrina McCutchan**

When American President Woodrow Wilson initiated the League of Nations in 1919, his aim was to create an organization that would unite national governments in the pursuit of a global agenda: peace. Criticism of the move, however, flowed thick and fast, with perhaps the most lasting objection being that America should not serve as the "world's policeman."

There is little doubt that the United States could fill such a role, especially after the end of the Cold War and the political decline of the only major contender for international hegemony. The topic of "policing" has been raised more recently in critiques of America's foreign wars. Now, a spike in longstanding tensions between the U.S. and China over human rights issues, caused by the sentencing of a Chinese dissident, has again pushed the question to the forefront of the political scene; except, it has been re-worded. Critics no longer ask if America should serve as the world's policeman, but if it can.

Tan Zuoren, a Chinese magazine editor and environmentalist, was officially sentenced to five years in prison for subversion of state power on February 9. The Chinese government claims that several emails written by Mr. Tan criticizing the 1989 bloodshed at Tiananmen Square are designed to undermine state power, and is using these emails as grounds for the charge.

The sentencing has sent Chinese and American human rights activists into an uproar. According to *The New York Times*, Amnesty International alleges the real impetus behind Mr. Tan's sentencing is his plan to release a criticism of state-directed school construction in Sichuan Province, where



thousands of children died in a 2008 earthquake as schools collapsed ("Editor Reviewing China Quake Deaths Is Sentenced"). In both scenarios, the Chinese government has obstructed Tan's freedom of speech, which is protected under China's constitution according to 2004 revisions.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and President Barack Obama have been hesitant to address human rights in China. Obama, against protests from the Chinese government, met with the Dalai Lama on February 18 — but the President took pains to make the meeting appear casual, refusing to see the Dalai Lama in the Oval Office (the meeting took place in the Map Room). By receiving a political leader from a region victimized by China in such a manner, Obama has allowed China to dictate his treatment of foreign dignitaries.

Clinton publicly supported Google's plan to stop censoring search results on its China engine as a step towards freer expression in the nation, triggering a rebuke from the Chinese government. The Secretary of State has kept silent, however, as a confrontation unfolds between Google and China over attempted hacking by people affiliated with the Chinese military. Google's threats to pull its program from Chinese webspace unless free speech rights are honored have received no backing from American leadership.

Despite the limited action that has been taken, the overall message sent by America remains conciliatory as China's global economic and political power continues to grow. It would be an exaggeration to say this strategy has caused a confrontation among Democrats, but human rights activists are unhappy with what appears to be

the prioritization of economic and trade concerns over the welfare of the Chinese people, a strategy typically attributed to the Republican Party. At the same time, the political leadership in Washington

---

*The U.S. is grappling with so many other issues that the social politics of the Chinese government currently have no place on its list of concerns.*

---

is constrained by the enormous foreign trade deficit and a desire for Chinese cooperation regarding matters of international policy, such as limiting Iran's nuclear program.

These economic and political circumstances, which make America somewhat dependent on China's good will, make the question of America's "policing" habits a moot point. The country's political leadership has neither the motivation nor the mettle to challenge China's human rights violations. Gone are the days when a months-long hostage crisis overseas can be ended by a single warning from the White House. The U.S. is grappling with so many other issues that the social politics of the Chinese government currently have no place on its list of concerns.

In fact, the resurgence of human rights as a point of global attention does not derive from any change in equilibrium on the issue — China still offends, America still halfheartedly slaps them on the wrist with the national media — but rather from an increased focus on China itself. Human rights

have merely been dragged into the media limelight by habit and happenstance.

This does not mean that the U.S. should never be concerned with China's human rights policy. America has, on several occasions, infringed on the sovereignty of foreign powers when great injustice has occurred (the plight of those in occupied France during WWII comes to mind). Whether the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are another manifestation of that principle is hotly debated, but will be passed over here.

Should the situation in China progress to a point where the populace is treated with blatant injustice and brutality, then America may have grounds to interfere — the nation's legacy of so-called "policing" in such matters suggests

---

*Should the situation in China progress to a point where the populace is treated with blatant injustice and brutality, then America may have grounds to interfere — the nation's legacy of so-called "policing" in such matters suggests that it would interfere.*

---

that it would interfere when given legitimate cause. But events have not escalated to that point, and America has its own concerns, and so for now China's human rights matters will continue to decorate the headlines of international newspapers instead of the headings of U.S. policy memos.

## by Sabrina McCutchan

---

The Texas State Board of Education has received nation-wide criticism for tentative changes made to its social studies curriculum standards on March 12. Overwhelmingly, the media's tone has been condemnatory and apocalyptic, suggesting that the changes inject conservative ideology into textbooks in a manner that distorts history.

The sheer number of topic-specific complaints makes it impossible to address every argument in the debate. However, an analysis of the most common arguments can render valuable insights into the dynamics of the debate and the nature of the complaints being launched.

First and foremost, there is a very clear logical fallacy underlying critical news reports. They wildly accuse conservative members of the Board of eliminating prominent figures or trends (such as Anne Hutchinson or "American imperialism") from history textbooks.

---

## by Joey Lauer

---

Social conservatism is ingrained in the GOP and is key to its existence and success. Take these three examples:

**Abortion:** Standing up for the right of unborn children is the only natural stance for the Republican platform. They are the ultimate defenders of life. Were Republicans not the party who gave life to slaves? Republicans defend citizens from the oppression of government and strive to make sure they can lead a life full of freedom. To deny support to babies in the womb would be to deny the very foundation of the

# Social Conservatism

## Notes from the Blog

In fact, the Board of Education's role is only to set the minimum requirements for curriculum; in other words, they articulate what *must* be taught, not what *can* be taught. The standards the board has proposed do not *prohibit* the inclusion of any information, they simply change what qualifies as a minimal social studies education.

In a similar vein, the media has interpreted the absence of topics such as César Chávez or hip-hop music as a ruling by conservative board members that they are unimportant. That is inaccurate. The board is simply saying that topics like hip-hop music are not *as* important as other trends. Teachers have only a limited time in the classroom. They cannot teach everything; some prioritization must occur. Not all useful information can be considered mandatory on the state level.

The debate, then, boils down to disagreement about which topics should take priority. It is the opinion of this author that the decisions made by the Texas Board of Education were reasonable, given that the goal of American history

classes is to study American history. As an example, a requirement to study the second amendment was introduced while a requirement to cite contemporary examples of institutionalized racism in America was struck. Racism is a very real part of this nation's history, but the Constitution is our founding document, so it is reasonable to prioritize study of the Constitution over a social trend.

Take as another example a requirement to discuss the Black Panthers alongside the movement led by Martin Luther King, Jr. With respect to other events in American history, emphasis is placed upon "telling both sides of the story" – when students learn about the nation's founding they also learn about the damage it caused to Native American society. Why, then, is it unreasonable to teach about a less savory (but no less important) side of the Civil Rights Movement?

Nonetheless, numerous *New York Times* articles allege that the amendments emphasize conservative ideals by injecting small-government and pro-capitalism philosophy. The *Times* cites

a requirement that publishers "describe the effects of increasing government regulation and taxation on economic development and business planning." But increased government regulation *does* affect the economy (anybody who has taken an introductory economics class can attest to that), and the requirement does not say publishers have to discuss *negative* effects. There is an appalling double-standard at play here. If requiring students to learn about affirmative action and welfare philosophy isn't "injecting liberal ideology" into textbooks, then a discussion of basic economic impacts of government action does not constitute "injecting conservative ideology."

Thus, the sense of liberal "political correctness" driving the opposition to the amendments has misrepresented the changes made, jumping on them as conservative propaganda. In reality, the Texas State Board of Education's reforms are clearly consistent with the standards for "acceptable" primary education in this country.

party. These fetuses have the right to live and the government should not be able to prevent that.

**Family values:** The Republicans support the strong, time tested, family structure in American life and they should continue to do so. A strong family and marriage decreases government reliance and increases overall prosperity. Much of today's poverty (and the huge welfare spending) results from out-of-wedlock births and divorced parents.

The traditional family system has been the key to success in America and if Republicans are true to their roots, they will not stand idle as our families

slowly degrade. And this goes for "gay marriage" as well. Gay families and homosexual partners who attempt to adopt children are attempt to destroy traditional family structures which have been the backbone of our society. Republicans cannot support this movement.

**Rights from a creator:** Many conservatives know that their rights do not come from the government, they come from a creator. An entity outside of the government. They hold that government is only there to protect these rights. They have ultimate respect for a small government. They don't rely on government for their lives, they rely on

God.

Republicans are the party of freedom and small government — more personal control and responsibility. These two philosophies go hand in hand, and the Republicans should welcome Christians and other religious citizens. Republicans know that we are "one nation, under God."

For these reasons and more, Republicans need to hold social conservatism dearly. It is integral to their political past. It makes them stand out from the other parties and is consistent with core conservatism. Put simply — a Republican party without social conservatism is no Republican party at all.

The Gothic  
Guardian  
at Duke University

a new generation on the right.

For information on joining The Gothic Guardian, advertising opportunities, donations or submissions, please e-mail [amy.li@duke.edu](mailto:amy.li@duke.edu).

Online updates now available at:  
[www.gothicguardian.com](http://www.gothicguardian.com)

**CN**

The Collegiate Network