

1 June 2020

Raleigh, North Carolina

To the former, current, and prospective contributors, advocates, and friends of the Carolina Review, and to the community of the University of North Carolina,

Considering recent events, I speak with an unfortunate confidence when I say that these United States are in the midst of one of the most troubling periods of their history. As we look over our lives upended by a pandemic the likes of which has not been seen in a century, we are no less inundated by a growing series of stresses and usurpations across our society. As I write these words, my hometown of Raleigh, North Carolina is entering one of the first city-wide curfews in its history. Riots convulse the major urban centers, partisanship is at crisis levels, and Academia is failing to produce a rational or even truly educated governing class. The systems of American society built for preserving the healthy transmission of history and heritage, protection of property, and rights of the individual from government tyranny are eroding to an extreme degree. Not only that; divisive legal battles such as those concerning abortion, illegal immigration, and the Second Amendment appear to be increasingly pointless as the moral and cultural divide between the urban and rural electorates of the Union is widening to the point of crisis.

In the Academy, and by product the workplace, media, and political discourse, the stifling nature of social leftism is omnipresent. We have all seen this reality with our own eyes: from the little things like silencing our speech for fear of saying something ‘problematic,’ to significant changes like the rise of racial identity politics and the constant changes of social standards in media. The upcoming presidential election has featured ‘moderate’ left candidates espousing calls for gun confiscation, normalization of child transgenderism, packing the Supreme Court, abolishing the electoral college, providing free tax-funded health care *en masse* to illegal migrants, among other things. If these things strike you as something out of the Twilight Zone, you are not alone.

I do not paint these concerning pictures without hesitation. Yet I believe that I speak for the conscience of our country when I say that, in circumstances such as these, the only true sin we can commit is that of inaction. So long as conservatives, libertarians, traditionalists, and appreciators of history remain meek and silent in our ivory towers, our country will continue this Kafkaesque march into insanity. I do not say these words lightly. I speak for a growing number of concerned onlookers that believe the Union is indeed headed for a severe crisis, if not even civil war, as a result of the serious stresses on our society. The future of our country is seemingly at a crossroads.

At UNC, a top university in the United States and the world, we are fortunate to have had our main student newspaper often considered one of the greatest in America. Yet anyone that has read *The Daily Tar Heel* in recent years knows the feeling of being utterly baffled at the leftist

dominance of discourse at that publication. Take this not from us self-described conservatives, but from people like the Pulitzer Prize-winning former DTH editor Edwin Yoder. In a letter to the editor decrying the partisanship of the *Tar Heel*, Yoder called for such radical ideas as “Freedom of speech in any setting [...] open, as one jurist memorably said, even to “freedom for the thought we hate.” And lamented that “[*The Daily Tar Heel*] masthead boasts ‘125 years of editorial freedom,’ but you [The DTH] hint at a standard that narrows freedom if and when we dislike or deplore its origins and content.”

(<https://www.dailytarheel.com/article/2017/11/letters-2-111317>)

Despite a long and generally amicable relationship between our two publications in which writers would frequently submit to both, *The Daily Tar Heel* enacted a policy around the 2016 election prohibiting their contributors from writing at other publications, notably the *Carolina Review*. This is not to mention the numerous other embarrassments that have hurt the healthy political discourse on campus, like the *Tar Heel*'s affinity for profanity when discussing Donald Trump, or their (later rescinded) publication of unfounded rape accusations.

This brings me to the subject of this letter. While we sincerely hope that *The Daily Tar Heel*'s leadership will end their monopolistic policy so we can resume our good academic sportsmanship, we are operating with the worst-case scenarios in mind. The *Carolina Review* is an independent publication with a long and successful history. Several of our editions have been of a quality worthy of comparison to top national publications from both their aesthetic and prosaic beauty, to their intellectual content. Yet in this past academic year of 2019-2020, the Review only published a *single* edition. Our presence not only nationally but on UNC campus is at an all-time-low. It seems that despite our efforts the *Review* has suffered from a chronic illness that cyclically manifests in years of recession, followed by a rebuilding, followed again by diminished significance.

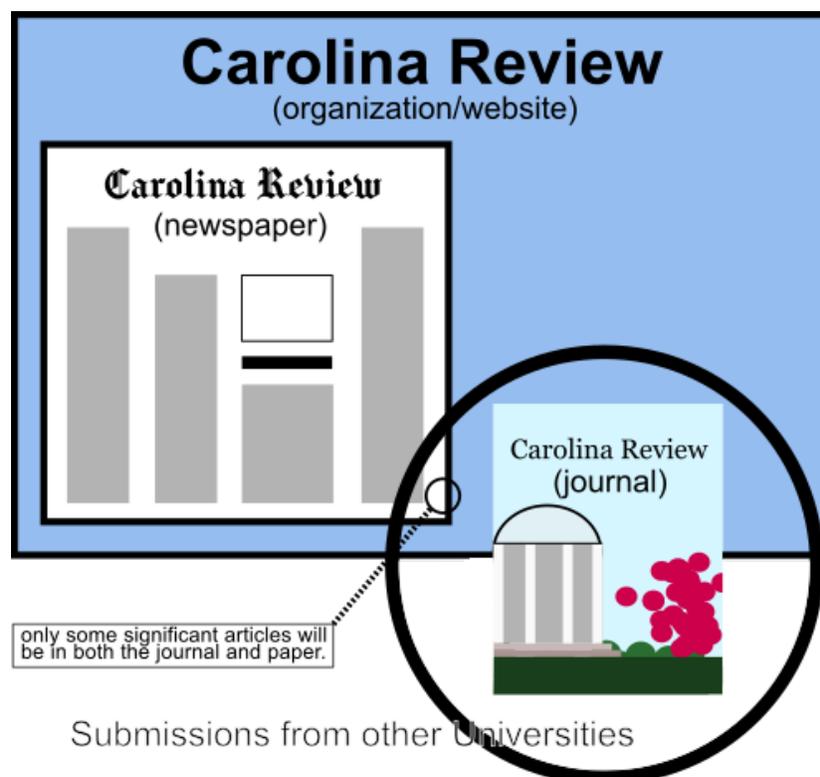
At a university that continues to produce so many within the country's governing class, this is unacceptable. How can we continue our silence when it directly leads to the most extremist left thought maintaining a grip on Academia, and then by proxy, the people that govern our country? Like our country, the *Carolina Review* is indeed confronted with a crossroads. But rather than lament the travails of ending sunken significance, we must take them as a chance for renaissance. This considered, we will be making significant changes to the publication out of necessity.

First, the *Carolina Review* will reorganize as a student newspaper. Our 'journal' will become a sub-entity. We will work to eventually publish a regular newsprint paper like our friends at *The Dartmouth Review*, with a once-weekly or once-every-two-week print as our more direct goal for this year. Should this prove initially unreasonable, we will at a *minimum* publish the journal monthly.

Second, why will we continue the journal at all? In order to maintain our standing as a respectable publication, we need room for lengthier, more academic analyses of politics, history, law, and society. The journal (magazine) will thus focus exclusively on publishing articles of this

type. To further intercollegiate discourse, the journal will also accept cross-posts and submissions from our sister publications (*Cornell Review*, *Michigan Review*, *The Dartmouth Review*, etc.), occasionally feature our older articles, and request submissions from other universities. Our journal will be comparable to a sort of combination of journals like *Reason*, the *Yale Historical Review* (which takes submissions of papers from any university), and the *Harvard Law Review*.

Third, our website. In order to be a respectable publication, we need to look like one. We will be seeking to migrate our online presence to a host like SN Works or MH Themes, common among top collegiate newspapers, unless we find a suitable aesthetic makeover feasible within the confines of Wordpress.



This graphic visually explains how we will be restructuring our publication. The website will continue to host almost all content, however, we will consider offering a subscription to our more academically dense content in the journal. The newspaper will be published in its entirety both online and in print. By five years from now, we hope to have accomplished relative parity with *The Daily Tar Heel*. We should have our own newsboxes distributing free papers, and be considered a significant publication on campus for the expression of public viewpoint. I know this is a bold goal, but I am confident we can achieve it. There have been newspapers at UNC before made specifically to offer a contrary worldview to the *Tar Heel*; the *White and Blue* was published by the Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies, for example. We can at the very least

build our foundations in the meantime by attracting our alumni with an email subscription and possible guest submissions, expanding our advertising presence, publishing more, and acquiring a significant membership increase.

The latter leads me to the final and most important point. To my understanding, the reason why other publications have not suffered the institutional amnesia and constant ‘sine wave’ of significance we have is because they have always maintained significant membership such that people independently seek their employment. However, at our current state of low membership this is an impossible expectation for the near future. Thus we will need to dramatically increase our efforts to expand membership. *We can't have a publication without writers.* Accordingly, we are announcing that we are accepting applications for writer positions from students that want their voices heard on campus. Kindly send to spiscit@live.unc.edu.

Our lives are turned upside-down right now, first with Coronavirus and now with the riots upending every major urban center in the country. But times like these are when our publication should be actively adding to the chorus of debate, not languishing in silence and insignificance. Fundamentally, we should not have to compare ourselves to other top national publications; we should *be* a top national publication. In the next academic year we will hit the ground running. So with the hope of restoring our position in the ‘war of ideas,’ healing the broken body politic of our university, and advancing the *Carolina Review* to a position of greater respect and significance than ever, I emphatically say:

Lux Libertas!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bryson Piscitelli". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, decorative flourish at the end of the name.

Bryson Piscitelli
Editor-in-Chief
Carolina Review