

The Daily Tar Heel

78 Years of Editorial Freedom



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Harry Bryan Managing Editor
Bill Miller News Editor
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John Agar

Agar's Endorsement Goes To Gooding

Criticism of this year's Tar Heel has run thick, and today should end it. Much of the anger which has been directed against the paper has been well-merited—even welcomed. What disturbs me is that so many people, editorial candidates in particular, have been unable or unwilling to recognize just what the source of the trouble was.

The result is that the race for editorship has been politics-as-usual: vague, heated criticism, followed by even less well-defined "total" commitments to straighten things out. The candidates' main endeavor has been to manufacture slogans—and then, of course, to find an issue to justify the slogan. Does "A Return to Responsible Journalism" sound smart? Good—then, let's criticize the DTH for "irresponsibility." So it goes.

Ken Ripley put it best: "So much is exaggerated, suppressed, or ignored. Personality becomes a key factor, slogans and catchwords plus nice, empty promises rule the field. Candidates latch onto any 'experience' or 'qualifications' they can print."

Personality is indeed a key factor. Amiable, vacuous smile is always first-rate poster material. A glaze of slickness, a way with abstract nouns that have lost their referents, a look of intense thoughtfulness, followed by a sentence which is entirely grammatical and entirely meaningless—these too often are a candidate's main recommendations.

What it is, of course, is the personality that hides personality, the charm that takes the place of character. If "personality" is anything more than an actor's gesticulations, then the main issue in this campaign has been impersonality.

The reason is not far to seek. This year's Tar Heel has been, on the whole, a good paper—don't stop reading. Its editorial page has been quite as literate, and a good deal more broad-ranging, than anything you are likely to find on the newsstands. Its sports and news coverage has generally been good, and sometimes excellent.

But the fact that so many people feel deeply that something is wrong with the paper is ample evidence that something is. Not the failure to cover such-and-such a story, or missing an item in the Campus Calendar. These have always been criticisms, and will continue to be, as long as the Tar Heel is staffed by students, forced by its printer to work on an unrealistic deadline, and, ultimately, typed and laid out by people who are not in sympathy with the paper.

Each of these problems has its own validity—but each has been magnified and distorted by one overriding gripe: Todd Cohen.

I think that if someone studies the Tar Heel ten years from now, he'll probably

Jim Eldridge

Jubilee: Can It Be 'For Everyone?'

NOTE: The following has borrowed greatly from the thoughts of a philosopher-king I know, who helped me formulate my thoughts on this subject (though they're still not concrete). To him, I am indebted, and although he shall remain anonymous (as all modern philosopher-kings should), I wish to thank him. Thanks, P.K.

The lineup for this year's UNC Rites of Spring—that event (?) called "Jubilee"—was announced quite early this year. Perhaps to give all the "straights" time to get good reservations for the beach that weekend. Indeed, the DTH article began with a reference to "Jubilee freaks"; it's no longer a "something for everybody." Not that it ever was, or ever could be.

But it is obvious that the more hip kids have taken control of the Union Entertainment Committee, and while this is not necessarily a bad thing (from my viewpoint), it is another indication of the growing rift between the straight and non-straight on this divided campus: an often stereotyped Southern school trying to be cool, if it can only figure out what "cool" is and then obtain it with a degree of moderation.

If we go back a few years and follow the development of Jubilee (with a little subjective labelling), we can notice that this trend toward coolness is not really radical but still obviously amateurish.

1967: Petula Clark, The Association, The Temptations—pop & soul
1968: Rufus & Carla Thomas, Neil Diamond, Nancy Wilson, Spanky & Our Gang—soul, folk-rock, straight nightclub

The Daily Tar Heel is published by the University of North Carolina Student Publication's Board, daily except Monday, examination periods and vacations and during summer periods.

Offices are at the Student Union Bldg., Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514. Telephone numbers: editorial, sports, news-933-1011; business, circulation, advertising-933-1163. Address: Carolina Union, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514.

Second class postage paid at U.S. Post Office in Chapel Hill, N.C.

conclude that Cohen's editorship was unsuccessful—we know that now, from the reaction it has elicited—but by no means undistinguished.

This year's Tar Heel, say what you will, has always been first in advocating students' and individuals' rights, in supporting the underdog, in refusing to be coerced into insignificance or a panty-raid mentality. It has never shied away from its role as spokesman of the student body. It has never for a moment blinded itself to the fact that being a young person, in this country, in this time, is serious business indeed; and that the era of raccoon coats and rah-rah is over and done with.

Yet now the Tar Heel is stigmatized with "irresponsibility," and students antipathy towards the paper, if the candidates have estimated it properly, is enormous. The reason, as far as I can assign a reason for it, is Todd Cohen's insularity—and, to a lesser extent, that of the entire editorial page.

Cohen is an editor capable of writing five perfectly reasonable editorials and then following them with one which knocks half the student body out of their chair—and for no good reason. It's a matter of not being aware of what the general standard of taste and judgment is—not speaking the lingo of your readership. The result is that criticism has centered on Todd Cohen's personality.

So, for this campaign, most of the candidates have opted for smiling impersonality. They reason, most people are tired of being jarred by the Tar Heel; they're looking, basically, for mediocrity:

give 'em what they want.

This is not, at any rate, what I want. The commitment of this year's Tar Heel is worth preserving, and improving. This does not mean that the candidate I support must agree with me on every issue, or on any issue—only that he must be keenly and vigorously aware of what it means to be alive today, in America, 1970.

By the same token, I want to see the Tar Heel improved technically—the next editor must be experienced.

Most important, the next editor must be a man of broad sympathy and ability to communicate with people whose convictions differ from his own. He must be not merely a critic of what goes on—he must be part of it. He must be able to speak the language of this campus and this society—moderately, with sweet reasonableness, but always with conviction.

For these reasons, I'm following Ken Ripley—whom I admire, though generally we disagree—in endorsing Tom Gooding for editorship.

Ripley argued long and well on behalf of Gooding's candidacy in last Wednesday's Tar Heel, so I don't feel I have to trot out every conceivable argument. But some of Gooding's qualifications, which I think are of utmost importance, are these:

—He is experienced. I'm not talking about experience as a stringer or cub reporter a la Jimmy Oleser—usually with either a hick paper or one's father's. Gooding has served on the Tar Heel as staff writer, associate editor, managing

editor, and—on the Summer Tar Heel—chief editor. Also, he has served with a consistency which few of the candidates can boast of. He knows the business.

—Gooding is intelligent. As a Morehead Scholar, with a major in journalism, Gooding will bring a critical intelligence to the Tar Heel which few or none of the other candidates can match.

—Most important, Gooding is dedicated, and he is the only candidate who combines conviction with an ability to communicate sympathetically with other points of view. Gooding will supply the idealism the Tar Heel needs to be effective, without at the same time succumbing to bias.

So many of the candidates have addressed themselves to this issue of fairness—with resulting commitments to be, in effect, fair, weak editors. Whether they mean to be that or not, I don't know; but clearly they have been unable to formulate the problem for themselves. Gooding offers the student body a chance to have a fair-minded, strong human being running the Tar Heel. It is a chance which should not be missed.

Ken Ripley, as I say, has already endorsed Tom. This itself is significant, only because Ken and I are people of diverse opinion and commitment, but because Ripley's moral aim is generally on target.

He writes: Tom "is the only candidate I can say who has consistently cared more for the paper than himself."

There are few praises higher than that.



Bobby Nowell For Editor

Today you vote for the editor of the Daily Tar Heel. Your vote is important because it will help determine what the Tar Heel is going to be like for the next year.

The Tar Heel is important to this campus for a number of reasons. First, it provides the students, as well as the administration, faculty, non-academic workers, and townspeople, with the news of what is happening on campus. Second, it serves as an expression of student opinion in a University where student opinion has few other means of expression.

The newspaper is an important part of this community because it is the only real student newspaper. It is supported by student fees and it is read by just about everyone on campus.

Because of the major role which the newspaper plays on campus, and the functions which it fulfills, it is important that the editor elected by students be the best possible one. The editor is going to have to be someone who not only has the journalistic credentials to be editor, but also the credentials as a human being concerned with the world in which he lives.

Of the eight candidates for the editorship of this newspaper, only one candidate has both sets of credentials.

Bobby Nowell is not only an accomplished journalist with the talent, experience, and knowledge to be an exceptional editor; he also has a perception of the world and its problems, and a willingness to be honest about that world, one of which attributes make him the one candidate to vote for.

The other candidates all lack a certain kind of credibility. Douglas

Campbell is Ph.D. candidate in mathematics, which makes us wonder how he would have time to be editor of the Tar Heel. Bryan Cumming thinks the Tar Heel should be "fun" to read, as if the reality of the world were not the kind of thing to have to read about. Steve Enfield and Dennis Benfield have worked for the Tar Heel, and neither demonstrated enough of a knowledge of either the world or the workings of a newsroom to show cause why he would make a good editor. Andy Schorr and Rusty Carter have virtually no newspaper experience except for Carter's sports work. And Tom Gooding, who has worked for the Tar Heel, has not really demonstrated a willingness to speak up on the issues. When he could have used his position on the newspaper to make his ideas known, he chose to remain silent within his anonymity.

Bobby Nowell does not have any of those failings. He has a wealth of journalistic experience, a penetrating ability to write, as well as a willingness to say what he feels, regardless of how distasteful his truth might be to some readers.

That is the kind of editor the Tar Heel needs. The University and the world are a mess today. Journalists in general have a bad name. What we do not need is an editor of the Tar Heel who is incompetent, or ambivalent, or unwilling to tell the truth because it might hurt someone's feelings.

We need an editor who can see the world, and who is not afraid to tell us what he sees.

We endorse Bobby Nowell for editor of the Daily Tar Heel.

Vote NO; Keep The DTH

If you vote YES on the Tar Heel referendum today, you are voting to discontinue the Tar Heel. If you vote NO, you are voting to keep it.

The Tar Heel is the campus newspaper. It provides a service for the students which the administration happens to feel is worth requiring the students to pay for.

The service is two-fold. First, the newspaper is the only source of campus news. Without it, there would be no practical way of knowing what the free-flick was, or who was speaking on campus, etc. The newspaper also provides an editorial "watchdog" of the administration for the students. Without the Tar Heel, there would be no such watching.

The argument has been raised that the Tar Heel is too radical. But the editor of the newspaper is elected, so the students have a chance each spring to determine what the political philosophy of the newspaper will be.

The argument against the Tar Heel's radicalism is not so much against the Tar Heel's being political as against the Tar Heel's being radical. The implication there is that the newspaper would be okay if it was only conservative. But that is no argument for doing away with the Tar Heel. If the Free Press committee wants a conservative Tar Heel, why doesn't it merely run a conservative candidate?

The students need the Tar Heel. It tells them what is happening (how else could the campus have been so well informed of what the Free Press group was doing rather than through the Tar Heel?) and it tries to champion student rights.

Without the Tar Heel, students would have to operate in the dark. There would be no campus news, and there would be no voice for and of the students.

Vote NO on the referendum today. Keep the Daily Tar Heel. You need it more than not.

The Enfield-Benfield Goof

Steve Enfield and Dennis Benfield have been charged by a number of students of falsely using names on an endorsement sheet. The co-candidates for the editorship of the Tar Heel have admitted they were morally wrong in using the names, and have decided to remain in the race for the editorship.

A number of individuals have said they will contest the elections today because of the Enfield-Benfield leaflet. That is unfortunate. It is unfortunate that all the work that went into this election might in some way have

been for naught. The error has been clarified to our satisfaction. Enfield and Benfield have apologized and withdrawn all names that were on the endorsement sheet.

If anyone is going to be hurt by this episode, it is going to be Enfield and Benfield. The students have been informed through the Tar Heel of the errors in the endorsement sheet, and it seems there would be little need in contesting the election unless it were for some purely political reason.