

The Daily Tar Heel

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Harry Bryan, Editor
Tuesday, October 26, 1971

It's all a matter of discrimination

When the North Carolina General Assembly convenes in a special session today, it will begin consideration of an issue crucial to the state—the restructuring of higher education. And by the time the Assembly adjourns, it will have decided once and for all what is to be done, and the matter will be closed.

However, there is much doubt as to whether legislators will consider other bills that are especially crucial to North Carolina's voters—the primary absentee ballot bill and another that would change the date of the primary from Tuesday to Saturday.

Though a well-organized campaign for consideration of the two bills is now in progress, it appears unlikely that the Assembly will take action on either of the two.

And if the Assembly does not act, a large number of students and low income blacks and whites will

be discriminated against in the most important primary in North Carolina in the past four years.

As the law now stands, the primary will be held on May 2, a Tuesday, and persons in low income jobs may run into problems getting off from work to vote. Previous elections were held on Saturdays, but thanks to the "genius" of the Assembly, that law was changed this summer.

Secondly, without the use of the absentee ballot, many students in North Carolina colleges will be kept from voting no matter what day the election takes place.

If it is on a Tuesday, many students throughout the state will be taking exams. If it falls on a Saturday, most will be studying for those exams. In either case, if a student has registered in his home town, he will be forced to either not vote or risk failing his exams.

Granted, many students have registered in the towns in which they attend college, and will be able to vote in the primary, but if they return home during break for any lengthy period, they will not be able to vote in the runoff which will probably take place, considering the number of persons who may be running for various positions.

Certainly North Carolina's legislators must realize this, but they appear unwilling to do anything about it. Either they are ignorant of the issues at hand, or they really don't want students to vote, despite what they say about students working through the proverbial system rather than around it.

If they care about the poor, they will move the date of the primary up to Saturday. And if they care about students, they will okay the absentee ballot bill.

If they really care about the democratic process being available to a maximum number of people, the two bills will be considered, and they will pass.

Keith Weatherly

Soap operas good for a laugh

Television programming has come a long way in the twenty-odd years of its existence. We have been subjected to everything from fads in science fiction stories, detective thrillers, to a barrage of Westerns, but nothing will ever top the phenomenon of the good ole All-American soap opera. Those shows have to be seen to be believed. Every afternoon from about one to four o'clock there is a continuous series of soap. I can never be sure of exactly which one I am watching, they are all practically the same. Stirring names such as "The Edge of Night," "All My Children" and "Search for Tomorrow" call countless millions of housewives to the tube every weekday afternoon to help shoulder the problem laden lives of the soap opera characters.

I have actually witnessed (to my complete boredom) a two hour discussion by female soap fans of how such-and-such person on such-and-such program can solve his problems and regain happiness. These storybook characters are no longer fictitious to the ardent fan—they are real people living real lives in places such as Monticello and Pine Valley.

Each day new obstacles are encountered to bring heartbreak and grief into the lives of these imaginary people and their imaginative viewers. Somehow nothing ever goes right for the soap people; they are forever engaged in a crisis that not only affects their own personal lives, but the lives of every busybody in the entire town.

Soap operas are not totally worthless unless you take them seriously. They are good for laughs. The acting is somewhat less than outstanding and the scripts are even worse. The actors on these programs, if they work hard and rise to the head of the class, might get the chance to be promoted into the classic world of television commercials. How many times have I been watching television when some female will shout excitedly that the girl holding the dog

food can or deodorant spray used to play on "Secret Storm" or some other equally wonderful soap show? Old soap stars never die, they just fade away.

I actually have two not so very good reasons why I subject my intellect to the humiliation of afternoon soap operas: (1) I have a fanatic soap fan for a wife and, (2) nothing else is on the tube during these hours. I guess I could lock my wife in the closet and not watch anything, but these shows have a certain amount of hypnotism. I cannot believe that they are as bad as they are. Take a current thrilling series of events on "Edge of Night", for example. The son of a prominent New England family is found by his mother to

be a maniacal killer so she sends him away for a year where he lives as a hippie and continues his murderous existence. When the heat is getting too hot after he tries to do away with a good friend of the police chief, he resumes his former identity after a haircut and shave. Now, since his brother was recently elected to the U.S. Senate, he too aspires to a political career with his mother trying desperately to hide his past.

This suspenseful action took several months to develop. A half decent murder trial usually takes approximately four months to decide the guilt or innocence of the accused, while out in T.V. land the

ladies are biting their fingernails.

Soap operas are a strange phenomenon. Millions of women, most already with more problems than they can handle, tune in each day to yet more problems of their favorite fairy-tale characters. These problems are worried over the same as their own. It is a wonder that more housewives do not sustain ulcers or at least high blood pressure for their efforts.

I hope that one bright day somebody on one of these programs will solve all of his or her problems and live happily ever after. That day will signal the demise of the soap opera, but I doubt seriously it will ever happen.

Ken Ripley

Pressure cooking grades

There are some things, I am assured, that come out well in a pressure cooker. But put people under too much pressure and they explode.

It seems obvious, but after three years in this place I'm beginning to wonder what we really mean when we write home, "I'm having a blast at college."

Pressure is a funny thing, a delicate combination of tension and force that either pushes us to achievement or destruction. Artists and journalists know the value of "creative tension," that kind of pressure under which we often do our best work. Pressure often stimulates us to think fast as well as face a deadline or the urgency of a problem.

Athletes know the value of putting pressure on an opposing team, forcing them to make mistakes, and businessmen often give bonuses to the "high-pressure"

salesmen who can pick our pockets clean before we leave the store.

But the deadline eventually comes, and the games end. The pressure lets up. The pressure cooker of a college education, however, doesn't know when to quit.

And I doubt if it's going to. Large universities don't grind out scholars without pressure. Education is achievement-oriented, and woe-betide the student who doesn't complete the papers, who blows the mid-terms, who flunks the finals. When we've got a heavy class load, someone is going to get pressured.

Supposedly, this pressure comes under "creative tension," and holidays served to release it. But when the work piles up without ceasing, leaking over into holidays, creativity is stifled in the rush "to get it done," and the pressure finds no escape.

And it builds. We begin to scramble for the good grade, and anything less drives us to self-doubt and frustration. We break down the nerves and body in an ever-increasing struggle to keep up. Time becomes our enemy, and every free moment our relief. We try to learn, but we memorize and cram and absorb.

Sooner or later, we explode. We can completely break down, drop out, use drugs, or tear the dorm apart—anything to escape the pressure.

But whatever we do, there's something wrong. We can talk about how good life at college is, but we can't enjoy it. College isn't fun, free, or easy. We can't relax and enjoy our "womb-like" existence.

If we want to "get educated," we can't escape the pressure. But we can find a safety valve that won't destroy us if we could only ease the pressure we put on ourselves.

The quickest way to send us up the wall is to start seeking the magic "A." We've got it drilled into us that the only well-educated man is he who heads his class, makes Phi Beta Kappa and the Dean's List, graduates "cum laude."

Grades are important, to be sure, since they represent the "achievement" demanded of us. But they are not life or death. Grades may get us into graduate school or land us a good job, but they don't make us better people and they don't necessarily mean we're "well-educated."

The way I understand it, education comes with learning. What would happen, I wonder, if we stopped driving for the grade and began trying to learn because we want to—if we could forget the grade, just for a minute, and get absorbed in acquiring some knowledge. Chances are, the grades would reflect that interest, and the pressure would decrease. A "C" is no curse if that's all the subject concerns us.

And if we're going to escape the pressure, we've got to take time.

Time to go out and enjoy ourselves when we want to.

Time to go outside, sit on the grass, and think what we like.

Time to read the books that interest us, meet the people who surround us, do the things we care about doing.

Time to play—and not to explode.

The Daily Tar Heel

78 Years of Editorial Freedom

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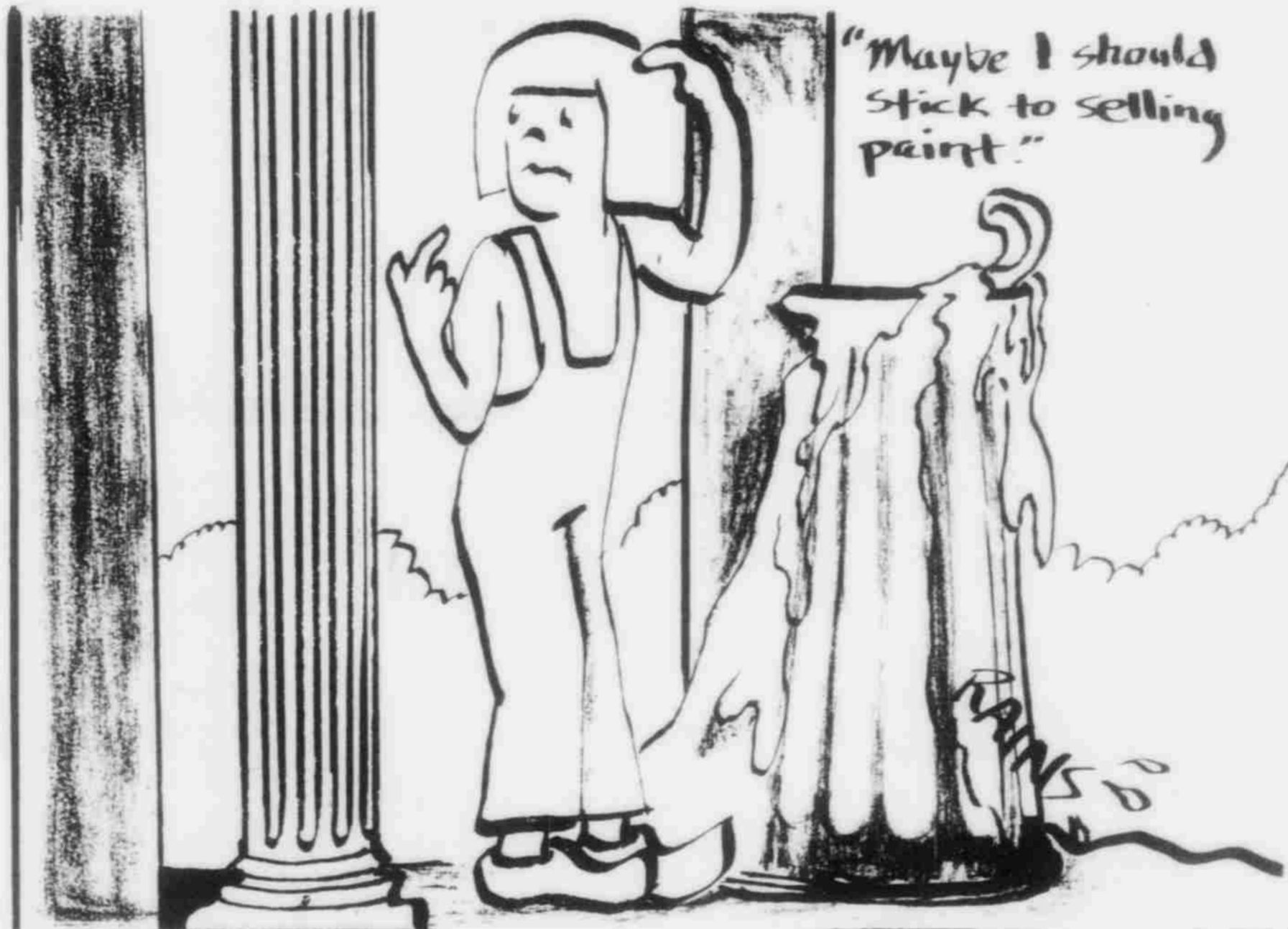
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Letters to the editor

The Office of Residence Life deserves credit

To the editor:
Do students actually want to work with administrators in making effective policy changes? My question is aimed specifically at three of our residence hall problems this year: required residency electrical appliances and room rent increases. Two organizations hit the headlines weekly about these problems: The Residence College Federation (the students) and the Office of Residence Life (the administration).

The question?—Who does the work; who gets the "credit"?
Last year a very profitable group of students and administrators—the Junior Transfer Forum—was organized to recommend change in the required residency rule. The work was shared by all, and the work was done well. But that was last year. This year we read in

statements in the Tar Heel by the RCF and by Steve Saunders demands to end the required residency. These are only statements, though. Statements serve a purpose—to gain people's attention. But statement upon resolution upon demand does not solve the question of required residency.

Recommendations for changing the residency policy are made from Bob Kepner, director of the Department of Residence Life, to the Dean of Student Affairs. No changes that I am familiar with have ever been recommended without the approval of the Committee of University Residence Life (CURL), a student-faculty board, chaired by Mr. Kepner.

We all remember that the required residency for sophomores and junior

transfers was lifted last spring for the academic year only. For the next three weeks, Bob Kepner will again work with CURL to reevaluate this policy. He will then recommend to the Dean of Student Affairs the new policy. The recommendation will actually come from a seven-student, seven-faculty member committee. Therefore, the decision can rest on the recommendations of students studying all sides of the question. This seems to me the most effective method of solving this problem—the chance for RCF members to stop releasing statements and start working through channels for concrete decisions. But how many of the seven students showed up at the first of three CURL meetings on this issue? Four.

The two other problems, electrical appliances and room rent increases, show

the most obvious distinction between students' interests and those of the Administration. Last Thursday, Bob Kepner released to the Tar Heel the proposed room rent increases for the dorms next year. Although an increase in rent is about the most unpopular move the Office of Residence could make, it was a necessary, much needed move. Mr. Kepner assumed the responsibility of releasing this unfavorable statement, but not before CURL and the Residence College Federation had given their full consent to the increase. But Steve Saunders, in his article in the Tar Heel Friday stated that the RCF had not made its decision yet. Why?

The exact same steps were taken in releasing the policy which now allows refrigerators in all dorms and an increase in the acceptable appliances used in the dorms. The Office of Residence Life was completely responsible for the design of this new policy. Kepner presented the policy to CURL and RCF. Both gave complete consent to the proposal, one which is of great benefit to the students. But who gets the privilege of releasing the new policy to the Tar Heel? The Residence College Federation. Friday morning's DTH headlines read, "RCF Asks New Electrical Policy in Dorms." The article made it sound as though the work was done by RCF. "The proposed policy has been sent to Robert Kepner, director of Residence Life, for final approval," read one paragraph. This was in the same article which indicated RCF had made no decision on rent increases.

Who is the RCF trying to fool? Who is actually doing more for the students? On these three issues, I am inclined to believe the Office of Residence Life is more sincere in their efforts to change policy for the betterment of residence hall living

than the Residence College Federation is.
Robert Wilson
Adviser
Residence Life

Vietnam reality not U.S. policy

To the editor:
Mr. Keith Weatherly's article against granting amnesties to those who chose not to participate in the Vietnam undeclared war (October 19) warrants a reply based on personal experience.

I spent a year in Vietnam during the height of the war as a liaison officer between command and logistical headquarters and combat units. I went over as a conservative American, sharing many of Mr. Weatherly's views.

While there I saw indiscriminate killing of innocent civilians and bombing and razing of villages which contained only women and children in order to "pacify" them. I saw American troops display disdain and racism towards the Vietnamese people and their way of life—such as soldiers in the back of trucks who made a game of throwing things at and swatting passing Vietnamese, and such as a truck driver who ran over and killed a girl on a bicycle because she wasn't quick enough to get out of his way. I saw our government supporting corruption and brutality and supporting political repression during Thieu's last election campaign, as long as they served our "cause". I met Vietnamese nationalists who resented the American presence and influence in their internal affairs.

I could not reconcile what I saw going

on in Vietnam with the stated moral position of our country ("freedom and democracy" and "self-determination of the Vietnamese people"). When I came back to the States after that experience I was even more shocked to see that the freedom, democracy, self-determination and other moral values we claimed in our involvement in Vietnamese internal affairs was being denied to some of our own citizens right here in America (Blacks, Indians, Chicanos, poor, etc.).

I was a career Army officer (Captain) and a conservative American. But if I had known what I know now I would have gone to Canada instead of Vietnam, because I cannot justify our presence there.

Mr. Weatherly is entitled to his views. But I feel that he is not in a position to judge the moral decisions of those who chose not to participate in the undeclared war in Vietnam. In a way it's sad, rather than another shock, to know that our country has no place for people with moral views that are different than the "public" policy.

Ken Barger

Text of Sitterson statement

To the editor:
On October 21, I released the attached statement only parts of which appeared in The Daily Tar Heel. I would appreciate it if you would print it in full, at least in the Editor's column.

The University of North Carolina has a long and respected tradition in intercollegiate athletics. We have maintained a sound intercollegiate program of which we are justifiably proud, now under the leadership of an able and dedicated athletic director and coaching staff. This does not mean, of course, that we, or any other institution, have solved all the problems of intercollegiate athletics to our full

satisfaction, and we continue to seek opportunities for improvement.

As recommended in the Faculty Athletic Committee report of October 8 and suggested by Faculty Council discussions and student suggestions, we have already taken action in several areas: (1) assured the presence of a physician at all football practices (so far as I know, this goes beyond normally accepted policies at other colleges); (2) directed that special clinics be held for coaches in basic conditioning and training factors to be conducted by medical personnel; (3) initiated a study of the desirability of the establishment of a Sports Medicine department to assure the best medical

knowledge and its application in all sports; (4) initiated an inquiry into the best structural relationship between the team trainers and the Student Health Service (this is a fundamental problem in college athletics).

We have begun the study of additional matters including the important area of the relations between student athletes and the student body. I have instructed the Athletic Committee to proceed expeditiously and to draw upon the experience and knowledge of all relevant elements of the University. Reports will be made as these studies are completed and recommendations made.

J. Carlyle Sitterson

The Daily Tar Heel accepts letters to the editor, provided they are typed on a 60-space line and limited to a maximum of 300 words. All letters must be signed and the address and phone number of the writer must be included. The paper reserves the right to edit all letters for libelous statements and good taste. Address letters to Associate Editor, The Daily Tar Heel, in care of the Student Union.