

# Campaign debates—grand spectacle, not issues

By CATHY ROSENTHAL

Tonight, during the televised debates, Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter will try to impress the American people that each is the more enlightened candidate for President. Yet, are the debates the most effective way for Americans to evaluate a candidate for elective office?

The networks covering this phenomenon will endeavor to present a slick package. It will be less a televised debate and more a staged talk show.

Many people are manipulated by the media. We accept television too literally and do not bother to research for ourselves. The debates provide another opportunity to sit and watch instead of challenge and question. We do not view just the candidate but an image on a screen.

Almost 16 years ago on Sept. 26, 1960, Richard Nixon and John Kennedy participated in the first televised debates. Key political observers like Saul Pett maintain that those debates proved to be a turning point in the 1960 Presidential campaign. Nixon's performance damaged his position in the campaign.

Pett is probably right, but times have changed, and neither Jimmy Carter nor Gerald Ford are strangers to television or to

the American people. Jimmy Carter's primary victories astonished a nation. Gerald Ford, the incumbent, has tried to restore legitimacy to the office of the Presidency. His efforts have not gone unnoticed by the American people.

Yet, the campaign remains low-key. Carter has been forced to equivocate on issues such as tax reform, and Ford has been shielded from the rigors of campaigning by simply performing the duties of the

Presidency. The debates are a novelty, but should not be taken too seriously. It is an uncommon media event and should be taken in that context. The American electorate are acquainted with the Carter and Ford style, and both have been accused of fuffiness on the issues. The televised debates will not solve this problem.

Supposedly the debates provide an opportunity for Americans to view their candidates in a pressure situation. Yet, the media coaches and plethora of advisors are well aware of this challenge and will prepare their candidate to insure the slick package.

Garry Wills states that Richard Nixon rationalized his loss in the 1960 debate because of Kennedy's position as the aggressor. Nixon was the incumbent and had to defend the Administration's record. Kennedy could initiate and make a lasting impression. The important factor, however, was the look, sound and presence of the candidate compared to his opponent. Kennedy was calm and secure, while Nixon looked tired and seemed nervous.

Neither Carter nor Ford have a dynamic rhetorical style. Carter is more articulate, but Ford has had practice as an off-the-cuff speaker in his twenty-five years in Congress. Each candidate will be prepared, but the one with more finesse and a more polished image will impress the viewers. The debates provide a forum for the candidates to espouse party

lines in the most deft manner possible. Issues are supposedly the key, but the reaction will be based not on what they say, but how they say it.

This approach reflects the nature of politics today. Americans search for honest and moral leadership. Ford and Carter will try to reinforce this image during the debates. Yet, at the same time they recognize that an emotional appeal to the self-interest of the electorate is most persuasive.

No one remembers the issues of the 1960 debate. Perhaps the American people are not issue-oriented, but they are eager to trust a politician. The man, rather than his issues takes precedence.

Ideally, issues should not be the overriding concern of a politically active electorate. Images will be projected in the debates and accepted or dismissed. But, it is hoped that viewers will look beyond the superficial image and concentrate on issues. Party platforms are necessary but should be read, not heard.

The debates will not provide insights into the candidates' ability to run the country, and the viewer should be wary of final judgments based on their impression of a media event produced and directed by the networks and public relations firms.

Cathy Rosenthal is a senior political science major from Chevy Chase, Md.

## Letters to the editor

### Misinterpretations can easily be avoided

To the editor:  
Twice this week depressing misinterpretations concerning race have been printed in the letters section. I mean the reactions to the cartoon about Howard Lee and the use of the term "colored" to describe persons of mixed race in South Africa. The one showed lack of imagination; the other, ignorance. As much as we bandy about the clichés of race, the mistakes are not surprising, but I should hope people would at least not publicly pontificate upon subjects about which they know nothing. The problems of racism are too serious to take time for the handicaps of thoughtlessness.

I call the mistakes depressing because they could have been avoided simply by thinking. Granted, the point of the cartoon was much too subtle to be understood immediately, but I'm sure that a few minutes spent pondering it would have resulted in an epiphany, in which one's grasp of the cosmic situation would have been enhanced. The proper use of "colored" could have been divined by checking the local encyclopedia. Thus, the space taken up by the two letters could have been used for something else.

That people tend to have opinions about

everything seems to me no license to print them when no attempt has been made to support those opinions. But I suppose that's merely a truism.

Robert Michael Hoskins  
408 E. Rosemary St.

#### Man with a cause

To the editor:

I am regretful that the students here at UNC are so apathetic. To the best of my knowledge the '60s were characterized by cause-oriented people. It seems today that no one has a cause.

Josh McDowell, man with a cause, will be on our campus Sept. 26-28. Kansas State's campus newspaper, *The Collegian*, quoted Josh as saying "My goal in life is to go to Heaven and take as many people with me as I can." He is a man who tells it like it is in a straightforward and dynamic way. I feel Josh has a message to share that can answer many of our problems and fulfill the needs we have as college students today.

I hope that UNC will take advantage of his presence. The impression he leaves on his audience, Christian or not, is basically

entertaining and intellectually stimulating. He is worth the trouble to hear at Carmichael.

Emily Combs  
316 Whitehead

#### Open your minds

To the editor:

I hope that Lillie Love ("Racist label?" *DTH* Letters to the editor, September 21) paid careful attention to the editorial article "Student isolationism" that appeared under her own letter to the editor. Her ignorance of "colored" as a legal term in South Africa belies a bit of the great student isolationism on this campus with regards to international current events.

What's wrong with students here? What do they think, that the outside world won't be real until they're ready to step into it from all the fun and comfortable protection of their college lives?

Come on, people! Open your minds and let a little information in.

Sarah Stewart  
220 Parker

#### Close death loophole

To the editor:

We see by way of Tuesday's paper that we might be allowed to drop a course if we die. Must we still take a posthumous twelve hours (the minimum load), or can we just withdraw from the University for the semester?

Seriously, the Administration should close the death loophole before unscrupulous students try to take unfair advantage. If not, perhaps the *DTH* should consider an obituary column in place of the editorial. Either way, it's obvious that the student body has been screwed again.

By the way, if we die, do we lose our reservations at the tennis courts?

Mike Sykes  
Sid Joyner  
Allen Edwards  
Chip Cox  
Donnie Kay  
Richard Davis  
Phil Atkinson  
Third Floor Manly

## DTH Classifieds

### FOR SALE

Used Furniture, Unfinished Furniture including Desks, Tables, Chairs, Sofas, Bookcases, Lamps. Cheapest mattresses anywhere. TRADING POST, Greensboro Street, Carrboro, 942-2017. FREE DELIVERY with advertisement.

STEREO FOR SALE: Infinity Monitor speakers; Audio Research D-78 amp; Dynaco PAT-5 pre-amp; N/K ST-7 turntable. Sell system or separately. All mint condition. Contact Jim: 477-5911 (Durham).

### FOR RENT

Mobile Home For Rent—CHEAP. Must rent by Oct. 1. 2 bedroom, furnished & A.C. Single \$75, couple \$100 per month. NO PETS. 942-2017, 929-3642.

Dorm room contracts for sale. Connor and Joyner. Only off-campus people can buy. 933-1887.

Roommate Wanted: Old Well Apts. Rent: \$87.50 plus 1/2 utilities. \$58.33 if you bring a friend. 929-1571 between 6 and 9 p.m.

North campus dorm contract for sale. Male and female space available! Call 933-9733.

North campus room for sale immediately with price reduction. Entities you to any available university room contract. Boyles 306 Carr. 933-7914 or University Housing Department.

### HELP WANTED

Male volunteers wanted for psychology experiment involving treatment for men who feel uncomfortable in social situations with women. Call UNC Psychology Dept., 933-5082, 9-5.

### MISCELLANEOUS

ACADEMIC RESEARCH PAPERS. Thousands on file. Send \$1.00 for your 192-page, mail order catalog. 11322 Idaho Ave., no. 206H, Los Angeles, Calif. 90025. (213) 477-4474.

FALL FESTIVAL: Chapel Hill Woman's Club big annual extravaganza—handmade gifts, crafts, food, plants, treasures and lots of intriguing useful rummage—all at appealing prices! Saturday Sept. 25 9 a.m. Binkley Baptist Church.

SPECIAL this week (Mon.-Fri.). Bowl 3 games for \$1 anytime before 2:00 p.m. at the Carolina Union Bowling Lanes!

LOST—Black Wallet in Union. Desperately need ID's. Keep money. Call Jon at 933-4279.

A few vacancies still remain for individuals and teams in our Student Bowling Leagues, on Tues. or Wed. nights, 6-8:45 p.m. Call 3-4131, or come by the Union Bowling Lanes.

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LOST brown wallet Monday. Greenlaw Wilson or Pine Room. Keep the money I need I.D.'s. Send to address inside or leave message 966-1006 for Margaret Patterson.

REGISTER TO VOTE TODAY 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Chapel Hill Municipal Building, North Columbia Street behind fire station. New residents can register now.

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## The Daily Tar Heel

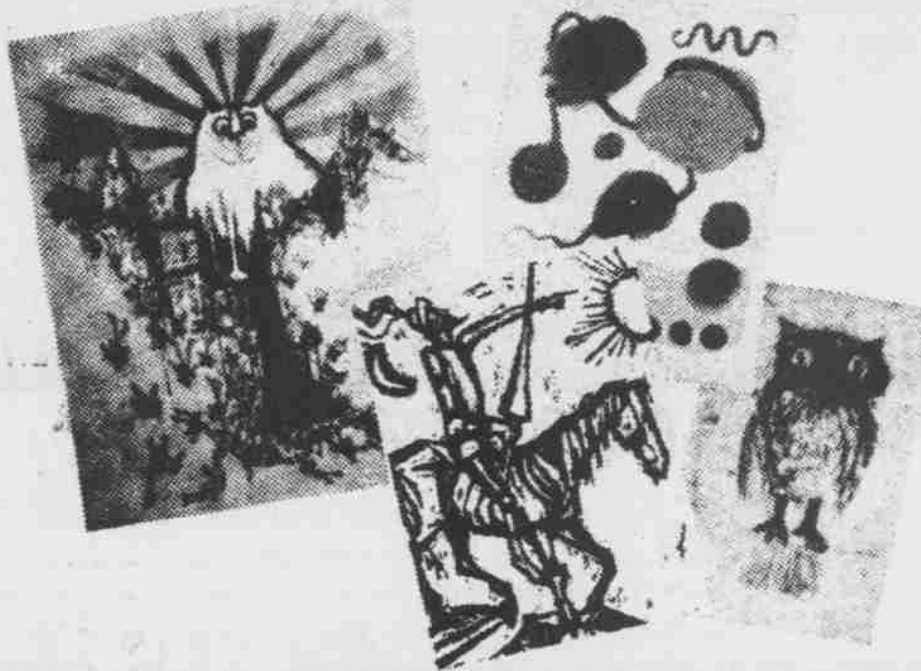
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### THE Daily Crossword

by Alfio Micci

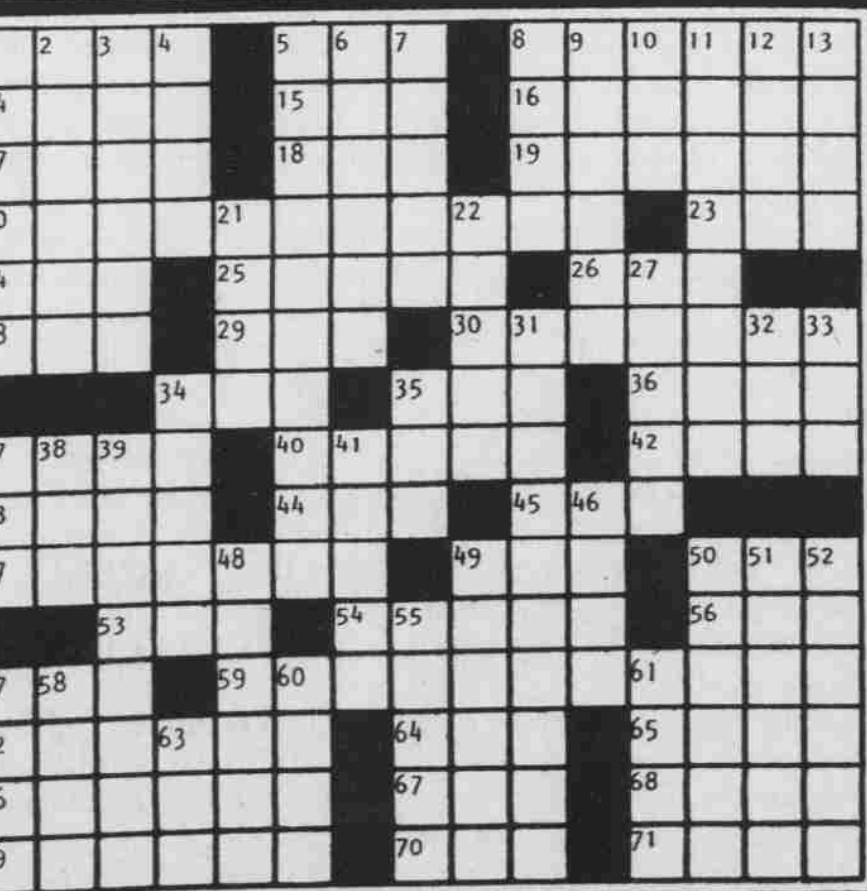
- ACROSS
- 1 Space
  - 5 Enforcement groups: abbr.
  - 8 Less wild
  - 14 Logan or Cinders
  - 15 He: it.
  - 16 Francis or Dahl
  - 17 Arab port
  - 18 The whole
  - 19 Priests
  - 20 Cock
  - 23 Chi. time initials
  - 24 Make lace
  - 25 "— of robins in..."
  - 26 German expletive
  - 28 Saute — Marie
  - 29 Of each hundred: abbr.
  - 30 Platform
  - 34 Cheer
  - 35 Wrath
  - 36 Army division

- 37 Meerschaum
- 40 Venezuela river
- 42 Volcanic mountain
- 43 Cassini
- 44 Religious woman
- 45 Army man: abbr.
- 47 Lease holders
- 49 "— is Sylvia"
- 50 "A rose — rose"
- 53 Diminutive suffix
- 54 Thoughts
- 56 Wager
- 57 OT book: abbr.
- 59 Magic
- 62 "The Glass Menagerie" character
- 64 East: Ger.
- 65 Gaelic
- 66 Last syllable but one
- 67 Small beast
- 68 Jungle
- 69 Cremation
- 70 Cunning
- 71 Stone

- DOWN
- 1 Responds
- 2 Hackneyed
- 3 Medicinal liquid
- 4 Author Thomas
- 5 Church service music
- 6 Sweet
- 7 Met diva
- 8 Garment
- 9 Bib. mount
- 10 Law degree
- 11 Trader
- 12 Chemical endings
- 13 Pause
- 21 Mulberry bark
- 22 Forever, old style
- 27 Mean
- 31 Mariner's song
- 32 Clamor
- 33 Gr. letter
- 34 Majestic
- 35 Fleming
- 37 Poker money
- 38 — de France
- 39 Bent
- 41 Songs
- 46 Mail
- 48 Thread's companion
- 49 "Pop goes the —"
- 50 Spanish peninsula
- 51 Responding device of sorts
- 52 Be at
- 55 Arabian sailboats
- 57 Sleeps
- 58 Large bird: var.
- 60 Archibald of basketball
- 61 Allen and Ott
- 63 Betel



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# YES OR NO

**The FUTURE TELLERS**

**Monday Sept. 27**

**8 PM** CARMICHAEL AUDITORIUM

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**Sunday Sept. 26**

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