

letters to the editor

Snow Ball War of Upper Quad Aggression—Aycock women ravaged

To the editor:

The date: Jan. 22, 1977
The place: Lower Quad
The event: The Snow Ball War of Upper Quad Aggression

On the above-mentioned date an infantry charge led by General Tunky Ray of the Mercenary Division of Graham Dorm repelled the overwhelming odds of the Upper Quad. Armed with light artillery this division of twelve gallant men stood its ground in hand-to-hand combat on the front line as the Lewis, Stacey and Everett Divisions retreated to the rear. There were no casualties suffered. However, our women in Aycock fell victim to the spoils of war.

After the Upper Quad retreated to replenish its supply of ammunition General Ray led a surprise attack on the wall which had been the enemy's stronghold throughout the war. The enemy was completely taken by surprise as the charge was successful in taking the wall. There were few scattered incidents of hand-to-hand combat, but for the most part the enemy was routed. However, the Graham allies did not bring up reinforcements which offered the enemy retaliatory measures. Led by Lieutenant Beauregard Edwards a small Graham force held off this attack and the Upper Quad retreated to discuss tactical measures. After long and bitter negotiations the Upper Quad decided to surrender the flag to General Ray. He

declined them the further use of their weapons but decided to let them keep the girls from Aycock.

RADIO FREE LOWER QUAD
War correspondent,
Greg Chocklett

A successful fast

To the editor:

It has been over two months since the Fast For A World Harvest was celebrated on campus. Only silence subsequently emitted from its local sponsors, the YM/YMCA Hunger Action Committee. People could pessimistically, though reasonably, conclude that the fast was a failure, that Chapel Hill has been defrauded, or that, finding it impossible to solve the world's problems in a single shot, its idealist sponsors have abandoned all hope as well as their committee.

Fortunately, all such despairing contemplations were premature. The fast was successful. The committee expresses its gratitude to the scores of people who joined in symbolic abstention for 24 hours, as well as to the hundreds who contributed over \$780. This may not seem to be a large amount, but it is more than some African day-laborers earn in 5 years; \$780 is about as much as a person subsisting at the Federal Poverty Level earns in 6 months.

Of course, these donations are not directly relieving any such plight. Through OXFAM, a non-profit group, the money is being used for capital development of the simplest sorts: to fund a well-digging in some small village which borders on the Sahara; a loan (at very modest interest) to purchase seeds for the next planting in the Andes; an investment in a newspaper-recycling plant in Southern India. The fast was not a charity drive: no rice shipments to the needy are made by OXFAM; rather, peoples' capability to produce rice for themselves is being developed.

Nor has the Hunger Action Committee disbanded. A billion and more starving people are not a "cause" but a reality: there is no cause to be lost. Plans are already laid for Food Day, a major educational and awareness event to be held in April. A small Hunger Library is maintained in the campus Y building, open to all.

To express its continuing existence, and to encourage involvement, the Committee is sponsoring a vegetarian pot-luck dinner and discussion this Thursday evening. The particulars are in the Campus Calendar. All those concerned about, interested in or even hostile to the idea of alleviating world hunger are welcome.

The fast was a great display of community; continuing action, however, is necessary to guarantee even the meaneast hopes of humankind being fulfilled.

David Culp
Hunger Action Committee

Perpetual malfeasance

To the editor:

Every candidate for student body president traditionally calls for the pre-registration publication of final exam schedules. This year's crop is no exception. Every victorious candidate, in turn, traditionally forgets the issue completely. Although not as earth-shaking an issue as tenure for geology profs, the pungent aroma of perpetual malfeasance which surrounds this question qualifies it for our concern.

Steve Perry
0-12 The Villages

Thanks for the memory

To the editor:

I wish to express my sincerest gratitude to the student body on behalf of the 1957 basketball team.

The reception and the ovation we received from the students at Carmichael Coliseum last weekend can only be expressed as absolutely unbelievable. To be remembered by so many people in such a kind way 20 years later makes us realize the stupendous continuum imports at the University, and we are grateful for it. Chapel Hill is truly the "Southern Part of Heaven." Again, thank you for such a remembrance.

Pat and Lennie Rosenbluth

Where's the story

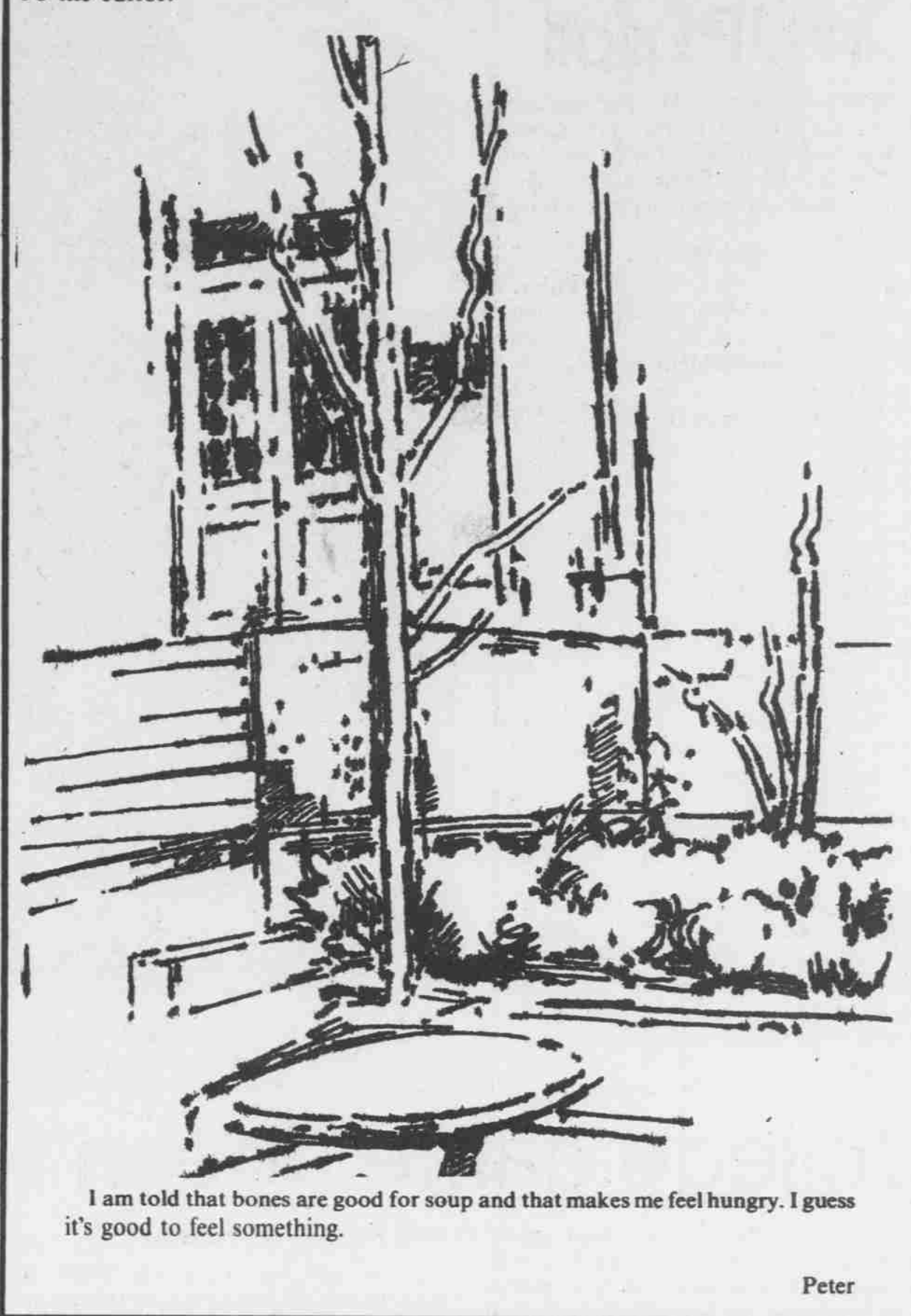
To the editor:

The College Republicans are wondering why you sent a reporter to our meeting on January 19, but did not run a story on it? State Senator Carolyn Mathis gave a very interesting and informative speech, which we felt deserved to be covered in the DTH.

Also at this meeting, the UNC College Republicans passed a resolution supporting the Equal Rights Amendment, and announced that the Spring CR Convention, involving 19 schools, will be held in Chapel Hill on March 25 and 26.

The College Republicans have many activities going this semester, and we

To the editor:



I am told that bones are good for soup and that makes me feel hungry. I guess it's good to feel something.

Peter

hope that we will get better coverage in the future.

Martha S. Broadfoot
717 Granville East

Understanding, not annihilation

To the editor:

I want to respond to Tim Fulton's letter in Monday's DTH concerning the funding of the B1 bomber. He said that the only published opposition to this project is the environmental impact and the high cost. This may be true only because the over-riding objections are so appallingly clear and obvious. I, too, think that we should do our best to become well-informed citizens, and much of this information can come from reasoned thought and common sense.

I grew up during the Viet Nam period, and have only in the last five years realized that no one knew why we were there, or what we were trying to achieve. We were just there, and we had guns in our hands, so we fought. But we didn't understand the people we were fighting or exactly what we were protecting. I submit that this understanding escapes us still.

It is the best "defense" policy to develop a three-pronged nuclear strike force capable of destroying the Earth several dozen times? Does this threat of atomization of the human race comfort our collective "noble" paranoid mind? Armament of this degree points out the need of an equal degree of international understanding, not blind threats of annihilation.

Terry Leonarz
209 Stacy Hall

comment

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English—a 'fatal slaying'

In a profession filled with dilettantes, NBC newsman Edwin Newman is a crusader.

Newman's crusade is against the decline of spoken English, and his primary weapon is an extremely witty pen. His two books, *Strictly Speaking* and *A Civil Tongue*, are brilliant monuments built on the ruins of language. In the books he attacks government for obscuring meaning with such meaningless idioms as "viable alternatives," "deepening dialogue" and "at this point in time." He attacks the press for talking of "fatal slayings," as though there were any other kind, and for using three words where one would suffice.

Many see Newman as a pedant and believe he is wasting his breath on trivial matters. They avoid his company at meals, he claims, because they don't want their grammar corrected. And the NBC weatherman resents the fact that Newman grades his morning reports for grammar and usually gives him a C.

But Newman is trying to correct a serious illness in our society that is more significant than most people suspect. Language is the cornerstone of civilization. As our language and our ability to communicate decline, society cannot help but be affected.

Newman quotes a budget proposal from the city of Winston-Salem. The proposal requests money for "effective confinement and extinguishment of unwanted and destructive fires."

"Firemen unable to achieve distinguishment between unwanted and destructive fires and the wanted and constructive kind," Newman comments wryly, "probably are destined to suffer languishment in the lower grades." The same budget proposal later asks for "schedule adherence with emphasis on hitting checkpoints within the targeted time." That apparently means making buses run on schedule.

With governmental language in such confusion, there is little wonder that government itself is in disarray. Just as three words are used where one would suffice, three bureaucrats are assigned to a position where one is needed.

What is the solution to this languishment of language? Newman undoubtedly dreams of a time, several centuries past, when the man whose speech was concise and witty was viewed with the greatest respect. Today quantity wins the laurels. The man who uses the most syllables per word and the most words per sentence is the educated, respected man.

Some see television as responsible for the decay; others blame the lack of grammar instruction in the schools. Both contribute to the problem, but there are certainly other causes as well. Before any serious analysis of causes begins, there must be a general recognition that a problem—a serious problem—exists.

Unless we at least address the problem, Edwin Newman's statement may prove true—America will be the death of English.

The Daily Tar Heel

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By ED RANKIN

A UNC senior runs his finger down the Classics 30 final grade list and breathes a sigh of relief: "I can't believe I squeaked a C out of that course," he says gleefully. Though his numerical grade is a 70, he will receive the same mark as the student who recorded a 79 average in the professor's gradebook—a C.

At least, that's the way it used to be. Beginning this spring, however, pluses and minuses may be included on report cards and transcripts, but without grade point values attached to them. The Faculty Council adopted the two-year trial period late last spring after lengthy and heated debate.

Though some students charged the faculty with ignoring student opinions on the new system, a *Daily Tar Heel* survey at the time revealed that UNC students approved the idea of pluses and minuses by a 2 to 1 margin, even if they were assigned grade point values.

So why the change? If there is no difference in grade points, students wonder, how can the new policy help or hurt them? "This will just start more petty competition," one student said last year. "What's the difference between a B-plus and a B-minus?"

Yet, most students and faculty agree that there is a significant difference within the range of one letter grade and feel that if one can make the distinction between an A and a B, one must make the distinction between a plus and a minus. Thus, the first rationale of the new grading system is that it is fairer and more judicious.

If a student receives an 89 in a particular course and another student an 80, the University has decided that it no longer considers the two grades equal. This may be little consolation for the student who missed the A by a fraction, but the Faculty Council did not adopt the measure to frustrate students, as one professor charged last year.

It's only fair that those students who

barely slip by with a 70 are not considered to have done the same level work as the students who earn an average of 79. A nine-point difference is not "petty."

O.K., you say, so there is a slight distinction made, but plus/minus grading still does not reward me for earning my B-plus and "punish" those for getting a B-minus. This is where the second reason for the two-year trial period enters. It's true that without specific quality point values we will only know what the faculty's habits are in assigning plus and minus grades, not what the effect is in grade point averages. But a careful record will be kept of the numbers of pluses and minuses over the next two years. The faculty will then sit down and determine the efficacy of assigning grade points to pluses and minuses.

If after two years the council discovers that indeed there are more B-minuses being given than pluses, it could

begin attaching different grades to the pluses and minuses.

One way to do this is to make an A worth 4.0; A-minus, 3.7; B-plus, 3.3; B, 3.0; B-minus, 2.7 and so on down to D. If grade points are eventually assigned, the student with the higher average will be tangibly rewarded for his efforts and the person with the lower average punished. And UNC will be doing its share to curb the nationwide phenomenon of grade inflation.

The success of the entire system, of course, rests with the professors. It is well-known that few teachers enjoy anyone telling them how to grade, much less asking them to include plus and minus grades. The new system, however, will not violate a professor's independence in grading. The idea is for teachers to make sharp distinctions within their grading scale and stick to them, not just give a student, for whatever reason, a B-plus when his grade is actually a B.

But the assigning of points to plus/minus grades may never materialize and the Faculty Council may even scrap the whole idea in two years. And perhaps it's true that a student getting a B-plus will only be more frustrated by falling short of an A and then having it rubbed in his face. Yet, the minus will serve at the same time to remind other students how close he actually came to getting a letter grade lower.

The whole notion is to give a student and others concerned with his record, i.e., parents, graduate schools and employers, a better reflection of his performance in college. And by the time fall, 1979, rolls around UNC students may be startled by a grading system significantly different from the one we have today.

Ed Rankin is a junior history major from Concord, N.C.

