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The Daily Tar Heel

88th year of editorial freedom

The waiting game

A long two and a half years ago one of the most pressing issues on this campus was the visitation policy in dormitories. One of the proposals was that guest hours be extended; 85 percent of students polled supported the plan. Since then individuals and committees have studied various policies, and yet, remarkably, there still has been no decision.

People involved in this protracted process are quick to blame others; the Housing Advisory Board is criticized for not meeting once in the spring of 1979 to discuss the visitation plan submitted by the Residence Hall Association; the administration has been attacked for stalling the whole process in the hopes that student interest would decrease; and RHA recently has been criticized for not pushing hard enough for its proposal and for not showing adequate interest in the whole issue. Clearly, the procrastination has not been the fault of one particular group. It has been a team effort.

Now, at last, the final report has reached the desk of Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs Donald Boulton, and he has said he might make a decision by next week. People involved have learned not to look far down the road for a definite implementation date. Students were disappointed last spring when Housing Director James Condie announced that no change could possibly take place until the spring of 1980. It is now that time, and we are still waiting, and we are still being disappointed. Some people have said the extra time has resulted in the discussion of more ideas. But how many more ideas do we need? A year ago RHA proposed that 24-hour visitation on weekends should be offered and individual dormitories could then vote on more restrictive policies if they desired. Such a policy places a greater responsibility on students—a responsibility that is rightfully theirs. Since weekend visitation policies now in use are widely ignored, there seems little reason not to give students the legal rights they already assume.

We see no reason for more delays. The issue is not that complicated. Some students have said that they would like a statement from the administration explaining the reason for the lengthy process but at this stage we want no more excuses. We just want a decision. Many times the administration takes action on important issues during the summer when many students are away. We trust that Boulton will act swiftly and appropriately.

Healthy and happy

The Student Health Service drew fire repeatedly this year when a controversial increase in the student health fee was approved by the Board of Trustees. As health costs rise, SHS seems content to raise student fees to cover them; the total increase in the yearly health fee has totaled \$50 over the last two years.

Present SHS director Dr. James A. Taylor will leave his post at the end of June, and candidates are already being considered to replace him. Whoever heads up the health service next fall will have his hands more than full if further fee increases are to be avoided.

The first order of business must be a thorough reassessment of the level of services provided by SHS. Such a study should be two-fold; it should evaluate the health services provided students in terms of quality and efficiency, but it should also determine which services students perceive as most necessary. The shining new Student Health Center includes a pharmacy, dermatology and ophthalmology clinics, but there is no conclusive evidence that students want or need such services.

The last comprehensive survey of the student body's health needs was done in 1974, and the demographic and economic changes since then mandate another. For instance, the ratio of men to women at UNC has changed markedly in the last few years; should SHS then allocate more of its resources to women's health care? A study addressing such questions would permit more effective allocation of health service funds.

A reassessment of service might also indicate means through which costs could be contained in the future. The student health fee cannot be increased each semester to cover the inflated cost of a given level of services. One area students might be willing to accept cutbacks in is the provision of free services. Surely, some would prefer to pay for such medical attention when they needed it rather than subsidize free treatments for all through the health fee. Data on student preferences is not available; thus they cannot be considered when SHS and administration formulate health care policy.

In considering candidates for the position of SHS director, administrators must acknowledge that the problems facing the service concern management rather than medicine. Dr. James Taylor brought the quality of student health care to a level unsurpassed in the state and region.

The appointment of a public health administrator more accustomed to dealing with fiscal and political problems might be more in order in an era of galloping medical care costs. Efficient management may not be able to prevent future SHS fee increases, but it might make health more affordable for those the service is supposed to serve.

The Bottom Line

Take that, Khomeini

The popular thing to do in Iran these days is blame the United States for everything. But this time they may be stretching things a bit too far—even for Iranians to swallow.

It seems the Moslem daily paper *Jomhuri Islami* said the other day that the death of 95 cows was caused by opponents of the Iranian revolution and U.S. agents.

The paper said a revolutionary guard sent to investigate the incident found the water used by the cattle company had been poisoned. The guard said this was done because Iran needs meat badly and "anti-revolutionary elements and U.S. agents have decided to strike a blow to our revolution by such acts."

Now it isn't clear how Iranian officials think the U.S. agents got to the water supply—or why killing 95 cows in Iran would do any good for the hostages in the embassy. What is clear, though, is that when you're dealing with Iran, logic is not the weapon to use.

Cruising for trouble

No one knows the trouble that the UNC crew club has seen.

In the last four years, the club has not made a single road trip without running into serious technical difficulties. Their trip during Spring Break for training at the University of Jacksonville went well until it came time to return to Chapel Hill. On the way home, the club's bus broke down four different times and the trip took 21 hours altogether.

On a trip last weekend to the University of Virginia, the trailer carrying the crew's racing shells broke loose and punctured the gas tank of the car towing it. The car was, of course, owned by a club member. At any rate, three club members wound up spending the night in backwoods Virginia with their crippled car.

Ever the optimists, several club members are planning to race this weekend in Charleston, W.Va. The rest will be here in Chapel Hill, trying to raise money for the club by selling hot dogs at Chapel Thrill. Buy a couple; they could use the help.

If crew club luck holds, the concert will be rained out.

And that's the bottom line.

Americans criticize yet thrive on Oscars

By THOMAS JESSIMAN

The Academy Awards have a strange effect on Americans. We call them ridiculous, we call them vulgar, we call them boring, and yet every year for some reason we watch them. The English have their coronation, the Spanish have their Holy Week and once a year we have the Academy Awards. Yet even with all that glamor and excitement it is hard not to feel a sense of uneasiness and discomfort—somehow the whole thing is not quite right.

Maybe Dustin Hoffman pinpointed part of the problem when he accepted his Oscar this year. "Well," he said looking at the statue in his hands, "it's got no genitalia and it's holding a sword." The idea of equating such a strange little statue with a remarkable acting performance is almost as crazy as judging whether X played an English king better than Y played a Puerto Rican gang-leader. Think of it: an Oscar. Somehow that name only brings to mind cigar butts or at best a stupid hot dog. "Oscar" is a small bronze statue 13½ inches high, weighing more than eight pounds and covered with a gleaming finish of 14 carat gold. The face is smooth and hard, the nose flat, the lips rigid, the eyes little more than slits, no hair, and, as Hoffman indicates, the thing is really just a neuter blob.

"May I have the envelope, please?" the emcee asks and fumbles opening it for a moment—then the announcement—then the cameras pan to the new hero, the new star shining away up there, a million miles above the heads of mortals.

The statue was named when a past president of the Academy saw a model of it and exclaimed, "Why, he looks like my uncle Oscar!" Nobel prize winners earn a small gold medallion—there is a certain decorum about that—and yet we have to give our winners the Oscar. It may not look as distinguished as those medallions, but we are quick to point out, it sure is worth a lot more money in the long run.

Some say that America no longer has its heroes, but

no one can say that we are not constantly searching for them. "May I have the envelope, please?" the emcee asks and fumbles opening it for a moment—then the announcement—then the cameras pan to the new hero, the new star shining away up there, a million miles above the heads of mortals. This star is a person of brilliant reputation and talents and yet has a remarkable humility. Though his greatness is fixed, somehow he lowers himself to the rest of us, he thanks the hundreds of people who made his glory possible. We expect him to show this humility, after all, we created him. And yet no matter how genuine he appears, his humility always seems self-serving.

Dustin Hoffman received his trophy: "I refuse to believe that I beat Jack Lemmon, that I beat Al Pacino, that I beat Peter Sellers. I refuse to believe that Robert Duvall lost. We are all part of an artistic family that strives for excellence; none of you have ever lost." We like Dustin here because supposedly he is displaying humility, and yet at the same time his "humility" is only emphasizing his achievement. It is like the winner of a track race who, by congratulating his opponents for a good race, is acknowledging that he himself ran a "great race."

The whole concept of expecting winners of the Academy Award to be humble and still a star is absurd and yet very American. As a young man, Benjamin Franklin wrote down in his journal 13 virtues to aspire to. The last one was "Humility. Imitate Jesus and Socrates." There is overwhelming pride in such ambition, pride that lies at the heart of any Academy Awards humility, pride that is accepted and even encouraged so long as the thin veneer of humility is not cracked.

And at the Academy Awards everyone wins a prize. After three and a half hours of the stuff it seems as if 200 people have trooped up to the stage and given their speech. The prizes are amazing: Best Screenplay Adaptation of a Foreign Film about Mewling Infants, etc. If somehow you do not win a prize then you are surely among the 400 who open the envelopes and give away the Oscars. We watch the whole thing for its spectacle.

And Hollywood, as if worried about reminding us of its venerability, always manages to trot out a few ancient, yet legitimate stars for a prize. This year it was Sir Alec Guinness and last year Lord Laurence Olivier was called on. Somehow Olivier's title, "Lord," gives "Oscar" a much more dignified ring. Then there is the guy who wins for giving "years of dedicated service to the

Academy" or, perhaps more accurately, "lots of bucks." He's called "a figure of great human understanding."

Even the pretensions of the title of the affair offer ironies. Antiquity had the great Akademia of Athens where Plato promoted advanced education; we have the Academy of Hollywood with sage Johnny Carson as master of ceremonies. Any time someone does try to use his or her position to make a serious, specific point, as Vanessa Redgrave did three years ago when she spoke of the Palestinian issue, the audience reacts violently. Stars are not supposed to worry themselves over human problems—they are stars. They should only occasionally acknowledge, humbly, the people who made them—if they do this and no more they will shine brighter. Those who seem to recognize the hypocrisy of the whole affair and refuse to attend, like Marlon Brando, are berated for their bad taste and crassness.

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The Academy Awards are probably here to stay. They represent the biggest Event we have in America, and that, perhaps, is a little frightening. Their popularity seems to increase every year and no doubt they will carry us into the next century. Perhaps the secret to their success is that they epitomize what Tom Wolfe calls the "Me Generation." Hollywood is a greedy crowd; a whole mob of people file onto the stage at the awards ceremony, and every one of them walks away with first prize. We watch them scream and cry like the winners on game shows and then they go home to count their loot. We realize most of the affair is tinsel and glitter, but nonetheless we can't deny that it is 100 percent American. So the next day we buy a newspaper and eagerly read about the whole shebang, to see if maybe it added up to something.

Thomas Jessiman, a sophomore English major from Newton, Mass., is associate editor for The Daily Tar Heel.

letters to the editor

RHA budget cuts frustrating, vindictive

To the editor:

This week the Campus Governing Council once again is deciding the fate of every University-recognized campus organization which depends on student funds to survive. It seems that this year the Residence Hall Association has been designated as the sacrificial lamb. RHA which serves more than 8,000 students, submitted a modest budget of 11,345 to CGC. This budget finances the RHA office in the Carolina Union, officer training, the RHA film series, housing surveys and studies, equipment and equipment maintenance, printing and publicity, the RHA newsletter and an RHA officer hand manual.

This year RHA asked for funds to help finance two new programs: an RHA handbook which would provide students with an explanation of what RHA is and how it can benefit each student, and a resource file which would provide dorm officers across campus a file of the programs that have been conducted and the process by which this was done.

After the initial cuts were made, the RHA budget was reduced to \$5,402. Among those programs that were completely cut were officer training, the RHA handbook, the resource file, speaker fees, and equipment. Substantial cuts were made in the categories of equipment maintenance; printing and publicity (from 2110 to 320); postage and office supplies.

Last year RHA received more than \$6,000. Of the approximately 12 other campus organizations whose budgets were reviewed before RHA's, only RHA did not receive at least that amount which it received last year.

It is extremely frustrating to find one's efforts to serve the University subject to the prejudices and vindictiveness of the very few who unfortunately control the purse strings. It seems that CGC could have scheduled their meetings so that the result of their rampage could appear in the *DTH*. But I understand now why they would not want such information made public.

Debbie Ford
55 Ehringhaus

Science magazine

To the editor:

The Alchemist is the scientific magazine of Carolina. The magazine contains articles on current and/or controversial issues in science, summaries of professional and undergraduate research, science fiction and graphics.

Published twice yearly, once in the fall and once in the spring, *The Alchemist* serves as a unique liaison between the science departments and the rest of the campus. *The Alchemist* digests science topics, removes the technical terms, and presents readable, interesting articles. Because *The Alchemist* is a science magazine geared to the general public, our staff is very diverse, including

physics, zoology, English, journalism and business majors. Any person interested, regardless of his major, is encouraged to join the staff next year. In the meantime, please call me if you have any questions or want to know more about *The Alchemist*.

Allison Essen
editor, *The Alchemist*

Blood drive

To the editor:

This Thursday and Friday will be the last days of the school year to donate blood in a campuswide blood drive. We urge all of you to come to Great Hall between 10 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. both days. This is extremely important to the area as

UNC students are the major blood donors to the Chapel Hill area. If you have not given in eight weeks, then you are eligible to donate again. We need your blood.

Bobby Wainer
Chapel Hill Red Cross
ZBT Fraternity

Is this a threat?

To the editor:

What do we have to do to get our picture on the front of your lousy rag? We've tried everything.

Remember who you're dealing with.

The Nick Fear Band
Chapel Hill



Nuclear power unnecessary, too dangerous

By GREGORY KATS

Nuclear energy is not a solution to the energy problem. Nuclear power is a source for only one form of energy: electricity. Because the nation's electricity needs were vastly overrated, the U.S. now has at least a 40 percent excess electricity generating capacity. While some excess generating capacity is desirable in case of an accident or plant shutdown, most utilities functioned well through the 1960s with less than 10 percent generating capacity. Nuclear energy is a solution to a problem that does not exist. We do not need more electricity.

Electricity is used almost entirely for lighting and driving stationary motors. For other uses, it is prohibitively expensive. Even with massive government subsidy, nuclear-supplied electricity would cost about \$100 for the heat equivalent of a barrel of oil. Electric consumption will remain a small portion of our overall energy use. Nuclear power provides only 14 percent of the nation's electricity and only 4 percent of the energy that America uses.

Moreover, nuclear energy is very dangerous and very expensive.

The Brookhaven National Laboratory conducted a study on the impact of a 50 percent release of the radioactive contents of a 500 megawatt reactor 30 miles from a large city (Chapel Hill is 27 miles from the in-construction 900 mw Shearon-Harris power plant). The Brookhaven report concludes that 45,000 prompt deaths would occur with a minimum of \$17 billion in property damages. 150,000 square miles would be radioactively

contaminated and uninhabitable for centuries. The director of the study refused to assess the likelihood of such an accident. He stated that "there is no objective, quantitative means of assuring that all possible paths leading to a catastrophe have been considered."

All nuclear plants produce radioactivity, and no level of radiation is safe. Increments from any source cause statistically certain increases in the occurrence of cancer and genetic damages. Power plants are allowed to release an average per person dose of up to .17 rads (a measure of radiation). Nobel prize winner, Linus Pauling, has calculated that exposure of the U.S. population to this level of radiation would cause the following increases in diseases per year: 12,000 children born with physical and mental defects, 2,200 leukemia cases, and 96,000 cancer deaths. Disease rates have increased around nuclear power plants. Five years after the Millstone nuclear plant in Waterford, Conn. was opened, cancer rates rose by 58 percent in the county. Five miles from the plant, the city of New London experienced a cancer rate increase of 44 percent. Thirty miles away, New Haven had a 27 percent cancer hike, compared to a national average of 6 percent.

Another difficulty with nuclear energy is that safe transportation, storage and protection of radioactive materials has not been demonstrated. Between 1968 and 1975, there were 176 reported threats or acts of violence against licensed and unlicensed plants. During this same period there were 28 reported threats or attempts of sabotage on material in transport or in storage.

Commercial nuclear wastes are currently stored in temporary sites around the country. The nuclear industry is considering dumping the waste on the Antarctic or shooting it into space. The cost of this, whether borne by the utilities or the government,

probably would be very high. There is currently 9.4 million cubic feet of high level radioactive waste in temporary storage with no demonstrated case of effective containment.

There are simple, cheap and safe ways to make up for the small percent of energy that would be lost through a moratorium on the construction of nuclear power plants. The two most evident methods of decreasing reliance on foreign oil are conservation and solar energy.

Decreased energy consumption through increased energy efficiency does not mean discomfort. West Germany and Switzerland are twice as efficient in energy use as the United States. With a higher per capita income, the Germans and Swiss are at least as comfortable as we are in spite of or perhaps because of their relatively high efficiency in energy use.

Solar power, if subsidized as highly as nuclear energy or even coal or oil, would play a large role in supplying the U.S. energy needs. Mainly because of solar subsidies in California, more than one-third of all solar panels sold in the United States are sold in that state.

Nuclear energy is not a solution to the energy problem. Nuclear energy is a dangerous and expensive way to supply a form of energy that already exists in excess. Continued construction of nuclear plants would require massive private investment and continued huge federal subsidies to an ailing industry plagued by accidents, booming costs, disease, massive public protest and a seemingly insoluble waste disposal problem. The United States cannot afford to divert billions more dollars from safe and cheap solutions to the energy problem.

Gregory Kats is a junior English and political science major from Madison, Conn.