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# The Daily Tar Heel

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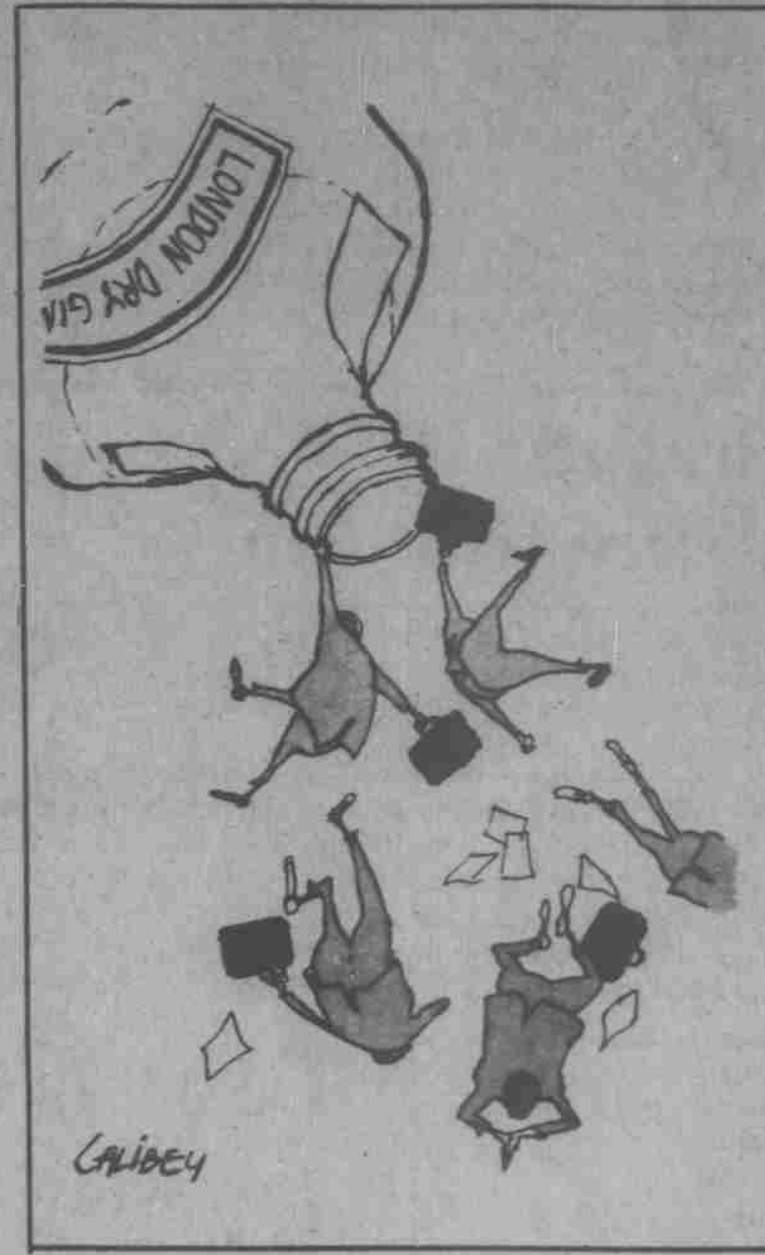
## Politicians blame misconduct on drinking

By JOHN DRESCHER

Those who have abused alcohol often use drunkenness as an excuse for their misbehavior while intoxicated. Increasingly, politicians are using the same strategy of innocent-by-intoxication to explain their misconduct.

Three politicians in October grabbed headlines by blaming their problems on alcohol. Rep. Robert Bauman of Maryland was charged with soliciting sex from a 16-year-old boy—he blamed his conduct on alcoholism. Representatives John Jenrette, D-S.C., and Michael Myers, D-Pa., were found guilty in connection with taking bribes in the FBI's Abscam case—both cited drinking problems.

Two other politicians, Rep. Richard Bolling, D-Mo., and Sen. Herman Talmadge, D-Ga., also have undergone treatment for alcoholism in the last year.



Alcoholic Educational Service. "In fact, I've found the opposite. In all probability, alcoholism cuts across all job categories."

In short, when it comes to drinking problems, politicians are no different from the rest of the population. Still, three in the last month have pleaded that they were innocent because they were having drinking problems at the time of the crime. Drunkenness, however, cannot be used by itself in court as a defense.

"Drunkenness is not a legal defense except in a very few instances," said Michael Crowell, Assistant Director at the Institute of Government. "To convict, you have to prove that the defendant had the intent to do wrong." Only if drinking affected this intent is drunkenness a defense, said Crowell.

Drunkenness then is no more a defense for these politicians' actions than it is for most civilian crimes. Politicians using drunkenness as a defense are clearly trying only to get the sympathy of the public and jury. During the 1950s and 1960s people began to accept alcoholism as a disease and not a moral fault, Mills said, and the politicians are playing on the public's conscience with respect to this "sickness" perception.

"We have a long history in this country of excusing anything a person does under the influence of alcohol," Mills said. "The logic is wrong. If I were a heroin addict, people wouldn't excuse me. It's like saying it's OK for a cancer patient to rob a store for money."

"I think that a politician that uses a disease for an excuse is a very poor model...I think that's unethical."

It is. The courts haven't fallen for the "I was drunk, so I'm not guilty" logic," as proven by the Abscam results, but now the people have a chance to decide the final verdict. Five of the six politicians charged in the Abscam scandal, and both Congressman Bolling and Sen. Talmadge, are up for re-election on Nov. 4.

It's not inconceivable that even those already found guilty could be re-elected.

"Congressmen who have been convicted of crimes have been re-elected," Stern said. "It depends on the individual and how it's perceived." There are a number of reasons why voters will still vote for a convicted criminal. Some voters identify with the politicians' problems, said Stern, and others either always vote straight party ticket or just are ignorant of the situation. Many though, are most concerned with looking out for No. 1: what their politician, convicted criminal or not, can do for them.

Jenrette is a prime example. A recent *Charlotte Observer* poll shows that Jenrette, found guilty in the Abscam case, still has a legitimate shot at holding on to his seat. One has to question the insight of South Carolina voters. Jenrette has about as much right to serve in the House of Representatives as Richard Nixon does to be president.

Juries have reached their decisions. They won't put up with politicians who say drinking is a defense for crime. Now it's the voters' turn to show that they won't put up with criminal behavior either.

John Drescher, a junior Journalism major from Raleigh, is an editorial assistant for The Daily Tar Heel.

## For president, Anderson

The 1980 presidential race has become a choice of the lesser of two evils. Since it became evident that either President Jimmy Carter or GOP challenger Ronald Reagan will likely lead this country for the next four years, the press and a lot of other people have been decrying the election as a farce, claiming the American people have been short-changed—swindled.

Considering both Carter and Reagan survived one of the longest and most extensive presidential searches in U.S. history—the primaries—this seems a specious claim. Reagan and Carter may not be the men many of us would like to see in the White House, but they are the candidates produced by the American political system. The American people had more to say about who would be president this year than ever before. They can blame no one but themselves if they are now unhappy with their decision.

In fact, the people who chose Carter and Reagan are probably satisfied. John Stuart Mill said years ago that "the natural tendency of representative government, as of modern civilization, is towards collective mediocrity." This aptly describes the events of this election year. After all, no law says that the men who represent the Democratic and Republican parties have to be the most intelligent, the most informed and the most effective of those available. It only says they have to be nominated. They were, and we would like to express our dissatisfaction with the choice that has been made.

### President Carter

Carter has changed a great deal during his presidency. Wrinkles line a face that four years ago was smooth and clean. Gray hair, once barely noticeable, reveals further Carter's age.

The smiling and youthful face of a Georgia governor has been transformed into the grim and bitter face of a U.S. president. The outside says a lot about the man inside.

The burdens of presidential office have weighed heavy on Carter, as they have on all his predecessors. Carter, however, has been the victim of more than his share of ridicule and scorn. Columnists have called him incompetent, naive and bumbling. His presidency has lacked clear direction in both economic and foreign policy. He has shown little, if any, ability to capture the enthusiastic support of even his own followers. They vote for him—and many admit it—because they do not want Reagan elected.

Still, Carter has learned a great deal as president. He has learned the limitations of the office and his staff. He has discovered the complex issues that face a president, such as seeking world peace without sacrificing national security. He has had to learn to balance idealism with realism.

All of this experience could have made for a wiser and more capable man. Instead, it seems to have bred acrimony and self-martyrdom. The loner president has isolated himself further by engaging in vicious attacks on his opponent's character rather than distinguishing his views. It is typical of Carter that he offers no positive steps to deal with the problems of this country, but instead emphasizes Reagan's alleged bellicosity. Carter offers no reason to hope, but more of the same.

### Governor Reagan

Reagan seems to be everything that Carter is not. He is a good-humored man most of the time, not likely the war-monger some would try to make him. He portrays little of Carter's vindictiveness. Still, given some of the past off-the-cuff remarks, there can be no doubt that Reagan, too, is a loner, capable of fits of anger. More important, Reagan is a man who cherishes the values of an antiquated world. Reagan the man seems likable and sincere. Reagan the president would leave much to be desired.

First, he is the captive of the right-wing element of his party. Despite his history as a moderate, Reagan has slowly moved further to the right in the past 15 years. Not that this is inherently bad. The right wing Reagan represents, however, does not understand the world of today—the world of environmental disintegration, the world of racial tension, the world of decaying inner cities and dwindling energy.

His simple approach to such problems will not alleviate them, and it will not endear him to the most potentially explosive force in the country, the poor people of the inner cities. Reagan, were he a little more perceptive and a little less extreme, might prove an able and popular president. But he lives 20 years behind the times. The world will not wait for Reagan to catch up with it. The United States can ill afford to wait for him either.

### John Anderson

Of the three major candidates, we believe independent John Anderson is best able to lead the country. Many people say Anderson cannot win, that a vote for Anderson is a wasted vote. Others suggest that even if he could be elected he has alienated the two major parties to the point that he would be an ineffectual president. We remind voters, as Anderson has, that the presidential election is not a horse race in which one bets on a winner. Votes should be cast for the most qualified man. As to the second argument, we would suggest that neither Carter nor Reagan is likely to be any more effective. Perhaps with an independent president, legislation will be passed or vetoed on its merits and not because of partisan politics.

Anderson's movement away from arch-conservatism only indicates the man has grown up to the real world. He believes in fiscal conservatism, but not at the cost of the general welfare of the country. He believes in a strong defense, but not to the extreme of tempting a nuclear arms race. He supports the Equal Rights Amendment and opposes the abortion amendment. He believes in the conservation of environment and resources, but still seeks alternative forms of energy. If Anderson loses it will not be because he is wrong, but because the American people prefer those who offer easy solutions. They will stand for a mediocre president they know rather than chance a change for the better.

Anderson is articulate, extremely bright and perfectly clear as to what direction this country must take. It need not go backward with Reagan, or stop and hesitate with Carter, one being just as bad as the other.

With Anderson as president, the American people can discover their own strength and with him move forward aggressively toward a better

## At Large

The sudden rash of politicians citing alcohol abuse as an explanation for their problems has caused many to question whether politicians are drinking more than they have in the past. Some longtime Capitol Hill observers say they cannot remember any Congress so shaken by reports of its members' weaknesses, but other claim politicians' behavior is no different than in the past. Journalism and law enforcement, not politicians' behavior, are what have changed, they say.

"We just know so much more about their private lives now," said Alan Stern, UNC associate professor of political science. "They're under so much more scrutiny now, much more than most other walks of life. Years ago we knew much less about the candidates' private lives."

"Twenty years ago, you never would have found the FBI aiming an undercover operation at members of Congress," said Norman J. Ornstein, a political scientist at Washington's Catholic University. "And the press considered the politicians' drinking problems a private matter."

Another myth is that the sudden outbreak of politicians admitting drinking problems is only a natural reflection of the high-pressure, in-the-spotlight jobs of politicians. This too has been refuted by those who study the relationship between occupation and alcoholism.

"I don't have any data that indicate that politicians do more drinking problems than the rest of us," said Kenneth Mills, a UNC associate professor of psychology who also is the director of the Campus

## Oklahoma

### Tar Heels must face Sooners, fans on their turf

By THOMAS JESSIMAN

*You're doing fine, Oklahoma!  
Oklahoma, you're OK  
—Rodgers and Hammerstein*

Oklahoma. The word has an aura. Every New Year's Day, three football teams make appearances in the bowl games—Southern California, Alabama and Oklahoma. Most often, Oklahoma plays in the Orange Bowl—and wins. Oklahoma football players are as revered in the eyes of third graders as professional players, and names like Billy Sims, Joe Washington and Lee Roy Selmon are household words for good football fans. This year, for the first time in ages, Oklahoma already has two losses—but there can be no question that the aura remains. The undefeated Tar Heels will have their toughest challenge of the year when they play the Sooners in Norman Saturday.

*'You run out onto the field and there is a sea of red everywhere. It's real quiet, almost eerie, and then you hear a roar start up and it's Oklahoma.'*

Joe Washington, a star running back first with Oklahoma and now with the Baltimore Colts, emphasized the importance Oklahoma football fans attach to their team. "On a Saturday afternoon in Norman, the people think of nothing in the world but Sooner football," Washington said. "When the visiting team comes out of the locker room and looks around, it sees nothing but red. The fans are so loud and the combination of the noise and all the red puts the visitors at a real disadvantage."

*Oh, what a beautiful mornin'!  
Oh, what a beautiful day!  
I got a beautiful feelin'  
Ev'rythin's goin' my way*

The Oklahoma fans have come to expect victory. They have been disappointed so rarely that in some ways they are spoiled. "The crowd takes a really business-like attitude," said Don Blackmon, a defensive end with Tulsa, a team that has never done well playing in Norman. "The fans watch the game for the point spread. If Oklahoma is picked to win by 20, then it's not a game unless Oklahoma beats the spread. No one comes to the game with the intention of watching the team lose."

When Tulsa played at Oklahoma

last year and was beaten badly, Blackmon said the fans did not cheer hard until the end of the game. "They had the game wrapped up. When the second team came out, the crowd booted—they wanted to beat the point spread. Finally in the last few seconds they scored and beat the spread. The crowd went wild. I tell you, it was crazy."

The fans are never satisfied. Coaches and players from Oklahoma's conference, the Big Eight, all said that playing away against other powerhouses like Nebraska and Arkansas always produced louder crowds—obviously those fans are still somewhat human—still prepared once in a while for a loss. "The fans are not wild at Oklahoma like at other places because they never are satisfied with what they have—they always want more," said Carl Lester, a middle linebacker coach for the Iowa State football team—another team with a lopsided losing record against

Oklahoma. "If Oklahoma is up by 40 points and they don't stop and call time out late in the game to go for more, the fans boo."

*There's a bright golden haze on the meadow  
There's a bright golden haze on the meadow  
The corn is as high as an elephant's eye  
And it looks like it's climbin' clear up to the sky*

But it would be a mistake to think that Sooner fans are all bored and unenthusiastic. Empty seats simply do not exist Saturday afternoons at Memorial Stadium. "The people turn out for football down there," said Lee Roy Selmon, a defensive star at Oklahoma and now with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. "The team has a lot of great tradition and fan support. It's something to drive to the stadium on game day and see the thousands of

fans arriving. There is red everywhere—red hats, red shirts, red blazers—I've even seen red teeth. The enthusiasm is there."

*'If Oklahoma is picked to win by 20, then it's not a game unless Oklahoma beats the spread. No one comes to the game with the intention of watching the team lose.'*

It must be something for a visiting team to run up the ramp and out onto the field. Amos Donaldson, a guard at Kansas State, said it was easy to be psyched out by the pre-game atmosphere. "You run out onto the field and there is a sea of red everywhere. It's real quiet, almost eerie, and then you hear a roar start up and it's Oklahoma."

Before the game, Kansas State and many other teams work out in regimented drills of calisthenics and practice plays. Donaldson was amazed by Oklahoma's pre-game warm-up. "They run around with their helmets off—they just kind of play catch. They don't do any organized calisthenics. They're all out of key and just look really loose." Unfortunately for Kansas State, Oklahoma was not so disorganized in the game. They ran back the opening kickoff all the way and after five minutes were leading 14-0. "It took us a little longer to get things together," Donaldson said.

Another disorienting feature about playing at Norman is that the team benches are incredibly close to the stands. "The fans are right there next to you," Donaldson said. "They talk right to you and once the game starts getting away from you they really start shouting and getting into it all. That helps the rout process. It's really something."

*Oklahoma!  
Flowers on the prairie where  
the June bugs zoom  
Plenty of air and plenty of  
room  
Plenty of room to swing a  
rope  
Plenty of heart and plenty of  
hope*



But once in a million years, a team comes into Norman and beats the Sooners. This year, on a rainy day in September, Stanford trounced

Oklahoma 31-14. "I remember watching them doing their half-assed exercises, their jumping around and hooting before the game," said Stanford wide-receiver Andre Tyler. "A bunch of us were wondering if they were taking us seriously—whether they respected us." But by the time it was 31-0 in the third quarter, Stanford definitely had Oklahoma's respect.

Tyler compared the campuses of Oklahoma and Stanford. "We have a library in the middle of our campus, but they have a stadium there. And we don't have a football dormitory as such, but theirs is right across from the stadium."

### Locally

"After the game an Oklahoma law student wrote to the school newspaper and said that if their team couldn't beat Stanford, a school where there are other interests besides football, then there was no need for the team. That tells you how seriously they take their football."

Tyler told about a remarkable incident that occurred late in the game with Stanford winning big. "The referee broke into our huddle and said that we should not try to embarrass Oklahoma. He said that they are a pride team and it would not be in our school's best interests embarrassing them. I couldn't believe it."

When asked to describe Memorial Stadium at Oklahoma, former Nebraska coach Bob Devaney referred to it as "The Snake Pit." "Playing there will not be easy for the Tar Heels. North Carolina is 0-6 against the Big Eight teams in its history; Oklahoma is 13-0 against the ACC. But this year, the Heels may well have the better team and should do well if they can keep their minds on the game and leave the aura to the fans. After all, playing a football team with a 5-2 record is one thing, but playing Oklahoma is quite another."

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