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# The Daily Tar Heel

88th year of editorial freedom

## Reverse discrimination

The Daily Tar Heel stated last January, soon after murmurs about a peacetime draft registration began emanating from Capitol Hill, that such a move was an unnecessary step in the direction of war.

The government ignored our reasoning, and this summer 4 million American men were required to register for the draft at their local post offices.

The registration was not without protest controversy, though. In July, a three-judge federal court panel in Philadelphia ruled the measure unconstitutional, citing its sex bias because it excluded women. It said the skills women brought to the military were useful and important ones, and by excluding women the military was limiting its flexibility.

Monday the Supreme Court said it would examine the lower court's ruling and decide whether any U.S. military draft, or draft registration, must include women.

We have not changed our minds about draft registration; we still believe it is unnecessary and somewhat dangerous. But if the country must have a peacetime draft registration, and in the future we must draft Americans to fight in a war, women also have a duty to serve.

The Supreme Court should rule that excluding women from draft registration and the draft is unconstitutional because it denies men equal protection under the law. They are being made to fulfill obligations from which women are exempt.

The court's decision probably will not be announced until May or June and until then Americans will hear countless arguments for and against excluding women from registration. Many of the arguments will be emotionally charged. Registering and drafting women to serve in the armed forces strikes some people as morally wrong. They conjure up images of girls still in their teens, not even women yet, being injured and killed on the battlefield.

For those people, we offer two arguments. The thought of women being killed in combat is deplorable, but for now that issue is a moot one. The law states that women cannot serve in combat units. Even if the Supreme Court ruled to include women in draft registration and the draft, they could not serve combat duty unless the law was changed.

If it were changed, few would disagree that sending young women to fight and perhaps die in a war is deplorable. But sending men, some still in their teens, still boys, to fight and perhaps die holds no more appeal.

## The Bottom Line

Lovely Rita

The Jenrette family of South Carolina seems determined to keep their name in the news this year.

John Jenrette, a Democratic Congressman from Myrtle Beach, was convicted earlier this year on charges of bribery and conspiracy in connection with the FBI's ABSCAM investigation. He then was defeated in the Nov. 4 election for his House seat.

Now Mrs. Jenrette — Rita to her friends — is getting into the act. The Cable News Network reported last week that Rita, whom newspapers described as "an attractive blonde" during the ABSCAM trial, is negotiating with Playboy magazine to do a photo spread sometime next year. Mrs. Jenrette, the network reported, had already posed for test shots in a bathrobe. In the photo spread, sources said, she would wear nothing more revealing than what is seen "on a public beach." However, CNN said others in the Playboy organization said the shots would have "sensual overtones" and that Mrs. Jenrette was considering posing partially nude.

The interesting part of all this is that Mrs. Jenrette was considered as a replacement for her husband in the House, and very nearly ran in his stead last November. If she had, she might have been a Congressional leader — the first member of the House to pose for Playboy.

Prep Rep

This week Newsweek finally got around to running an article on The Official Preppy Handbook, that guide to upper-crusty clothes and character. While the Tar Heel had already run a piece on the book on Tuesday, Newsweek sure scooped us in one respect; they had quotes on dressing prep from UNC's own Lee McAllister.

McAllister, a senior who is an oft-quoted executive assistant in Student Government, gave Newsweek advice about how preppy dressers dress. "I wear Weejuns and khakis; sometimes starched," McAllister said, not bothering to explain how Weejuns could be starched, "and polo shirts

generally, or sometimes a button-down." Surely, this sounds familiar. He went on to explain that L.L. Bean shoes, a prep favorite, should be worn without socks in all but the worst weather.

On dressing preppy, McAllister "confided," to Newsweek, "It's just the way I've always dressed. I really don't think about it — unless I do something off the wall like wearing white socks."

Where, you may ask, did McAllister "prepare;" where did he accumulate this vast store of knowledge on the art of prepping out? Why, at that bastion of northeastern elitism, Raleigh's Needham Broughton Senior High, a school about as preppy as a blue jean jacket.

Dateline UNC

Lee McAllister's comments on preppy chic weren't the only information from UNC people included in the Dec. 8 Newsweek. In fact, a person could get the impression from thumbing through the magazine that it has a bureau at Carolina.

Besides the story in which McAllister was quoted, a second story describes the discovery of a new white blood cell by a UNC neurobiologist, Dr. Jacob Hanker. He calls it the Medusa cell because its tentacles remind him of those of a Medusa jellyfish. It uses the tentacles to grab other blood cells, and Hanker said further research could show that the cell helps some people and harms others.

In yet a third story that recommends books to give as gifts for the holidays, Newsweek singles out another UNC instructor. The article calls zoology Professor Alan Feduccia's book The Age of Birds an "exciting natural history, handsomely illustrated," and praises Feduccia for his skill in relating the evolution of birds from their reptilian ancestors. Ironically, in a recent debate with The Daily Tar Heel, the Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies chastised the DTH for printing an article earlier this semester on Feduccia's book, saying the article's topic was unimportant. Newsweek knew better.

And that's the bottom line.

# Bridging the gap

By BUDDY BURNISKE

When a young man or woman packs his or her bags, hugs mom and dad and sets off for college he or she leaves a gap. No, not a generation gap; that was there long before college came around. Nor is it always a credibility gap, which may result when the mother calls at 7:30 a.m. "before the rates go back up" for three days in a row and finds her son or daughter supposedly out pulling an "all-nighter" on each occasion. The gap considered here, is that lying between two worlds, two galaxies really, one of old and one of new.

I first realized this during my freshman year, as most of us do. It was after the fourth weekend at school and the fourth long-distance call home. I hung up the phone wondering why my folks always talked about things like the weather, my old high school's football record, kids I went to high school with and town gossip. I didn't realize then, and often forget now, that they had remained in the world I left behind, that while I moved on to a new domain they clung to the old, and felt comfortable as my link between the two....

It was Wednesday and there I was at RDU, carrying my typewriter and a suitcase full of books that would serve as paperweights during Thanksgiving, stacked proudly on my desk for my younger sisters to gawk at and ask, "Do you really have to read all of those?" I had thoughts of remaining in Chapel Hill for the break, wasting away on a turkey pot pie while I began "operation catch-up." But Mom had had thoughts of a different kind.

You need a break she had said. But I have so much work I said. You can work here she said. There's too many distractions there I said. The change will be good for you she said. The change may kill me I said. Your sisters would love to see you she said. Only if they don't have to move out of my room I said. Your father wants someone here to watch football with on Thanksgiving Day and we'd all like to go tobogganing like we used to, she said. You're killing me with nostalgia I said. Besides, this is the last chance you'll have to see the puppies before we sell them, she said. That's true I said. I'll pay for your ticket she said. I'll be there on Wednesday I said.

The day after Thanksgiving we sat in the kitchen, seven Shih-Tzu puppies yapping, two sisters fighting over ownership rights to a blouse, my mother moaning about her ruined diet and the turkey sandwiches they would eat for a week, my father griping about the steady rain that was to fall all weekend, and I-groaning about the paperweights getting heavier and heavier on my desk.

"I'm flunking out, you guys," I said as two of the puppies tore at one of my socks while a third listened to nature's calling and relieved himself on the other.

"God, think if all this rain were snow," my dad said looking out the kitchen window at the steady downpour.

"I don't know, I guess I took on too much," I said. "It just caught up with me."

"Ooh, ooh, you bad boy Joshua, you don't do that there," my mother said as she grabbed the plumpest pup in the bunch, the one I called "Tank," and set him down on The Daily Tar Heel I'd brought home two days before. "There," she said with a pat on his little head, "you go there like a good boy."

"I'll do better next semester," I vowed for the fifth consecutive semester. "Don't worry."

"Look at this one, she's Rachel," my mother said. "She and Holly, the other girl, are the troublemakers of the litter." Mom doesn't believe in naming dogs "Spike" or "Spot," she gives them "people names" to match their personalities. The dogs respond by taking

## Letters to the editor

# Well, we asked for it and here it is

To the editor:

I imagine that if The Daily Tar Heel staff is forced to resort to insulting its readers (both of us) (in "Letter to readers," DTH, Dec. 3), to get a response, things must be getting pretty bad around the office. However, you don't need to tell us. We know. It shows all too well every day the DTH arrives. Instead of blaming your shortcomings on "reader apathy," perhaps you should take a long, hard, objective look (if possible) at yourselves, your purpose and your paper.

Yes... our paper! You seem to forget that the DTH is not your paper. It is a campus paper for students and faculty of this university. No one is forced to buy a Durham Morning Herald or Raleigh News and Observer; therefore, they can print what they think will sell papers. But even they don't print the obituaries and high school scores of Dinwiddie, Va. Why? Because no one in Durham or Raleigh really gives a damn. That kind of news is not what their readers will buy.

The DTH, however, does not have to worry about selling papers. Whether we like it or not, we have already bought a subscription. Unfortunately, it is seldom worth the minute and a half it takes to

read it. Perhaps you should call it the Daily Advocate. It seems to be all advertisements, with an occasional news story which is usually three days late. Do you really get your news from the wire service or do you skim through history books?

For the past three years I have listened to the campaigns the candidates for DTH editor have run. Every year we hear a promise: "If I am elected I will include more campus news and coverage of University events." Gee, that's really nice of you. You act as if it is a real concession for a campus paper to include campus news. But alas, that was just a campaign promise, wasn't it? Obviously, you don't feel the need to report on such mundane stories. You know, I found out more about our homecoming activities from a story in the News and Observer than I did from anything (was there anything?) in the DTH.

However elementary and basic this may sound, I feel compelled to point it out. A campus paper should include and emphasize campus events, campus controversies and campus accomplishments. If you are having so much trouble filling the space where the letters to the editor usually appear, why

don't you print the campus calendar so that people can read it?

I, myself, would like to apologize for not writing editorial letters. I suppose I was so tired of writing the entire editorial page in high school that I just gave up.

I enjoy the DTH editorial page. It is difficult to remember to write letters of approval. I was in full agreement with the stands taken on the "Moral" Majority, the Homecoming

## Between the 'paper chase' and a world filled with puppies



was speaking puppy talk.... "Was it a good flight back?" my mother asked through the phone.

"I think I forgot a couple of books, Mom," I said. "The weather is still awful here, how's it there?" she said.

"Could you mail them, I'll need 'em for exams." "Sure. You take care of yourself," she said. "I can't believe how much I have left to do."

"Get some sleep for a change." "Thing is, I don't even care, I'm so sick of it all." "Try to take those vitamins, too."

"I mean, you care about grades?" "Just remember we love you."

"Nothing but little rewards for greedy kids, the same kids that got gold stars and the chance to clap the erasers in grade school. It's a vicious little game...what did you say Mom?"

"Goodbye, Bud," she said. "Oh sure, say hello to everyone there for me, I had a great time, the flight was great...bye Mom."

I hung up the phone and laughed, thinking about how little she and the rest of the family knew about me, about what I was doing. They tried but they just couldn't help it, they were so removed. But as I think on it now I realize they're not the only ones removed, the only ones preoccupied with their own little world. I recall the world I left and hope there is a second coming this Christmas — the coming of another litter and a chance to brush up on my puppy talk.

Buddy Burniske, a junior English major who misses Hatfield, Mass., is an editorial assistant for The Daily Tar Heel.

Debbie Ford  
Old Well Apartments

Editor's note: Thanks for the letter.

"DTH" lauded

To the editor:

I just finished reading your "Letter to reader," DTH, Dec. 3, and you are absolutely correct. Knowing from my experience as editor of a high school paper, students just do not care what goes on in the outside world. That is why the "ivory tower" syndrome exists — students live in a fantasy world in college and are appalled when they hit the real world.

I, myself, would like to apologize for not writing editorial letters. I suppose I was so tired of writing the entire editorial page in high school that I just gave up.

I enjoy the DTH editorial page. It is difficult to remember to write letters of approval. I was in full agreement with the stands taken on the "Moral" Majority, the Homecoming

competition, and, especially, the endorsement of John Anderson (1984, watch out!). Thanks for alerting me to what I was doing...at least one person is out here reading!

Ellen Neerincx  
239 Morrison Residence Hall

Letter contest

To the editor:

Your plea for more letters to the editor, although couched in such terms as to bring an immediate "1-2-3-awwww!" response from most of your readers, actually represents a far more serious problem than some of us would like to admit. To write a letter which one assumes will be made public, one must make sure that he has written it well: that it is grammatically coherent, that there are no dumb mistakes, that there is some sense to its content. In other words, the writer must be sure that he isn't going to make a fool of himself in public.

Few college students, it seems, have such confidence. Despite what we teach them in English courses about writing and communication, despite the fact that when they assume positions in the business, social and academic communities after graduation they will be required to carry on correspondence, still, most students do not write letters. Perhaps it is the lack of rhetorical practice, in school or out of it; perhaps it is easier to "reach out and touch someone" by phone instead of by pen; perhaps we're all just lazy.

The DTH is not the only correspondent who writes but gets no reply. Our mothers will all bear witness to this fact. It isn't easy to commit one's self to putting words on paper, to publicly take a stand and be recognized for it. I too think that students should write to their school paper, if only for the practice of an art which they will need to exercise the rest of their lives. I know of no way, however, to stimulate them to do this beyond what the DTH already does: publicly take stands and invite informed response. Perhaps the DTH could sponsor a contest for the best letter to the editor received — the prize, a free ride on the bucking bull at Jaspers. For many people here, that seems to be a more appealing goal than expressing themselves in their native language.

Josephine Koster  
Department of English

