

The Daily Tar Heel

90th year of editorial freedom

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Bad and mad

"They are jealous and just drooled at the thought of me spending the rest of my life in some wretched prison in the backwoods of North Carolina. But here I am in this insane asylum, in southeast Washington, D.C., and everyone can't stand the thought of my innocence."

John W. Hinckley Jr.

A year and a half ago, John Hinckley Jr. shot President Reagan. Just 14 months later he was found not guilty by reason of insanity.

Today, Hinckley is receiving psychiatric treatment in St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, but the insanity defense is still on trial. Since the June verdict, government and judicial officials have split on whether a person found insane can be held accountable for his actions. Leaders of the American Bar Association say no. Reagan says yes. On Saturday, Reagan announced his plans to push anti-crime legislation through Congress that would eliminate insanity as a defense.

Proponents of the insanity defense argue that the U.S. judicial system traditionally has not punished people mentally incapable of controlling their actions. They maintain that the insanity defense serves as a reminder of the compassion and mercy still found in today's judicial system.

But opponents of the insanity, or "bad and mad," defense, are rankled by the person that can walk away scot-free from a crime. Law regulations in the past have allowed those found not guilty by reason of insanity to leave insane asylums shortly after they're committed. The opponents point to the Georgia man who, upon acquittal and subsequent release from a mental hospital, walked into a hotel lounge and killed his wife and two bystanders.

Reagan's bill, if approved, would ensure that persons guilty of crimes pay their dues. But his proposal is incomplete as of yet. It does not specify that psychiatric treatment will be administered to those who really need it.

Congress should approve measures, such as those already adopted by four states, that would find a person guilty, but insane. Under this verdict, a convicted felon would receive psychiatric treatment before serving a prison term. A person who is both "bad and mad" would be treated as such.

The next best thing

Once again Southern Bell is trying to reach out and touch someone, this time with a new optional service for its customers called measured service. But the proposed service has been structured in such a way as to ensure that most people won't even bother to sign up for it.

Ideally, measured service means that a subscriber's phone bill would be based on the number of telephone calls made: the more calls made, the higher the bill. Such a proposal would give customers an option to the \$11.75 monthly rate now charged by Southern Bell.

But instead of a simple pay-as-you-phone rate, Ma Bell has asked the North Carolina Utilities Commission to approve two rates: a "standard rate" that gives a customer 124 one-minute calls for \$9.65 per month, and a "low usage rate" that provides 40 one-minute calls and costs \$6.75 per month. If a subscriber exceeded his limit, a surcharge would be tacked onto the bill.

Southern Bell representatives told the utilities commission Friday that the proposed service would provide an option for customers who rarely use their phones. And with rate increases planned for 1983, Southern Bell also argued that some alternative to higher costs was needed.

A simple measured service, in which a person is billed only for the calls made, is a good idea. For those people who rarely use the phone, it would provide a much needed cost break to higher monthly rates. But Southern Bell's version of the service is set up in a way that would discourage its use by most telephone subscribers: it is so complicated that most people could not figure out how many of their allotted calls they had used.

For example, someone on the low usage plan would be given \$2 of the \$6.70 bill for telephone calls. A call in the same city would cost five cents for the first minute and one cent for each additional minute. A call to a nearby town might cost eight cents for the first minute and three cents for each additional minute. Most people would need a calculator and a math degree to figure it all out.

That is the principal stumbling block to this proposal. A similar proposal was turned down by the commission last year. Southern Bell has settled for the next best thing by proposing its limited calls measured service, a service that has been shown to be little-used in other states. The utilities commission should reject the Southern Bell proposal, agreeing to the proposal only when a simple, measured service is developed.

Etiquette lives

We don't have a "Society" page, but if we did, it certainly would have given a large amount of coverage to this weekend's debutante ball in Raleigh. There is no doubt that this year's ball was, as usual, the highlight of the state's social scene. More than 200 of the most outstanding and accomplished young ladies from the best families in the state made their debut into society. As expected of these valuable keepers of tradition, the ball was run smoothly and by all the highest standards of etiquette. After all, one must behave properly at something as important as the deb ball.

Because etiquette is so important to the ball, the sponsors of the ball, the Terpsichorean Club, make sure everyone involved knows all the dos and don'ts of coming out. Not that the Twerps Club, er, Terps Club, does not trust the manners of the participants. But no one wants to see the whole ball absolutely ruined because some deb wore the wrong length gloves or a rough-edged assistant marshal put his elbows on the table.

So to make sure no mistakes happen, the club puts out a 16-page "Debutante Handbook," which tells debbs to be on time, not to attend any unsanctioned events and generally to keep the ball "on its proper plane of dignity."

The assistant marshal also receives a letter from the Terpsichorean Club. Of course, since he was carefully chosen by the deb, he should know already not to pick his nose or get trashed at any of the 12 sanctioned parties. But boys will be boys, so the letter tells him to behave like a gentleman. Even if he is not quite satisfied with his deb date, he is told not to "invite dates to any of the debutante ball functions." We don't see why any assistant marshal wouldn't be satisfied with his deb, but, well, maybe that happens.

The Terpsichorean Club, however, cannot answer all questions, including the most difficult one: whether the debbs should wear comfortable flat shoes or more attractive heels to the ball. The decision becomes especially difficult when one remembers that the debbs must descend three short steps during their presentation, an athletic feat that has unnerved debbs for 56 years.

Ah, that's a tough decision, and yes, it can be lonely at the top of society, but it's all worth it. As for us, we congratulate the debbs on their debut, their assistant marshalls for behaving like gentlemen, and all of Society for showing the state that tradition and etiquette still live.

Stereotyping mars Christian image

By NORMAN ACKER

When someone says the word "Christian," what is the first thing you think of?

Teetotalers? Non-smokers? "Good" people? A priest with a collar? A hell-fire preacher in the pit? A conservative political campaigner?

These terms might describe some Christians, but they do not define what a Christian is.

What is a Christian, then? I propose that a Christian is simply a person who does two things. First, he knows the love of Jesus Christ, and second, he responds to it. And, to "know" means more than just intellectual knowledge, more than just knowing about God. It means knowing him personally.

We understand this distinction when we talk about knowing people. I know a great deal about President Reagan, but I don't know him.

The Bible talks about our knowing God in terms of the relationship between a father and child. A father and child spend time talking together. We talk with God, through prayer. Nor is prayer just something we do with our eyes closed. It is a constant communication with God throughout the day and it is the key to the Christian life.

But the Bible not only says that we are children of God, it says that we have been adopted into His family. None of us is worthy of being adopted into God's family, nor are we adopted because we deserve His love. God draws us into His family because He loves us as a father loves a child.

The Bible says, "God demonstrates His love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8.

So God's love is not merely a feeling or an emotion. It is action. Jesus gave up His place at God's side to live as a

man. Even more important, He freely gave up His own life to bridge the gap between God and man.

The know God's love is to realize the fact that it is given to us not as something we deserve, but as a gift given through Jesus. Jesus, by His crucifixion, paid the price of this gift, so that we who are imperfect can be embraced by God. It is only when we have appreciated God's love as a gift that we can enter into a father/child relationship with God himself.

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The second principle of Christianity, however, is as important as the first: once we have accepted God's love, we must respond to it. This we do by loving one another. "Since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." I John 4:11.

Like God's love for us, our love for others must be more than emotions. It is demonstrated by actions — by helping others in any way we can. This is our motivation for trying to be "good" people. It is not that we are afraid of God or feel we must obey a strict code of conduct. (Although to be honest, some Christians themselves have this mistaken view.) We realize how much God cares for us, so we do what we believe is best for ourselves and for others.

Our love can be demonstrated through everyday actions like helping someone with homework or listening to their

problems. It could be as simple as taking a hungry transient to dinner or as complicated as providing food for the millions of malnourished people in the Third World.

Our love also prompts us to tell others of our relationship with God. We want others to know the greatness of God's love.

Since God meets our ultimate need — the need to be forgiven of our sins and accepted into His family — we ought to try to meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of those around us. Thus, good works are not an attempt to obey rules or to work our way into heaven. Rather, they flow out of an understanding of how much God has done for us.

The misconceptions that many people have about Christianity often come from an overemphasis on either knowing God's love or responding to it, rather than emphasizing both in balance.

Some fundamentalists spend so much time talking about God's grace and Jesus' death on the cross that they neglect to respond to that love by reaching out to others. Many churches, on the other hand, have gone to the other extreme in an attempt to carry out the "social gospel" (the Christian responsibility to help people in need and promote social justice). They forget that all of us need to know God's love and forgiveness that was demonstrated by Jesus' death on the cross. The Christian life, then, is a life of balance.

Both Christians and non-Christians should examine their lives. The former to see if they are keeping this balance. The latter, to accept the gift that God gave us through Jesus, and respond to that.

Norman Ackers is a second-year law student from Raleigh.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

U.S. first-strike prospect ignored

To the editor:

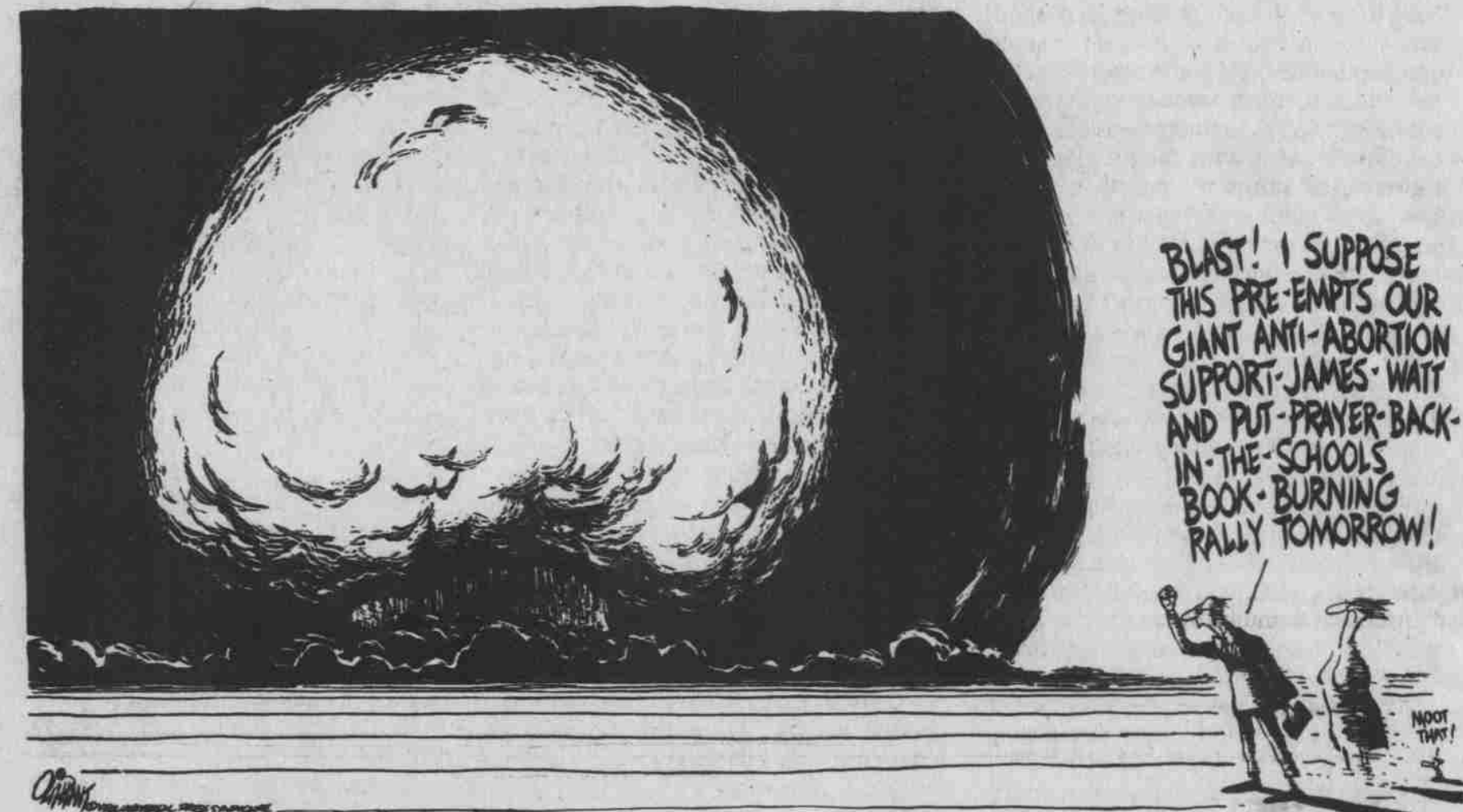
With all due respect for James Leutze, chairman of the peace, war, and defense curriculum, I have to disagree with the statements he made in the article, "Dr. Leutze discusses nuclear war" (DTH, Sept. 1). Whenever I hear talk about the superiority of the Soviet Union's first-strike capability as compared to the United States' first strike capability, I try to look at the issue from the perspective of a Soviet defense planner. I remember that the Soviet defense planner thinks all Americans are baby-eating barbarians. He thinks President Reagan can't wait to push the nuclear button and to blow the Soviet Union off the face of the earth. Looking at the issue from this perspective, I would be terrified.

Look at the facts! The Soviet Union has 75 percent of its nuclear weapons in underground missile silos, and 25 percent in bombers and submarines. The United States has 33 percent of its nuclear weapons in underground missile silos and 67 percent in bombers, cruise missiles, and submarines. (I don't want to get into the argument in this article, but I could contend that our bombers, cruise missiles and submarines are better than the Soviet Union's.)

If the Soviet Union fires first with its missiles, they could wipe out a lot of our missiles and some of our bombers and bomber-launched cruise missiles, but they would get virtually none of our ship-launched cruise missiles and even less of our submarine-launched Polaris missiles. We would be left with most of our people-killing nuclear weapons. Our underground missiles are aimed at Soviet missiles, so if they are wiped out by Soviet missiles our only problem is the fall-out, because the Soviet missiles just knocked themselves out. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union is left with vastly outnumbered (and probably outclassed) people-killing weapons.

Now, what Leutze and American defense experts never mention, is what happens if the United States fires first? We always assume the Russians are baby-eating barbarians, but what if you are a Russian thinking all Americans are baby-eating barbarians? For what it is worth, the Soviet Union recently declared it would never fire first; the United States has never made such a declaration.

If the United States fires first, we will wipe out 75 percent of the Soviet arsenal



before it has a chance to leave its silos. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union would be wallowing in a nuclear fall-out quagmire instead of us. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union will be left with a vastly outnumbered people-killing nuclear arsenal.

The point is: if the United States fires first, we actually could destroy the Soviet Union, while the Soviet Union would get in a few hits. If the Soviet Union fires first, they might come out with a draw.

Ask Leutze, President Reagan or any American general if they would trade for the Soviet nuclear arsenal, and then ask a few higher-ups in the Soviet Union if they would trade for ours.

Richard Oldrieve
625 Craige

Crossing guard necessary

To the editor:

I found Alan T. Mather's letter "No crossing guards" (DTH, Sept. 2) to be of adolescent level. Mather protested implementation of a law by placement of a public safety officer at the NCNB/

Carolina Coffee Shop crosswalk. The already present stoplight is necessary, but of no avail if not respected.

Mather spoke of a "right on red" application for crosswalkers which would allow crossers to disregard a "Don't Walk" signal when no traveling cars are proximal. By observation of the large volume of violators, one would think that such an alteration was presently legal. But such modification is not legal and should not be, for reasons of further violation by the many irresponsible students presently attending this University.

I don't think that many students realize the serious complications of an automobile-pedestrian collision. Practically no pedestrian or driver wants to incur the devastating legal, financial or emotional consequences of such an accident. Therefore, to prevent or at least reduce the chances of additional avoidable occurrences, the law must be enforced by a costly public safety officer. This would not be necessary if all would comply.

It's too bad that so many students exhibit adolescent and selfish attitudes

when it comes to common responsibilities as a law-abiding citizen. Which goes to say: if you act "elementary," you should be treated "elementary."

Mark E. Allen
Chapel Hill

PLO real 'monster'

To the editor:

I was appalled by the ridiculous description, written by Jason E. Dowdle, "Israel at fault" (DTH, Sept. 7), of the effort by Israel to secure its land and the lives of its people against the PLO. These judgements exhibit a total lack of knowledge of the history of this subject.

Thank you, Rita S. Wolfgang, "Jews just want a home," (DTH, Sept. 9) for informing readers of the real monster in history. Perhaps this accurate description of PLO dealings with not only Israelis, but Jews all over Europe, will make those who feel they are capable of judging the actions of Israel, more careful in the future.

David Leff
Chapel Hill

Did they use sheepskins?

By MIKE SHARSKY

It recently came to my attention that I do not have enough credits to graduate. I am not sure what this means. Whenever I ask what a credit is, I learn about three dozen other items, which I am told are intimately connected with the acquisition of credits.

However, I am satisfied that no one knows exactly what is being acquired, except that it is necessary to get a "diploma." According to my dictionary, a "diploma" is a Greek letter folded double. The Greeks initiated the custom of the diploma so that what they wrote would not be visible to prying eyes. This was before the Chinese invented gumma to stick the letta together.

However, the Italians, known as the Romans, improved this system further by inventing the envelope, into which the diploma could be inserted without gumma — that went onto the envelope — which kept the diploma clean. Then the U.S. Postal Service, with a stab at efficiency, came up with the pigeon hole for sorting envelopes. It turned out that the average diploma was larger than a holey pigeon, so letters had to be folded three or even four times to fit the small envelopes. Triloma and quadroma sound rather clumsy, so "letta" was adopted, eventually becoming "letter."

Diploma was honorably discharged from linguistic service and retired to its present usage. Old and a little senile, the word went astray, and became attached to a document that is never, ever found in the folded-double state. But this document is very valuable to one's career. What you do is hang it on the wall in your den, then tell prospective employers, "Yes, I have a diploma. It is hanging on the wall in my den, like a diploma should." For some reason, no one ever questions your honesty about that hanging diploma. They never stop the interview to say, "Please go home, young man, and come back next week with your diploma. You may fold it double if it is convenient. Good day."

Every senior has dug through a zillion credits, flinging them behind like dirt out of a tunnel. But at the end of the tunnel are a few especially tough credits, blocking a final escape. They are always "requirements," a sort of essential credit. Somewhere in university lore sits a thin figure in steel rim spectacles, leaning back in a wooden recliner, fingers tented, staring down his long cruel nose and whispering, "Zere are certain re-QUIREmentssss..."

I am trying to pass French. Why must a writer of English humor, or rather humor written in English, learn another language? My only use for French would be if I fell into Paris one day. And if that happens, imagine trying to get by on two plodding semesters of French credits. I would never be so rude as to expect a Parisian to stand by while I go over conjugations.

I am trying to pass French. Why must a writer of English humor learn another language? My only use for French would be if I fell into Paris one day. And if that happens, I would never be so rude as to expect a Parisian to stand by while I go over conjugations.

If I had to pick a language, I think Chinese or Eskimo would do. It would be so strange that I would feel like a child again, and, of course, children pick up a language so much easier.

My other problem is a "major requirement." This is a sort of super essential credit. English has sub-requirements; I must select credits from within credit groups. Thus, we have your sub-super essential credit. (These groups, by the by, do not have any theme or cohesion; I cannot see why a credit is in one group and not another; they are apparently ordered through the process of random cruelty.)

I am confounded by a course in 19th century English

novels. These books are massive, ponderous; they possess individual fields of gravity. This credit requires: *Moll Flanders*, *Tom Jones*, *Vanity Fair*, *Humphrey Clinker*, *The Mill On The Floss*, *Emma*, *Dombey and Son*, and *Jane Eyre*, which I lent out, but I know has 38 chapters. Excluding *Jane Eyre*, and what the hell, why not, the grand total is 3,985 pages. After several hundred pages, everything runs together. To demonstrate this, I present a paragraph composed of a single sentence from each book, excepting only *Jane Eyre*, and what the hell, why not.

"Respecting the chief of the Southdown family, Clement William, fourth Earl of Southdown, little need be told, except that his Lordship came into Parliament (as Lord Wolsey) under the auspices of Mr. Wilberforce, and for a time was a credit to his political sponsor, and decidedly a serious young man. He was not an ill-tempered man, not so often unreasonably cross as to deserve such a reproach; but his temper was not his great perfection; and, indeed, with such a worshipping wife, it was hardly possible that any natural defects in it should not be increased. Scenes like this, when painted at large, afford, as we have observed, very little entertainment to the reader. Things were now come to a lamentable height. It is doubtful whether our soldiers would be maintained if there were not pacific people at home who like to fancy themselves soldiers. All this time, uncle sat boiling with impatience, biting his fingers, throwing up his eyes, and muttering ejaculations; at length he burst into a kind of convulsive laugh, after which he hummed a song; and when the hurricane was over, exclaimed 'Blessed be God for all things!' It seemed as if the bosom would burst with the emotions stirring within it."

Well, try to sort that out. You'll see why I despair when an exam demands that I compare and contrast this and that from one and another endless novel. The clever student can write a paper that needs only minor adjustment to make it acceptable for any of these books. But all I see in my mind at exam time is 3,985, in big, block numerals.

Mike Sharsky is a senior English major from Greensboro.