

# The Daily Tar Heel

91st year of editorial freedom

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## No nerve gas

The Senate Tuesday narrowly approved the production of new "binary" nerve gas weapons, capping off the last element of the largest and perhaps most controversial military appropriations bill in history. The Senate was deadlocked until Vice President George Bush cast the deciding vote to approve the new breed of gas weapons that President Reagan has said would be used more as a bargaining lever than as a military deterrent. No amount of ostensible bargaining power, however, can offset the grave error of producing a weapon known more for killing civilians than soldiers. Nerve gas is barbaric and unneeded; it has not been used by this country since World War I.

Arguments for producing the weapons are weak, at best. Reagan claims that the new weapons will act as an effective tool in negotiations with the Soviet Union for an ultimate ban on all nerve gas weapons. The threat posed by these new gas bombs will supposedly make the Soviets think twice. But the United States already has 200,000 tons of chemical weapons at its disposal. Even Pentagon officials have admitted that this stockpile is enough to ward off any serious threat to U.S. security.

This hasn't stopped the Reagan administration officials' claim that the 'old' nerve gas is not as safe, endangering civilians because the shell containing the gas corrodes over time — a claim refuted by tests which show little or no shell deterioration. Officials say the new nerve gas, then, would be more "safe" because the binary shells would contain two inert gases that by themselves are harmless. When the new shell explodes, however, it's another matter; the two explode to produce a gas lethal even in small proportions.

If Reagan officials are concerned about the safety of the U.S. civilians during times of peace certainly the threat to others during war also should be considered. During a military strike using such bombs, innocent civilians living miles from an explosion could be killed by the nerve gas. In fact, it has been predicted that for the death of one protected soldier, 20 civilians would be killed. Certainly there is something morally wrong in the production of a war weapon more effective at killing civilians than soldiers.

When the House-Senate conference committee meets to hammer out the differences between their versions of the new \$253 billion defense appropriations bill, serious consideration must be given when weighing the benefits and detriments of this new breed of abhorrent chemical weapons. If the Reagan administration seriously wants a ban on such weapons, it should use the stockpile when bargaining with the Soviets, not complicate and increase this barbaric threat.

## Relentless runts

You're alone. It's almost midnight, and you hear him walking behind you, gaining ground on you with each step he takes. You can almost feel his warm, erratic breath on your back.

You turn the corner. So does he. Your apartment is only two blocks away, and you still pray that maybe, just maybe, he won't follow you that far. You pray that when you finally reach your apartment door he won't be right behind you, staring at you with feral eyes, salvation-drenched jowls.

You fumble in your pocket for the key. Only three or four steps separate you and the safety of your living room. But as you insert the key in the lock and frantically turn the door knob, he does it. He brushes against you and he...whines.

Each of us dreads this situation — a stray dog at our doorstep. Because it looks at us with such sad, hopeful eyes. Because we don't know whether to stroke or hose down its matted, muddied fur. Because we know that if we shut the door and trot off to the kitchen, our sleep will be hindered by overwhelming feelings of guilt.

Strays don't deserve it. They have no pride. And, boy, do they know how to pass the buck. They're all too ready to grovel, to transform their own miseries into a luckless person's crisis of conscience. They're never satisfied. Stoop to pet a lonely cat and he'll soon begin to set up camp outside your bedroom window, periodically pawing at the glass and pathetically leaping at insects in an all-too-obvious display of hunger.

They're there when we least expect them. Waiting for us outside the glass doors of Burger King while we eat our Whoppers. Standing in front of our cars while we unlock the doors. Creeping up behind us while we read *The Daily Tar Heel*... uh, oh.

## Editor's note

In the past few weeks, *The Daily Tar Heel* has been criticized heavily for proposed changes to the Campus Calendar, our daily schedule of campus events. There have been idle threats. There have been concerned letters. Perhaps it is now time for an explanation.

First I'd like to say that the new calendar will run twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays, instead of just Thursdays as was previously suggested. This was a move I had intended to make later when the paper had more money to absorb the cost. The Thursday calendar will include all events from Thursday through and including Monday. Monday's schedule will list Monday's events again and include those through and on the following Thursday. This will ensure that events on Mondays and Thursdays can receive adequate publication before the event is held. Forms must be filled out and returned to the Carolina Student Fund in South Building by 5 p.m. Tuesday for Thursday's publication and on 2 p.m. Sunday for Monday's.

If you've made it this far, you are probably still wondering why a change was needed in the first place. One reason is space in the paper. The *DTH* simply cannot handle the cumbersome schedule everyday given our high costs that result in small papers. And, I'd like to add that the twice-a-week listing will be presented in an easily-read form that can give

groups better promotion. Students will be able to cut out the calendar and have a complete listing of the next few days events at his or her fingertips. Surely that's a benefit.

Another reason for the change is the coordination that will occur when the events are published through a central group, the Carolina Student Fund. The group, located in South Building, is relatively new to campus but holds great promise in its efforts to promote the campus groups' activities. They can help by warning groups of days where a great number of other meetings may deter people from attending theirs. And they can serve as the center from which all groups can operate, perhaps suggesting at times a merger of activities to increase participation.

Now, let me finally say that the new format will not exclude groups from publicizing last-minute events in the *DTH*, just as the old form did not. On most days there is the space for us to run short announcements from our news desks. It's true that the new format will ask a little more from the groups, a bit more organization. But it will return much more — an easy-to-read and comprehensive look at the week's events. That was the purpose behind the paper's first beginning the campus calendar as a free service, and that certainly is its purpose now.

Kerry DeRochi  
editor



SOME GUY WANTS TO KNOW IF YOU'VE HEARD ABOUT A NEW ANTI-HERPES VACCINE THAT WORKS ON MICE?

## LETTERS

### Reverse Ragland decision

To the editor:

It is a shame that the UNC School of Medicine administration has turned its back on gay medical students and the medical needs of the gay community by refusing to accept the Ragland scholarship ("Officials refuse scholarship for gay medical students," *DTH*, Oct. 31); a double shame, in fact. Not only has Dean Stuart Bondurant exposed his ignorance of gay people's difficulty in finding adequate, informed medical care by refusing to accept medical students' voluntary clarification of their sexual preferences, but he has also made clear that he would prefer not to know.

It is impossible to work for long in the area of sex counseling without discovering how hard it is for lesbians and gay men to find good doctors. Very many of the inquiries the Sexuality Education and Counseling Service receives from gay people are calls from people who feel unable to disclose important personal facts to the doctors they see, or who have been rebuffed by their doctors and do not know where they can go to avoid repeated insult.

When one thinks about the reasons, this is not so surprising. Gay people have frequently been victimized by segments of the medical profession. Doctors and psychiatrists have used their authority to turn a personal difference into a so-called pathology, and to bolster prejudicial and persecutory laws which turn this so-called pathology into a crime. Although the American Medical Association and the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from their classifications of diseases in the 1970s (an action which continues to be challenged by vocal conservatives), North Carolina remains as one of 15 states which still classifies homosexual acts as felonies.

As late as 1966, state laws encouraged courts to prescribe "cures" for homosexuality, consisting of aversion "therapy," electro-convulsion, and lobotomies — techniques originally developed on unwilling homosexual prisoners by members of the medical profession. Even though extreme situations of medical mistreatment may have involved only a small number of health professionals and a relatively small number of lesbians and gay men, continuing mistrust and misinformation remain a widespread problem. This problem is compounded by the continuing existence and sporadic, discriminatory enforcement of anti-gay laws and, further, by commonplace, traditional anti-gay prejudice, ridicule and rejection.

While unjust laws may be addressed through many sorts of political activism, the medical issues confronted by the lesbian and gay community demand very particular solutions:

- Working to define objectives and methods for provision of care which encourages patient confidence and open disclosure of all relevant medical facts, free from any fear of ridicule, freakish curiosity or ignorant malpractice;
- Working with individuals and groups within the lesbian and gay community to relay sources of acceptable health care, and emphasizing both the importance of such care and the drawbacks of receiving treatment from unqualified doctors;
- Fostering mutual support groups for gay people who may be chronically ill, or panicked by individual problems or by common, perceived threats such as AIDS.

Brian Richmond  
Acting Director  
Sexuality Education and  
Counseling Service

### Dangers of silence

To the editor:

We thank the editorial staff of *The Daily Tar Heel* for their thoughtful and courageous stance on the issue of "a moment of silence" in our public schools ("The silent treatment," *DTH*, Nov. 2). The latent dangers of quiet time are callously ignored by the proponents of "a moment of silence," and the *DTH* has done well to remind us of the frightening "potential for a threat to the constitutionally mandated separation of church and state" inherent in silence.

On more than one occasion in grade school, I was cruelly ridiculed and abused by my classmates "during the kickball game at lunchtime recess" for refusing to join them in silent prayer. Since there was "no way to sufficiently monitor the announcement of the quiet moment," my

teacher frequently made me think about God during the moment of silence, though I begged her not to do it. Silence must therefore be forbidden.

Unfortunately the editorial did not confront an even more insidious threat to the Constitution: By giving its employees Sunday off, the federal government is forcing them to go to church. This is an intolerable violation of the separation of church and state even though the pressure to attend a worship service is merely tacit. Perhaps the courts could address this issue next: Government employees should be given a seven-day work week. Sunday is another form of a "moment of silence" that must be eliminated.

Kevin Wolf  
J.B. Howard  
North Street

### Not just bigotry

To the editor:

I don't mind being persecuted for my beliefs — when you take a stand you've got to expect opposition. But how can you degrade our university and *The Daily Tar Heel* by attacking me or any other CARP member for our religious beliefs because you also oppose our support for America and democracy as expressed in the Pit? ("Students rally in reaction to

Grenada," *DTH*, Oct. 21.) You can be a religious bigot as well as anti-American, but you shouldn't try to discredit those who would stand in defense of their country because of their race, creed or color.

Jack Ashworth  
Director of CARP  
Chapel Hill

## This side of paradise?

By MARYMELDA HALL

College students represent a strange breed of almost-adults. Society assures these pseudo-scholars that the college years are carefree wisps of Fitzgeraldian imagery and intellectual excitement. Obviously, neither society nor F. Scott has recently sampled collegiate life. Today's college student is a frustrated, overwhelmed human being, struggling with independence and lint-filled laundry.

College students encounter many pitfalls in their land of independence. They get hooked on junk food and afternoon soaps, staying up late and sleeping through 8 a.m. classes on rainy days. College students drink beer for breakfast, eat crackers in unmade beds, leave dirty clothes in piles on the floor and never ever dust. They go to class wearing torn blue jeans and a ragged sweatshirt they know would flunk maternal inspection, as would their language, which increasingly resembles that of a sailor's.

Unfortunately, financial worries hover over this newfound personal freedom. A college student is shocked at paying \$142 for one semester's books. And when did pencils get so expensive? College students dread the ominous phone bill, especially after receiving a \$72 demand from Ma Bell ten days after hook-up. College students love check books, hate bank statements and go into withdrawal if they misplace their Teller II cards. College students are always broke, and letters home are

sure to include a desperate "send money."

While money matters are a problem, academics also provide ulcer material. College students face critical professors, arrogant TA's, incredible geology exams ("rocks for jocks" is not what it seems) and endless labs. They must fight to gain recognition in a class of 400 equally or overly intelligent fellow students. They learn to love a study hour's silence in an otherwise stereophonic residence hall. College students force themselves to read eighty-seven pages of abnormal psychology. They discover that all tests and quizzes inevitably occur during the same week, if not on the same day.

College students seldom have agreeable schedules. They wade through the drop/add ocean, searching frantically for an opening in Econ 10 or any 9:00 class. Their math professors don't speak English, and their English professors speak it too well. One course always mutilates an otherwise presentable OPA.

## U.S. wrong on Nicaragua

By LOREN HINTZ

In spite of growing opposition to the U.S.-supported attacks on Nicaragua, the Reagan administration continues to support covert activities in that Central American country. These activities have killed many Nicaraguans and have impeded efforts to reconstruct a nation ravaged by the 1979 civil war between the Sandinistas and the U.S.-supported Somoza dictatorship.

Many people, such as House Majority Leader James C. Wright Jr., D-Texas, continue to make accusations against Nicaragua that are better applied to its neighbors. They accuse Nicaragua of violating human rights, failing to improve the standard of living of its people, being a threat to neighboring nations and opposing traditional American values.

In general these accusations against Nicaragua have no merit. The accusations also make the United States a hypocrite since the Reagan administration supports many governments in Latin America which violate human rights and pose a threat to peace in the region.

After spending three and a half of the last five years in Central America and after visiting Nicaragua several times, I am aware that the current governments of Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala are more harsh and barbaric than the Sandinista government has ever been. Secret cemeteries have been found in Honduras and El Salvador, not in Nicaragua. Priests and religious workers have been murdered in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador, not in Nicaragua. El Salvador destroyed its own university and has killed scores of students.

The June visit of a U.S. trade union delegation made it very clear that El Salvador severely represses its unions. In Nicaragua the unions play an active role in governmental policy. Some anti-Sandinista unions, however, have complained in the local press of government harassment.

Throughout Central America, Indians have been repressed. Guatemala seems to kill Indians on the mere suspicion that they support the guerrillas. In the Honduran valley where I lived, Indians who claim lands that ranchers have taken from them are shot. During an interview with Miskito members of the Nicaraguan Indian Committee, I learned that the Nicaragua government has worked to improve the quality of life in the Mosquitia.

Treatment of the opposition differs greatly in Nicaragua compared with other Central American nations. In El Salvador, the perceived opposition is tortured and assassinated, and those who march in protest are shot. Honduras has begun to "disappear" opposition leaders. In Nicaragua, those suspected of violating the security laws are tried. The trials are not a farce, since even some of those accused of being counterrevolutionaries have been acquitted. The Somoza National Guardsmen captured by Sandinistas after the 1979 revolution were not executed. Instead, they were tried for war crimes, and those convicted were usually given relatively short sentences.

Nicaragua has been called a threat to her neighbors, but the reverse seems true. Although Honduras complains of Sandinista attacks, it is Nicaragua that can show the bodies of children, workers and soldiers killed by invaders from Honduras. A month before my last visit to Nicaragua, a German doctor was killed by a group of "freedom fighters." Incidents like this happen all the time in Nicaragua. If there is any pattern to the civil wars and revolutions in recent Latin American history, it is that this violence is preceded by U.S.-supported dictatorships.

Nicaragua has implemented many of the same values the United States claims as its own. For instance, Nicaragua practices the tradition of accepting refugees. Most recently, the United States has begun to deport Salvadoran refugees, some of whom have been murdered upon their return. Nicaragua emphasizes helping the poor rather than the wealthy or the middle class. During Nicaragua's current economic crisis, those with cars are only allowed several gallons of gas a week, but bus transportation for the poor is greatly subsidized. Basic foods are cheap and necessarily rationed, while imported luxury goods are expensive and scarce, but not rationed.

Both the United States and Nicaragua denounce foreign intervention and oppose tyranny. The United States emphasizes Soviet intervention in Europe, Asia and Africa, but turns a blind eye at home. In contrast, the Nicaraguans emphasize U.S. intervention in Mexico, Honduras, Grenada, Guatemala, Cuba, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Chile and Nicaragua. Because of U.S. intervention, Nicaragua must spend scarce resources on defense while scores of Nicaraguans die on their own soil defending themselves from an invasion. Meanwhile, the powerful United States is able to fight its "wars of national security" overseas.

The United States and Nicaragua both support democracy. The United States equates democracy with elections, but ignores the many farcical elections held by Central American governments. (Of course, the United States has been in the bad habit of subverting freely elected governments it did not like, such as in Chile and Guatemala.) Nicaragua equates democracy not only with elections, but also with public participation in the government and is beginning to give power to student, woman, worker and peasant organizations.

Five years ago, the Sandinistas overthrew one of the worst dictatorships in Latin America. Since then they have tried to improve the lives of their poor and to guarantee fundamental human rights. For many reasons, including U.S. intervention, they have not accomplished all that they set out to do. However, Nicaragua's record of responsive government is much better than that of any other Central American nation over the same period. Nicaragua deserves our help, not our bullets. Congress would be completely justified in its efforts to prevent the Reagan administration from attacking Nicaragua.

Loren Hintz is a graduate student in education from Tiffin, Ohio.

### A unique play

To the editor:

Arts editor Jeff Grove failed to appreciate the simple beauty of the musical *Pump Boys and Dinettes* ("Pump Boys" promises more than it delivers," *DTH*, Nov. 7). No one promised that *Pump Boys and Dinettes* was going to be replete with plot and pageantry. It was a deftly crafted insight into rural Southern living: not a revue, but a revealing, humorous description of plain, everyday life. To use the pejorative term "plotless" is thus unfair. No plot was needed; no plot was wanted.

Nicolette Larson certainly did not bring the self-confidence and starfire of a Patty Lupone or a Betty Buckley to the stage of

Memorial Hall, but a slick performance was not required. What it took was the understanding to play a rural Southern woman that one could meet serving up hashbrowns in a truckstop on a mythical Highway 57, and Larson performed admirably.

Each piece of drama is unique and therefore requires a fresh effort on the part of the viewer. Preconceived ideas as to how a show should look and sound will often leave the theatergoer disappointed.

Joey Hall  
Cameron Avenue

Social life, or the lack of it, is of colossal concern to college students. They nap in the afternoons, recovering from or preparing for late-night partying. They drink too much, too fast — and spend the next day wondering why. Some choose Greek life and rush from house to house in search of the perfect brothers and sisters, while others claim that the siblings back home are more than enough. Beginning their weekends on Thursday afternoon, college students survive on football games, court parties and hall mixers. They spend hours on the phone making plans to attract the opposite sex. Dreading nights alone in a dorm room, college students drag themselves from party to party, convinced they are having a wonderful time.

This frenzied hustle of everyday life challenges the unsuspecting students. They flounder in a sea of anonymity, reciting endlessly their Social Security numbers. College students scan the crowds at fraternity parties in search of just one familiar face. Struggling to cope with roommate skirmishes, personality conflicts and coin-operated washing machines, they survive on care packages, telephone calls and weekends at home.

College students hunger for life, but they hunger even more for Domino's pizza. The child in them clings tighter as the adult fights to emerge. Today's college students bend rules and break hearts as they haltingly fight their way to maturity and the showers.

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