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The Daily Tar Heel

92nd year of editorial freedom

Back at the vacant lot

It all took less than a minute and a half. In just 88 seconds an exchange of fewer than 40 bullets left five communist labor organizers fatally wounded and seven more Americans wounded on a vacant lot in Greensboro. But as far as the criminal justice system is concerned, the event might never have happened, for no one has been held responsible for the crimes committed that third day of November, five years ago. Sunday's acquittal ends any possibility of the defendants serving time in prison for their crimes. The verdict, while deplorable for its failure to wipe out the injustice of non-guilty verdicts in the 1980 murder trial, was unavoidable because of legal technicalities. The result is a sad failure of the system of justice. But it is a failure that should not be interpreted as an endorsement of political murder.

The defendants were tried under a narrow statute which defines civil rights only in racial terms. Attorneys for the Klansmen and Nazis successfully claimed that the killings were politically motivated — that as Godfearing Americans they were slaying communists. The government used the civil rights law as a last-ditch attempt to correct the unjust verdict of not guilty delivered by the jury in the 1980 state trial.

The defendants, of course, could not be tried again on the previous charges of murder, manslaughter and felonious rioting. In effect, authorities "threw the

book" at the defendants in 1980, and were then left with no new charges after the all-white jury passed down verdicts of not guilty on all counts. Moreover, the 1980 jury reached its verdict without the benefit of testimony from communist eyewitnesses — who refused to testify until the federal trial — and on the basis of videotape analysis that was later proven inaccurate. Only because previous opportunities for convicting the Klansmen had been wasted in 1980, was the government forced to try to persuade a jury that the nine Klansmen and Nazis killed the four whites and a black purely as an unprovoked racial attack.

Klan opponents warn that this second verdict of not guilty is a "green light" for more political murders. But North Carolinians must not and presumably will not interpret one miscarriage of justice as an endorsement of fascist attempts to exclude political adversaries from the exercise of civil rights. Recent vigils and demonstrations protesting Sunday's verdict provide evidence of this healthy public attitude.

The acquittal of the Klansmen and Nazis refreshes memories of a gruesome crime committed in a vacant Greensboro lot, and of the legal injustice that followed in a courtroom a year later. The system has failed, and nine probable killers have managed to ensure that fellow Americans are better dead than red.

Pornography on the high seas

As part of a continuing effort to lock up child molesters, the U.S. Customs Service is developing computerized "target lists" of the thousands of Americans who repeatedly receive pornographic material from foreign countries. The lists are, in turn, to be offered to local law enforcement agencies in hopes of providing leads in child sexual abuse cases. The idea is a good one.

Despite our approval, we must admit that at first glance, we felt compelled to cry unconstitutional *foul!* As Burt Neuborne, legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union, put it, "The most dangerous thing any society can do is keep a list of who reads what."

Quick phone calls to Duke and UNC law professors reassured us, however, and helped put the matter in perspective. It was pointed out that search-and-seizure protections, as well as other constitutional guarantees usually taken for granted in this country, are virtually nonexistent at the border. Anyone who has been to Mexico or Bermuda knows all too well that upon return to the United States, personal belongings are subject to intensive search.

Indeed, such seemingly unconstitutional violations of privacy appear at odds with our Bill of Rights — the ACLU's

Neuborne says the lists are "flatly unconstitutional" — but the discrepancies are another subject altogether. At issue here is whether the government should keep lists of those who receive pornographic materials from overseas.

The legality of such lists appears safe. Customs Commissioner William von Raab says that, in addition to his office having the authority to inspect any foreign mail entering the United States, by law it must maintain a list of recipients of pornographic material. He also argues that the lists would be invaluable to capturing and convicting child molesters: "We have been quite surprised at the occasional coincidence that recipients of large volumes and frequent shipments of child pornography often live across from public playgrounds or are on the staffs of child day-care centers and that sort of thing."

Americans who solicit pornography from other countries do so in defiance of the law. Thus, incoming pornography is no less than contraband, and the recipients are merely knowing law-breakers gambling that they won't get caught. By maintaining lists of those who receive the dirty goods, the Customs officials are not only enforcing the law, but they are helping to control child molestation as well.

A now-or-never situation

By TIM LITTLE

Editor's Note: The following column examines the growing danger of hazardous wastes and the importance of adequately controlling them. This issue will be examined further tonight by Michael Brown, a leading figure in exposing the problems at Love Canal, N.Y., in the final speech of the Carolina Symposium series. Brown will speak at 8 p.m. in Room 5 of Mitchell Hall.

Considering the size and scope of today's problems, from atomic weapon proliferation to city zoning, it would not be surprising if society chose to leave the hazardous waste problem on the back burner a while longer. It wouldn't be surprising, but it would be unfortunate because hazardous waste creates a problem to which virtually every consumer contributes and that affects all things dependent upon fresh air and water for life, but one that is entirely controllable.

Like acne, the hazardous waste problem is incurable, but manageable. Hazardous wastes are here to stay, a sign of our highly industrialized society. They are the product of manufacturing processes that give us the telephones through which we communicate, the automobiles we drive and the

paper upon which we print. Furthermore, they are the product of industries that in North Carolina alone account for 15 percent of all employment and \$5 billion in annual wages. Since life as we are accustomed to it is impossible without production of hazardous waste, society must either deal with hazardous waste now or be poisoned by it later.

Hazardous waste, as defined by the Environmental Protection Agency's Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 is solid waste or a combination of solid wastes that, because of its quantity, concentration or physical, chemical or infectious characteristics, poses a threat to human health or the environment when improperly managed. By this definition, a solid waste need not be solid, but may be liquid, semi-solid, solid or gaseous material which has served its originally intended purpose and may be discarded.

This is a modern definition of substances that are historically as old as manufacturing processes themselves. Hazardous waste is not peculiar to high-tech civilization, then, but has simply evolved along with growing technology and population. In general, waste is considered hazardous when it is capable of damaging the environment and harming public health because of improper handling. It is dangerous when it is ignitable, corrosive, toxic or reactive (as with air or water). North Carolina is the 11th largest producer of these substances in the United States, generating about two billion pounds annually.

The tricky art of filling space

When I first began to work at this paper, a veteran of sorts informed me that "there is no room for perfectionism in journalism." What at first seemed to me the words of a person with a grimly defeatist attitude soon proved to be truths nonetheless. As any writer whose story has been cut or rearranged on, or after, deadline can attest, journalism concerns itself with both the substantive and the cosmetic, and there is quite frequently a conflict between the two concerns.

The newspaper or magazine editor knows only too well that the quality of what appears on the printed page matters little unless the presentation of that material is attractive, accessible. It's somewhat like the proverbial tree in the forest situation. If no one hears it fall, does it really make a sound? Likewise, if no one reads a writer's story, can it have any impact? The journalist wants to be heard, so he tries to make certain that the forest is as handsome as it can be. He worries plenty about the tree — it's what he's ultimately committed to — but he recognizes the parallel, if not transcendent, virtue of the forest.

Making a page, or an entire newspaper or magazine, both appealing to the eye and easy to read is no easy task. The large production staffs at newspapers and magazines do a good job of reducing the complexity of it all to lists of rules including such catchphrases as "tombstoning," "bumping," and a host of other, equally provocative gerunds. The effort to "make up" a paper is cumbersome enough that some of the most respected journals in the nation merely concede the responsibility, reveling in their self-exemption from what they'd like to deem petty traditions of the trade. But most of these journals can do so only because their readers are perhaps a bit more sophisticated and a bit more willing to plow through dense thickets of print.

I have noticed, however, that there is one concern that seems to touch equally the big city daily and the small town weekly, the literary review and the sports magazine. That concern is filling a page so that the material fits, and fits snugly. It's not as easy as it sounds. Very often stories of a previously designated length come up short — too short to simply insert corridors of white space between the story's paragraphs, yet not so short that another story can find its way to print. The solution? Space fillers.

Frank Bruni

Ferret's Wheel

Space fillers are those often self-congratulatory, always irrelevant boxes in the corner, or across the bottom, of a newspaper or magazine page. They are usually promotions for the paper itself ("Wake up to a cup of coffee and *The Daily Tar Heel*") or for regularly appearing columns in the paper. Sometimes, they are conveniently altruistic plugs for charity organizations.

Ever since I recognized the need for them, and the extent to which they are disguised as mere amenities to the page, I have kept an eye open for the different ways in which that messy, unforeseen space is filled in various publications.

Space fillers are those often self-congratulatory, always irrelevant boxes in the corner, or across the bottom, of a newspaper or magazine page.

The New Yorker gets the tip of the hat for the most honest and entertaining, if condescending, method of filling space. Often, at the end of a short story or essay that hasn't quite made it to the bottom of the page, the reader will find a reprinting of a brief passage from another periodical. In that passage will be some typographical error that changes the entire meaning of the passage and renders it somewhat absurd. For example, *New Yorker* editors recently stumbled across a clipping from a newspaper that reported the nationally acclaimed Pittsburgh ballet's travels from Florida "to upstage New York." Any proofreader might have missed the crucial g, but the editors of *The New Yorker*, never ones to miss an opportunity for jest or to sit back and let their native New York be insulted, couldn't resist attaching the comment, "Pittsburgh, go home," to the end of the clipping.

At the other end of the spectrum is *Rolling Stone*

magazine. The merits of the publication aside, its contribution to the art of filling space comes in the form of "poems" appearing in between album reviews in the back section of each issue.

These sprinklings of verse, only a few of which succeed in hitting any kind of literary mark, are at least consistent. From what I have been able to determine, they all seem governed by the following rules.

- No single line is to exceed three words.
- No more than one punctuation mark per five lines is permissible.
- No conjunctions or articles may be used.

- The poem's title may be longer than the poem itself, but the poem should not exceed in length the full name of its author.

Of course, I am only assuming that these poems, by virtue of their brevity and the flexibility RS

editors have in how many they choose to print, are space fillers. But I may well be wrong. My first assumption about the poems — that they must be inclusions in the envelopes of those who write letters to the editor of the magazine — proved to be fallacious. Months of matching the bylines of letters with those of poems showed no correspondence between the two. Where the poems come from, I don't think I'll ever know. But I'll still put money on the fact that they're unsolicited.

Both *New Yorker* and *Rolling Stone* are merely trying to do what any publication does when it has to fill unexpected, uninvited space — create something ostensibly substantive out of nothing at all. It's not all that different from the task faced by the columnist who's run out of ideas.

Frank Bruni, a sophomore English major and associate editor of *The Daily Tar Heel*, has just succeeded in filling a great deal of space.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Maybe Miller needs a life jacket

To the editor:

I am greatly concerned with the views of D. Evans and J. Miller ("You only think you couldn't be pregnant..." *DTH*, April 9). First of all, I have always been greatly impressed with the Student Health Service. I commend those health professionals who provide care to such a challenging population as a university campus. I feel they do an excellent job, and I have used the Student Health Service on several

occasions. However, I am reminded by good friends and student colleagues at the School of Nursing of cases where SHS misdiagnosed a treatment or made a misdiagnosis. To those patients, I sympathize. However, this happens in the realm of health care, and unfortunately, humans err.

As a health professional, I find it appalling that these two women can call some of the doctors or nurse practitioners of SHS quacks, even if

in a humorous manner. These people have worked hard in the educational system, have passed rigorous state board examinations, and put their licenses on the lines daily working with people and making decisions about their lives. Put yourself in their shoes for one 12-hour shift!

For the bit on the \$55, I am like the next UNC student and would love to have that money for other things. However, I am thankful that it provides medical care for me in the manner in which it does. I work weekly at a volunteer clinic manned by students in medicine, nursing, dentistry, etc., and see a vast number of patients who are thankful for the opportunity to see us, even if at the expense of waiting many hours and being seen by a student health professional. Go to a private physician and see where \$55 gets you: a urine specimen and a tongue depressor.

I am also quite concerned that these two women are concerned about being asked, "Are you sexual-

ly active?" when visiting SHS. I have read the literature regarding sexual activities among the college population and the results of it: pregnancy, abortion, disease, and other psychosocial problems. If this is not enough, look at the number of adolescents who are sexually active and their problems, prior to entering college.

I hope Evans and Miller will get some insight as to why health professionals ask questions regarding sexuality. It does more than satisfy a curiosity, it helps them plan, implement, and evaluate treatment and educational regimens. I hope that these two women will soon see the good benefits of SHS that are at their fingertips. If not, they are missing a good opportunity to do so, before venturing out into the real world, where \$55 hardly gets you an appointment with some of us "quacks."

Kevin Ballance, SN
Teague

To err is human

To the editor:

We are writing in response to Glenn Miller, leader of the Carolina Knights' letter "Why the KKK is growing" (*DTH*, April 13). Miller describes the white race as "drowning in a sea of color." Why does Miller feel that he is drowning? Although we attend a predominantly white University, we have never felt as though we were drowning in a sea of paleness. We are confident enough in our abilities not to feel compelled to blame another race for our inadequacies.

Miller not only has contempt for blacks and Jews, but also for other whites. He refers to them as "brain-washed, liberalized, deracinated, limp-wristed honkies..." These are strong words to describe a white person who doesn't feel inferior and has an IQ above 90. Miller also finds it easy to blame Jews for the abortion of one million white infants yearly. Perhaps it is easier to blame than to recognize the problem of unwanted pregnancies — white or otherwise.

Miller further states that there hasn't been a Klansman convicted of a violent crime in North Carolina for eight years. The fact that there

have been no convictions in no way proves that no crimes have been committed. The Greensboro Nazi-Klan trial is a case in point. Five people were murdered in that incident, yet there was not a single conviction. Is this to say that no one died? No. It only underlines the support that Miller and his merry men have been able to gather using their gross generalizations and lies.

Exaggerations and generalizations are the earmarks of twisted logic like Miller's. With more than a century of ploys and preachings, the KKK has evolved from a band of cowardly buffoons to their lofty status as North Carolina's secret militia, bound and determined to make the world safe for hypocrisy. When will Miller and his friends realize that there's no avoiding the fact that we live in this world together? We might as well learn to love and evaluate each other for what we are and not for where our ancestors come from.

Keni Waddell
Morrison
Frank Abbott
Stacey



Political women

By SUSAN GADDY

Women in politics is becoming a topic which all candidates who are seeking elected office in 1984 are having to live with, whether they like it or not. Although women in the United States today represent more than one-half of the voting population, only 24 of our 435 members of Congress are female.

On the state level, women in positions of leadership occupy the offices in greater proportions, but they comprise less than a third of all top appointed or elected positions. Locally, in Chapel Hill we see women in politics as a standard political practice. Yet, the fact remains that, overall, women as a group are the invisible majority in terms of their influence in the political arena as decisionmakers.

The Equal Rights Amendment, which would give all women equal treatment under the law, cannot even pass three-fourths of the state legislatures to be able to become a ratified portion of the Constitution. It is not that American men and women do not support the concept of equal rights for women, it's just that many do not understand what

would happen if the amendment became law.

Tonight at 6:45 in Gerrard Hall, the top-ranking woman in North Carolina's state government will be speaking here on campus. Jane Smith Patterson is the secretary of the Department of Administration under Gov. Jim Hunt. Last fall she received a distinguished alumnae award and delivered the keynote address at the University Day celebration.

As an undergraduate here in the early 1960s she was involved with several campus organizations including Student Government. She organized sit-ins to begin the desegregation of the Franklin Street movie theaters.

Patterson will address the Women's Forum, which is the newest committee of the Campus Y. Her talk will center around the subject of women in politics. The Women's Forum is a support/discussion group for women who are active on campus.

It is not affiliated with the Panhellenic Council or the Association of Women Students, though we welcome members of both these groups to come tonight, as well as anyone else who would be interested in becoming a part of the Women's Forum during the upcoming year. There will be a reception following the speaker in the second floor lounge of the Campus Y. Come to listen, learn, meet new friends, take a study break or air your gripes about all the chauvinists in your dorm, apartment, office, fraternity, back yard, state, country or anywhere else you encounter our fellow friends.

Susan Gaddy, a junior political science major from Greenville, S.C., is an editorial assistant for *The Daily Tar Heel*.