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The Daily Tar Heel

92nd year of editorial freedom

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Yo Houchins, line up and grow up!

To the editor:

After reading the first couple of paragraphs of Carter Houchins' letter ("Now, a message for line-breaking slimeballs," Jan. 15), I felt like shaking my head and saying, "Grow up!" But after I finished the rest of the letter, and thought it all over carefully, I decided to go ahead and shake my head and say, "Grow up!"

Although he has a point, if he wears a hat no one will notice. If one of Houchins' MBA buddies were to see him in line and stop to talk,

I wonder if Houchins would shove him off to the back of the line, 500 people away.

Standing in line is a way of life at Carolina. If Houchins has been at this university as long as I have, he'll remember those of us who slept out five nights for Virginia tickets two years ago, only to have a mob come out of the bushes at Winston at 8 a.m. on the day of distribution. People have been breaking in line since kindergarten, about the same time most of us used the phrase "pond scum." Name-calling will not

do any good.

Regarding line-breaking as an Honor Code violation — somehow I can't imagine an Honor Court official asking, "Isn't it true that on Jan. 13 you deliberately and with malice aforethought gave fronties to a fellow student?"

Maybe next week Houchins will scold the real pond scum of this campus, those people who write ridiculous letters to the editor.

Richard Marvill
Chapel Hill

The Monster That Ate Posters

This editorial isn't for everyone. We address instead the less-than-one-tenth of one percent of you that are running for a campus-wide office.

Elections are a strange and curious creature, and, like any good B-movie beast, devour whatever they cross — namely campus walls, leaving posters in their wake. They slip under dorm room doors in the guise of pamphlets, leaflets and the like. But they also bring out man's destructive nature, which is not a pretty sight.

Look around you. Chances are you'll see remnants of a poster that's been mutilated, one poster on top of another, or some similar act of vandalism. Enough, we say.

With a field of nine candidates for student body president, there's likely to be a shortage of that precious commodity called prime wall space. Already classrooms, bulletin boards and bars are glutted with mugs. And when poster

supply exceeds the demands of space, something's got to give — and another pretty face finds itself in the circular file.

Not only is this practice unethical and uncalled for, but it's illegal as well — in fact, an Honor Code violation. Warnings might be the norm for first offenders, but beyond that, getting caught can only mean trouble.

Most potential rulebusters are not the candidates themselves, but overzealous campaign workers interested in eking out extra votes. With a ballot the size of a baseball squad slugging for the winning margin, underhanded tactics may seem mighty tempting. But they'll only get you thrown out of the game.

Campaigns are costly, both in time and money. It takes time to put up posters — and posters cost money. Whether you share a candidate's views, the least you can do is share their wall space.

Can Bruce survive G105?

The Boss is coming to Greensboro this weekend, and we're not talking about the head french fry chef at McDonald's either.

Several readers have urged us to quiet our shrill attacks on the Campus Governing Council and North Carolina's senior senator just long enough to note the impending arrival of Bruce Springsteen, staunch upholder of traditional rock values in a Top 40 wasteland. The Springsteen loyalists have also urged us to spare their hero the Amy Carter treatment, and to try to say something nice, for once.

It's not hard to find nice things to say about Springsteen, even for smug, condescending and mean-spirited editorial writers. Several DTH staffers camped overnight in the December chill outside a Durham shopping mall in hopes of getting tickets to one of The Boss's two Greensboro concerts. Some of our elder staff members, who find themselves still short of a college degree in their late 20s, have been fans of Springsteen since the release of the classic *Born to Run* album in 1975, though they wished he would slur his words in song a little less. Rock aficionados will tell you, however, that the real fans came aboard listening to such albums as *Greetings from Ashbury Park, N.J.* and *The Wild, the Innocent & the E Street Shuffle*, which were released when "Old MacDonald" was the favorite song of most of today's college students.

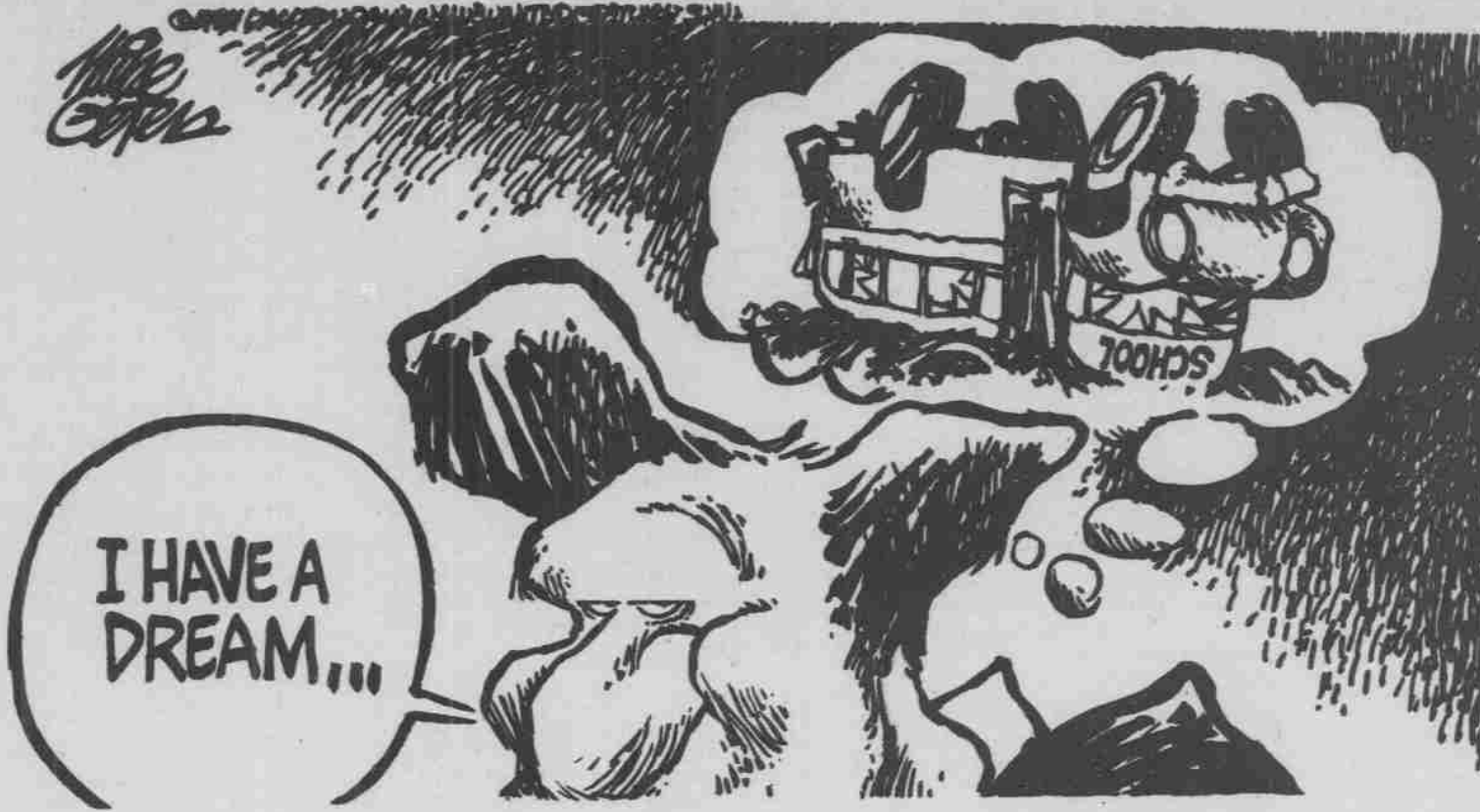
Still, we're concerned about what the current outbreak of Springsteen mania will do to The Boss. Rock fans are particularly fickle in this respect — they don't like to see their cult figures become superstars. Singing about human needs,

joys and heartbreaks, Springsteen has obviously touched a chord with popular culture; we just hope adulation and comfort don't turn the bite of his songs into sap. We also wonder where the late-comer Springsteen fans will be if his next album is not a commercial success. They'll probably run off like the new Cubs fans who were history when their team dropped the playoffs.

True, Springsteen survived appearing on the covers of *Time* and *Newsweek* during the same week in 1975, but can he survive being played on G105 three times an hour? Remember, popular support turned the likes of Billy Joel into a bubble-gummer who covorts with balloons and Christie Brinkley on MTV.

We hate to tell Bruce this, but the warning signs are there for him, too. Despite his efforts to alleviate world hunger and his history of benefit concerts, Springsteen has become a millionaire, one who admits money is not such a bad thing. There's no evidence he's upgraded his wardrobe a stitch, but we wonder how long he can empathize with Vietnam vets and the unemployed from his pink Cadillac and his second home in Hollywood Hills. While Springsteen chided President Reagan for invoking his name at a New Jersey campaign stop last fall, The Boss is obviously better off than he was four years ago. Worst of all, the king rocker is allowing a couple of his songs to be polluted into dance singles. The Boss at Purdy's! Man the lifeboats.

Still, if you've got a ticket for one of the Greensboro shows, use it proudly. We wish Springsteen success, but not too much success. It's painful to see an artist transformed into a Cabbage Patch Kid.



Maybe Jesse isn't perfect, ya know

To the editor:

Implicit in Chris Sanders' letter ("Conservatives deserve a fair shake," DTH, Jan. 14) is the claim that being liberal amounts to being biased. Far be it for me to insist such a claim fairly identifies Sanders' de facto position. But this claim is embedded in his letter. And I am no mind reader.

It seems Sanders is quite comfortable in maintaining that editorials critical of Sen. Jesse Helms or stories reporting some of his views, actions or policies are attempts to make him "look bad." This is taken as evidence for the claim that "conservatives have ... not gotten a fair shake in the media."

Now if it was possible to say all that had to be said about Sen. Helms without ever picking a bone with him, without ever casting legitimate doubt on the fiber of his moral character, without ever raising a hint of his policies being the product of a very political being with a very skewed view of the world — if all of this were possible, then Sanders' assessment of the media would make a great deal of sense. Indeed, if such an assessment was true, it would follow straight away that attempts to make Sen. Helms look bad would have to be biased; for in principle nothing bad could be said about Sen. Helms that could be true.

Now if it is true that nothing negative can be truthfully said about Sen. Helms, and if, as Sanders implies, it is true that one of a liberal's calling cards is to say negative things about Sen. Helms, then it follows that liberals, so defined, must be biased. On the other hand, those who have nothing but praise for Helms cannot be

liberals; indeed such persons cannot be biased at least with regard to Sen. Helms. For taxonomic purposes, let us call such people "conservatives." Now from this taxonomy we derive a startling fact: A conservative cannot be conservative if his assessment of Sen. Helms is negative.

We would be warranted in etching the above in granite if it were certain that Sen. Helms is nothing less than a saint. But Sen. Helms' positions are open to reasonable debate, his views are open to reasonable criticism, and the moral status of his behavior is not at all a settled matter. The point here is quite simple: neither "conservatives" nor "liberals" have a monopoly on truth — reasonable persons can be found in both camps. From this it follows that critical editorials might be right and that some of the bad press might, just might, be rightly deserved. This issue can only be resolved by examination of the plausibility of the editorials and news stories themselves, not of the voting records of their authors.

From all of this it follows that disdain and disgust over Sen. Helms need not be a liberal affectation. Nor is it the case that such responses deserve to be rejected out of hand as inherently biased. To claim otherwise, explicitly or implicitly, is to give expression to one of the most biased of all biases; namely, that the categories of right and wrong, fairness and mean-spiritedness, reasonableness and bias, map rather simply and straightforwardly to the categories of conservative and liberal, respectively.

Brad M. Goodman
Department of Philosophy

Administration on the right track

To the editor:

We, Student Government, would like to commend the UNC administration for an action that shows real concern for the human rights of all people. A recent letter from the Associate Vice Chancellor's Office for Business and Finance to Evans & Moxon Capital Management, Inc., Investment Advisors, summarizes the action — "The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill does not wish to have its endowment funds invested in companies which have not adopted the 'Sullivan Principles' in respect to their operations in South Africa."

On Dec. 13, 1984, the 4000 shares of Black & Decker handled in the account for the endowment funds were sold. The Sullivan Principles are a set of principles voluntarily adhered to by several U.S. corporations operating in South Africa that hope to achieve fair

labor practices in terms of equal and fair employment, equal pay for comparable or equal work, minority training programs for administrative positions, non-segregated work facilities and improving the quality of employees' lives outside the work environment.

We see such action as a momentous first step in the area of human rights. We congratulate the administration on the beginning of a socially responsible investment policy towards South Africa. We do not necessarily perceive a socially responsible policy as a total divestment scheme, but agree with and commend the University on recognizing basic human rights and equality as a presupposition to investment. The baseline, the Sullivan Principles, is a good starting point.

Greg Hecht
Executive Vice President
Student Government

N. Arthur Coulter Jr., M.D.
Professor of Surgery and Biomedical Engineering

Boweled over by Valvano?

To the editor:

After reading that eruption from David Turnbull and David Wells in the DTH ("DTH" takes championship beating from "Pack, Jan. 10), I couldn't help but wonder what got their bowels in such an uproar. Could it have been one of Coach V's championship culinary creations?

Stephen B. Jones
Medical School Administration

How 'bout a big boo for frou-frou?

By GUY LUCAS

There's been a lot written lately about abortion, integration, and other issues. OK, they're important and we need to hear about them. But I want to talk about something really important: frou-frou.

The dictionary defines frou-frou, in one sense, as "frilly ornamentation," and this is more or less what I mean, but I'll define frou-frou as I see it. You know those cute little bears with tattoos all over their fronts? Frou-frou from the word go. But if there's anything more frou-frou than tattooed bears, it's the tattoos without the bears.

I'm greatly concerned by the sharp increase in frou-frou over the past several years. It has always existed, and probably always will, in the cutesy, feminine realm. That's fine, because what would a girl's room be without a rainbow or some kind of animal without claws? (Yes, bears have claws, but bears who let themselves get tattooed can hardly be in a frame of mind to use those claws.)

Where frou-frou causes me the greatest concern is where it has started infiltrating the macho-masculine realm. The board on the door of my very own room has a drawing of a cat talking on the phone and writing notes with a pencil. One door down, the board on the door of the room of two athletes (athletes for Pete's sake!) has clouds and a rainbow. Frou-frou is everywhere, and it worries

me so much I can hardly sleep at night.

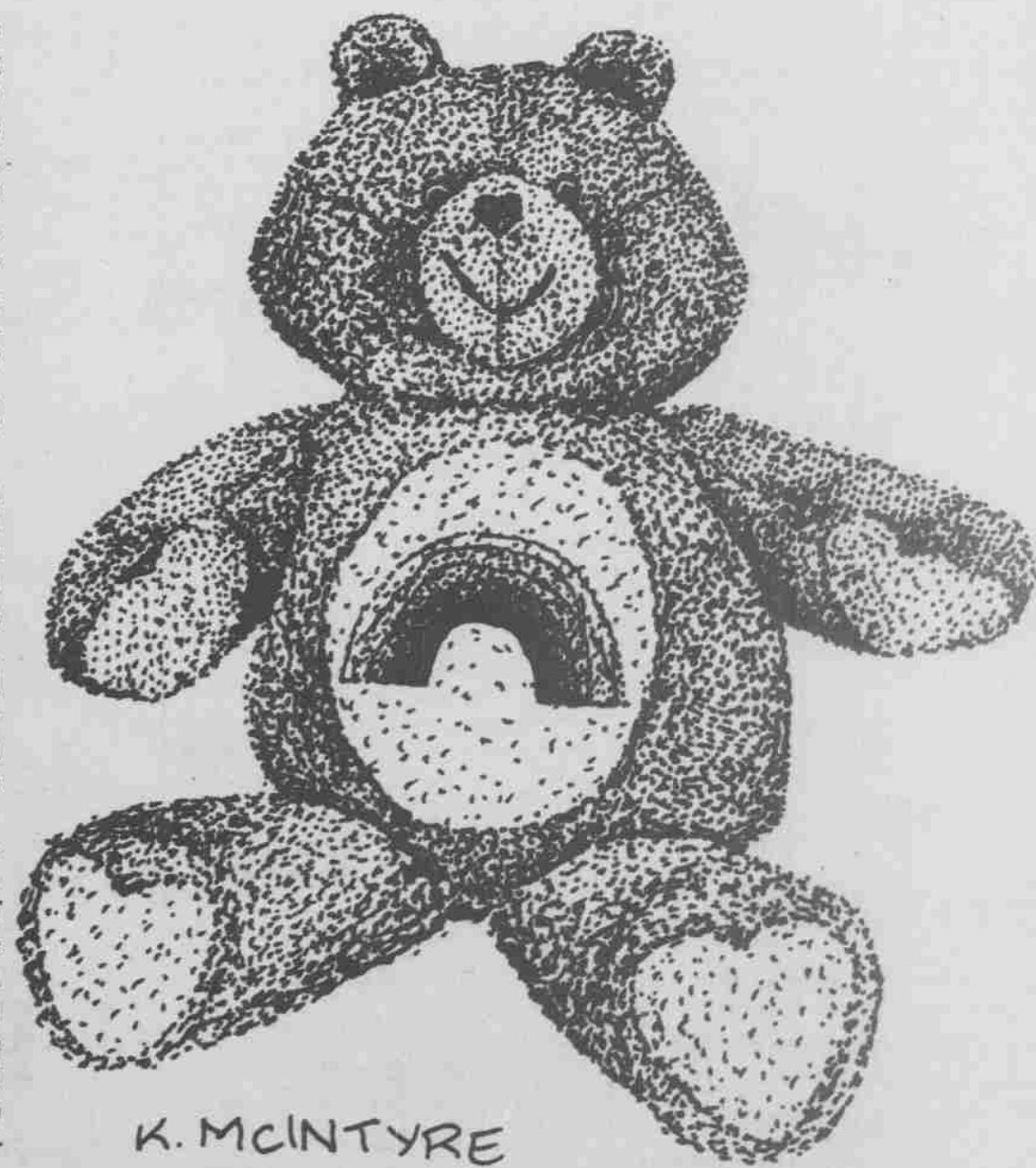
Of course, it's no secret to me where all this frou-frou is coming from. Where else in the world but the one place where they would like nothing better than to see the United States put rainbows and talking cats on everything? Gasp all you want, but the Red Menace is behind this and getting richer every minute. They're sending us rainbows and cats, and we're sending them George Washington and Abe Lincoln, along with the bucks their pictures are attached to.

This very minute Chernenko, on his death bed, is signing approval forms for hundreds of new frou-frou designs. In the time it has taken you to read this, 32 species of animals have been tattooed and declared. When they hit America, they will suck children and adults, possibly even professional athletes, into a fatal muck of frou-frou and more frou-frou.

But unlike integration or the Board of Trustees' investments, we have discreet control over this. If we are aware of this threat, if we know what frou-frou is, we can resist the urge to purchase it. And when we do that, you better believe the entire Soviet economy will crumble like a saltine under Tab Thacker (we're talking mega-crums, here).

Come on, America! Fight the frou-frou! There's a bear in the woods, and it wants to hug you.

Guy Lucas, a sophomore journalism major from Greensboro, is a staff writer for The Daily Tar Heel.



Frou-frou: Cuddly cub or closet commie?

The Daily Tar Heel

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