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The Daily Tar Heel

92nd year of editorial freedom.

Herpes kids: starting life as a victim

By FRANK BRUNI

More than the multiplication drills or spelling bees of my elementary school years, I dreaded the elusive challenge of meeting with peer approval...



For Johnny Bigley, a 3-year-old from Pasadena, Md., who only this month entered a classroom for the first time, ostracism is the given.

He is not alone, nor is his situation unique. In an elementary school in Council Bluffs, Iowa, more than half the students boycotted classes to avoid encountering a 3-year-old girl with herpes.

These situations of panic are not only regrettable but avoidable. The fear with which parents—and in some cases, teachers—have greeted the school enrollment of children like Johnny is by no means proportionate to the threat these children pose.

Of course, the parents who have protested the participation of afflicted children in public education have not taken the time to investigate the facts. Perhaps—and it would be nice to believe this—their overblown anger, targeted arbitrarily at the infected children, reflects a deeper-seated frustration with a situation in which the victims are many and the villain elusive.

who cannot help but worry, a guilty party remains inconspicuous.

The parents of an infected child can hardly be blamed. So ubiquitous is the herpes virus, it requires little sexual license to contract it.

While the exasperation of the other children's parents in Pasadena, Council Bluffs and Sacramento is understandable, their failure to take into account the feelings of the infected children—and the deep emotional scars with which immediate ostracism might leave these children—is distressing.

I have heard many parents lament the cruelty children are capable of exhibiting toward one another in group settings. I have heard these same parents say that the most difficult and heart-breaking part of parenting involves consoling the baffled child who comes home from school with a tear-streaked face and a tale of inexplicable ostracism.

That's a crucial lesson, one that will be lost on the children in the aforementioned towns.

Instead of checking the tendency toward cruelty many children exhibit, the parents who unnecessarily warn their children to steer clear of an infected classmate only prove how much easier it is for people to hate than to love...

For now, the conflicts in Pasadena, Council Bluffs and Sacramento have been resolved by the courts of law that continue to prove such necessary safeguards against the pervasive self-interest and eager antipathy of civilized man.

I pity Johnny Bigley, because of the hurt he has experienced, because it will be difficult for him to ever hold much regard for the fellow man who, from as far back as Johnny will be able to remember, has recoiled from his touch.

Frank Bruni, a junior English major from La Jolla, Calif., is a staff writer for The Daily Tar Heel.

No cause for champagne

In a literal sense, former Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon lost his \$50 million lawsuit against Time magazine, but the case has raised disturbing questions about the methods the press uses in gathering and presenting the news.

While finding that Time did not libel Sharon, the jury in the case took the unusual step of issuing a statement that the newsmagazine "acted negligently and carelessly" in its reporting of Sharon's alleged role in a 1982 massacre of Palestinian civilians by Lebanese Phalangists.

Using unnamed sources, Time reported in February 1983 that Sharon "discussed the need for the Phalangists to take revenge" for the assassination of President-elect Bashir Gamayel of Lebanon.

As it turns out, Time was sloppy and perhaps irresponsible in the reporting of the story. Contradicting Time's article, no mention of any Sharon discussion about revenge appeared in an appendix of the Israeli government's report on the massacre. During the course of the trial, Time correspondent David Halevy admitted that his sources had not explicitly said that the discussion was mentioned in the report, but he said he "inferred" it from the sources' statements.

Amazingly, Time managing editor Ray Cave said he never made correspondent Halevy reveal the sources he used for his dispatch. If that isn't mind-boggling enough, the correspondent who seems to have earned so much of Time's

unquestioning trust in the Sharon matter was once put on probation for a year for filing an inaccurate report about the health of former Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin.

While finding that Time has not libeled Sharon, the jury concluded that a paragraph of the story in question was false and that it had defamed Sharon. For a private citizen, such a ruling would be sufficient to win a libel suit.

Despite Time's ineptitude in handling the story, we feel that public figures should be required to go the extra step in proving libel. As has been traditionally argued, public figures have greater access to the media to address false statements about them.

The greatest worry for the press is not libel law as it exists, but the tremendous cost of libel suits, whether media defendants lose them or not.

Time claimed victory after the verdict last week, but it should leave the champagne uncorked. The rest of the press may be paying for that win for years to come.

Get a grip, Ann

There is trouble in paradise—at least according to Ann Landers. Recently, Ann took a sex survey of her women readers, asking if they would be content to be held close and forget about "the act."

This has a lot of people up in arms. Several renowned sex experts have denounced the survey, saying that the emphasis on just hugs and kisses could harm relationships and lead people to be boring.

Sorry, Ann, but we agree with Peterson. Although Landers justifies her survey by saying her mail shows "there are a lot of angry, unfulfilled women out there," chances are it's just the angry and unfulfilled who wrote to her.

person is happy with a relationship, sexual or otherwise, in all likelihood he or she is not going to write Ann Landers about it.

The survey was very biased. By asking readers to respond to whether they'd be content to "be held close and treated tenderly and forget about 'the act,'" Landers forced people to make a choice between the two.

Ann Landers has no business conducting such an unscientific survey. Besides not reflecting the real attitudes most women have about sex nowadays, it actually hurts women by reinforcing the Victorian idea that women don't, or can't, enjoy sex.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NCMH providing for-the-rich-only services

To the editor:

N.C. Memorial Hospital will soon begin performing heart transplant operations. However, to qualify for such a procedure a patient will have to have proof of health insurance coverage for such surgery or put down a deposit of \$70,000.

patient services for which only the wealthy are eligible.

There used to be a sign in front of NCMH that read: "Operated by and for the People of North Carolina." I assume that meant all the people.

I suspect that the existence of one

or two "elite" services is only the beginning of a trend in which more such services will be developed.

If patient services are to be offered at NCMH they should be for all, but at a minimum there should be public discussion of whether this hospital should offer

such very expensive procedures and, if so, who among us should decide who shall receive them.

This policy may well produce a two-class system of patient care. Is that really what the people and the physicians of this state want?

Marion S. White
Graduate Student
School of Public Health



How 'bout a little trip, Youngblood?

Regarding Karen Youngblood's column, "The Vigilante: Doing society no favors" (Jan. 24):

I cordially invite Youngblood to spend a week with me this summer in New York City. During your stay, Youngblood, you can ride the subways—alone, through all five boroughs, during all times of the day and night, just like Bernhard Goetz does regularly—and meet

"horse-playing teen-age boys" similar to the teen-age boys Goetz met prior to this past Christmas. While you're there, you may also want to apply for a job at The New York Times as a staff writer.

view prior criminal records was buried in one of the last paragraphs on a "turn to" page.

Hopefully, your experience in New York will not be so enlightening that you never get the chance to write your column.

William A. McQuade
Carrboro

'DTH' writes editorial on front page

To the editor:

I respect the journalistic skills apparent in the DTH, but the front page story on the Black Student Movement forum ("Candidates spar in BSM forum," Jan. 24) seriously clouded the BSM funding issue.

its purpose was to give an account of what issues were raised concerning this matter, then it was patently biased.

Arguably it was not intended to be an editorial against BSM funding, but it certainly had that effect due to the extensive account of the opponents' arguments to constitutionally funding the BSM.

those proponents present, namely Doug Berger, Fetzner Mills and Ma' Lloyd.

Perhaps the next story will be less biased and will give equal consideration to the views of both opponents and proponents of this referendum.

Allen W. Rogers
President
Black Law Student Association

Our own survey

Outraged by Ann Landers' unscientific polling methods and the potentially devastating effects her biased survey could have on American romantic life, our sexual experts have devised an airtight survey designed to accurately reflect the sexual attitudes and practices of UNC students.

- 1. Are you: male female androgynous (circle one)?
2. Class: freshman soph. jr. sr. grad other
3. Is sex better with or without hugs and kisses? How so?
4. Do you prefer: a) hugs and kisses b) the act c) other unspeakable acts d) want to know just what this "act" is?
5. Do you believe Ann Landers is: a) an agent of the Mormon Church b) a disciple of Che Guevara c) one hip old chick d) yesterday's news?
6. Where do you get your sexual information from: a) Ann Landers b) Heloise c) the Kinsey Report d) DTH personals e) Mack "the ax" Snipes?

Punks aren't the victims

To the editor: Bernhard Goetz, our "subway vigilante," is continuing to draw a lot of attention. Most of this attention is misplaced.

New York City policemen have said they can't adequately protect subway riders. Now these same officials are trying to destroy a man who was only doing what the police themselves admitted they couldn't do.

Rick Henderson
Chairman
Orange County Libertarians

Letters?!
Image of a typewriter
Letters to the editor and editorial columns should be typed on a 60-character line and should be triple-spaced.