



Snitters
The Daily Tar Heel took its third consecutive Student Newspaper Invitational Tournament championship by scorching the rags from Duke, Maryland and Virginia in Raleigh this weekend

'Falcon' offers exciting premise; characters are dull, undeveloped

Steve Carr

Review

Beware of movies billed as true accounts. More often than not, they can't stand on their own as entertainment. John Schlesinger's new film, *The Falcon and the Snowman*, has an exciting premise: Two middle-class California youths begin selling secrets to the Soviet government.

The premise, however, becomes subject to a number of "true story" pitfalls. One problem in *The Falcon and the Snowman* is that the characters on whom the story is based are as undeveloped as they are dull.

Timothy Hutton portrays Christopher Boyce, a high school graduate whose job gives him access to classified government information. Hutton's performance is reverentially dull; he comes off more as a disillusioned Junior Achiever than someone who has serious problems with CIA infiltration of foreign governments.

As Andrew Daulton Lee, a drug dealer turned message boy for Boyce, Sean Penn wins the Eric Roberts/Robert DeNiro look-alike contest and even hints at his character's sliminess. Although Penn at least musters more energy than Hutton, the two actors seem to play off of each other's blandness. Ultimately, Penn is just too tame, making Lee about as harmless as a time-sharing condo salesman.

Hutton and Penn are not totally to blame, however; their characters are written with little or no development. Instead, they are quasi-Christ figures, innocent victims of complacent middle-class values and pawns in a deadly game of political intrigue.

At the beginning of the film, Hutton leaves a seminary

where he has been studying. It seems that such a departure would require something of an explanation. And how does he manage to befriend a drug dealer? Well, in the end the film reveals the two were altar boys together.

Director Schlesinger, a British expatriate, has a keen critical eye for the seamy underside of American life. Both *Midnight Cowboy* and *Day of the Locust* were vicious dissections of the American dream in all its slimy glory.

In both of those films, however, the characters were just as important as the social perspective Schlesinger took. In *The Falcon and the Snowman*, Schlesinger treats his characters in much the same way the governments treat them — pawns. The only distinction is that they are used to convey a message, which makes for a tedious, uninvolved exercise.

Perhaps the ultimate problem with *The Falcon and the Snowman* is that it uses its facts as a crutch. Validity becomes a substitute for quality. And since the wonder of film is that it creates its own little world, when a film drains reality for impact, that's a sure sign there is something aesthetically wrong.

Debate

"We need to use our political strength to affect town issues like the housing shortage or improving the bikeways to campus," Berger said.

Wallace agreed, adding that off-campus students could mobilize their power around Student Legal Services to fight landlord problems.

Discussing the parking problem on campus, both candidates agreed they could work to improve parking for future generations of University students. Because increased traffic could pose a problem with an on-campus parking deck, Wallace said she proposed an off-campus deck with a shuttle service to and from campus which would operate into the night.

Berger said the University needed a land use policy before it made plans to solve the parking problem so it could target the best place to build a parking deck.

The candidates differed on whether they supported constitutional funding

of campus organizations. Wallace said she favored funding for *The Daily Tar Heel* and the Union but stressed that funding was not full funding of the organizations. *The Daily Tar Heel* supplies most of its budget through advertising and the Union through ticket sales. She opposes constitutional funding for the Black Student Movement.

"I'm against fully funding the program expenses of any organization because organizations change from year

to year," she said.

Berger supports BSM constitutional funding and said the BSM, as a cultural support system for black students, was an important minority recruitment tool for the University and should be protected from possible opposition by CGC members at annual budget

hearings.

In addition, Berger said about 80 percent of the BSM's budget went to its publication, the *Black Ink*. "If you fund the *DTH* to give it editorial freedom, why not fund the *Black Ink*?" he said.

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