

# The Daily Tar Heel

93rd year of editorial freedom

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## A proper end to guesswork

Guidelines for the control of equipment used by student organizations will be brought before the Campus Governing Council tonight. Members should make sure they're well-equipped to deal with them.

The policy — compiled by Sharon Grubb, who was hired by the Institute of Government, and supervised by Student Body President Patricia Wallace — is an achievement of student input. It calls for an inventory and labeling system coordinated by the student body treasurer so that Student Government can keep tabs on equipment bought with student fees.

Grubb actively has sought to discuss the proposals with leaders of student organizations and didn't hesitate to act on their suggestions — even at the last minute.

For instance, an important section in the draft passed by committee last week has been reworded to keep the entire load of liability for equipment off one officer in an organization. We urge the CGC to adopt the revision: "Should theft or abuse of SG property occur as a result of a member's failure to follow the organization's approved procedures, that member shall be personally liable for replacement of the property."

When equipment such as expensive Yackety Yack or Student Television cameras is involved, the retribution may

seem harsh. But students using them should not be able to avoid responsibility for negligence if they're at fault.

Deciding who's at fault in such a situation could be a problem, however, as is enforcement once blame is placed. The CGC should make sure it understands how someone who denies negligence should be judged and how to get someone to pay if retribution is refused.

These and other clarifications, such as the student body treasurer's flexibility in performing spot inspections (it's hard to imagine an SBT having enough time to make them once a year for all equipment, as the policy states), can be included in the statement of intent that will accompany the policy if approved.

Just one more point to raise. Throughout the policy, equipment is said to have been bought with "SG funds." This label implies that Student Government has more control over the equipment than the organization just because it allocated the money. Why not call them "organizational funds," since organizations actually use them? Better yet, how 'bout plain "student fees," just so neither side assumes it has a special right to them.

But, overall, the equipment control guidelines promise to be effective in maintaining security of student equipment. Too much time and hard work went into them to have an uninformed CGC consider them lightly.

## Databases byte libraries

The high-powered lawyer bankrolled by a wealthy client can locate dozens of legal precedents for a case within minutes. The lobbyist for a large industry can call up floppy discs full of old newspaper articles and press releases. Professors and students working for well-endowed departments can compile long printouts of references to their chosen field.

Computer databases have exploded in number and variety over the past two years, and while these rapidly growing collections of computer-stored facts and figures make research easier, they threaten to create two classes at UNC and across the nation: the haves and have-nots of information. Using the resource is physically easy. You just punch into a microcomputer a set of several words or phrases only found together in discussions of the subject investigated and, via a long-distance telephone link, ask one of the country's nearly 400 database services to send abstracts of all stored texts with the set. The problem is cost. Databases charge subscription fees of up to \$20,000 a year, and most searches cost at least another \$20 apiece.

Well-heeled lawyers, industry lobbyists, and professors on federal government research grants can pay these charges without pain. Consumer advocates, defenders of civil rights and liberties, and UNC students cannot. The

affluent can increasingly assemble better arguments faster. And the problem will grow worse as more information — particularly data on computer software and stock prices — becomes available only in bytes and not in the printed word.

The UNC system and libraries across the country face a dilemma in trying to keep research materials at the ready disposal of all users. Books bought are available for years free of cost to all users, but to enable financially strapped researchers to compete in the future on an equal footing, machine readable texts must also be made available to individuals.

Should investment money go to enlarging the number of volumes in a collection or to providing one-shot services to users? Most municipal libraries are too poor even to buy terminals, much less consider subsidizing users. The libraries of low-tuition public universities, such as UNC, are only able to cover subscription fees and staff salaries, leaving search charges to the individual student or faculty member.

Defending yourself in America today requires access to information. To avoid a widening information gap following income lines, libraries need to keep services free. That will be expensive. Next time you see a proposal or a bond issue to help a library expand services, be supportive.

## The Daily Tar Heel

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**Printing:** Hinton Press Inc. of Mebane

## Enduring the fray on NCSU's big day

By ANDY TRINCIA

Sweat. Pushing and shoving. Waiting in line. Security checks. Ah, the joys of covering a presidential visit.

Yes, last Thursday I was among the myriad of journalists roasting with 13,000 others in N.C. State's Reynolds Coliseum. But it was exciting.

My past *DTH* assignments include fun stuff like covering a speaker on Polish religion and politics, internship meetings, economic outlook stories and tobacco articles. Don't get me wrong, I've had some interesting assignments as well, but this was different. We're talking about the president of the United States.

At Reynolds by 8 a.m., photographer Larry Childress and I were told by Secret Service agents that the remaining members of the press couldn't enter until 9:30 a.m., two hours before Reagan's speech. So we waited for 90 minutes in the hot sun as cheerleaders, band members and students waited by us into the coliseum. I guess a press pass isn't worth what it used to be.

That pass gave me away as a Tar Heel in foreign territory. One NCSU student noticed it immediately. "You better flip that thing over," she said. "You might get killed around here."

Precisely at 9:30 a.m., sandwiched between a TV cameraman and other reporters, I squirmed through the chaotic crowd, inching toward the metal detector. It was war. Lots of muffled cussing and shoving went on. After having our belongings searched, we walked through the metal detector and into the gigantic sauna (aka Reynolds). I found a choice seat at the press table, staking my ground.

The portable air conditioning units from Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in Goldsboro just didn't do the job. I could see and hear them, but I sure didn't feel them. The sweat from my face rolled onto my pad and press kit. Faces all around me had that shiny glow caused by excess perspiration. Looking up into the crowd, I saw thousands of makeshift fans waving back and forth.

With two hours left until Reagan's appearance, the friendly folks at State decided to entertain us all. It was more or less a Wolfpack pep rally and this Carolina student had to sit there watching it all.

The Associated Press writer next to me said he was a State alumnus. "I bet you're loving



every minute of this," he said.

Chants of "Go Wolfpack, Go Wolfpack" echoed through the coliseum. Football coach Tom Reed and a couple of State basketball players spoke to the crowd about their seasons ahead. I couldn't wait to hear those famous words, "Ladies and gentlemen, the president of the United States."

Reagan finally came on and spoke for 24 minutes. It was vintage Reagan. He told the crowd just what they wanted to hear. He played up to the crowd, reminiscing about State's 1983 NCAA basketball championship, saying he needed that "Wolfpack spirit up in Washington this fall" as he works to gain approval of his tax overhaul.

After his introduction, Reagan dropped this little one on the crowd: "Nothing's finer than

to be in Carolina in the morning." C'mon, Mr. President.

I must admit, Reagan is a great speaker. He's a smooth talker who captivates his audience. He made his tax plan sound great — so great, in fact, that Sen. Jesse Helms reportedly has reservations about parts of it.

He told us he'd like to put more money from our paychecks into our pockets and less in Uncle Sam's. He told us he wants to see 10 million new jobs in the next four years. He told us the poor would pay no taxes under his plan. Sounds great.

But, Mr. President, can you really do it?

Andy Trincia, a sophomore journalism major from Charlotte, is state and national editor of The Daily Tar Heel.

## READER FORUM

### Enough fraternity and sorority drivel, already!

To the editors:

In recent weeks we have noticed quite a few negative articles and editorial comments pertaining to fraternities and sororities. Sorority girls have been labeled as racists and lampooned as snobs, while fraternities have been told to "clean up their acts." While we appreciate your right to an editorial opinion, there comes a time when a fair shake must be given to the Greek system.

There are many organizations that benefit from fraternity fund-raising efforts. It seems unfair for there to be such a negative bias in your representation of Greeks when these organizations do so much for

the community.

It is unjust for there to be front-page coverage of the "streakers" from Lewis dormitory when other noteworthy events such as those sponsored by Greek organizations for charity are ignored. The most recent example of this bias is Sept. 6's Sigma Nu Porch Party. This event was sponsored by area businesses and was attended by more than 5,000 people from all over the triangle. The event raised more than \$3,000 for the Lineberger Cancer Research Center here in Chapel Hill. Yet the *DTH* failed to find it worthy of even a mention in Monday's edition. We realize that a

fraternity did sponsor this function, so we are probably asking too much to have any mention of this fundraiser in your paper. Perhaps you did not see the ad in your paper for it in Sept. 5's edition.

The point here is to show that the Greek organizations on campus are not a bunch of racist, irresponsible slob, as often portrayed in your editorials. Fraternities and sororities are an integral part of the University community, and almost all of these organizations have fund-raisers or other community service projects. The *DTH* editors seem to be intent on dragging the Greek system through the mud, and all of

the good facets of fraternities and sororities are being ignored. When will you guys wake up and realize that without the Greek community UNC would not be as appealing a school for many prospective students? In our opinion, the Greek system is a valuable asset to the University, and we feel that we should be given fair treatment from the paper that supposedly represents all students.

Hal Wilson  
Harry Patton  
Martin Borden  
Beckton James  
Chapel Hill

### 'DTH' oversteps its bounds again with TV quote

To the editors:

After reading Frank Lloyd Wright's statement at the bottom of the Sept. 9 *DTH* that "Television is bubblegum for the eyes," I want to express my moral outrage that such heresy is being printed in the pages of your pretentious fishwrap.

Wright may have thought himself clever, but his callous statement has undermined the faith that thou-

sands of your readers once had in the glorious tube.

If the quotation is an expression of editorial opinion, I demand that the editors investigate the opposite belief that television is meat and potatoes for the eyes.

Does the *DTH* really endorse the notion that television is visual bubble gum? While such ideas may

pollute the minds of the degenerate liberals that plague our community, many of us are good, TV-fearing people and cannot tolerate such drivel.

Ah, but perhaps outrage is not the emotion I should feel. Perhaps I should instead be saddened that many of my fellow students have so little faith in television that a few

simple words can undermine the foundation of their belief. Perhaps instead of writing this letter, I should have probed the depths of my own soul to find a renewed strength and go on believing in television, no matter what the architects say.

John Gardner  
Carboro

## Christians must fight the good fight, 'DTH'

By KEN THROCKMORTON

This column is divided into two parts. The first part is to the editors of *The Daily Tar Heel*; the second part I dedicate to every Christian at this University, and to our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we believe to be the one true God, and whom we know to be alive. If you are a Christian, I beg you to read this.

**Part 1:** Last year when the *DTH* started printing quotes on the front page I thought, "Gee, that's pretty neat. Maybe they'll print a quote that will help people view life in a neat sort of way and we'll all walk around being neat to each other." And sometimes the quotes were deep and meaningful and helpful for looking at the day in a different way. Sometimes the quotes were funny, or sometimes simply stupid.

But on Wednesday, Sept. 4, when you decided to print the quote "God is dead," you went past poor judgment or bad taste. What you chose to do was wrong. If you believe in good conscience that what you did wasn't wrong, I believe that there are thousands of students here that in all good conscience believe you were wrong. When you print a quote on the front page in big, bold letters, you are making a statement that reflects your attitudes about life, attitudes that you hope others will think are novel and true, and will take on as their own philosophy. So instead of choosing from literally a million other quotes that would have been meaningful or entertaining, you chose one that was offensive and attacking.

You knew what you were doing when you printed the quote "God is dead." I know what you were doing, and because I believe that I am a Christian, I can safely say that God knows what you are doing. Only God knows what you may have done as a result of printing "God is dead." Every editor's desire is that their publication will be taken as true and correct, as an authority for truth. Because your paper is the most visible authority on campus, you also want what you print to be one more thing: influential. You want the students to believe that things are the way you say they are. Above all, Rickert and Schmidt, you want to be able to leave this University while saying, "We made a difference; we left a mark." I believe you may get what you asked for, in a way much worse

than what you desired.

Your "quote of the day" was offensive. You offended Christians and you offended our Lord God. You slapped Jesus Christ in the face and laughed because you think he lies dormant. You attacked who we are and why we are who we are. You attacked our reason for being on Earth; you even attacked our reason for being and existing after our bodies die. You attacked Christians at a level far above personal insults. You challenged God.

**Part 2:** Dear fellow Christians, every student at this University is bound by the student body constitution to support the *DTH* through student activities fees that we are forced to pay every semester. This fact is important to remember through the remainder of this column.

### 'Either you are for God or against God. There are no double agents in this realm.'

Lately I have been thinking about God and what it means to be a Christian. I think that as Christians we have accepted an "easy Christianity." We want all the blessings and none of the trials. We want the rights of being Christian, but none of the responsibilities. It has become too easy to be Christian; God is not taken seriously anymore.

But God has made himself clear: Serve him or serve the world. Either you are for God or against God. There are no double agents in this realm. I once thought that the *DTH* represented no one side. But they chose sides and launched an attack last Wednesday with just these three words: "God is dead."

I ask you, as a Christian, to examine your faith and decide what it really means to be Christian. Think about the levity of this situation; is it any less serious than missionaries being buried up to their heads in the sand, and then told to reject Christ or die by a spear through the head? Our physical lives are not in danger here, but something more important is — our spiritual lives.

Remember those times in church when your pastor repeatedly told you that you might have to stand up for Christ? When you would have to choose between going along with the crowd

crusade for Christ. To United Christian Fellowship and the UCF choir I say: "... make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise." To the Fellowship of Christian Athletes I say, run this good race, fight this good fight. To every Christian I say: "Serve the Lord with all thine heart." All together, we are more than enough to prove to this University and the world that God is wonderfully alive, active on a global level and individually. He lives within all of us.

If you believe that what I have related to you is true, and you believe the battle has begun, then let us finish the war. I and others will be in the Pit outside the Student Stores all day Sept. 11, with a petition calling for a referendum to amend the constitution. Please come and put your name down for the Lord. And if you know other Christians that may not have heard of this, have them read this letter so that they may stand and fight if they so wish. And in closing, I tell you to be strong in Christ, and I quote the Apostle Paul from Romans 8:31 — "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

God Is Alive Now, Today (GIANT).

Ken Throckmorton is a senior psychology major from Winston-Salem.