

# The Daily Tar Heel

94th year of editorial freedom

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## Editorials

### SFA tests the liberal arts

*"It's not a question of whether homosexuality is wrong, or if I'm a homophobe or not, or it's legal or illegal. The issue is whether being a homosexual warrants student fees."*

— Keith Poston, chairman of Students for America.

In essence, Students for America is trying to defund the Campus Gay and Lesbian Association. To test its stand, SFA is taking the issue to the students with a petition. SFA, a right wing political student group, hopes to get enough student signatures to place a referendum on the February ballot. The referendum would ask the students if they think CGLA should receive student fees.

The referendum is not binding to the budget process next spring. That is, CGLA would still have a right to a fair hearing in the budget process.

SFA's strategy is simply this: If students say "no" to funding the CGLA, then the Student Congress members should not approve funds to the CGLA. The reasoning is that Student Congress members should represent what their constituencies' views.

It's a bold and risky maneuver for SFA. If it backfires and students vote yes, then SFA would lose a lot of valuable ammunition and credibility.

This is not the first confrontation for CGLA. The debate over students funding for CGLA is a perennial one.

Nationally, homosexuals suffered a setback in their struggle for equality when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in July that state laws against sodomy

were constitutional.

At UNC, SFA maintains that minority groups deserve funding when the cause of their being minority is not a matter of choice, such as skin color or ethnicity. Homosexuality, SFA claims, is a matter of personal choice.

It should be noted that there appears to be nothing in the budget allocation guidelines that disqualifies the CGLA from receiving student fees, seeing it is fundamentally not a political or religious group.

SFA members hasten to say they aren't "homophobes," but rather wish to debate the question whether a group has a right to receive student fees because of their sexual preference. In the past, SFA claims, the debate over CGLA funding in Student Congress has resorted to name calling. That is, if a member is for CGLA funding, then he's a bleeding-heart liberal. If he's against it, he's a fascist.

Essentially, the debate is over intolerance. CGLA is a minority group on campus that merits student funding. The reason is at the basis of what a liberal arts education is about. We should be mindful that tolerance does not equal participation and that intolerance is the prelude to ignorance, a false sense of superiority and suppression. That is counter to what UNC stresses — understanding, compassion, thoughtfulness.

The votes this spring, both the referendum and Student Congress, will be a true crucible of what UNC students have learned here.

### U.S. needs stronger drug cures

In an emotion-laden speech Sunday night, Ronald and Nancy Reagan declared their vendetta against drug use in the United States. While fighting the "cancer" of drugs is an issue that all Americans must face, Reagan's proposals should be recognized as a mere starting point.

The statistics on drug use in the United States are discouraging. For example, an estimated 4 to 5 million people now regularly use cocaine, often termed "the drug of the 80s." Another 500,000 are addicted to heroin. At least 20 million Americans regularly use marijuana. And as if this weren't enough, now there's crack — a highly addictive, smokable version of cocaine. An estimated one million people have tried this drug.

There is clearly a great threat to the nation's well-being. If the younger Americans are befuddled by drugs, what hopes can be entertained for their future? What hopes can be entertained for any drug user's future, and that of the nation as well?

To combat this threat, the president proposes a \$1 billion budget increase to fight drug trafficking, imposing drug tests for certain federal employees and educating students more about the perils of drug use. These proposals are a mixture of good and bad.

The specter of mandatory drug testing has caused great concern. Reagan proposes, and with good reason, that about one million federal employees involved in safety or security matters be periodically tested for drug use. Government employees hold a position of service, and are in fact employed by the taxpayers. If the taxpayers don't want public officials to use drugs, then so be it.

However, there is reason to oppose the spread of government drug testing to the private sector. The sanctity of the workers' spare time is a cause of disagreement — if the worker involved

has a crucial task, such as flying a plane, then shouldn't he be drug-free? The answer is yes, but private companies should be concerned with business, not prying into their employees' private lives. While this is admittedly a curious double standard, the United States must avoid becoming Orwellian, with Big Brother peeping into every crevice of society.

Allocating more funds for educating the nation's youth about drugs is admirable, but probably ill-fated. It would be naive to presume that many teenagers will take Nancy Reagan's advice to "just say no." Adolescence is an age often marked with resistance to advice from elders, particularly when that advice denies the adolescent something many of his friends have tried and recommend.

On a brighter note, Reagan's plan to increase funding to agencies that fight drug trafficking is much needed. Many of the agencies, such as the Drug Enforcement Agency, are besieged by scant workforce and limited resources.

An obvious proposal, one Reagan has mentioned only briefly, would be to work with the governments of those nations that export drugs. While the governments of Peru, Colombia and Mexico are not wholly responsible for the U.S. drug problem, much could be done to curtail the amount of drugs leaving those countries. Again, this is an obvious proposal, but one which has not been fully explored.

The problem lies predominantly with the American populace — they have historically been eager to explore, willing to try anything once. But it is also the nature of Americans to be proud of their character, to fight against anything endangering that character. It is this trait that must lead the people now, in finding much stronger methods to fight the drug affliction.

## Tar Heel Forum

### Safety second for Shearon Harris

Mark Reichard

Guest Writer

The author is co-chairman of the campus chapter of the Coalition for Alternatives to Shearon Harris.

If the Shearon Harris Nuclear Power Plant "juices up" for operation next spring, its effects on Chapel Hill residents could be disastrous. CP&L Public Relations Representative Mac Harris' comments to the contrary in "Shearon Harris' spring '87 opening to fuel electric bills" (Sept. 11), were a mixture of omissions, half-truths and outright untruths.

Harris dealt with the two issues central to the Shearon Harris controversy in their order of importance to CP&L: economics first, with an afterthought about safety.

Harris asserted that the single \$3.6 billion reactor (which was originally scheduled to be four reactors at a cost of under \$1 billion) was "the most cost-efficient way to meet the needs of a growing area." This is simply not true. Not only is nuclear power the least cost-effective way of producing power (15 cents per kilowatt hour as compared to 3 cents per hour for energy efficiency), it is also entirely uneeded.

Current statistics from the N.C. Utilities Commission show that there is essentially zero growth in the demand for power. In fact, residential use has declined steadily for the past six years, and in 1985 was down 4 percent from the 1984 levels. It seems clear

that there is no need for the Harris plant, but CP&L is going ahead with plans to open it.

Also, the utility's main concern seems to be the \$3.6 billion that they have already spent on Harris. They point out that the most expensive alternatives, such as conversion to coal or gas, would cost an additional \$1.3 billion to capitalize. But what they hope their customer don't realize is that Shearon Harris, like all nuclear plants, will eventually become too "hot" to operate and will have to be decommissioned. Decommissioning costs money. The cost of decommissioning CP&L's Brunswick plant was recently estimated at \$2.8 billion, and estimates bear this figure out for Harris.

Economically, the choice seems clear: CP&L can operate the plant as a nuclear facility — charging its customers \$3.6 billion for construction and probably an additional \$2.8 billion for decommissioning — or they can develop an alternative source of energy and save them at least \$1.5 billion.

And an afterthought: Mac Harris' parting words to The Daily Tar Heel were, "Outside

of that radius (the 10-mile evacuation zone) exposure to radiation would not exceed EPA (safe) levels of radiation exposure in a nuclear accident." Under certain conditions, this could be true.

If it were a minor accident, there was no wind, Jordan Lake didn't exist (so that radiation wouldn't get into the water table), and if everyone ate imported food (because radiation would be in the food chain), the people outside of the 10-mile radius could be safe. If these conditions weren't all met, however, the consequences would be disastrous.

In 1975, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission reported that a "worst case" accident would mean 3,300 immediate human deaths, 45,000 deaths from cancer, 240,000 people suffering from thyroid tumors, and 5,000 children being born with genetic defects in the first generation after the accident. This study based its data on the assumption that the area within 25 miles of the plant would be evacuated. CP&L advocates a 10-mile evacuation radius, and doesn't even adequately plan for that.

Chapel Hill is 22 miles from the Shearon Harris plant. So, "unaffected" Chapel Hill residents, where does that leave you?

Mark Reichard is a sophomore international studies major from Columbia, S.C.

### No fear here

The author is chairman of UNC College Republicans.

To the editor:

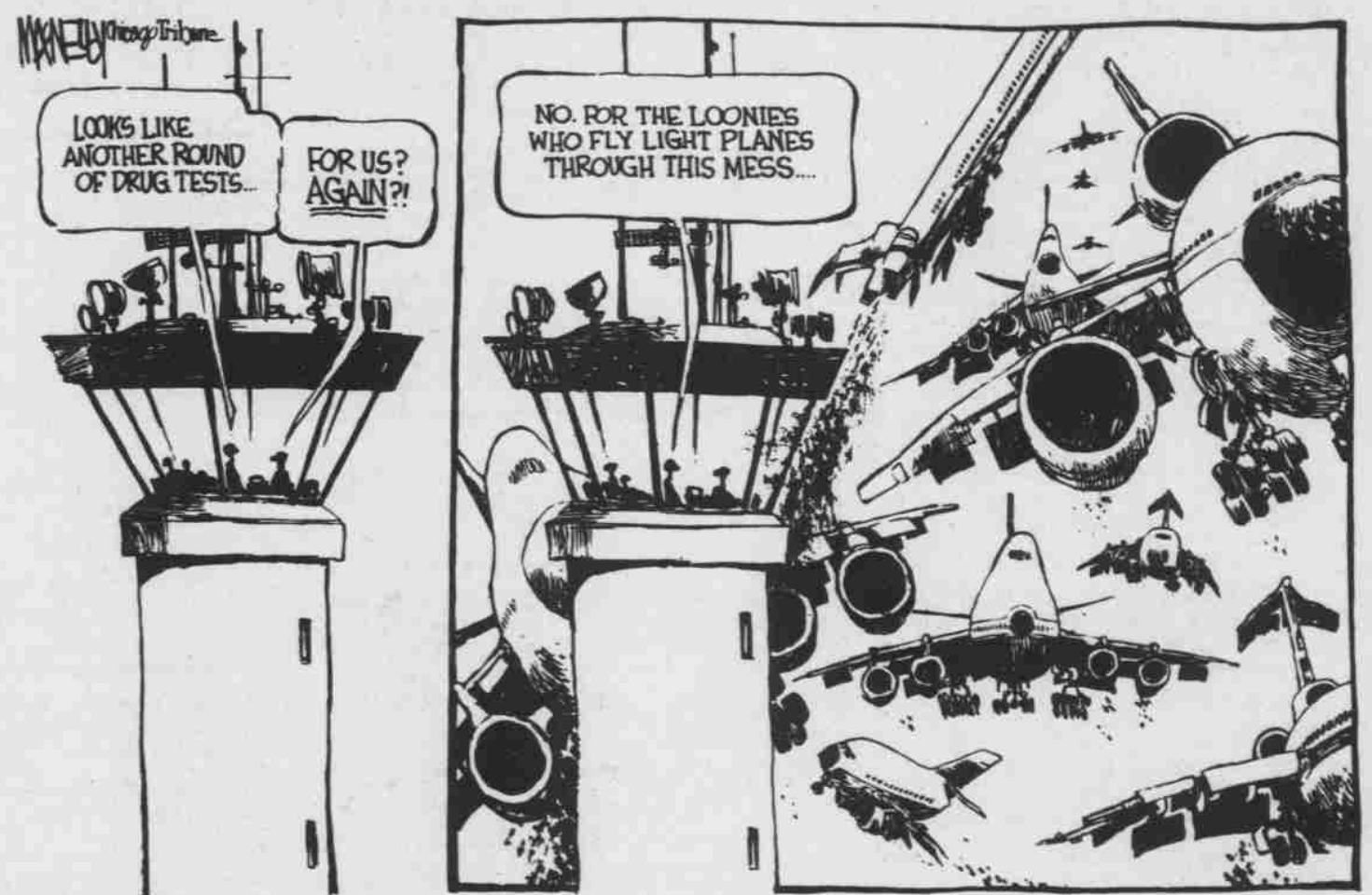
Regarding Marguerite Arnold's article on law, morality and the College Republicans, it is time to set the record straight. Arnold claims that the College Republicans have never tried to refute the label "homophobic." To be quite honest, this is the first time I recall us having that label.

For the sake of argument though, allow me to refute this label. According to the American Heritage Dictionary, a phobia is "a persistent, abnormal, or illogical fear of a specific thing (in this case, homosexuals)." The College Republicans are not paralyzed with fear over the chance of seeing a homosexual on campus; we have no fear of them at all. If society sets the norms for us to judge what is abnormal, then clearly our dislike of homosexuality is not abnormal. We are concerned, though, for the safety and morality of society.

As for Arnold's views on law enforcement, when judging the meaning of a law, we must look at its legislative intent. The N.C. General Assembly's intent in writing the Crimes Against Nature Law was not to prevent parents from changing their child's diaper. I am not worried about being given the chair for taking care of a child.

Look at the legislative intent behind a law, which in this case was to prevent acts of perversion. Arnold said "sex is natural in any of the manifestations it may take." Sex with a dead body, an animal or species of the same sex is not natural, but perverted.

As for the personal attacks on my friend Jim Wooten, neither he nor the College Republicans pose a threat to



## Letters

anyone's constitutional rights, homosexual or not. The Carolina Gay and Lesbian Association does not have a guaranteed right to receive student funds. The CGLA complains about its budget getting cut, when in fact its funding has been about the same for the last three years. Last year, the CGLA received over \$900 in student fees.

I don't care what homosexuals do behind closed doors. I do care when they make their activities public or when they take money that we pay in student fees to support their activities. As a Christian, I do not hate homosexuals, but I dislike homosexuality. I bear them no malice, but I ask that they do not take my money to spend it on acts that I consider immoral. As Thomas Jefferson wrote in the Virginia Declara-

tion of Religious Liberty, 1777: "To compel a man to furnish funds for the propagation of ideas he disbelieves and abhors is sinful and tyrannical."

WILLIAM PEASLEE  
 Senior  
 Political Science

### Radical energy

To the editor:

One need only to examine the issues of Shearon Harris to see how ideologies have been misidentified. Shearon Harris opponents have been accused of being "liberal, radical, children of the 60s." A close look at the issues reveals that the opponents are actually supporting a conservative view-

point, a perspective which encourages alternatives to nuclear power, conservation of energy, cost effectiveness, safety and responsible energy planning.

The proponents of Shearon Harris support a power source which is so dangerous it requires evacuation plans. Nuclear power has been proven to be the most dangerous and expensive energy source. Shearon Harris will generate 1,000 tons of nuclear waste, which will be radioactive for the lifetimes of 4,000 generations. This appears to be a rather radical method to produce 30 years of electricity.

If we must label a viewpoint "radical," let us first examine the issues.

MARY CHARLTON  
 Hillsborough

### UNITAS breaking barriers

The author is international student liaison to student government.

William Hickson, a 19th-century English preacher, once wrote:

"Lord, make the nations see  
 That men should brothers be  
 And form one family  
 The wide world o'er."

Poet Hickson made a better preacher, but his heart was in the right place. As a foreign student here at Carolina, I've often echoed Hickson's prayer with wishes of my own. It's easy to feel separated from the people around me, easy to feel segregated, and unfortunately, these feelings aren't felt only by me. They reach deep into the heart of every racial or cultural minority on campus.

On the most basic level, this barrier of segregation is a direct result of a lack of understanding. Examples of this problem abound. I briefly — very briefly — dated a girl who got upset when she found out I wasn't applying for American citizenship. I've talked to members of certain fraternities who are proud of the fact that their groups have no black members. I sat in on a Sunday school class at a local Baptist church, and the teacher proceeded to explain that the governments of foreign nations were controlled by Satan.

This sort of problem arises, I think, out of a lack of understanding. I'm different, and proud of it, just as any black student, any Jewish student or any other minority group member. The lack of understanding arises when members of the majority fail to understand why anyone is happy to be different.

There's a 17th-century proverb that says, "It takes all sorts to make a world," and I strongly agree with that. Unfortunately, not everyone else does, which may explain

why I still see racial segregation, and why groups like the North Carolina Citizens Against Liberalism continue to function.

Fortunately, there are other groups dedicated to demolishing the barriers that separate us. For example, the Association of International Students "promotes international awareness on campus and provides a place for foreign students as well as American students to get together and share their different cultures, ideas and experiences." Other groups, such as the Black Student Movement and the Carolina Indian Circle, perform similar functions for their own members.

In essence, the purpose of these groups is to destroy the barriers that separate us all, while at the same time preserving the uniqueness of the group. These groups are attempts to knock down walls through education, and as such, they are a good starting point. Eventually, however, more needs to be done. Education is great, but hands-on experience is what really teaches. To really overcome differences, one must understand what the differences are, and that understanding takes close contact.

Recently, the Student Government and the University took a step together to make this close, learning contact a real thing. UNITAS is a project designed to increase racial and cultural awareness on campus.

Beginning next year, a section of Carmichael dormitory will be set aside for the program. Twenty-four members of cultural or racial minority groups will live and room with 24 "average" Americans, in a new attempt to bring down the barriers. Many

groups, such as the AIS, are already expressing support for the project.

The UNITAS program goes well beyond two people simply rooming together. It includes classes, guest speakers, open discussions, forums and much more, all designed to "instill and promote a sense of responsibility for the enlightenment and further education of fellow participants and other UNC students on racial and cultural issues."

UNITAS is an ambitious idea that will clearly take a lot of work, but it is being done. Someone is finally taking some steps to permanently knock down some barriers. Forty-eight people is not a huge beginning, but it is a beginning. It's a group to start with and build upon, and a group to set an example. Furthermore, Emily Ayscue, executive assistant in charge of the project, says that the program will include more people in the future.

UNITAS is exactly the sort of thing William Hickson was thinking of when he penned his lines of bad poetry 150 years ago. He dreamed of a time when all men could be brothers, a time when all people could live and work and enjoy life together. Today, it's still a dream, but one we're working to make real, one we're working to fulfill. Groups like the AIS and the BSM are telling us to reach out and understand, and UNITAS is showing us how. The exchange and interaction of UNITAS is the first step, the first push toward a time when we can really be together, when we can really be like brothers.

To borrow a phrase from the Ba'hai faith, "All mankind is one." All that remains for us is to prove it.

Bruce Dickinson is a sophomore English and history major from Toronto.