

The Daily Tar Heel

94th year of editorial freedom

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Editorials

Time to sport a new approach

In more than a quarter of a century as UNC's men's basketball coach, Dean Smith has equated academic prowess with athletic skill when recruiting prospective Tar Heels. The result has been a tremendous graduation rate of more than 93 percent among lettermen on Smith's teams.

Smith established that record by recruiting athletes that could handle the high-profile life of major college basketball and the workload of a typical UNC student. While academics plays a role in recruiting by UNC coaches, a report released Friday by the UNC system shows that academic preparedness has not played as important a role as they should.

The First Annual Report on Intercollegiate Athletics is a document that, at times, lacks as much coherence as the University's admissions policy for athletes. The report presented a set of numbers exhibiting UNC's blatant favoritism for athletes during the admissions process: Of 46 "recruited entering freshmen student-athletes with full athletic grants for fall 1986," 22 "exceptions" were made. In other words, the University bent its base standards to accept these athletes.

That means that nearly 50 percent of UNC's freshman athletes on full scholarship either had an SAT score below 800 or a "Predicted Grade Average" of 1.6. Among the entire freshman class of 3,307 students, only 141 exceptions were granted.

The UNC Board of Trustees opened the door to such exceptions in September when it said admission should not be denied applicants that, among other things, "give evidence of possessing special talents for University programs requiring such special talents." That's a euphemism for letting in students with substandard academic preparation.

Two solutions can be considered to eradicate these transgressions. Freshman ineligibility, a concept that died in the early 1970s, sports advocates such as Smith and UNC Athletic Director John Swofford. Sitting out during the first year of study would allow for smoother acclimation to college. It is an issue being seriously debated among NCAA leaders.

The most immediate solution is to simply draw the line: No more exceptions for athletes, period. Letting an athlete enter into an overwhelming academic environment and strenuous physical regimen is an injustice to the athlete. Creating the possibility that an athlete could develop as a leader on a team — only to fall below minimum standards later in an academic career — is an injustice to teammates.

Passing over the next Michael Jordan because he's in the bottom of his high school class would not be easy. UNC has historically made decisions that weren't necessarily easy, but were just and right. Let's do that again — draw the line.

N.C. needs revised health care

If a current trend continues, the state's senior citizens may face a retirement where health-care programs would not shield them from the high costs of prolonged illness. In fact, N.C.'s ability to provide affordable health care for the elderly is already weakening at a phenomenal rate.

Much of the problem stems from increasing numbers of retirees overwhelming N.C. health care programs. According to the American Association of Retired Persons, the state's 65-and-older population increased 46 percent between 1970 and 1980.

As medical advances have lengthened the average life span, they have also challenged elderly health care to deal with more patients. When the Baby Boomers retire, N.C. health care for senior citizens will be severely strained.

While more North Carolinians are applying for Medicare and Medicaid, those services are constrained by tight budgets. Attempting to cut costs, Medicare decided in 1983 to pare two days off the average hospital stay of 9.5 days when awarding funds. Thus, patients are being released before they are fully recovered.

Medicare and Medicaid could stand improvement. Medicare operates on the notion that paying a flat rate for a generic medical service is a sound practice. It is not. To really cut costs, the service should stop reimbursing hospitals \$200 for \$150 worth of medical service.

Also, as Medicaid stands now, it only provides health coverage for paupers. While that serves senior citizens admirably, it locks them into a no-win situation. Consider a senior citizen suffering from a serious, lasting illness but who is not insured for long hospital stays. Because Medicare cannot pay for all treatments, he must rely on other sources. If a loan isn't available, lifetime savings must be depleted in order to qualify for Medicaid benefits. He's damned if he does, damned if he doesn't.

That future is neither promising nor pleasant, but could await many North Carolinians. The state's health care services must do more to provide affordable health care for senior citizens. If the services are not overhauled and expanded now, N.C. senior citizens cannot expect a worry-free, healthy retirement.

Help is on the way, Richie fanatics

If you're still cursing the powers that be over the breakup of Wham!, then you're probably counting the days until Lionel Richie's Nov. 8 appearance at the Dean E. Smith Center. As a matter of fact, the excitement is so intense here on the Hill that one could probably cut it with a . . . well, you get the idea.

To help concert-goers get a grasp on their enthusiasm and better understand the Songster of Our Times, we — ever mindful of our duties to our readers — have established the Lionel Richie Information Center. The center, located atop Morrison Residence Hall (next to the building's famed pool), will, according to its charter, "collect, amass, collate, then distribute, disperse and give out information on Mr. Richie to the masses, in order to make the world safe for democracy, enrich the lives of the global citizenry and give us something to do with our free time."

So, increase your knowledge of the Wiz of the Music Biz. Visit the Lionel Richie Information Center daily. Better yet, become an LRIC Society member (only \$75

The Bottom Line

per week, including the elegantly photocopied "I itchie for Richie" badge). And, for goodness' sake, trash the advice of your loved ones and stop putting off that subscription to People magazine.

Ubiquitous 'prostitutkas'

The world's oldest profession knows no boundaries, it seems — even an Iron Curtain is no barrier for the practice of prostitution.

The Soviet Union, which has long denied the existence of prostitution within its borders, recently admitted that, yes, "prostitutkas," long believed a by-product of capitalism, do indeed walk Soviet streets. The admission contradicts the official Soviet Encyclopedia, which declares that "prostitution has been liquidated." Some things just endure.

Tar Heel Forum

Gorbachev — the real summit culprit

Paul Cory
Staff Writer

Ronald Reagan has been unfairly blamed for the collapse of the Iceland summit. The real saboteur, Mikhail Gorbachev, has somehow managed to escape his crushing load of blame for the failure of the Iceland meeting.

The two leaders reached an impasse over the American Strategic Defense Initiative, popularly known as "Star Wars." SDI is Reagan's proposal for an anti-missile defense, part of which will be based in space. Gorbachev insisted that SDI not be allowed out of the laboratory for 10 years. But by that time, according to verbal agreements reached between Reagan and Gorbachev, there would be no more ICBMs to deal with.

Gorbachev's demand is essentially the same thing the Soviets have been screaming for since Reagan announced SDI. Nothing new, just another example of Soviet inflexibility. When Reagan refused to give up SDI, the conferences broke up with considerable ill will on both sides. There was no mention of the fact that the Soviets themselves have been working full speed on their own missile defense program.

Reagan's refusal to give up SDI would not have crippled the mini-summit if Gorbachev had bargained in good faith. But had Gorbachev done so, he would not have demanded that the American SDI research be halted.

According to agreements reached by Reagan and Gorbachev before the SDI stalemate, by the time even the most optimistic projections put a functional anti-missile system in space, there would be no ICBMs left. There would be nothing for the SDI system to destroy. Yet Gorbachev sabotaged the Iceland progress by insisting the United States give up a system that would not be ready for use until it was useless. He demanded this without suggesting the same limits on Soviet SDI research.

Instead of being blamed for the failure of the summit in Iceland, Reagan should be praised for getting Gorbachev to do what no other Soviet leader has ever done; agree to almost totally eliminate nuclear arms. In the verbal agreements made before the stalemate, Reagan conceded more than Gorbachev. Without the missiles, without Mutual Assured Destruction, the Soviet Union has a numerical superiority in men, tanks and planes. To match the Soviet numbers would require huge expenditures by NATO countries, particularly the United States.

That Reagan was willing to accept this

inequality is a sign of his genuine desire for arms control. That Gorbachev was willing to sabotage the whole process by insisting the United States give up SDI indicates that his desire to bring about arms reduction was not as sincere as he would want us to believe.

Since the Soviets are trying to develop their own SDI system, Star Wars should have been a moot point unless the Soviets were planning to cheat. Reagan's refusal to bargain away the only thing that could ensure the Soviet's honesty cannot be construed as bargaining in bad faith.

The Soviet Union is a country that tried to blockade West Berlin into submission in violation of post-World War II agreements. It has established puppet states in Eastern Europe and has invaded Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan to keep repressive communist regimes in power. It has repeatedly violated chemical weapons treaties and the Helsinki Accords on Human Rights. The Soviet Union has shown that it will break any treaty it makes once it stands to gain from it. Why should this time be different?

Gorbachev is expected to catch hell from the Politburo for not returning with an arms agreement. He should be catching hell from the world as well.

Paul Cory is a freshman journalism major from Bowie, Md.

Care, not tact

To the editor:
 In your Monday editorial ("Protest lacks tact," Oct. 20) you commented that the UNC "pro-divestment group" suffered a loss of credibility due to their protest at President C.D. Spangler's inauguration. In fact, the anti-apartheid group increased its credibility. The question is with whom. To the black South African children who weep from tear gas engulfing their homes; to the parents who agonize from torture and death; to the degraded and humiliated majority; and to the courageous many who are resisting the daily terror—to them the Friday demonstration was a small but noble gesture.

People who are concerned about social amenities and decorum above all else are going to judge acts of conscience which make an impact as being in bad taste. Given this outlook, it is easy to understand why Nobel Peace Prize winner (and one of the most moderate black leaders in South Africa) Bishop Desmond Tutu said, "The West can go to Hell."

There is one criticism concerning the Friday protest. There should have been hundreds participating, including The Daily Tar Heel editorial board. It is time to act on our convictions. If the thousands of students who say they are for divestment were willing to make sacrifices in the tradition of Martin Luther King, the smooth functioning of the University could be disrupted until it divested. This is the least we could do to show our support and solidarity with the people of South Africa.

BOB SHELDON
Chapel Hill

Tax burden

To the editor:
 Eric McManus has described Terry Sanford as brave and responsible for supporting a food tax in North Carolina ("Sanford's badge," Oct. 20). While I agree that education is an issue of highest priority, imposing a tax on the necessities of life, especially in a state that ranks low on the per capita income scale, is neither brave nor responsible, but barbaric and obscene.

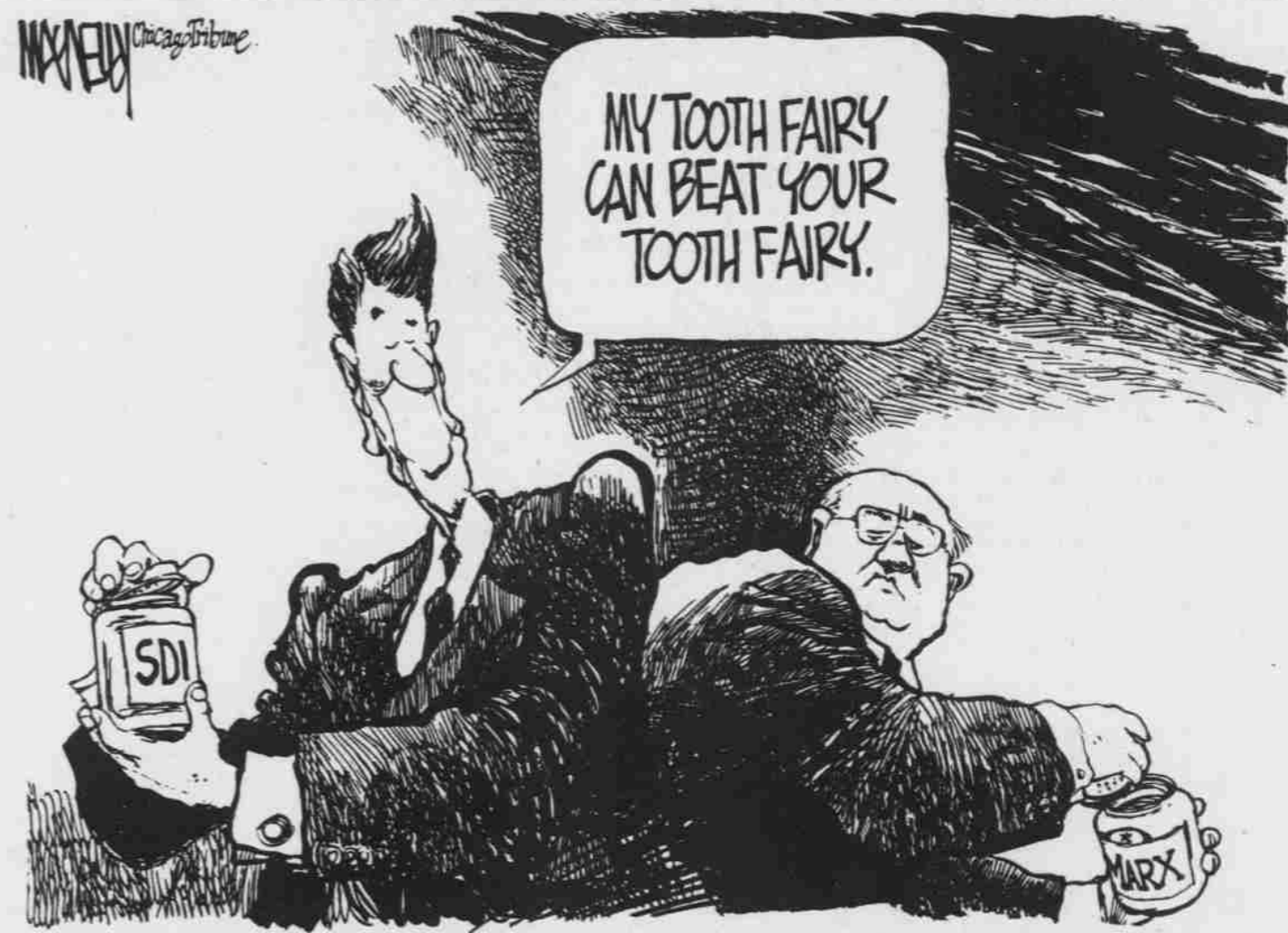
If Sanford wants to demonstrate his bravery and responsibility, let him support a tobacco tax.

SCOTT CARSON
Class of 1986
Chapel Hill

On her merits

To the editor:
 Keith Poston flatters himself. Judging by his paranoic comments ("Poston declines election appeal," Oct. 15) regarding some sort of "movement" to prevent his election to the Student Congress, he assumes that every vote cast in the Oct. 7 election in District 14 was for him or against him. He seems to ignore the fact that his opponent, Stephanie Alschwede, won — it was "the movement" that succeeded in its vendetta against him.

I, for one of many, voted for Alschwede because she is a concerned, open-minded, intel-



The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comment. For style and clarity, we ask that you observe the following guidelines for letters to the editor and columns:

- All letters/columns must be signed by the author(s). Limit of two signatures per letter or column.
- Students who submit letters/columns should also include their name, year in school,

major and phone number. Professors and other University employees should include their title and department.

- All letters/columns must be typed. (For easier editing, we ask that they be double-spaced on a 60-space line.)
- The Daily Tar Heel reserves the right to edit letters and columns for style, grammar and accuracy.

Legalize drugs

To the editor:

Were the production, sale and distribution of marijuana, cocaine, heroin and other such substances legal, these industries would become similar to the tobacco and alcohol industries.

A few remarks while you catch your breath: I hesitate to call marijuana, cocaine, heroin and LSD "drugs" because of the tendency to exclude nicotine and ethyl alcohol from that category. Let me emphasize: tobacco and alcohol are drugs too, and when abused cause many problems, including death. Certainly there are differences in effects and potency between drugs, but all are potentially harmful.

Were the marijuana industry legal, jobs would be created and extra money would flow in the economy in a fashion similar to that in which the N.C. tobacco industry generates these effects today. The marijuana industry would no longer be in the hands of the underworld, and pot-related crime would decline. Local, state and federal governments would receive tax revenues. The federal government could save a lot of money, say \$1.7 billion, the amount President Reagan is expected to authorize for the war against drugs.

On the negative side, drug usage — and abuse — might increase.

Let me note that I am not a drug abuser, or even a regular user. About three years ago, I smoked some marijuana one night, the only such occasion in my life. I have tried cigars a handful of times and I drink an alcoholic beverage perhaps once every three weeks.

Nevertheless, I believe that this country should conduct a limited experiment to evaluate whether or not legalization of presently illegal drugs is beneficial. I suggest that marijuana be legalized and that 10 years later a study be commissioned to evaluate the effects. Such an experiment would reveal the similarities between alcohol, tobacco and marijuana, and

ligent individual. After attending a voter forum at Whitehead before the election, I came to the conclusion that Alschwede was a much more personable and accessible candidate. I resent Poston's insinuation that Alschwede won because of his political affiliations, not because of her political merits.

LISA BRIGHTON
Freshman
Psychology

True believer

To the editor:

Oh come on Dave Schmidt . . . ! Obviously you are not a true Monkees fan! (Come on, you can tell us, you were forced to go, right?) Give us all — all 12,600 admirers of those "three middle-age men trying to look hip" — a break! So they sang "Listen to the Band" without Mike Nesmith — his loss is our gain!

The current residents here in "Status Symbol Land" seem to think — I know I do — that these 40 year olds in their "plastic fashion plates" did a DAMN good job on stage! Will you be able to say the same when you reach middle age? (Please send us a photo when you do so we can fairly compare!)

Well, Schmidt, I must concede you one point: the opening acts did leave something to be desired!

Hokey or not, can you honestly see the Monkees playing straight men all the time? Think about it. "I'm a Believer" Schmidt, maybe one day you will be too.

COURTNEY SHANAHAN
Sophomore
Early Childhood Education

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would be helpful in developing intelligent policies to regulate the production, sale, distribution and usage of other drugs as well.

RONALD MENICH
Graduate
Operations Research and Systems Analysis

Cruel black bars

To the editor:

After a relaxing weekend at home, I was glad to get back to the Hill. Seeing friends and resuming my Chapel Hill lifestyle left me fulfilled and glad to be back. But when I went to Lenoir to engage in my favorite pastime, stair sitting, I was distressed to find the open stairs sectioned off with ugly, black handrails that were already rusty.

I can no longer sit with four or five friends and watch the world walk by. Diners are already now corralled into the dining hall, stepping over or on anyone relaxing on the stairs. Apart from ensuring each front door of Lenoir even wear, I see no use for the railing eyesores. Lenoir offers adequate access for handicapped students, and people with crutches now have a harder time finding an aisle to go up and down because they must dodge dispersed clumps of sitters (separated by the rails). I haven't seen many people teeter and fall, but I assure you that if they were going to fall, the rails would not stop them (except possibly by falling on the black cast iron dividers, increasing greatly the chance of head-splitting).

Many occurrences have upset me since I've been here, but I never thought I could do anything done about it. Last year's letter about the trick doors of the Undergrad Library got enough backing to get the doors fixed. I'm not going to stop stair-sitting. I will just have to get used to looking through the black bars the University has surrounded me with, and seeing things as they really are.

ROBERT S. KISTENBERG
Sophomore
Math