

# The Daily Tar Heel

95th year of editorial freedom

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## The vote: anatomy of a failure

"I don't like it at all," said sophomore David Bolick, referring to drop-add. His view is universally shared by undergraduates at UNC. Chancellor Christopher Fordham agrees. "I grievously lament the waste of students' time."

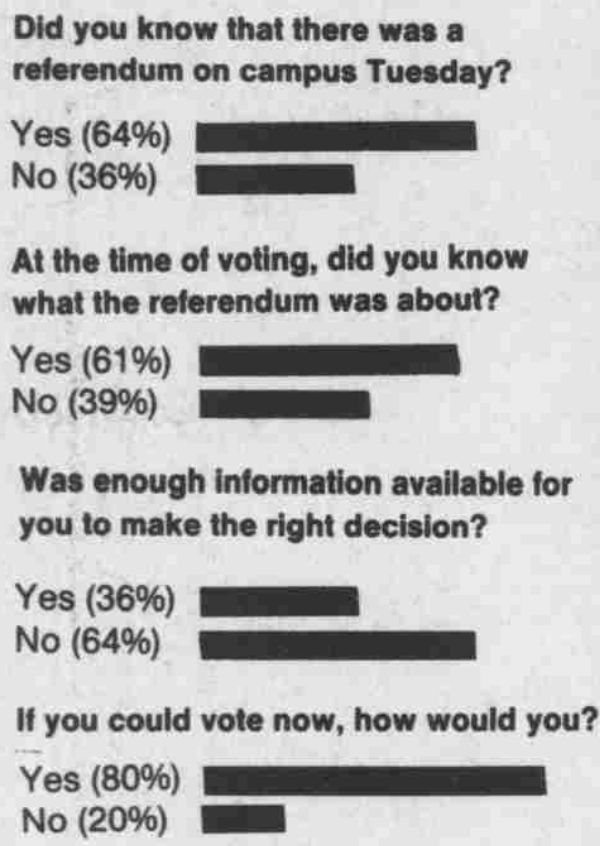
On Tuesday, students had the chance to change all that. In a campus election, they were able to vote on a \$5 increase in Student Activity Fees, an increase that would revolutionize drop-add by financing a telephonic registration system.

Students voted 5 to 1 in favor of the referendum. But it didn't pass because less than the required 10 percent of them voted.

Although some said they had never heard of the system, the idea is nothing new.

### board opinion

### Survey results



**Spring 1986** Newly-elected Student Body President Bryan Hassel, having made a campaign promise to reform drop-add, sends two representatives to discuss the issue with University Registrar David Lanier. Lanier proposes a task force to look at ways of improving the system.

**Summer 1986** In a memorandum to registration task force members, Lanier writes, "To summarize my understanding of the direction we are taking, a registration system is being proposed that is a real-time, on-line registration system using the telephonic voice response system as the primary method of data entry."

**Summer 1986** Lanier meets with the leaders of the Black Student Movement, Interfraternity Council, Residence Hall Association and Panhellenic Council to promote the new system. He asks to make more detailed presentations. Only the Panhellenic Council takes him up on this.

**Summer 1986** In a letter to Hassel, Lanier asks that he and John Harrison, associate provost, appear before Student Congress to make a presentation on the issue "at your earliest convenience." Lanier also recalls a phone call asking the same question. Hassel never replied.

**Fall 1986** Lanier's office conducts a random survey of 350 students at drop-add. Of those surveyed, 67 percent indicated that they would be prepared to pay at least \$5 for telephonic registration. Students were obviously dissatisfied with the system now in use.

**Fall 1987** By this time, Lanier's staff had spent 18 months exploring the issue. They vigorously prepared for a student referendum to approve the necessary fee increase. On a budget severely limited by election laws, they succeeded in making a video, handing

out 1,500 fliers at drop-add, painting the cube, demonstrating the system at Compufest and advertising the referendum on WXYC.

But student apathy was such that less than 10 percent bothered to vote. "Why am I beating myself to death to promote this system?" Lanier asked.

Admitting his lack of follow-through on the project, Hassel said, "This is a great example of the administration really trying to help the students and include them. Throughout, they let them know what was going on." He called the election turnout "a big blow to student credibility."

Students initiated the project. In response, a major administrative department committed time and money to research. Together, they found a solution in the form of telephonic registration.

Yet the project did not get the publicity it needed. In an informal poll conducted Wednesday, 64 of 100 students said they didn't have enough information to make a decision.

Student Body President Brian Bailey said that low voter turnout is a nationwide problem, and that UNC compares well with other universities. But the fact that apathy is the norm does not make it excusable.

Student leaders are responsible for keeping their constituents informed. It is not the administration's job to campaign for student issues — its role is to provide the necessary information to student leaders. On the drop-add proposal, plenty of information was available.

When today's underclassmen face drop-add lines in 1990, they have not only themselves to blame, but their past and present leaders.

### non sequitur

## Kicking the paperback habit

Non was wandering through his favorite bookstore the other day when he decided to check out what was new in the fiction department. He paused in front of a row of paperbacks with colorful, stylish covers, each of the covers featuring a moody painting.

Non knew, of course, that these were the Vintage Contemporaries, some of the best new fiction available, written by the new darlings of the publishing industry. He saw Richard Ford's "The Sportswriter," James Crumley's "Dancing Bear," Richard Russo's "Mohawk."

"It's always warm inside the Mohawk Grill," Non muttered to himself. A woman standing next to him turned and flashed a sympathetic smile.

"I know exactly how you feel," she said. "I started reading these a couple of years ago, and now I find I can't stop. It's progressed to the point that hardcovers give me a rash. I came in the other day and tried to buy Garrison Keillor's new book, but then I started thinking about how nice 'Cathedral' would look next to 'Fiskadoro,'" and found himself back here again."

"That's not the worst part," Non said. "All my friends read these, and if you fall behind it's tough to stay in the conversation. Someone asked me yesterday if I had read

the new McGuane, and when I said no, he punched me and then walked away. So I bought it today."

"I feel that same kind of pressure. When I read a book or even a short story published before 1984, I feel guilty. There's so much good new writing that it seems a shame to read anything else."

"I used to have the same problem. But I've conquered my guilt. It's only the occasional outbreak of violence that sends me here. I've created an organization. It's called Vintages Anonymous. At every meeting, each member stands up and says, 'I have read 'Bright Lights, Big City.' ' We go from there."

"I just know I couldn't quit cold turkey."

"You won't have to. We're allowed to read one new novel or collection a week. But we also read Barth and Fowles, Updike and Salinger. I'll always spend a couple of hours a day right in front of the Vintage rack, and I've already got my order in for Barthelme's book, if it ever comes out. But this doesn't have to be your whole life."

"Maybe I will come by. But one question. You mean Donald, not Frederick, right?"

"Of course I do. How could you think otherwise?"

Then they both chuckled knowingly, content in each other's presence.

## Readers' Forum

### Fact more horrifying than fiction

Donnie Trevathan  
 Guest Writer

While much was uncovered during the investigation of the Iran-contra affair, most of it was not new. We as a nation were presented with irrefutable proof that members and associates of our government and military were involved in a network of illegal actions (by national and international laws). Eugene Hasenfus was shot out of the sky on a private supply operation; Reagan officials were caught secretly selling arms to Iran and diverting the profits. New incidents, old pattern. We had already heard about the CIA-published assassination manuals released in Central America. We had already seen the United States proclaimed in violation of international laws by the World Court after the CIA was caught mining Nicaraguan harbors. But the pattern of covert, illegal actions is even older and more shocking than that.

Investigations initiated by independent journalists Tony Avirgan and Martha Honey in Costa Rica and extended by the Christic Institute, (a Washington, D.C.,-based law agency that has been involved in the Texas Sanctuary trials and Three Mile Island) have linked the team involved in the Iran-contra operations to a network of crime covering 25 years and various

corners of the world. According to testimonies and evidence amassed in the Christic Institute's investigation, this U.S. government-sponsored network has played a part in planning and carrying out illegal arms sales, drug trafficking, covert wars and the assassination of more than 100,000 civilians in Laos, Cambodia and Thailand.

Many of the questions raised in the congressional investigation of the Iran-contra affair are seen to be completely insignificant ("Did Reagan know?") in comparison with the questions surrounding the history of this criminal network. In May 1986, the Christic Institute filed a lawsuit against 29 defendants based on federal anti-organized crime laws. Among the defendants are many familiar names: Richard Secord, Albert Hakim, Theodore Shackley, Adolfo Calero, etc. The criminal actions that they are being charged with involve Chile, South Africa, Australia, Cuba and Southeast Asia, as well as Nicaragua and Iran. Lurking beneath the Iran-contra cover-up is a mind-boggling

reality of government-sponsored criminality.

The implications of the lawsuit — the degree to which the U.S. government and military have attempted to place themselves beyond the control of law, the Constitution and the American people — are of phenomenal proportions. Our own government has for decades been using the kind of terrorist methods for which we have repeatedly denounced other governments. The Christic Institute's goal is to bring this network of crime to light, and to bring its perpetrators to justice. The congressional hearings barely scratched the surface of these goals. If democracy and justice are to be safeguarded elsewhere in the world, we must first learn to safeguard them here, and supporting the investigation of the Christic Institute is of the utmost importance. Anyone can contact its office in Carrboro and obtain affidavits reporting the entire bizarre history — a real-life story of spies and crime unequalled in fiction and unavoidable in the struggle for a just, democratic world.

Donnie Trevathan is a graduate student in clinical psychology from Hawthorne, Calif.

### Study rooms will be free

To the editor:  
 I noted with interest Andy White's letter ("Don't tie up study rooms," Oct. 7) concerning the difficulty his study group had in finding a room in Davis the other evening. He may not have been aware that a policy statement on the use of typing and group study rooms, posted outside each study room, indicates that an individual is required to vacate a study room at the request of a group of two or more. This may have made his task of finding a room somewhat easier.

As one means of alleviating the specific problem he mentioned, however, we have amended our policy on group studies to indicate that groups may occupy a study room if it has been left unattended for longer than 20 minutes. Additionally, assistance in carrying out this policy will be available at the circulation desk. New signs to this effect should go up sometime next week. We also intend to monitor the situation and to look for other solutions if it proves necessary.

We reiterate White's plea for consideration of student study needs by asking that individuals and groups remove personal materials from study rooms when they are not going to be used.

KAREN SEIBERT  
 Associate University Librarian  
 Davis Library

### Just say no to U2 concert

To the editor:  
 In wonderment I read and reread the Oct. 5 letter "Local bands: catch 'em while you can" and, finding no evidence to the contrary, came to the conclusion that the author was, indeed, serious. My next thought was that the author was a kid with bright yellow tennis shoes, a radical skateboard and whose intellectual curiosity about life ends with his musings on how much vertical air he can get off the walls at Davis library. But this letter was the collaborative effort of a graduate student and a resident technician at our hospital.

Anyway, I have been aware for some time of squawkings in reference to the University's decision about the U2 concert but have remained admittedly ignorant of the ethereal "dream concert" experience of Fetchin' Bones and Hege V in the same

enchanted evening. Allow me to extend an idea for a revolutionary and all-too-novel auditory diversion: Flip on a public radio station. The programs of WCPE in Raleigh and WUNC in Chapel Hill are informative and exciting. Perhaps attend a function of the UNC-Concert Series or see the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra in Raleigh, etc.

And while these notions may not appear as tantalizing or as titillating as guzzling cheap beer and dancing in the aisles at a U2 concert (and later expressing some righteous anger about those prudish guards trying to maintain some semblance of control among 20,000 rowdy fans) or may not leave the listener with "that dull ringing noise in his ears induced by exposure to great performances," they may offer some insight, enhancement, enlightenment, enjoyment.

KELLI SMITH-ENGLISH  
 Senior English

### No need to be gun-shy

To the editor:  
 With regard to Jill Gerber's editorial ("Put that pistol down," Oct. 6), I must make several points. First, let me make it clear that I am opposed to any law that enables anyone (with the exception of law enforcement personnel) to carry a concealed weapon.

A law such as this could have serious impact on public safety. What I am opposed to is Gerber's approach to attacking the National Rifle Association. First of all, she begins with a statement that includes the phrase "state gun fanatics can brandish their steel-gray revolvers with renewed zeal." Webster's Dictionary defines brandishing as "moving or waving, as a weapon." Waving or pointing a gun is prohibited in Florida. No permit to carry a weapon allows an owner to "brandish" the weapon.

Gerber goes on to point out that many of the permit applicants live in Dade County, Fla., and that this is where "crime-ridden Miami is located." Is she implying a relationship between the applications and the already-existing crime rate in Miami? It appears that a man or a woman who lives in such an area might want to purchase a firearm, learn to handle it with safety and keep it in his or her home. The NRA believes that law-abiding citizens have that right guaranteed by the Constitution's Second Amendment, which specifically states that "the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed."

Although I am not an NRA member, I do strongly agree with its stand against gun control. After all, when guns are outlawed, only outlaws will have guns.

KENT SPEARS  
 Senior Criminal Justice

## Stop pouring concrete all over our campus

To the editor:  
 The charm of Chapel Hill is its campus. What other major college has been able to preserve the natural beauty of the surroundings, while still forging ahead to establish itself as one of the foremost educational institutions in the country? When visitors come to campus, they speak not only of the basketball team or the educational opportunities, but of the pine trees, squirrels and other wild life which abounds on the UNC campus. Unfortunately, the tide is turning.

Recently, it seems that the Rams Club and other alumni have decided that the University is no longer for the students, but for the former students.

The alumni have seen to it that they have

the best seats at both football games and basketball games. Now they need to disrupt the beauty of our campus by erecting a building in their honor. The Alumni Center on Stadium Drive is the last straw! The center would mean cutting down the beautiful pine trees that the past alumni have fought so hard to protect. The replacement for these trees would be more "progressive" things such as glass, brick and concrete. Now doesn't that add to the aesthetic beauty of campus! If the trees are going to be cut down, why won't it be done in a way which will benefit students, like a parking lot?

As a future alumna, I can appreciate the alumni organizations wanting to keep in touch with campus and its activities. I,

too, will want to come back to see a football game or a basketball game. But I hope I will have enough sense to put the needs and wants of the students before my own selfish ones.

The alumni should give money to their former school because they love the campus and the good times they had here. It should not be because they want another brick laid in their honor. Just a word of warning to the alumni: This is our campus, too, and had we wanted bricks, we would have gone to State!

CAROL HUFFMAN  
 Freshman Political Science