

The Daily Tar Heel

95th year of editorial freedom

JILL GERBER, Editor
 AMY HAMILTON, Managing Editor
 SALLY PEARSALL, News Editor
 KRISTEN GARDNER, University Editor
 KIMBERLY EDENS, University Editor
 SHARON KEBSCHULL, State and National Editor
 LEIGH ANN McDONALD, City Editor
 MIKE BERARDINO, Sports Editor
 FELISA NEURINGER, Business Editor
 HANNAH DRUM, Features Editor
 ELIZABETH ELLEN, Arts Editor
 CHARLOTTE CANNON, Photography Editor
 CATHY McHUGH, Omnibus Editor

Innocents housing the guilty

Imagine: You are standing in line in Student Stores when the manager locks the front doors. "A calculator is missing," he cries. "Unless the person who stole it confesses now, each one of you in here will have to pay part of its cost."

The crowd of students grumbles. You shout, "Why should we pay if we didn't do anything? What if the thief stole it an hour ago and isn't even here anymore?"

The manager shakes his head and guards the door. "You will all have to pay, right now!"

This scenario has been exaggerated to Big Brother proportions, but is not too far removed from the situation in UNC dorms. Under the housing contract, if a hall or common area is damaged in any way, every student on the hall must pay for the damage if the true culprit does not come forward.

This policy raises a number of questions. First, it is reminiscent of fifth-grade classrooms where every student sits fidgeting after school for the actions of one playground bully. Fining every resident for the actions of one individual is simply unfair. Justice is not served by punishing the innocent along with the guilty.

Especially if the guilty are not even

board opinion

present. Dorm security is minimal, and nothing prevents a vandal from entering a dorm, doing his dirty work and escaping. The residents can't produce the criminal when asked, because he doesn't live there. As a result, they pay for damage for which they have absolutely no responsibility. On an exaggerated level, this is like asking a robbery victim to pay the police for their trouble.

Furthermore, it is not the responsibility of the dorm residents to patrol their hallways. Students are here to study, not to police. They should take care of their rooms, but cannot be held responsible for areas that are open to any drunk with a can of spray paint.

The real crime is that the housing contract is a very one-sided document. Students who want to live in dorms do not agree to the vandalism clause so much as bow to it. Administrators would argue that if a student doesn't like it, he can live elsewhere, but off-campus housing is often not practical for freshmen. And even in an apartment or private house, the landlord must take formal legal action to receive damage compensation from his tenants. The compensation is not assumed.

Until the housing contract is revised, dorm residents will have no choice but to assume guilt as a group for the actions of an irresponsible individual.

Jaybirds should fly the coop

The plovers and the nudists are quarreling, and no solution seems to be in sight.

Actually, the piping plovers aren't handling their side of the dispute by themselves. The battle centers on Moonstone Beach, a one and a half mile strip of sand in Kingston, R.I., which is the only public nude beach in New England. And since there are only four plovers who reside on Moonstone, and there are thousands of nudists who use the beach, the plovers have enlisted the aid of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

But what exactly is a plover?

According to Webster's, the word "plover" derives from the Old French *plovier*, which means rainbird and which in turn derives from the Latin *pluvius*. A plover is a limicoline (shore-inhabiting) bird of the family Charadriidae, especially those with a short tail and a bill like that of a pigeon. Plovers, then, are pigeons that really like the beach.

Unfortunately, piping plovers are also an endangered species, and there are only 550 couples left on the Atlantic coast. The problem should be obvious. The plovers love the beach, live on the beach, and want their children to live on the beach. But the nudists need a place to fulfill their quest for the elusive all-around tan.

Now, since the plovers don't wear clothes (due no doubt to the death of domestic industry), one might think the nudists would welcome the birds with open arms, so to speak. The problem, though, isn't the nudists so much as it is the animals they bring with them. Last year, heartless carnivores searching for garbage cast away by the nudists wiped out eight plover eggs and forced the birds out of their homes.

That's why the Wildlife Service wants to close the beach for the summer. The nudists say shutting down Moonstone will cost the state \$6.5 million in lost revenue. They also claim the plovers are merely an excuse to remove them from the beach. But the state originally bought Moonstone to protect wildlife. That purchase represented an implicit, if not explicit, contract with the plovers, wherein the state promised to let the species flourish.

The advent of the nudists has endangered that promise, has stripped the plovers of the opportunity to watch their children spread their wings and leave the nest. Perhaps the nudists, as they claim, do have a First Amendment right to walk sans accoutrements. But that right is overruled by a more pressing concern, by the right of little plovers to live. — James Surowiecki

The Daily Tar Heel
 Editorial Writers: Matt Bivens, Brian McCuskey, Laura Pearlman and James Surowiecki.
 Editorial Assistants: Gary Greene, David Lagos and Mark Leeper.
 Assistant Managing Editors: Cara Bonnett, Teresa Kriegsmann and Mandy Spence.
 Layout Assistants: Ashley Campbell, Katherine Hortenstine, Peter Lineberry, Laura Ross and Amy Weisner.
 News: Kari Barlow, Joanna Baxter, Crystal Bell, Laura Bennett, Lydian Bernhardt, Patricia Brown, Brenda Campbell, Lacy Churchill, Jenny Cloninger, Staci Cox, Robin Curtis, Laura DiGiano, Carrie Dove, Laura Francis, Amy Grubbs, Lindsay Hayes, William Hildebolt, Kyle Hudson, Helen Jones, Susan Kauffman, Will Lingo, Barbara Linn, Steve Long, Lynne McClintock, Brian McCollum, Myrna Miller, Rebecca Nesbit, Helle Nielsen, Susan Odenkirchen, Laura Peay, Cheryl Pond, Beth Rhea, Becky Riddick, Mark Shaver, Mandy Spence, Christopher Sontchi, Laura Summer, William Taggart, Clay Thorp, Amy Weisner, Jackie Williams and Amy Winslow. Mark Folk and Justin McGuire, senior writers. Juliellen Sarver, wire editor. Brian Long, assistant business editor.
 Sports: Chris Spencer and Jim Muse, assistant sports editors. James Surowiecki, senior writer. Robert D'Ardua, Steve Giles, Dave Glenn, Dave Hall, Clay Hodges, Ginger Jonas, Brendan Mathews, Patton McDowell, Keith Parsons, Andy Podolsky and Langston Wertz.
 Features: Jo Lee Credle, Grier Harris, Jim Mock, Corin Orlam, Leigh Pressley, Carole Southern, Ellen Thornton, Linda van den Berg, Julie Woods and Holly Young.
 Arts: James Burrus, senior writer. Scott Cowen, Stephanie Dean, Kim Donehower, David Hester, Julie Olson, Kelly Rhodes, Alston Russell, Richard Smith and Michael Spirtas.
 Photography: Christie Blom, Tony Deifell, Janet Jarman, David Minton, Elizabeth Morrah and Julie Stovall.
 Copy Editors: Karen Bell and Kaarin Tisue, assistant news editors. Cara Bonnett, Carrie Burgin, Julia Coon, Whitney Cork, Bert Hackney and Sherry Miller.
 Cartoonists: Jeff Christian and Greg Humphreys.
 Campus Calendar: Mindelle Rosenberg and David Starnes.
 Business and Advertising: Anne Fulcher, general manager; Patricia Glance, advertising director; Joan Worth, advertising coordinator; Peggy Smith, advertising manager; Sheila Baker, business manager; Michael Benfield, Lisa Choreanian, Ashley Hinton, Kellie McElhane, Chrissy Mennitt, Stacey Moniford, Lesley Renwick, Julie Settle, Dave Slovinsky, Dean Thompson, Amanda Tilley and Wendy Wegner, advertising representatives; Stephanie Chesson, classified advertising representative; and Kris Carlson, secretary.
 Subscriptions: Tucker Stevens, manager.
 Distribution: David Eiconopouly, manager; Billy Owens, assistant.
 Production: Bill Leslie and Stacy Wynn, Rita Galloway, Leslie Humphrey, Stephanie Locklear and Tammy Sheldon, production assistants.
 Printing: The Chapel Hill Newspaper.

Readers' Forum

Painful struggles blind us to beauty

Louis Corrigan
 Staff Columnist

When a 24-year-old woman less than a year out of college publishes her first novel, young and aspiring literati take notice. When that woman is a recent graduate of your university and the novel depicts life at college, the novelist and her book are liable to become the talk of the town. Garret Weyr, an honors graduate of UNC's Creative Writing Program, is the woman who has Chapel Hill buzzing with the words "Pretty Girls."

Weyr is hot. A lengthy essay in the February issue of *Glamour* and a recent appearance on "The Today Show" are surely the first of what Crown Publishers hope will be an extended publicity campaign. After recent best sellers chronicling the anomic youth culture of Los Angeles and New York, Crown is betting the novelty of Weyr's Southern setting will make "Pretty Girls" a hit, and so has ordered a remarkable first printing of 20,000 copies.

For local residents and recent farflung alumni, however, the novel holds the special allure of being the story of our Chapel Hill lives and not their Los Angeles lives. How are we seen by one of our own?

For those who knew Weyr and her friends, there is an undoubted initial interest, even insidious pleasure, in reading the novel as a *roman a clef* and trying to discern the real people on whom the characters are based. Whom does Weyr lambast and lampoon? Where does she hurt feelings, even the score or show surprising and sympathetic insight?

All readers, however, finally come to consider the story's interest in itself, of these young people supposedly not so different from, if not ourselves, then those around us. If the characters seem both unloved and unlovable, and strained to the limit of their nerves, an explanation is at hand. Over the course of the novel's writing and rewriting, Weyr sustained both her

parents' divorce and, at age 20, a stroke paralyzing the left side of her body. During the slow process of recovery involving endless visits to the physical therapist, Weyr endured a strain that even her friends could not realize. Such unusual troubles, however, did not mean Weyr was freed from the normal social, sexual and academic problems afflicting most college students.

Yet, just as we are interested to know what the travel guide "Let's Go" says about our hometown, so too are we anxious to hear what Weyr says about the places and faces that we call home.

Like Hemingway's Paris in "A Moveable Feast," the Chapel Hill of "Pretty Girls" unfolds with names of real places where the characters eat, drink, make love and just hang out. The novel includes a fair catalog of local landmarks: The Pit, Kenan Stadium, Molly McGuire's, Spanky's, Breadmen's, La Residence, Morrison, Franklin Street and Carr Street for a start. And Alex, one of the book's central characters (a New Yorker on a "Bullfoot" scholarship), works as an arts writer for The Daily Tar Heel.

There are passages of particular note. While sitting in The Pit amidst preachers and sorority rush banners, "Alex feels that there are a hundred life-styles streaming past her that she is missing: dark, exotic bohemians and kelly-green debutantes." A later comparison of Morrison's lobby to the Port Authority bus terminal rings clear and true.

Yet, in marked contrast to Hemingway's description of Paris (a city he loved), Weyr captures surprisingly few of these concrete particulars that make a locale live. If the

travelog aspect of the novel (the New Yorker's encounter with a Southern university) interests both local and cosmopolitan readers — and of course, it is but one element of the book — it also fails to hold them.

The single most striking quality of Chapel Hill is that it is pleasing to a surprising variety of people. The physical campus often seems like a dreamer's vision of Arcadia. To read Thomas Wolfe's description of Chapel Hill is to see, breathe and feel a still present beauty that, sadly, does not make it into Weyr's novel.

Perhaps the inspired "aloneness" of a young man is better suited for such awareness. But though fiction need present neither edifyingly happy lives or the tired phrases of born and bred Tar Heels, it seems there should be a place for beauty in a novel: for a clean, well-lighted Waffle Shop with attentive and considerate waitresses who during more than 300 breakfasts have allowed me quietly to regain consciousness; for that sticky-sweet, on-linoleum-tiled-floors smell of beer wafting out the door of my Old East tower; for Dexter Romweber, guitar in hand and grizzly chops on cheeks, scowling and crooning to our shaking legs; for hoops against the backdrop of that Carrboro sunset that so often makes our chest sink with awe; for the Franklin Street record stores, the friendly one and the unfriendly one; for the night spent rolling around in the Arboretum after a fraternity party.

It seems a pity to write about Chapel Hill and leave out the things you love. But Weyr's characters live under a strain that permits no room for love or beauty. That indeed seems to be much of the point.

Louis Corrigan is an Evening College student from Atlanta, Ga.

Mill waste perfectly safe

To the editor:
 I feel that Laura Pearlman's editorial about the Champion Paper Mill was very misleading ("The river of their discontent," Feb. 5).

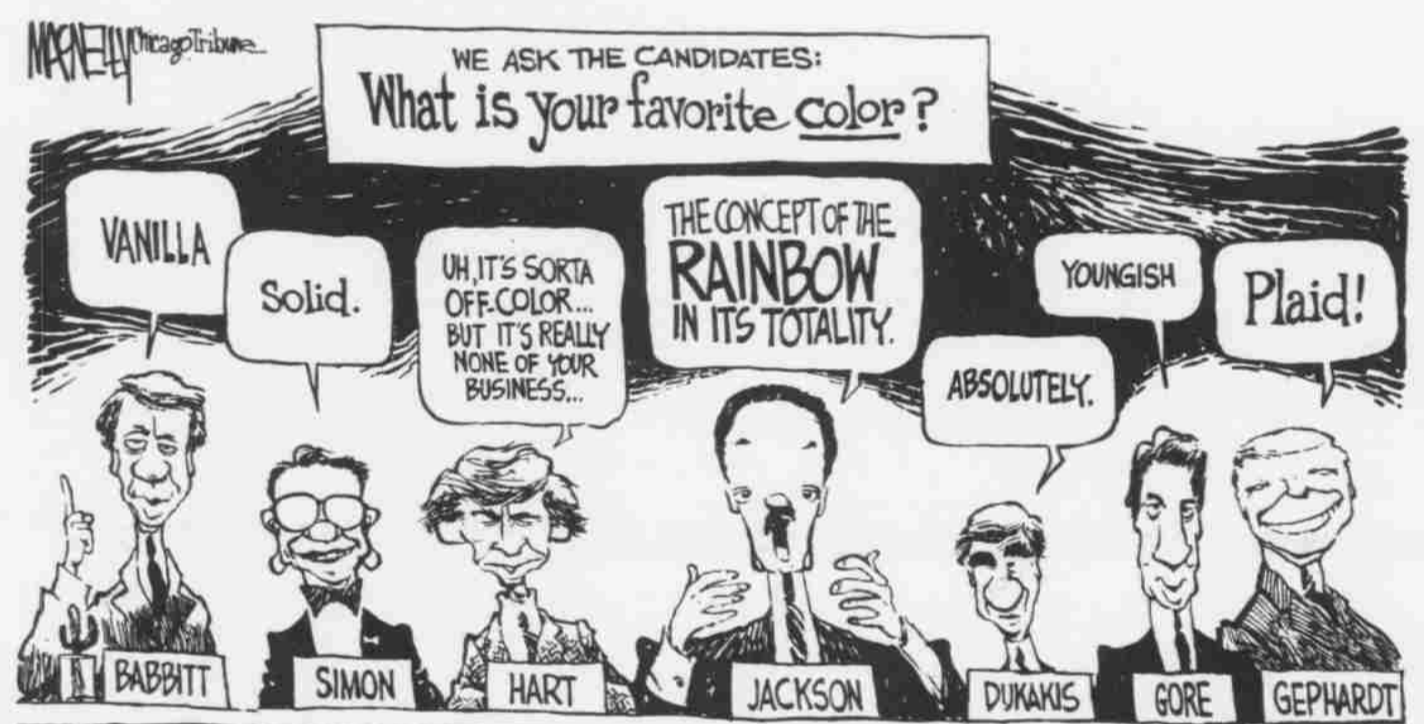
Champion Paper has been operating in Canton for the past 80 years. The only "waste" Champion puts in the Pigeon River below the mill is wood particles. It is not toxic. In fact, the water is safe for human consumption. Downstream, cows and other animals drink the water. Vegetation grows in and around the river. For many years, farmers have used it to irrigate their crops. The fish that live in the river are edible, contrary to what Pearlman writes.

Pearlman also says, "... laborers fear that a plant closing would irreparably damage the town's economy." If Champion Paper is forced to close, it would be disastrous not only for Canton, but for all of western North Carolina. Champion is the top employer west of Charlotte. Besides its direct employees, it is also responsible for the welfare of many sawmills and loggers all over the region.

Pearlman writes, "Instead, Canton should develop a tourism industry." Tourism has already been developed as much as possible in western North Carolina. Canton is located in a fairly populous area, making it an unlikely choice for vacationers. People who visit the mountains travel farther west to the Great Smokey Mountains National Park in Swain County, or they go to Tennessee.

Pearlman fails to mention that waste is dumped into the Pigeon River in other places downstream. In Newport, Tenn., where citizens are screaming, "Close Champion," raw waste is dumped at several sites. The mill is clearly not the culprit in this situation.

Champion has met guidelines set by the Environmental Protection Agency again and



ANOTHER DEMOCRATIC DEBATE

again. Technology does not exist that would enable the mill to produce crystal-clear water. But Champion officials think a solution can be implemented over a five-year period, and are willing to spend up to \$200 million to modernize the plant and clean up the river. The mill must not close — it is vital to the economic survival of western North Carolina.

It is time to open our eyes and get a clear view of the picture. With all the concern about our natural resources, we must not forget the most important one of all: our people.

CHARLENE HOGUE
 Junior
 Administrative Justice/
 Political Science

Non Sequitur is nonsensical

To the editor:
 The Non Sequitur author has produced yet another unintelligible abomination ("Sending out postcards from paradise," Feb. 9). Enough is enough. Non Sequitur has the potential to be a space for truly valuable creative expression.

Instead, DTH readers are usually confronted with an idiotic stream of pseudo-intellectual claptrap which few, if any, can bear to read through the first paragraph. The most recent effort can be summed up as a nonsensical, uninteresting miasma of hopelessly oblique literary allusions. Not unlike others featured in the past, it displays no glimmer of either style or substance.

Editor's note

Last week, a person falsely identifying himself as a Daily Tar Heel editorial writer called student activist Dale McKinley. The caller falsely informed McKinley that the contra aid bill had passed in Congress, and asked for his reactions.

Last weekend, a person identifying himself as the editorial writer called students for "a random poll" about the upcoming student body president election. The caller finished by informing the students of his poll results so far, apparently in

an effort to persuade them to jump on the bandwagon for one candidate.

Neither the editorial writer nor the DTH was involved with this poll. The DTH is not, nor will be, taking a poll for the Feb. 16 elections.

ROBIN BOLANDE
 Sophomore
 International Studies

Letters policy

The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments, ideas and criticisms.

All letters and columns must be signed by the author, with a limit of two signatures per letter or column. Students should submit name, year in school,

Catholic Church favors women's rights

To the editor:
 Linda van den Berg did a fine job in her feature on Rosemary Radford Ruether ("Theologian focuses on rights of women in Catholic Church," Feb. 8), but I would like to question her style, if not her objectivity, in two passages of her article.

Van den Berg writes that "... Ruether is undoubtedly best known for her work in encouraging women to realize and fight their ongoing oppression in the Catholic Church." By writing what is clearly Ruether's opinion without the use of quotation marks or an editorial disclaimer, van den Berg tacitly states her agreement. But in fact, many other theologians, not to mention many lay men and women, would disagree that the church oppresses women at all.

A second example was the statement

that Ruether was "shocked and repulsed by the church's lack of justice" after a history professor told her that the church had not opposed slavery or serfdom in the Middle Ages. But van den Berg did not make it clear that the alleged "lack of justice" was merely Ruether's perception of a problem described by a third party who was quite removed from the situation. Indeed, van den Berg aggravated this fault by beginning a new paragraph with this remarkable revelation about the evils of the medieval church.

I agree that stereotypical attitudes do frustrate many women seeking their role in society. But such prejudices are not the official position of the Catholic Church and are actually quite common within many avowedly egalitarian institutions. The fact that some members of an

institution subscribe to opinions of dubious intellectual merit does not reflect on the institution itself.

In any case, such attitudes should not be replaced by more stereotypical attitudes about some patriarchal church run by a bunch of old men in Rome. It has been unequivocally clear in published documents that the official church is very much concerned about women's rights, as well as the rights of all people. To attack the church on the basis of perceived injustices or in terms of one's own expectations is to ignore the evidence and to toss a red herring into the discussion of true equality.

SCOTT CARSON
 Department of Romance Languages