

# The Daily Tar Heel

96th year of editorial freedom

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## Get injected or be ejected

This is one piece of mail you didn't want to get — the little white card from Student Health Services engraved with a mandatory invitation to appear at Woollen Gym this week to get a measles vaccination. And if you're looking for a way to get out of your date with the syringe, think again because the University isn't fooling around.

The vaccination policy is out of University hands, under the jurisdiction of the North Carolina quarantine laws. This means if you were too afraid to get your shot, you shouldn't take it personally if you are escorted out of class today or out of your dormitory tomorrow. Such drastic action is necessary because under N.C. law, the state can close the campus if health officials don't think the University is complying with the quarantine procedure.

To make sure you aren't booted from class, you should carry the card with you today. The professor will have a list of students whose immunity status is unknown and the only way to get off the black list and into class is to show the card. The professors have the right to ask you to leave class and if you don't leave, technically, the police could be called to escort you home. The situation is quite serious,

## This P/F proposal's on target

Months after the Faculty Council voted down a proposal that would have allowed students to select target grades in courses declared pass/fail, the idea may be getting another chance.

The revised version of the proposal, developed by student government's Special Interests Committee, is true to the original purpose; it is designed to encourage students to experiment academically. Under the proposal, which now will be considered by the council, students who declare a course pass/fail would be required to select a target grade. If the student earns the target grade or higher, the achieved grade would be averaged into the GPA and appear on the student's transcript with a pass notation. If a student didn't reach her target grade but still passed the course, only a "pass" would appear on his transcript.

The big change in the proposal is a reduction in the number of credit hours students would be able to take pass/fail. Under the revised system, students could take a maximum of 16 hours, eight less than the present limit of 24. Also, students would have to have 12 hours of regular credit to take a three- or four-hour target grade course.

One of the Faculty Council's major objections to last year's proposed system was that it would be too easy, that it would counteract the motiva-

and if you or your professor fail to adhere to these rules, you can be charged with a misdemeanor. Try explaining that to the folks.

If you're one of the about 2,000 students who still haven't bothered to get the required shot, you can be vaccinated at Woollen Gym from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. today — but that's it. After tonight, you'll have to go to a private physician, the Board of Health or Student Health Services. And SHS can only handle 125 vaccinations a day at its facility on campus.

If you're not getting the shot and you need it, you're doing everyone a disservice. You're wasting the time of your professors and classmates and jeopardizing the health of other students by leaving yourself susceptible to a highly contagious disease. Also, you're hurting yourself. Missing two weeks of class and having to move out of your dorm room is probably an inconvenience you can live without in your life.

Save yourself, your classmates and your professors a lot of hassle, and go to Woollen Gym now to get the shot if you need one. It doesn't hurt too much and it beats measles with a stick. — Laura Pearlman

tion behind the grading system.

However, the severe restriction on the number of pass/fail courses would not allow students to use this special option indiscriminately. Rather, it would give students an understandably limited number of opportunities to branch out academically while not endangering those precious GPAs.

That seems fair; a University curriculum can't afford to make things too easy for students. Popular but too-easy options may sound great to students who consider only short-term benefits, but such options could ultimately result in lowered academic standing, which in turn would hurt students' chances of finding good jobs or attending good graduate schools.

More importantly, allowing pass/fail hours to accumulate unrestricted could affect the overall quality of undergraduate education at UNC. If students could select A's as target grades for a significant number of their classes, then spend the rest of the semester deciding if it's worth trying to get A's, would make a farce of an atmosphere that often isn't academic enough.

The council should consider supporting this pass/fail compromise. It strikes a good balance between upholding standards of academic excellence and encouraging students to obtain a diverse education. — Jean Lutes

## Finding a date for the inoculation ball

Day 1 — I'm informed I must get my shot. I think my first reactions are pretty normal. My legs collapse and I fall to the floor like a jellyfish. I'm salivating like a dog we used to have, and can only say the words "garb" and "tuna fish" without getting dizzy. After an hour, I make it to the couch.

I start to get some feeling back in my right side, and I try to look at this thing rationally. Thousands of people are having to do this. It's almost a social event, so I invite this girl in my biology class I've had my eye on (the way she talks about the spleen is completely erotic). I play it really cool at first. Then I make my move. "Well look," I say. "I was going to go down to this little inoculation thing some friends of mine are having. Could be kind of crazy. What do ya say?"

She tells me she's already vaccinated, so I say okay, maybe some other disease. She hangs up. Fear sets in again, and I imagine not a kindly, elderly nurse rubbing my arm with alcohol, but a woman-wrestler type with some sort of javelin, yelling "Heave!" I crawl next door to ask my neighbor where they give the shot.

"I think it's in the gym," the bonehead says. "No! I mean where do they give it?"

### David Rowell Pardon Me

"Where do you think?" he says. I crawl back to my room and do not know where I think. Though I guess I should know, instead I conjure up the image of getting it through the nose and screaming, "Get it out! Get it out!"

So I think the hell with it. I'll just take the measles — I'm open to new things. I look "measles" up in the dictionary, and it describes them as small red dots on the face, which I figure I can just clear up with a little Oxy 10. Then I pick up the card and read that failure to be vaccinated will result in withdrawal from the University. My legs collapse and I fall to the floor like a jellyfish.

Day 2 — I get the shot. I wake in a cold sweat. All night, I dreamed that I was sleeping on a bed of nails and playing with my pet porcupine, after which I went for an acupuncture session and climbed a cactus.

I try to get some breakfast down and settle my nerves. I run out to get a DTH and read about the first day's shots. There are no casualties reported; I take this as

a good sign. The hours fly by and now it is 8:30 p.m., the time I swore I would go. I walk over with as much poise as, say, the Scarecrow in the "If I Only Had a Brain" number. I look around and see that not all the people administering shots are nurses. Some are students. I panic. I just know I'll get some psych major saying, "I think it goes in this way." They move me down to a student nurse, who was, I must admit, quite lovely. She asks me a series of questions.

"Do you have a fever?" she asks. "No, but I could get one." "Do you take steroids?" "Hell yes. Why — it doesn't show?" She tells me I won't be able to give blood for four weeks. She looks at my name on the card. "Or sperm, either, Mr. Rowell." (It's my luck I get an avid fan.)

"Give it to me," I say, and she does. I walk out, and try to remember her name so I might ask her for a follow-up visit, just to see how it's healing, but my mind's a blank. In fact, it still is, and besides a sore arm and possible fever, I worry that a post-reaction is that you get a blank mind.

David Rowell is a senior RTVMP major from Fayetteville.

## Readers' Forum

### Burning questions

To the editor: It always seemed strange to me how intensely strong emotions could come and go so easily. For that very reason I am taking this time out to write mine down — not only for my own thoughts' posterity, but in hope that maybe someone else may feel the same way.

I took a break from my usual bitching about how far behind I am in school to go see "Mississippi Burning" recently. I went with a few friends, and the consensus was that the movie was "intense." The sphere of emotions encompassed ran the gamut: shock, anticipation, fear, hate, helplessness and, for me, unresolved uneasiness as I walked out the door. How does it go? Introduction, rising action, climax, denouement, resolution. What happened to the resolution? Ten years for murder is somewhere between a slap on the wrist and being sent to your room without dessert. Thank God Hollywood didn't candy coat the story with a happily ever after.

There is no resolution because the disease persists. The problem of racism remains because of the hammering closed of today's minds by the hammered-closed of yesterday's. I hated the racists during the movie, but I shouldn't have. Given a different set of circumstances I could have grown up just like them.

So who is to blame for the persistence of racism? The bigot had no choice. The bigot's narrowness and hate was cultivated. What about me? I've had more than my share of educational opportunity, and I've been able to develop my own beliefs from a wide variety of sources and thoughts. With these opportunities in mind, then, is it enough to treat others without prejudice, or is it my obligation to actively combat



that which I know to be wrong? Maybe I feel that my effort toward such an enormous problem would be insignificant. I know that I shouldn't, but maybe that's why I felt uneasy as I left the movie theater.

Okay, now you're asking yourself, "So what is this guy trying to say? Is he trying to blame me for racism just because I've had opportunities?" No. I'm just blaming myself; but if you haven't already, go check out "Mississippi Burning" and see if you feel satisfied with the ending.

JOHN ENDE  
Medical student

### Scientists not the victims

To the editor: Robert Slugg ("PETA demands frightening, unrealistic," Feb. 1) takes great pains to point out that he and his fellow researchers are the victims of a "slick public relations department." I assume that he is trying to say that their concerns are bulldozed by an organization with more visibil-

ity or a greater ability to make its position known. He tries to come off as a victim of sorts. I find it hard to have any sympathy for him though, because in his lab, the animals are the victims and he is the one with the powerful organization and the "visibility." PETA is simply trying to give those animals a voice that can be heard. They are protesting the cruelty that the animals aren't in a position to object to themselves.

Slugg points out that this pain and suffering is irrelevant because animals aren't human — which, incidentally, does not mean that they cannot and do not suffer. There are those of us who feel that a person who has no compassion for other living things is less than human, but we have no desire to put such a monster in a cage and torture him for our benefit. And while we are on the subject of benefit, Slugg says that it takes "considerable time and effort to correctly explain the beneficial nature" of his work. He certainly doesn't bother to try! He merely attacks an organization with concern for the other living beings that share this world with us and

avoids pointing to any concrete evidence as justification for what he does. Does that mean that he doesn't have any hard, cold evidence that he believes is strong enough to compete with "a large dose of emotion"? Or could it possibly be that he has no justification for his cruelty and is simply striking out at PETA because they may have hit a nerve?

PATRICIA MURPHY  
Senior  
Psychology/philosophy

### Letters policy

The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments and criticisms. When writing letters to the editor, please follow these guidelines:

■ All letters must be signed by the author(s), with a limit of two signatures per letter.

■ Students should include name, year in school, major, phone number and home town. Other members of the University community should include similar information.

## Avoid global reasoning in individual decisions

I applaud Marguerite Arnold's stance in "Choose abortion before overpopulation" (Feb. 2). She states that the world population will double in 40 years and adds, "Personally, I do not want to live in a world of 10 billion people when I'm 60 years old," and, "It has been speculated that the number of people who could live on this Earth at the current American standard of living is only 1/2 billion." Today, we have 10 times that many people. Arnold advocates abortion to control population. In theory, liberal use of abortion could effectively cut the population growth. However, today in the United States only one in four pregnancies is terminated. We are allowing 3,600,000 babies to be born in America each year, and aborting only 1,200,000. We need to abort at least two or three times that many babies in order to put a dent in the crowds that will be hitting the ski slopes in a few years.

Arnold argues eloquently for the role of abortion in preventing hunger and poverty, as well as child abuse. She explores the constantly-debated question of when human life as we define it really begins. (For me, life as I define it began when I was 18 and hit this campus flaunting a tan and a pink miniskirt.) Most importantly, Arnold reminds the reader that as Americans, we place top priority on quality of life. We enjoy talking about the terrible conditions in Africa or downtown Carboro or wherever, but how many of us are going to spend Spring Break working in the soup kitchen or at the shelter for battered women and children? That \$600 that we will spend on quality of life at the beach could feed a starving African baby

### Elizabeth Gibbons Guest Writer

for a year. Where's your money going? To a heathen baby or a tropical island? I thought so. Don't feel bad, that baby should have been aborted and spared her awful existence. I advocate infanticide if things are looking especially bleak for a child. Who honestly believes that those troll-like creatures drooling and jabbering incoherently and flinging Tonka trucks about the house are humans in the richest sense of the word?

Abortion is effective in eliminating a small group of unwanted people. Contraception also has its merits as a growth deterrent even though it can be messy, expensive, fraught with side effects and sometimes spoil the fun of sex. I have a two-step plan that would effectively halve the world population in an easy, natural and cost-effective way: 1) Stop vaccinating people against deadly disease, and 2) Stop giving antibiotics that hamper venereal diseases from naturally sterilizing women.

For thousands of years, our ancestors supplemented abortion with widespread epidemics to control population growth. Without vaccination, half of our babies would die before their fifth birthdays. We could, in effect, retroactively abort the children that we missed the first time. In addition to hitting small children especially hard, epidemics also wipe out the very old whose quality of life and productivity are at an alarming low, and pregnant women (killing two birds with one stone).

If, in addition to encouraging epidemic disease, we also stopped treating venereal disease, up to 40 percent of the women on the UNC campus would be relieved of ever having to worry about pregnancy again. Just imagine the sexual freedom that might ensue if we knew that not only are we definitely not going to become pregnant, but we are passing on the seed of absolute birth control to others.

Global epidemics and widespread sterility should effectively reduce the crowds at our favorite dining and vacation spots. Unfortunately, we will have to bury the less hearty of our friends and families. However, we will appreciate and support our surviving loved ones much more than we do today. The surviving children will be welcomed, cared for and well fed. We will be able to enjoy the many pleasures of "this precious jewel, spaceship Earth" without having to fight crowds, wait in line or share.

Abortion is an explosive topic and we can imagine situations in which we might choose it for ourselves or friends. Don't mix world politics into an individual's decision to carry one child to term. If one chooses to terminate a pregnancy in the name of world hunger and overpopulation, the only logical step would be sterilization. The world will be hungrier and more crowded the next time one becomes pregnant regardless of the change in the individual's perception of the world and her role in it. Many Americans confuse lifestyle opportunities with life opportunities.

Elizabeth Gibbons is a second-year medical student from Raleigh.

### The Daily Tar Heel

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