

The Daily Tar Heel

97th year of editorial freedom

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Agents epitomize athletic greed

Last Thursday, a jury found agents Norby Walters and Lloyd Bloom guilty of racketeering and fraud against Michigan and Purdue universities. Supposedly, college athletics would benefit from the men's trial and conviction, which would limit the pace of greed and corruption within the college athletic system.

These men were responsible for signing active college athletes to contracts that were dated after those players' graduation dates, for which the athletes would receive cash and other inducements. Involved in the scandal were several promising athletes, fueling discussion about the hypocrisy of the relationship between amateur and professional athletics.

Six Big Ten schools pressed charges against Walters and Bloom, initiating a trial intended to warn other agents as much as punish the defendants. To the extent that college athletic programs have lost fewer eligible athletes to overzealous agents, the trial has succeeded, and the sentencing should scare people even more. Under federal law, Walters and Bloom could face 55 years in jail and fines of \$1.25 million.

But the obsession with a monetary bottom line under which Walters and Bloom operated remains. Through the greed of the convicted men and other agents imitating their practices, college athletics and its participants can be

recognized for what they too easily become: weekend warriors worth millions of dollars and exempt from the rules to which others must bend.

The athletes who signed the contracts and accepted the gifts which led to Walters' and Bloom's convictions are evidence of that situation. All the athletes involved lost their college eligibility. But since each one was a professional prospect, they had the right to enter the professional draft of their sport and most did.

Derek McKee, a basketball player from the University of Alabama, signed one of Walters' contracts. He then retained another agent, entered the basketball draft, and now makes more than \$500,000 a year playing for the Seattle SuperSonics. The men at the opposite ends of the same deal enjoy very different fates.

So the "outside agents" who took advantage of the system will pay, while the athletes within the system continue their careers. The convicted agent's methods are certainly suspect, yet their motivation makes them no more guilty than the athletic programs and players now making millions of dollars. Until college athletics can lift itself above such greed and self-serving principles, people like Walters and Bloom will remain a part of the system. — David Starnes

Clean up both parties' acts

Charges of corruption in government have been commonplace since the Watergate scandal rocked the executive branch almost 20 years ago, but the finger is almost always pointed at Republicans, making corruption a tool of petty party politics. The investigation into House Speaker Jim Wright's alleged ethics violations, however, should make the electorate and the elected realize that corruption is not limited to the Republican Party.

Wright, a Democrat, is fighting for his honor and the future of his career. As a result of a 10-month investigation into Wright's alleged violations of House ethics standards, the House ethics panel is expected to issue two separate reprimands of the speaker.

Wright is under investigation for several alleged ethical violations, but he is most likely to be reprimanded for his business dealings with Texas businessman George Mallick Jr. and reports of misconduct involving the promotion of his book "Reflections of a Public Man."

Though a reprimand represents the lowest form of sanction the panel can issue, the ones against Wright will probably be enough to make him lose the speakership.

But this incident should be instructive to everyone, because it confirms that corruption is a problem in both

parties at all levels of government. Republicans, led by House Whip Newt Gingrich, will undoubtedly make the debate over Wright's ethical practices a party issue, just as Democrats do when a Republican leader is suspected of foul play.

But representatives should look past party politics and demand higher ethical standards from everyone involved in government. If it is clear from the investigation that Wright violated standards, Democrats should support sanctions against him, even if they are issued against "one of their own."

Clearly, no party or branch of the government is immune from corruption. Corruption runs rampant in government, but as Defense Department scandals surface and Ronald Reagan and George Bush are implicated in illegal arms deals, politicians and the public grow numb to the problem and become too ready to jump on the party wagon.

The partisanship which accompanies any type of conflict probably cannot be eliminated, but Wright's case should be an impetus for self-reflection for both politicians and voters. Cynicism and a sense of alienation from the government would be greatly reduced if voters knew they were not being represented by corrupt, crooked leaders. — Chris Landgraff

Readers' Forum

Don't lose sight of rape victim's rights

Irene Finney
Guest Writer

In the past few weeks there has been quite a bit of interest and discussion about the assault that occurred at Burnout. While it is always a good thing when a community loudly and clearly condemns this sort of violence, somewhere along the way we have lost sight of what really matters — the victim.

There has been substantial pressure placed on the victim to come forward and to "press formal charges." The victim has chosen instead to file a blind report, which keeps her identity confidential. I think that one of the underlying concerns of the community is "why doesn't she file a full report?" While I understand the community's desire to have this information, perhaps it might be helpful to look at the situation from the victim's eyes. Why might a victim, any victim, want to keep her identity confidential?

There may be a fear of publicity and

insensitive treatment. Considering recent reaction on campus, it is not hard to understand these fears. However, these are not the only issues the victim has to deal with. There is also the fear of retaliation or the fear people will blame her. Perhaps she is unwilling to face a trial or to tell her story over and over again to complete strangers. Because of the extremely personal nature of the violation, she may not wish to describe it in detail to anyone at all. Maybe she just wants to put the incident behind her. Although this is certainly not an exhaustive list of concerns a victim might have, I do think it brings to light some of the reasons why a victim

would want to keep her identity confidential. Whatever the victim's response is, it is legitimate.

There are people who will say that some of these fears are unfounded. That is not the issue. It does not matter if the fears are rational or not. It does not make them any less real for the person experiencing them.

So when we look at the situation while considering the victim's feelings, our response should be one that respects her decision. It should not be a response that pressures her into doing something she does not want to do. We should try to remember that whatever action she does or does not take should be best for her. That is, after all, what is most important.

Irene Finney is a senior philosophy and economics major from Chapel Hill.

Marching for right to choose

To the editor:

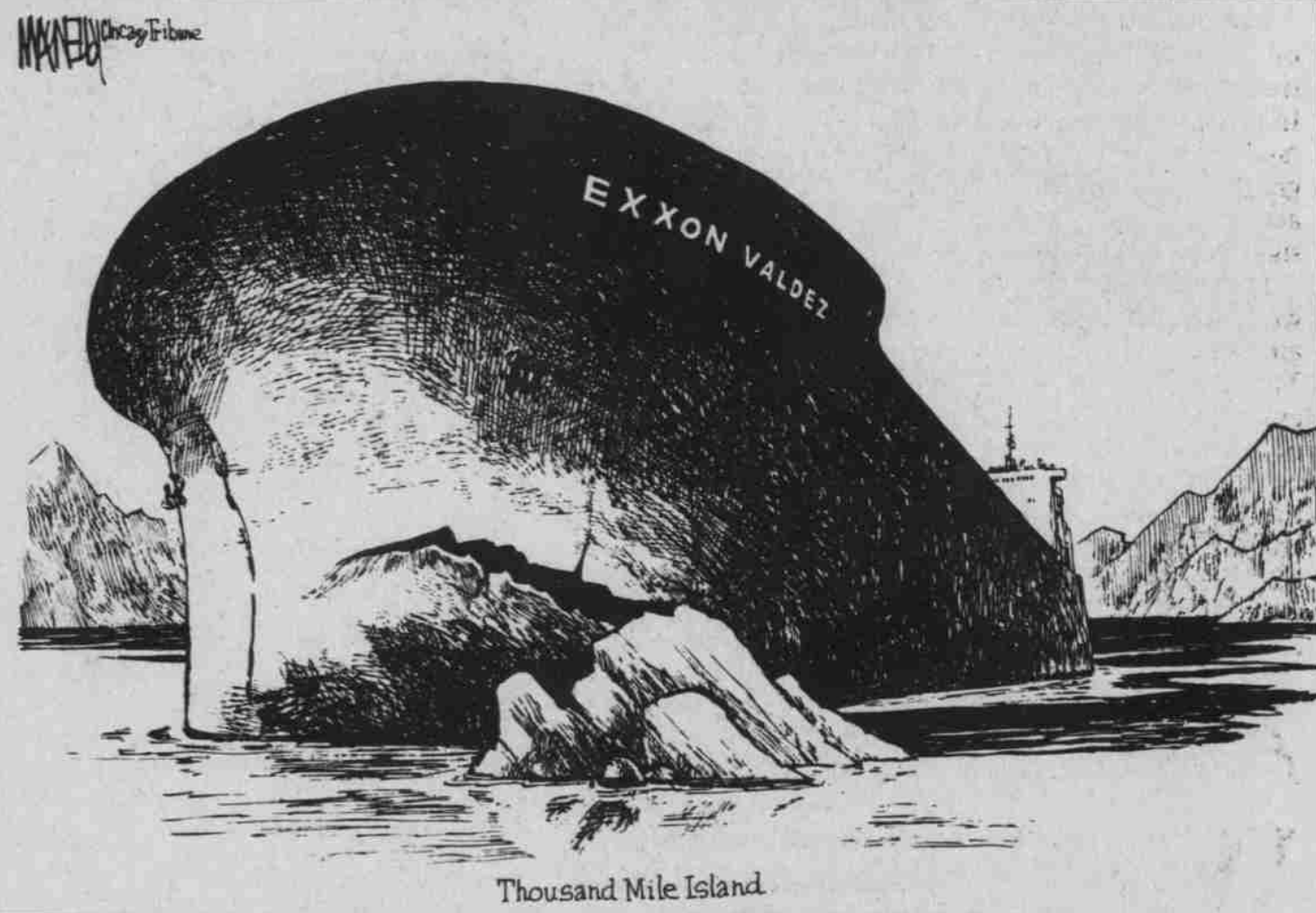
Margaret Atwood, in *The Handmaid's Tale*, tells of a place called Gilead where women, similar to today's women, are suddenly denied every basic right by the men. The men and some women have decided that the population rate is growing too slowly and start to control reproduction. Reproduction becomes the sole purpose for women, and they are totally dependent on men. It does not matter that the majority does not like Gilead; the system stays. Choice does not exist.

On April 9, more than 600,000 men, women, and children marched on Capitol Hill to fight for the right to choose. More than 600,000 marched to attract the attention and sway the mind of essentially five of the nine Supreme Court justices. Chants like "USA! Hear our voice. All these people are for choice," and slogans like "Fighting for the right to choose" were very common throughout the march.

On the subway back to the Pentagon, my group talked with a woman who wore a button that said, "Meet a woman who has had an abortion." Why does this woman have to wear this button? An abortion is a private matter, yet this woman has to publicize it to show — what? That a woman can survive a safe and legal abortion? This woman was in charge of all the media for the march. Did she wear the button to say that even if you do not carry a baby to term that a woman can still accomplish something? We left this exhausted walking billboard to return to our van where the popular person was a little four-year-old girl, Warhl. Obviously, Warhl was not an unwanted pregnancy, and this happy child exemplifies the most logical slogan "Pro-choice is pro-life."

What does Warhl have in store for her? She heard Jesse Jackson eloquently speak about the 60 cents that women make to every \$1 that men make, that women cannot buy houses cheaper than men can, that women cannot educate their children cheaper than men can and that this discrimination has to stop. However, standing on Capitol Hill and chanting the slogans and clapping at the enthusiastic remarks, more than 600,000 people underscored that women are second-class citizens.

It seems ridiculous that so many people are fighting for the right to choose. If the state starts to regulate such a fundamental right such as the right to control your own body, will the state then regulate what



Thousand Mile Island.

women are to wear? Will the state halt all production or reproduction of slacks and miniskirts? Will the state allow women to use only regular toothpaste, not the tartar control gel formula? It seems somewhat inane, but so does fighting for the right to choose. More than 600,000 people had to massively mobilize to fight for the right to choose. In 1989, Gilead is starting to happen.

TANIA MALIK
Senior
Political science

Family values are not sexism

To the editor:

After reading Kimberly Edens' editorial of April 12, "When a majority is a minority," I felt I must respond. There is no arguing the fact that many Democrat women are finally realizing the inherent problems and internal contradictions of their "special-interest minded" party. However, it is surely not rational to place the blame on the Republicans as Ms. Edens' mention of Sen. Jesse Helms attempts to do.

Helms has always espoused traditional family values, but surely this does not equate him with sexism, and especially not sexism within the Democratic Party. Moreover, it is certainly not common practice for a sexist to surround himself with women in such key positions as Helms has done. Women serve as his long-term confidantes and close friends and occupy 27 of his 39 staff positions, including his chief legislative assistant, top research assistants and office managers, both in the Washington and North Carolina offices.

Sexism can certainly be found in the Democratic Party, though. In fact, the most visible Democrat leader, Sen. Terry Sanford, bared his sexist views

Sunday night by his unprovoked remark to a UNC student as he said, "Young lady, if you weren't so pretty, I wouldn't be talking to you." Evidently the Democratic leadership is not willing to even discuss political issues with women unless they consider them physically attractive. How then can they be expected to treat women as serious candidates?

Women, as Ms. Edens pointed out, should not be treated as a special interest group, and fortunately for young women like myself, the Republican Party has long realized this fact. If female Democrats are sincere in their desire to break away from the "special interest/minority cycle," they should begin by taking a long, hard look at the situation. They should examine the party that appointed the first female ambassador to the United Nations and the first woman to the U.S. Supreme Court. In doing so, they just might find that the answer is turning to the party which realizes that the best way for "special" interests to be served is by looking at the broader issues . . . and they will turn to the Republican Party.

CHARLENE HOGUE
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Get priorities straight

To the editor:

Now that the Office of Management and Budget in Raleigh has handed down its decision to withhold 5 percent of the budgeted appropriations for all state agencies and institutions, I think it is imperative to point out a few facts. The reason given for this cut is a decrease in state revenues during March;

even though other programs were cut, once again the big loser is education. From a governor who has committed himself to being the "education governor," this is certainly not the kind of action that we should expect. At UNC, \$3.2 million will be lost, \$2 million of which will be taken from the academic affairs budget.

To make matters worse, the state has decided to go through with the funding of a sports arena in Raleigh for N.C. State University. These actions reflect the problems of our state on a wider spectrum. We are allowing the leaders of this state to fund buildings which will benefit a few — a sports complex — while many students will suffer from cuts in their educational programs. I can only ask: where are the priorities of this state?

JOHN LOMAX
Sophomore
Political science

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.

- Place letters in the box marked "Letters to the Editor" outside the DTH office in the Student Union.

- The DTH reserves the right to edit letters for space, clarity and vulgarity. Remember, brevity is the soul of wit.

The Daily Tar Heel

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Answering questions on abortion, choice

To the editor:

I am writing in response to Mr. Stephen McLoughlin's thought-provoking questions on the statements made by pro-choicers that appeared in his letter to the editor on April 10 ("Arguments muddled"). I read his letter understanding all his feelings and his questions, and I think I can answer them fairly. Perhaps this will solidify the reasons many people, including myself, are pro-choice.

Mr. McLoughlin questioned whether abortion can be classified as self-defense because he sees the unborn baby as a co-victim and not an attacker. In a situation where a pregnancy is a physical danger for the mother, the fetus can assume the role of an attacker. There are other, more common situations such as when the mother is in danger of being abused, emotionally or physically, by her parents or her partner because of the unexpected pregnancy or when she is in danger of being thrown into poverty in order to try to cover the cost of having and raising a baby.

As for the questions of baby surplus and having room for more people in the world,

the reason this statement is made is to make you ask yourself, "What would we do with 600,000 people? Where would they live? Who would take care of them?" Please be realistic for a moment. We can't take care of the masses of hungry and homeless people on this planet now. Many of those unwanted children may starve to death, or be forced to become criminals in order to live. We can't expect that just because someone is born, he will grow up to be happy or comfortable, or even that he will grow up at all.

When it comes to dictating morality, I think most people agree that murder is immoral, but there are still questions as to whether abortion is actually murder. I know that if my mother hadn't been ready to have a child, if she hadn't been able to take care of me and look after me, I wouldn't call her immoral for having an abortion. Of course, I wouldn't be here to argue for this, but I think the fact that I wouldn't condemn her for not giving me a chance to live makes my point clear.

Mr. McLoughlin's final question relates to women getting coat-hanger abortions.

He asks, "Who am I supposed to feel sorry for — the one using the coat-hanger or the one getting stabbed to death by it?" Well, sir, you can feel sorry for either until you're blue in the face. It doesn't mean that it will stop. Being pro-choice doesn't mean I want you to feel sorry for anyone. I just want you to let me have a choice. Yes, there are people who abuse their right to have a legal abortion, just as there are alcoholics who abuse their legal right to alcohol. History shows us that prohibition didn't work. What makes anyone think that making abortions illegal will? It didn't in the past.

If a woman feels that she needs an abortion for any reason, no one has the right to deprive her of a sanitary, legal one. I won't tell anyone what to do if they have an unwanted pregnancy and in return, I expect them not to tell me what to do if I have one. Let me have my choice.

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