

Seniors open doors to tomorrow

By PAM EMERSON
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Staff Writers

Graduation day. With the tossing of 3,880 mortarboards, so end the college careers of UNC's Class of 1989. But real life is just beginning for these graduates-to-be.

"In life, no one gives grades," said Andrew Edmonson, a senior from Knoxville, Tenn. "A's mean you're doing well." But Edmonson said he wondered how he would know if he were succeeding in the real world without a grade to tell him.

This is only one of the many concerns facing today's seniors and tomorrow's alumni, who now hold the future in their own hands.

A bright outlook

"It's normal to be anxious," said Sharon Wiatt, associate director of University Career Planning and Placement Services (UCPPS). "We see many students who are concerned with finding jobs upon graduation. But they should not feel like it's a catastrophic event if they don't have jobs before graduation."

Senior Alison Davis of Winston-Salem has decided to wait until after graduation to look for a job. Davis, a business major, said the search for jobs on campus was too competitive. "I wanted to enjoy my last semester and then worry about getting a job."

She plans to move home after graduation and begin her job search. "But after a few weeks at home, I'll probably be willing to do anything."

According to a survey conducted by UCPPS, roughly 55 percent of last year's graduates had already accepted job offers before graduation.

The majors with the highest full-time employment rates include: dental hygiene, pharmacy, nursing, computer science, accounting, journalism, business administration, economics and industrial relations. In the field of dental hygiene, the employment rate was 100 percent for the 1988 graduates who responded.

The highest average starting salaries by major were reported for graduates in pharmacy (\$34,737), accounting (\$29,943), computer science (\$23,045), economics (\$22,173), nursing (\$21,888) and business administration (\$21,121).

But for seniors like Davis, who are graduating without jobs lined up, the outlook remains bright. Twenty-four percent of last year's graduates were employed within two months of graduation and 20 percent of the remaining graduates had jobs by November.

Once last year's graduates found jobs, 90 percent said they were satisfied with them, according to the survey.

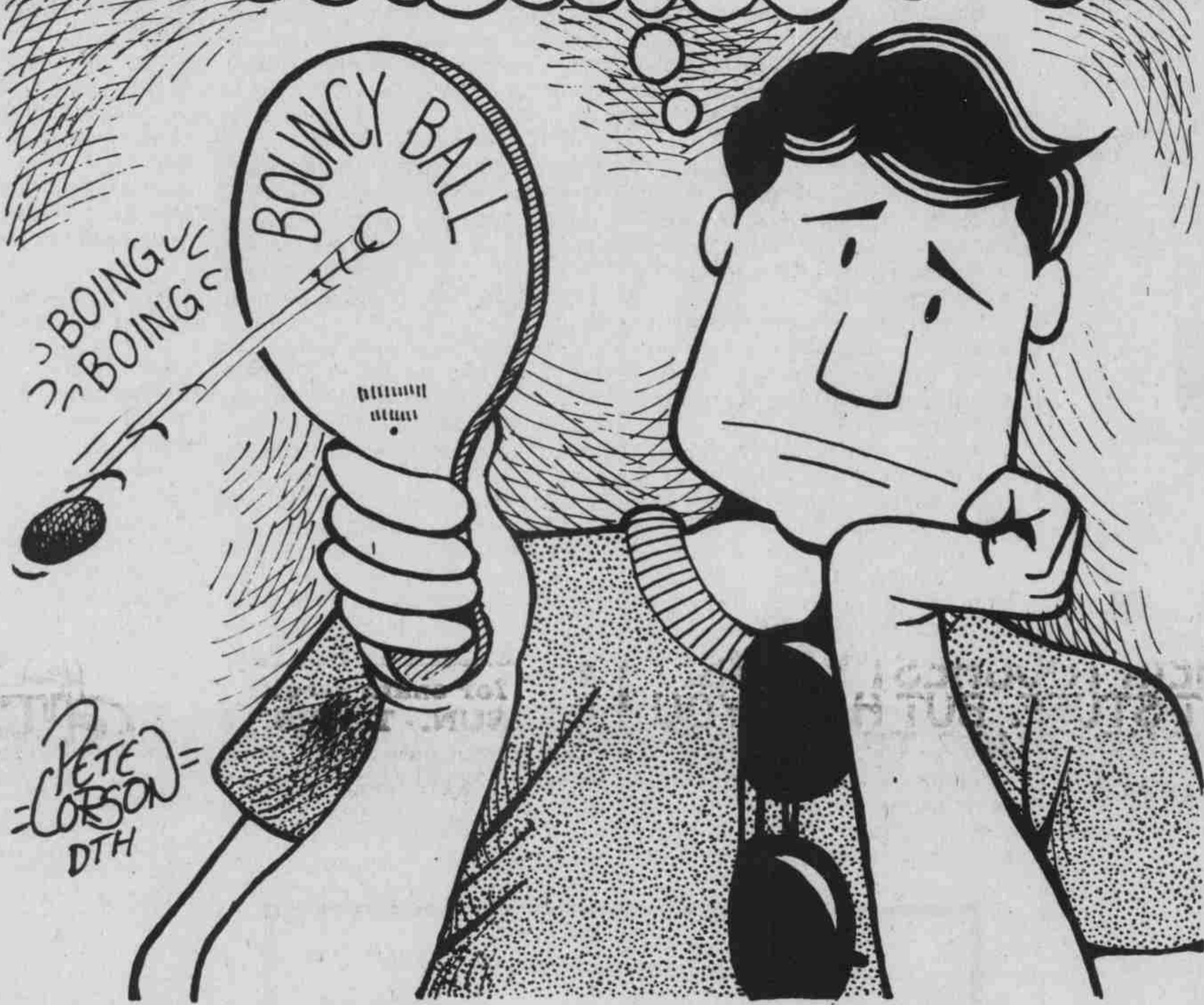
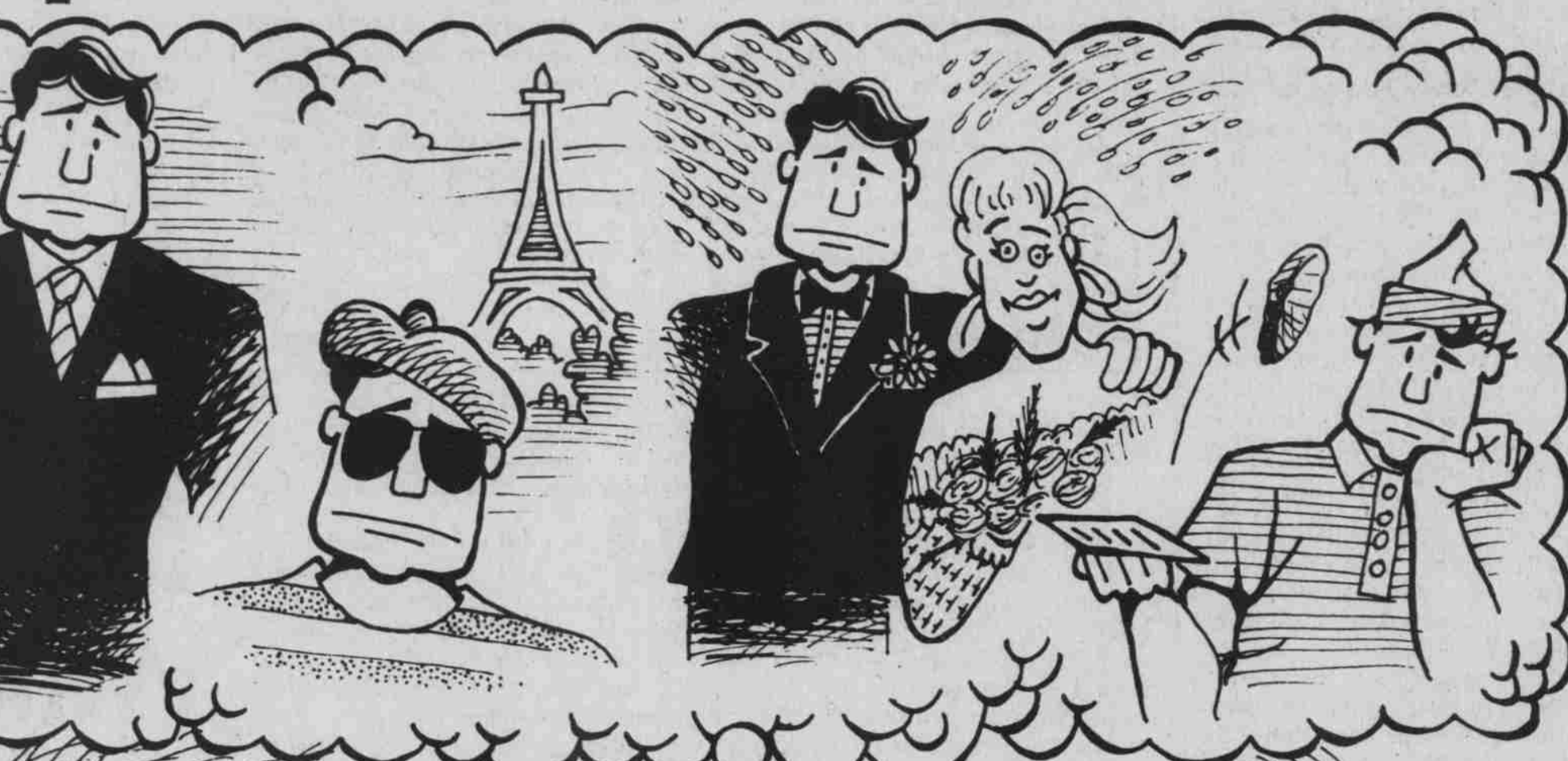
Searching for the future

Most respondents found jobs in North Carolina or elsewhere in the Southeast. But many students from small towns cannot go home and look for jobs — as Davis intends to do — without limiting their opportunities.

Faced with this situation, senior Felicia Mebane of Siler City said she would probably leave North Carolina and go to New York because of the many opportunities there.

Mebane, who said she was waiting to hear about a job, has interviewed through UCPPS.

Roughly 79 percent of last year's graduates reported using at least one of UCPPS' services. The top three sources cited as leading to initial contact with employers



were UCPPS, family and friends, and personal investigations.

Consulting family members and friends, or networking in the "hidden job market," requires "a lot more energy than dropping your resume," Wiatt said. "Many students prefer getting a job on their own."

Through UCPPS, students can interview for jobs in such fields as advertising, banking, personnel management and teaching. Job recruiters throughout the Uni-

ted States come to UNC to interview.

The secret of success

Throughout college many students worry about their grade point average and activity involvement that may make or break their future.

"There is a strong correlation between the GPA and job acceptance and GPA (grade point average) and salary," Wiatt said. "A 3.0 is pretty safe. It is often the

artificial cutoff line."

Chris Gudzan, human resources specialist at Raleigh Federal Savings Bank, said she preferred to hire students with a GPA of 3.0 or better, but a 2.6 GPA or higher is acceptable. Geographic flexibility is also important, Gudzan said.

Bruce Szypot, personnel relations manager at Eastman Kodak Co. in Atlanta, has interviewed several UNC students for sales positions. Students should "go beyond what's in the placement office in learning about the company" for which they are interviewing, he said. They should be prepared for a job commitment and long hours.

Back to school

For students who didn't get enough of studying as undergraduates, graduate school provides ample opportunity to delve into studying again.

There has been a steady decrease in the percentage of students attending graduate and professional schools since 1985, according to the UCPPS survey. However, law school attendance has increased, consistent with national trends.

Davis said she has considered graduate school, but not right away. "All my professors say to go out and work first. I would only get an MBA if I saw that I needed one."

Edmonson, expressing the sentiment of many seniors, said, "Grad school is just not for me right now." He plans to take time off and work in London before returning to the United States to study English. "It's good to do mind-drop jobs that are frustrating and will lead me back to academics."

Graduation and marriage: the double whammy

Some students prefer to embark on their future with a partner. Senior John Phipps of Winston-Salem has chosen to go directly to medical school at UNC — and directly into marriage on June 3.

At this point in his life, Phipps said getting married overshadows everything else. "I'm excited about graduation because it's that much closer to the wedding."

Phipps and his fiancée, senior Melissa Perrell of Lexington, met at UNC and have been dating for three years.

In the long run, Phipps said he saw it as easier to be married while in medical school than to try to continue dating. "At least this way I know I'll see her once in a while," he said, referring to how the rigorous schedule of medical students could interfere with his personal life.

Although graduate school and marriage together will present a challenge, Phipps said, "I'm ready for it."

Job opportunities for couples are often available. In the Peace Corps, married couples can be placed in the same country, said Peace Corps recruiter Lynn Ross. However, a joint placement process may take longer than a single applicant's, she said.

But other seniors are not ready to make any long-term commitments. "I want to have adventures, live a wild life, have a riotous youth and lots of romantic love before I settle down to car payments and house mortgages," Edmonson said.

Looking back: Years at UNC will never be forgotten

By LISA ANTONUCCI
Staff Writer

"It's been the era of Kenny Smith, J.R. Reid and 'Moonlighting,'" said senior Michael Mezei of Mt. Holly, N.J., as he recalled some of the things he remembers most about his time at Carolina.

With graduation just around the corner, these last two weeks are marked by reflection, anticipation and excitement. For seniors, this marks the end of an era — their era — and a philosophical to funny, they've all got something to say about it.

"I'll miss the little bricks in the sidewalk that you trip over, and then you hope no one is looking," said senior Heidi Rummel of Toledo, Ohio.

Senior Dave Williams of Greensboro said he already missed the 50-cent popcorn machines in Henderson Street Bar and "the mindless irresponsibility of being an undergrad — I'll miss drinking at Henderson Street knowing that I have homework and not doing it."

"I'll miss the community of good will," said Steve Tepper of Winston-Salem, president of the Class of 1989. "It's neat to be at a place where everyone is working for a common good — even if it doesn't always seem like it."

The variety of people at UNC will be difficult to find elsewhere, said senior Suzy McGuire. "There are so many people from so many places here, and no one thinks alike. I'll miss the exchange of ideas and the interaction with others."

But it's the little things that will make the most difference, said Danny Hockaday, a senior from Raleigh. "Basketball games, Molly's, walking through the Pit, Hector's — these are the kinds of things I'll miss most."

And don't forget the "fringe benefits" of being an undergraduate. Seniors are the first to admit they're not going to like having to pay for things like football tickets or use of gym facilities once they graduate to alumni status.

"I'll miss access to use of free computers, free game tickets and being able to walk everywhere," said senior Maria Brown.

But even while seniors are getting sentimental, they can also recall plenty of things about UNC they won't miss.

"No more hassles with parking, no more traffic tickets or camping out for basketball tickets and no more Bynum Hall," Hockaday said.

But despite the hassles of college life, leaving UNC is still an emotional experience. "There is nothing I won't miss, and I am intensely

depressed," said Laura Zeligman, a senior from East Rockaway, N.Y.

So how do seniors deal with their anxiety and depression? Myron Liptzin, a psychiatrist from Student Health Service, suggested "transforming this anxiety into awareness of the opportunities at hand. All of these emotions are very normal, but hopefully they are short-lived."

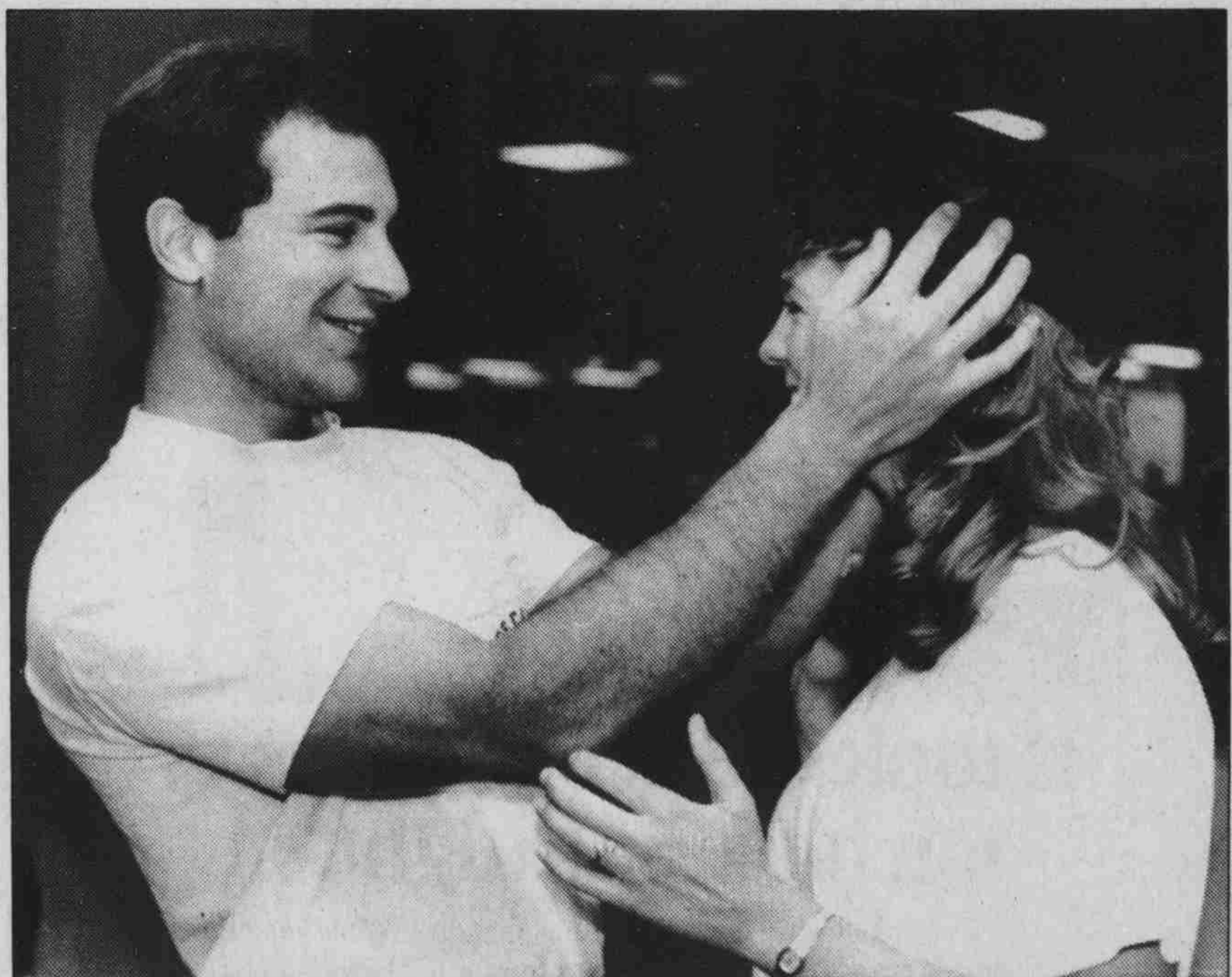
"Graduation is a transition point — there are many of these throughout a person's life, and seniors need to realize this. Having gotten to this point, seniors need to look to themselves and call upon their strengths and their ways of coping that have gotten them through these four years."

"Hopefully, the past four years have given them some self-awareness, a sense of self-esteem that will enable them to deal with the ambiguity of the future. Sometimes losing something is liberating," Liptzin said.

In addition, seniors need to take a step back to regroup before they look ahead to the future. "Often the anticipation is worse than the actual event. We know that they are going to make it — for better or worse — just like those that came before them," Liptzin said.

But knowing that others have passed the same way does not make it any easier. "It's scary and exciting at the same time," McGuire said.

Senior Nancy Hanes also had some advice on how to view this "scary" situation. "If you let yourself be intimidated, you will be, but this is the only time that you can view the world with such an idealistic attitude about life. Coming from this sheltered environment, the whole world is open to you; it's time to go after your pipedream."



Tom Staab helps Mary King get the right fit on a mortarboard in Student Stores

Yet beyond the emotional reaction to graduation, some seniors viewed the transition in a more philosophical manner.

"The profundity of graduation is surpassed only by its insignificance," said Mark Rogers, a senior from Alexandria, Va.

Senior Kir Wellman, a philosophy

and economics major, gave two views on graduation. As a philosophy major he said, "For the past four years, Chapel Hill has been my everything. In May, I am faced with changing this complete lack of everything into the absolute presence of nothing."

However, as an economics major,

Wellman had another view. "When I graduated from high school, I had the feeling it was time to move on. As I graduate from college, however, I am frighteningly aware that my collegiate experience is characterized by diminishing marginal returns such that my happiness would be maximized elsewhere."

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— Myron Liptzin,
Student Health Service psychiatrist

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