

Opinion

America cannot afford to lose war on drugs

I have looked in vain for any signs of the much-heralded War on Drugs here in our little village and major university. Perhaps it's already won! All of the Pell Grant recipients at Carolina this fall, as a condition for receiving these federal funds, signed a statement that they will not make, sell, have or use "controlled substances." In this context, too, the chancellor has signed a statement that the campus is "drug-free."

Unlike Wake, Durham or Alamance counties, there is not a single substance abuse treatment center, private or public, that offer extended primary care for Orange County residents - students or non-students. Indeed, until last year, there was not a drug/alcohol detoxification facility in our county that assisted both men and women. Our Student Health Services must need only the one substance abuse counselor who was hired last year. Evidently, unlike Duke Power, Southern Bell and most Research Triangle corporations, the University does not need an employee assistance program to help faculty and staff members to identify, treat and begin recovery from substance abuse.

But is the war won or merely ignored? Ask that question to the staff of the Orange-Person-Chatham Mental Health Center. There, hundreds of substance abusers from our community, many of them University students, faculty or staff, or their family members either volunteer or are assigned by our court system for education, counseling and treatment. Ask that staff if there is a substance abuse problem in their jurisdiction and if they have the finances or personnel to wage war against it. Ask our campus or town police, the dean of students' office, the Orange County courts, the staff of the N.C. Memorial Hospital Emergency Room or South Wing if we are free of the drug problem in our "Southern Part of Heaven."

Probably no one knows the extent of the drug problem in Chapel Hill; apparently not too many care. Of course we are spared the horrors of the drug-infested streets of D.C., L.A. or New York. Further, the tyranny that reins in Colombia seems to be in another world from Franklin Street, UNC. But this distancing and safety is merely relative and may be only temporary. We do have our victims - those addicted to

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alcohol and other drugs, the battered wives and abused children, the DWI casualties. Some of these victims make the news, and the public reacts with horror and indignation. But the vast majority of victims never make headlines - the missed classes of students and instructors, failed marriages and broken homes, discontinued degree programs, shortened academic careers and lives.

What makes our drug problem all the more insidious is that, overwhelmingly, our drug choice is alcohol. That the drug is legal, socially accepted and used moderately by a majority does not mitigate the total effect its use has on our community. Experts tell us that about one in 10 alcohol users are addicted; we don't need experts to prove to us that even casual use can be abusive and destructive. So we have a major battlefield here, before we add coke, crack or pot.

Although the chancellor's support of "Zero-Proof Day" is an interesting and useful symbol, especially since it focuses attention on alcohol as well as other drugs, it is hardly a battle cry. If our school is to join the fray, even at the infantryman level, there are certain basic conditions that must be met:

1. We must catch up to other corporate and governmental employers and meet state-mandated provisions by providing a comprehensive employee assistance program for faculty and staff members.

2. We should review the available resources and personnel not only in the Student Health area but also through all aspects of student life with the goal of having quality professional and peer assistance to all students who may have a problem with alcohol/drugs. The Student Assistance Program, already endorsed by the N.C. Department of Public Instruction, which is providing training for teachers, counselors and other public school personnel in the drug/alcohol abuse prevention area, is a possible direction the University could take.

3. We could join other state universities by providing degree programs in

Meanwhile, the War on Drugs rages on against the user!!!



substance abuse counseling. At the very least, we should provide substance abuse education to all students. As of now, we limit that education to our athletes, a practice that defies logic and equity: surely no one feels that athletes are more at risk than other students to problems of substance abuse; surely all students deserve the same quality instruction and attention to this important health issue.

The above suggestions are only a few efforts that the University must make if she is to be even a soldier in the

battle. If the University is to provide the leadership in this area that should be expected of a nationally ranked and regionally superior institution, as we often and loudly declare, we must go beyond what is expected of and being done by other institutions. We need to develop innovative and imaginative programs in both the areas of instruction and research as well as service to our University family as well as the community around us and the state for which we are the chief educational entity. We could have a state-of-the-art

drug/alcohol treatment facility as a companion to our Center for Alcohol Studies. We could review and update the curricula in Medicine and Public Health, with regard to substance abuse information and treatment, and make Chapel Hill the place to study in the area of chemical dependency studies. The field is wide open for all the generals and admirals we wish to provide.

But don't the basic requirements, not to mention the major problems here suggested, cost lots of money? Not really; probably not nearly as much, at

least to get started, as the \$99 million dollar power plant now under construction nor the \$34 million dollar Smith Center. Particularly in a "war-time economy" the money can be there if the will is strong enough, if the right people want it. In the case of the War on Drugs, this is one battle we can't afford to lose.

Thomas W. Langston is the associate director of the student aid office and a board member of Freedom House, a detoxification unit and halfway house for women.

View of Hugo's wrath brings understanding of suffering

I spent part of my fall break tearing down an elderly woman's home. Actually, Hurricane Hugo didn't leave much to tear down. It was my first trip to Charleston since the massive storm had hit the East Coast late in September. I was amazed at the damage that Hugo had left behind in the city but at the same time was surprised at the clean-up that had already been accomplished. Virtually all the trees that I had grown up taking for granted were gone, but much of the debris the storm left behind had been cleared and now lay in ten foot high "walls" on the sides of roads.

On Sunday morning, my mother and I rode out to McClellanville, a rural community about an hour north of Charleston that depends primarily on shrimping for its livelihood. McClellanville was where Hugo's storm surge - the huge wall of water that is pushed ashore by the hurricane's winds - landed. In contrast to Charleston, McClellanville's clean-up was seemingly just underway. We rode into town just as many churches were getting out - most had planned lunches for volunteers and residents but had to hold them outside due to damage to the churches.

We spent the day helping Lilly Page, a small, gray-haired woman of 65, tear down the sheet rock walls of her home. When we first met "Miss Lilly," as she was referred to in the village, she was wearing a purple Furman Palladians sweatshirt, which we learned was donated by a local church, as was most of

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her current wardrobe. Miss Lilly lived in a small box home whose frame had somehow survived Hugo. She showed us the water line of the surge on her walls - the dark line marking the height of the water was about five feet on the wall. "At least it didn't hit me as hard as it did my children's home - the one we used to live in," she said. Later in the day her grandson John took me over to see the remains of his home - a pile of smoldering ashes. His house had been knocked about 10 feet off its foundation, and his family consequently had no choice but to burn their home. He later showed me the boards left from a treeshore he had been building for his brother a few days before Hugo hit.

Despite the loss of their home, John and his family were lucky. According to him, his father's shrimp boat was the only one in the village not damaged by the storm. Many were left stranded in the middle of roads or wedged in between trees, damaged beyond repair. The storm left many local residents facing great economic hardship in the near future. Most everybody had wind insurance, but, according to Miss Lilly, only one person she knew of had flood insurance. Despite the fact that the surge was wind-driven, insurance agents

could only compensate those who were specifically insured against flood damage. Consequently, Miss Lilly and many others are left to cross their fingers and hope that their applications for FEMA assistance grants are accepted. When I went to grab a Coke at the just re-opened general store, I asked the owner if they had been busy. "Not at all," he said. "No one's got any money."

Mother Nature hasn't been kind lately. For many of us, it is easy to watch the reports of disasters in South Carolina, San Francisco and Texas with a detached concern. But when I saw Miss Lilly removing the last surviving remnants of her home, I understood her complete devastation. "That was the last Christmas tree your grandfather ever saw," she told her grandson, pulling a white aluminum tree off the top shelf of the closet. She was reminiscent when John found a small purse containing two-dollar and silver mint one-dollar bills. But despite her severe losses, Miss Lilly's spirit remained buoyant and gracious. As we began to leave, she gave my mother a crocheted doll she had made, one of her few surviving possessions. Having helped her finish Hugo's destruction, we left her sitting alone on her stairless doorway, only to wait and wonder when she can begin again.

Trey Loughran is a senior political science and economics major from Charleston, S.C.

Officer courageous for acting against racism

I am writing to pay tribute to a tremendous lady and a wonderful teacher and role model; I refer to police officer Keith Edwards. I met Officer Edwards on Oct. 11, and I find her to be a lady who bears a wellspring of wisdom and an individual who is deeply concerned with the subtle and often overt forms of institutionalized racism that affect African-American men and women daily regardless of our position in life. I consider Officer Edwards a friend, a mentor and a teacher. The African-American community on the UNC campus should honor and support her for she stands boldly in speaking for herself and others of her people who may be afraid to point out the wicked, racist and corrupt policies of the state of North Carolina and the campus at Chapel Hill.

I state unabashedly that I love Officer Edwards. I love her because when she speaks to me and advises me on life, and encourages me to keep on pushing, and assures me that I can and will make it, I feel as though I am finally getting an opportunity to meet Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Ida B. Wells and many of the other sisters whose names we never knew - women who demanded that their sons and daughters remain steadfast and strong in the wake of slavery and Jim Crow. I feel as though I am

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speaking with Queen Candace, our African sister who lead armies and frightened Alexander the "supposedly" Great on the field of battle. In Officer Edwards I see more than simply a campus police officer, and you the black community of UNC professors, administrators and students should demand that the charges of racism, sexism and corrupt hiring practices on the part of the campus police department should be heard by whatever judicial board is trying to evade these issues now.

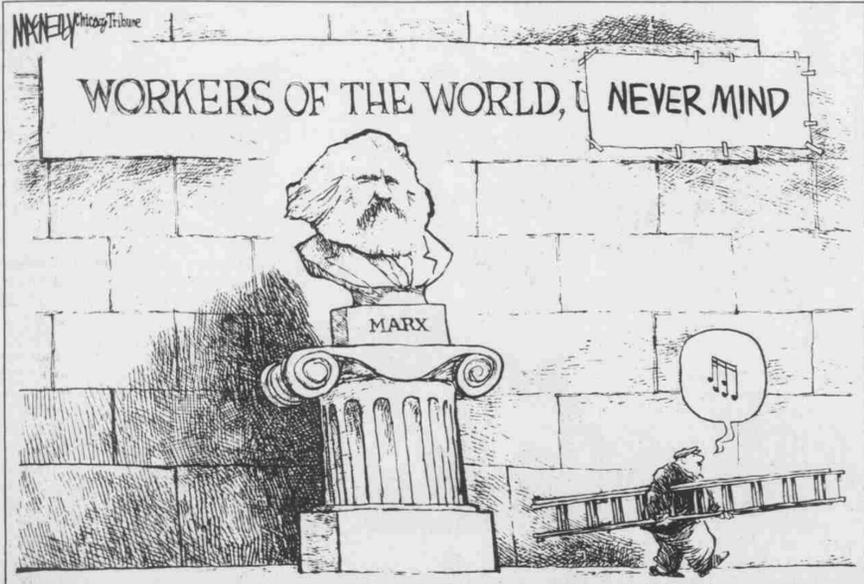
I have had law enforcement experience in the cities of New York and Durham. I have had the opportunity to dialogue with police chiefs, majors and captains in both of these cities, and I find Officer Edwards to be just as knowledgeable of her field as these other top police officers. In a recent conversation with Mr. Lawrence Morris of the Raleigh Office of Human Relations he stated that, after 15 years with all her expertise, Officer Edwards should be no less than a captain. I feel that it is an insult to the intelligence of the African-American community of UNC to be told that Keith Edwards should remain in the same position of

patrol officer in 1989 as she was when she was hired as a patrol officer in 1974. This is at best disgraceful!

I am somewhat familiar with the old administration of the campus police department. I have had conversations with Sgt. Ned Comar and Major Parigga. Around March 1988 I completed an application for the UNC campus police department; I was not even granted an interview. I am a very mature and articulate 31-year-old college graduate with a B.A. in political science and a minor in sociology. I have worked in the communications section of the New York and Durham police departments and I am a former social worker, and I would be very interested in knowing exactly why I was not granted an interview.

To the African-American community of UNC and our people throughout the diaspora, we have a great commission. It is time to take down the false barriers that divide us and realize that we are one people, we have one God and we have one destiny. Marcus Garvey said, "Up you mighty nation, you can accomplish what you will." Remember our sister Officer Keith Edwards stands for truth and justice; she stands for herself; and, most important of all, she stands for her people. Let us all support her.

Bruce Karriem is from Durham.



Threshold, TAs and doing time

"It's starting out with so much power, so many people and so many students, there's no way it can't have a long-lasting effect." - Tony Deifell, Campus Y co-president, commenting on this past weekend's national Threshold conference, sponsored by the Campus Y's Student Environmental Action Coalition. The groundbreaking student environmental action conference, which ended Sunday, included more than 1,300 college students and featured such speakers as N.C. Sen. Terry Sanford.

"I've been charged with disruption of legitimate University activities, and I wonder which is more disruptive - my actions or breaking up a class in the middle of the semester." - Student activist Dale McKinley questioning the sentence he received for his Oct. 18 conviction of trespassing and willfully obstructing the operations of the University at an April 1988 anti-CIA protest in Hanes Hall. McKinley was placed on definite probation, which prohibits him from officially representing the

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University or from participating in any extra-curricular activities, and which may keep him from teaching his political science class of 50 students.

"I'm deeply sorry for those I have hurt. I have sinned. But never in my life did I intend to defraud." - Jim Bakker, speaking in the courtroom before being sentenced for fraud and conspiracy convictions. Bakker was sentenced last week to 45 years in prison and fined \$500,000 for defrauding his PTL followers for his own enrichment.

"I think Playboy believes, 'what's wrong with being a sex object if that's not all you are?'" - Elizabeth Norris, director of communications for Playboy, explaining that Playboy recruitment on college campuses usually draws a few protesters, but not enough to stop interviews. Playboy has plans for a

"Girls of the ACC" issue, and a photographer will be at the Carolina Inn this week to begin interviews.

"They need to realize they're living in a college town. There need to be compromises. Students should be aware of the community, and the community should be aware of the students." - Mark Smith, president of Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity, responding to local resident's proposed reduction in noise levels permitted under Chapel Hill's noise ordinance.

"President Bush may well have stumbled on the one issue that could cost him re-election." - U.S. Rep. Bill Green, R-N.Y., commenting on President George Bush's veto of a bill that would have provided abortion aid for poor victims of rape and incest. The House fell 50 votes short of overriding the veto last week.

Compiled by Tammy Blackard, editorial page editor.