

# Editorial

## Gas Masks And Boxing Gloves

Once upon a time, all you needed to play basketball were a few players, a leather ball and an old peach basket. Later, knee pads, \$90 sneakers and color-coordinated sweat bands became standard equipment. If the example of Saturday night's Mars Hill-UNC-A game is any indication, two more pieces of gear, gas masks and boxing gloves, may soon become standard equipment.

Mars Hill College and the University of North Carolina at Asheville were scheduled to meet in a basketball game Saturday night in Asheville. Thousands of fans crowded Justice Gym expecting to see a classic confrontation between hated rivals. Instead, they witnessed a street brawl that left several players injured and cast the future of the rivalry in doubt.

Who is to blame for the brawl? It would be convenient to blame Mars Hill's Rocky Spaulding, for it was he who threw the first punch and was ejected. While Spaulding certainly is at fault, in his defense it should be noted that the object of his fist, UNC-A's Tom Haus, began the dispute by throwing the game ball at Spaulding. Unfortunately for Rocky, the officials failed to see Haus' action.

Some of the blame for the brawl must rest with the game officials for not controlling the shoving underneath the backboards earlier. Anyone even vaguely familiar with the history of the Mars Hill-UNC-A rivalry knows that the potential of a brawl is always just one shove away. The officials chose to ignore much of the shoving underneath the boards that lead up to the fight. By the time the referees attempted to bring some order to the game, players from both teams were scuffling on the floor.

The subsequent actions of security forces on the scene further aggravated tensions. The use of teargas is a serious matter. We believe that the UNC-A security guards overreacted in

using the eye irritant to disperse the fighting players. If the coaches and officials and four security guards cannot restore order without resorting to the use of chemical warfare, then something is very wrong with present security measures. At the time the officer chose to use the spray, there were no spectators involved in the fight. Several players were injured in the exchange and spectators also reported being hit with the spray. As Coach Ronai asked after the game, "What's next, guns and clubs?"

Coaches and officials of both schools would like to forget the incident and get on with the rest of the season. Unfortunately, the rivals have another meeting scheduled for Feb. 9, this time at Mars Hill. We would like to suggest that the players, coaches and officials of both schools meet before the game to take steps to prevent future outbreaks of the sort that took place on Saturday.

Healthy rivalry between nearby schools is good for the spirit of competition that drives athletes. When the rivalry results in a near riot, however, it is time to question if it's worth it.

Because the rivalry between the schools is so intense, it might be a good idea to play the games at a neutral site. We would suggest that the schools consider using the Asheville Civic Center for future games. While the Asheville location may not be neutral, its far enough from the UNC-A campus to negate any home court advantage the Bulldogs would enjoy at Justice Gym.

The larger arena might also help by separating the partisan fans.

When player stop playing basketball and turn instead to street fighting, fans have a right to ask whatever happened to sportsmanship. Saturday's game showed that it's gone the way of the two-handed set shot.

## Heard And Seen

By POP STORY

One of my closest friends and favorite columnists, Bob Terrell, often writes items I think many of the readers of this newspaper (who do not get the Asheville Citizen) would enjoy. In Bob's column on January 5, is a fine example which I decided to use this week, as follows:

The acquisition of knowledge is perhaps the greatest dimension of life. To see a child grow in knowledge is one of the great attributes of parenthood.

In school, the acquisition of knowledge is akin to blowing up a balloon. Children swell with learning.

In church, kids learn the darnedest things . . .

A Sunday school teacher asked her class to draw Biblical pictures. One little girl drew a picture of a bear with his eyes crossed, and beneath the bear she penciled the word, "Gladly."

"Suzie," said the teacher, "I don't know what your picture means."

"It's the title song I heard in church," Suzie said. "It's 'Gladly, My Cross-Eyed Bear.'"

Another child pictured a long limousine with a driver in front and a man and woman in back. The boy who drew it said it was "a picture of God driving Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden."

A child's conception of Biblical events is limited. He tends to compare the Bible to things within his own field of knowledge.

After a discussion of Noah and the Ark, a little boy said, "Boy, I'll bet Noah did a lot of fishing."

Another replied, "No, he didn't. He didn't have but two worms."

God's destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah generates various pictures in the minds of youngsters. A Sunday school teacher tried to describe the event vividly: "God warned Lot to take his wife and flee out of the city because he was going to destroy it. Lot got away, but his wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt."

A little fellow raised his hand and asked, "What happened to the flea?"

Another class said the Lord's Prayer in unison. A little girl prayed, "Our Father, who art in heaven, Hal be thy name . . ." Her brother punched her and whispered, "His name isn't Hal. It's Howard!"

A little girl told her teacher that her pet dog died, and the teacher tried to comfort her. "Dear," she said, "your little dog is up in heaven now with God."

"What would God want with a dead dog?" the little girl wondered.

Punishment was the subject on a Sunday morning, and the teacher told the story of Adam and Eve eating the forbidden fruit. "God punished them," she said. "Does anyone know how?"

A little boy raised his hand. "He made Adam write the Bible," he said, "and made Eve a housewife!"

The story of the prodigal son provokes strange ideas from children.

"In all the joy and excitement of the return of the prodigal son," a teacher told her Sunday school class, "There was one to whom the prodigal's return brought no happiness; one to whom the feast meant not good times and laughter, but bitterness; one who hated the very thought of attending the feast. Can any of you tell me who this was?"

A sad little guy knew. "The Fatted calf," he said.

Another drawn illustration of a Biblical event pictured an airplane in flight with a man and woman in the rear seat and a man in the front.

"What does this picture mean?" the teacher asked Johnny.

"That's Joseph and Mary on their flight out of Egypt," Johnny said.

"Who's that in the front seat?"

"That's Pontius the pilot."

Abraham's journey through Haran into Canaan was discussed by the teacher of a class of 4- and 5-year-old children. A little boy, known for his imaginative qualities, raised his hand and said, "Teacher, I knew Abraham."

"Billy, that's quite impossible," the teacher said. "Abraham died almost four thousand years ago."

"I know it," Billy said. "He died and went to heaven before I left, and I knew him up there."

Another teacher discussed the merits of being good with her class. "I'm sure all of you want to go to heaven," she said, and was surprised when a little girl shook her head.

"Why not?" she asked. "Because my mommy told me we had to go straight home after church," the youngster said.

## Letters To The Editor

Dear Editor, In the Jan. 11 News Record, I read the letter from Lydia Booth, from the League of Women Voters, "League Studies Nuclear Question." They think the nuclear question must be considered by all of us, whether in a meeting in Asheville or in talking with a friend or with our children. It certainly is not an easy thing to think about...in fact it

is in many ways "the ultimate fear." And we don't see the nuclear bombs in our daily lives, so its easy to forget about them. We think that is something for the government to take care of. But, perhaps we realize that the government's policy of nuclear superiority threatens us all. In facing the idea of death from war, we find out how much we care about life. And

we automatically affirm our love for family, friends and this world. The possibility of nuclear holocaust has been the "ultimate evolutionary driver" and it has assumed we will evolve into a more aware, compassionate species. Each of us can make this change from acting out of greed and fear to stopping and being aware of the caring and goodwill.

Let's talk about the arms race. If we see it is not good, we as citizens of the government of the United States can change our national priorities by contacting our representatives and our president. But equally important, we can contact that part of ourselves that may be on the wrong track; and we can change. Sincerely, Ann Whitefield



## Know Comment

By JOSEPH GODWIN

Although we often hear people use the term "human nature," we seldom hear the term explained. Human nature should pertain to human beings in a way that it does not apply to other creatures. A human being is as much human as if he were not human at all. That has to be true because we are certainly not plants. Like other animals, we reproduce our kind by sexual process. Born helpless, we remain helpless longer than many other animals. We must have food for survival and we acquire much of it in the same way other predators get theirs, we kill it. We prey on other animals such as chickens, cows, goats, hogs, sheep, fowls, and fish. The manner of slaughtering, preserving, and preparing our meats does not remove human beings from earth's list of prominent predators. Like other animals, we must have clothing and shelter. While most of us have a reasonable amount of hair on our heads, none of my human friends are covered with

feathers. (I have heard of a few who were called "feather-legged.") Our nests are called homes and cost thousands of dollars, but we use them for the same purpose and in somewhat the same manner that other creatures use their nests and dens. We share another area of existence with other animals: At times we are frightened, frequently we suffer, and finally we die. The members of one species recognize and respond to the distress cries of another species. If music is the universal language among human beings of different tongues, uncontrollable groans and cries of anguish are the almost common speech among great segments of living creatures. None of these things I have mentioned are strictly human characteristics. The humanity of human beings does not derive from man's size, strength, speed, nor longevity. Other animals are larger, stronger, and faster; some also live longer. Caring for our young does

not make us human. Everybody, I suppose, knows that some animals are much better mothers than many humans are. (I'm so sorry I had to write that last statement!) What, then, is the nature of human nature? The answer is freedom. The biological human is really human only when the spiritual and intellectual human is really free. Other animals do what they must. Their genetic programs unfold and we say they behave because of instinct. Being a dog is what makes him bark. Being a rooster is what causes him to crow. Or he bellows because he is a bull. We human beings do what we will because we are free. Since we are free we are not bound by any particular habitat in the mountains, on the coast, on the sea, in the arctic, or in the tropics. Since we are free, we can build a tent, a shack, a modest home, or a mansion. We are also free to destroy that which no longer has meaning or purpose, but we may also destroy the materialization of man's

most noble dreams and highest skill. Since we are human, we are free to love and hate. We learn to do both because we are born doing neither. We can love those who love us and those who hate us because we can choose to do so. We should learn to hate selfishness and injustice. With our total being, we should love beauty and peace. Because we are human, we have the freedom to choose. God made us that way. As a result, most of us most of the time in this country have positions in life that are the result of the choices we have made. We can also change our circumstances. When forces beyond our control infringe upon our freedom to move, build, destroy, and choose, our basic freedom remains — the freedom to will. When our dreams turn to bubbles and burst, when our best motives are misrepresented, when our strongest efforts fail, when we have every reason to despair — we are still free to have faith and maintain our mastery over our attitude.



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## Living And Growing

By CARL MUMPOWER, M.S.W., The Asheville Counseling Center
Have you got a dollar in your pocket? If so, can I talk you into a bet? If in the past hour you haven't had some negative comment or thought about what's happening around you, then I owe you a buck. If you have, then you owe me a buck. If I can get everyone to pay up, I plan to take three months off in the Bahamas.
Our world, contrary to popular opinion, is not all that bad a place. For everything that's wrong, there a thousand things that are right. For every death each year in our area, there are thousands of lives that continue. For every

negative bunch. Many of us pride ourselves on being able to quickly zero in on what's wrong about this, that, or the other. Our trained eye, like radar, locks onto mistakes, errors, and the like with a vengeance. Such may have some advantages, but I'm of a different school of thought.
Ever given any thought as to what all of this negative thinking is doing to you? How about your attitude, do you not find that your negative perceptions tend to leave you with a negative attitude? Then there's your sense of judgment and perspective. Does a

lightbulb that burns out in our home, there are ten or more that continue to shine. For every day we have a cold, there are a large number of days of no sniffles. Name one bad thing in your world, and I can name good things at a hundred to one ratio.
Your next question might be on why we are so negative. Part of the reason has to do with the power of the bad and dark forces in life. It's easy to take something good for granted, but more difficult to ignore something that's causing you pain or trouble. Negative things grab our attention, and in a sense hypnotize us in their direction. We are also, you might have noticed, conditioned by people around us. Politicians tend to be much more focused on what's wrong than what's right. It's on report cards draw much more attention than B's and A's. Just one physical handicap tends to

become the commanding quality of an otherwise well individual. We are essentially trained by our environment to focus on the bad to the frequent exclusion of the good.
One changes this process of negativism by switching focus. By literally forcing our attention to the good. Ten good recognitions for every bad one might be a good ratio to consider. In doing so, a whole new world can be opened up to you. Sad is the condition of the man without eyes. Sadder still is that of the man with eyes who can still see see.