

SHARIF DURHAM  
EDITOR  
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# The Daily Tar Heel

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BOARD EDITORIALS

## Forgive and Award

Elia Kazan's contributions to the movie industry, not his actions during the Cold War, make him worthy of an Oscar.

To the disgust of many in the entertainment industry and beyond, legendary director Elia Kazan will receive a lifetime achievement award Sunday during the 71st annual Academy Awards.

Critics say Kazan doesn't deserve the honor because he ratted on Communists during the 1950s. Nonsense. Viewers everywhere should stand Sunday and applaud a man whose body of work is deserving of such high praise.

There's no denying that Kazan's accomplishments warrant the lifetime achievement award. From 1940 until 1976, he directed 20 films, including classics such as "On The Waterfront," "East of Eden" and "A Streetcar Named Desire." He helped develop such stars as Warren Beatty, Marlon Brando and James Dean. Kazan also wrote eight novels.

But that's not the legacy critics tend to remember.

From the 1940s to the 1960s, when the Communist scare reached its height, Hollywood blacklisted hundreds of artists on the basis of their left-wing political views.

Kazan, a former Communist who grew to detest communism, made what many critics call an unforgivable transgression in 1952.

He testified before the House Un-American Activities Committee, where he named eight members of the Communist Party working in the film industry. Afterward, he even took out newspaper ads boasting about what he had done, an act that sealed his reputation as a traitor.

Kazan might have cooperated with the

committee for fear of being barred himself from making films. But in the process, he destroyed the careers and the reputations of many of his colleagues. Without a doubt, Kazan's actions were reprehensible.

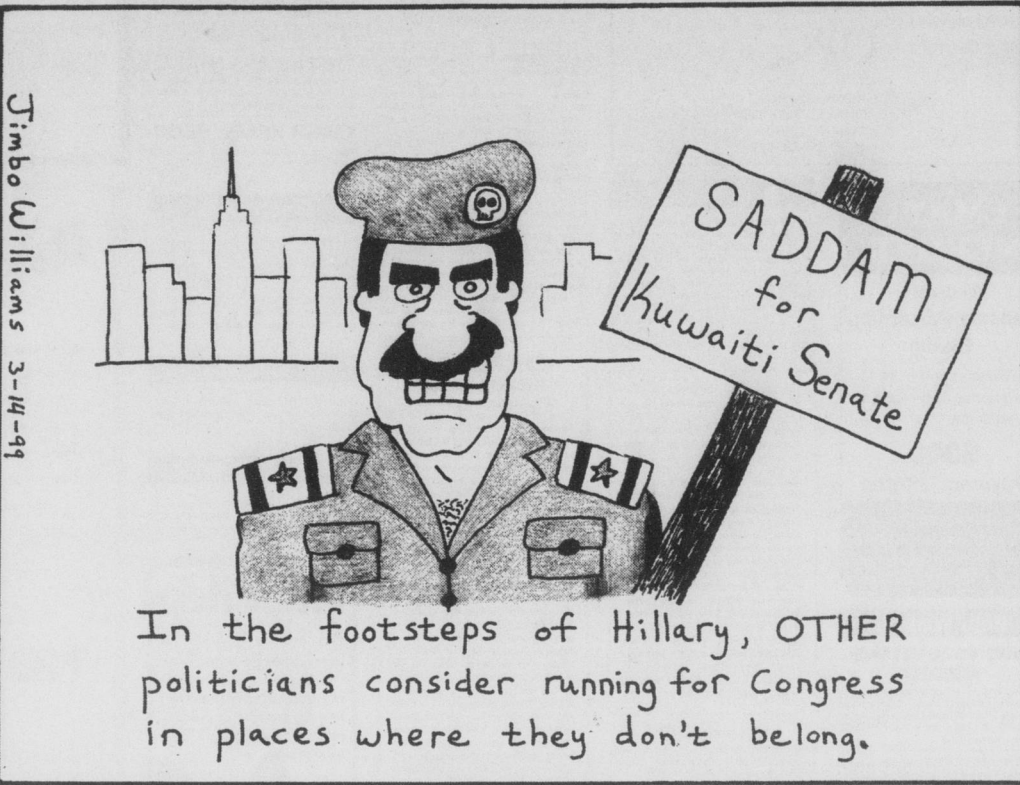
But not unforgivable.

Kazan made a mistake. A big one. But the Communist-fearing post-war society in which he lived dictated Kazan's actions. His own government expected his testimony. Only when he complied did he become a villain in the eyes of many. But that doesn't mean his professional accomplishments should be ignored because of his actions nearly 50 years ago.

Look at football great Lawrence Taylor, who entered the National Football League Hall of Fame based on his performance on the field, not his crackhead tendencies off it. Or perhaps Michael Jordan. Should he never join the National Basketball Association Hall of Fame because of his past trouble with gambling? No. In sports, that's a ludicrous idea. It should be in Hollywood, too.

Still, resentment over Kazan's testimony has overshadowed many of his crowning achievements. Just as Kazan alienated those colleagues he testified against, so too has Hollywood turned its back on him for half a century. And it shouldn't. Not any longer. Nearing 90-years-old, Kazan is long overdue for the Academy's highest award.

On Sunday, he finally will receive it. Here's hoping that it will be to the sound of applause instead of the grumblings of disapproval.



## Officials' Non-Response a Disservice

Imagine for a moment that the University appoints a new men's basketball coach (and I am in no way suggesting that it needs to).

After holding the requisite introductory press conference, this new coach announces that he would rather not speak to the press or, for that matter, the fans, after that date.

Besides being awfully silly (why come to the nation's most prominent basketball program if you wish to avoid the spotlight?), the announcement would probably offend fans.

Sadly, that hypothetical coach's attitude is the same many public officials seem to take toward their constituencies.

More and more, reporters are discovering that the dictates of professional courtesy and accountability to one's community do not count for much.

Public officials justify their lack of communication on the grounds that the media is obviously biased. "Why bother offering up information," they ask, "when reporters will likely twist it however they like?"

It's a legitimate question: reporters at any news outlet have a knack for finding controversy in even the most mundane stories.

But it ignores one important point: the media offer the most effective means of communicating with the community. Public officials avoid them at their own peril.

Despite the relatively small size of the community it serves, The Daily Tar Heel is not immune to such problems.

University administrators, for instance, are elusive animals, capable of avoiding reporters' phone calls for weeks at a time.

A graphic on Monday's Op-Ed page tried unsuccessfully to convey this idea. It featured a map of campus complete with satirical descriptions of alleged "Hooker Sightings."

The execution on the graphic could have been better, but the point its author sought to make was valid: his present illness notwithstanding, UNC's head honcho has long been a tough guy to locate.

While working on the editorial board last semester, I witnessed it firsthand. I tried for a week to speak to Hooker for an Op-Ed piece.



JOHN SWEENEY  
OMBUDSMAN

I had only a few questions; the whole ordeal might have taken 10 minutes.

But the chancellor's assistant informed me that he would be in town for only a few hours Thursday morning.

In an almost comical twist of fate, I missed Hooker's call Thursday morning because I had gone to the bathroom. Worse, he had phoned from his car, on the way to catch a flight at Raleigh-Durham International Airport, so I could not call him back.

Hooker is an important man, and I am sure he was doing important things that week. But were they so important that he couldn't have found 10 minutes to schedule an interview and answer my questions?

If I sound like a frustrated, helpless child, it is because that is the way journalists often feel. Reporters depend on sources for information, and if sources do not cooperate, the reporters cannot do their jobs.

And all too often, the sources do not reply. It has become a daily ritual. After trying to reach a source for several consecutive days, editors decide to run a story without the source's input. Once the story has run, the source calls back, offering to speak to anyone with questions or complaining that he had no say in a "problematic" story.

The big question is "Why?" Do public officials live in fear of the press, cowering beneath their desks any time that the phone rings? Or do they see some hidden agenda behind every question?

It is true that dealing with the press can be a disconcerting experience. Sources provide information, but reporters decide how it is

presented to the public. That is a scary position for an official to deal with, and many have been burned.

A DTH board editorial earlier this semester unfairly criticized John Jones, the director of Student Stores, after he was mentioned in an article about the N.C. Umstead Act, a law governing market competition between private and public entities.

Fortunately, Jones called the newspaper on the mistake. But the damage was done; University administrators who saw the error were bound to be a bit more wary the next time a DTH reporter called.

In truth, it needs to work both ways. Reporters should be careful to place quotations and information a source provides in the proper context, to avoid factual errors and to respect the wishes of a source regarding what is and is not on the record.

If there are genuine concerns about the way information comes across in the newspaper, sources need to speak to editors about them. Keep in mind that the DTH is run by student journalists and, much as it pains me to say it, mistakes happen. The important thing is to correct them. But cutting off contact with the media is dangerous.

No journalist chooses the profession under the assumption that it will be easy. The vitriol directed toward this nation's media is not a well-kept secret. But no amount of ill will justifies ignoring the Fourth Estate.

I do believe that the community's leaders are doing their jobs and doing them well. And I do not believe that they intentionally ignore every media phone call that comes their way.

But I also believe the adversarial relationship between government (and, in the DTH's case, University administrators) and the media has gone too far.

Like it or not, public officials should respond to the press because it is in the best interests of their constituents.

John Sweeney is a senior history and anthropology major from Jacksonville. Reach him with your comments about The Daily Tar Heel at [jsweene1@email.unc.edu](mailto:jsweene1@email.unc.edu).

## An All-Around Benefit

The Special Olympics World Games are coming this summer to the Triangle. But where are the volunteers?

The biggest sports event of the summer, the Special Olympics World Games, will take place in the Triangle from June 26 to July 4. With three months to go, organizers are still searching for volunteers. Here is a chance for students and residents to make a difference.

By volunteering for the games, students and town residents have an opportunity to do something good for themselves, the community and some truly special people.

Estimates are that 35,000 volunteers are needed to assist approximately 7,000 athletes from 150 countries competing in 19 events. The contests will be held at several area universities, including UNC-Chapel Hill.

As a requirement, volunteers must be able to work at least three six-hour shifts. But, the benefits involved with participation far outweigh the time commitment required.

Volunteers work directly with athletes, so they get to see firsthand the products of their much-appreciated efforts. A smile from an appreciative athlete would warm the heart of anyone willing to offer his or her time. It is

a chance to improve personal skills, see how a large sporting event is run, and dispel stereotypes about mentally disabled people.

The games are proof that volunteer efforts can benefit both athletes and the people who help run the event.

Also, because they live in a town hosting events, Chapel Hill residents' actions reflect upon the area as a whole. A strong volunteer showing will enhance Chapel Hill as well as the Triangle's image. Volunteering for the Special Olympics World Games can bolster the development of the Triangle as well as the development of the men and women who participate in the events.

Right now is a good time to give something back to the community and to personally gain something invaluable in the process.

### Lend a Hand

To volunteer for the Special Olympics this summer, call 1-888-767-1999.

## BAROMETER

**Tourney Time**  
The NCAA tournament continues this week without UNC's men, whose shocking upset by Weber State single-handedly ruined office pools across the country.

**Aldersperson?**  
The Carrboro Board of Aldermen is debating whether to assume a more gender-neutral name. How about: Board that Debates Meaningless Changes?

**Can't Stop Science**  
Scientists recently found that the urine of pregnant women contains a protein that fights HIV. Dying of AIDS or being urinated on — tough choice.

**Got Bread?**  
The Great Harvest Bread Co. will give customers a fresh loaf of bread for old bread. Contrary to rumors, this old bread will be used to feed livestock, not to cut campus dining hall costs.

## TAR HEEL QUOTABLES

"They're a hate group. All Communists are anti-Christians."

**CONSERVATIVE ACTIVIST G. R. QUINN**  
On members of the National Lawyers Guild. There's nothing quite like Christian brotherly love.

"In North Carolina there's a frickin' building on every corner."

**GREENSBORO COLISEUM DIRECTOR SCOTT JOHNSON**

Concerning the competition among venues for booking acts. Scott, you'll find buildings in a lot of states. Don't travel much, do you?

"We've got to have a nominee who can win."

**FORMER SEN. BILL BRADLEY**  
On Vice President Al Gore's entrance into the Democratic race for the presidential nomination. How about settling for a nominee who doesn't move like the Tin Man in the "Wizard of Oz"?

"At any rest stop or truck stop, you can find what you're looking for."

**TRUCK DRIVER KEITH HAYES**  
On prostitution in North Carolina. Maybe that's where President Clinton should have looked first.

## READERS' FORUM

### Writer's Comparisons Insult Islamic Beliefs, Make Assumptions

**TO THE EDITOR:**  
Luke Meisner's recent attempt to draw cultural similarities between western and Islamic women led to a very insulting assumption.

Meisner made the statement discussing "the recent trend for Islamic women to veil themselves ..." and later in his passage went on to say, "The veil in Islamic countries ... went out of style." The veil is an Islamic tradition that is embedded in its holiest book, not something worn simply when a woman has the urge.

The assumption that this form of Islamic expression is simply a "style" is an insult to Islam.

His conclusion discussing the "return to their own cultures" again demonstrates an obvious lack of understanding with respect to Islam. The lack of a cultural identity for

hundreds of years, as this passage attempts to imply, is simply false.

Drawing a comparison between revealing clothing and a fundamental religious tradition is doing a grave injustice to the significance of the veil.

**Salem Shubash**  
Freshman  
International Studies

### Coach Doing Fine Job, Critic Lost Credibility Through His Letter

**TO THE EDITOR:**  
As Franklin Hurley aptly demonstrates in his March 17 letter, anyone stupid enough to state in print that he came to Carolina just for basketball tickets loses any credibility that his comments about the basketball program at UNC will reflect even a modicum of intelligence.

Bill Guthridge is certainly the kind of person who should be at the helm

of the team at a university like ours. I was disappointed by the losses to Weber State and Puke (sic) University. But the results of this season were better than I had anticipated, especially given the team's youth and inexperience, so I hope "Coach Gut" will stay.

As for Hurley, there is no point wasting paper to give him a diploma, given that he doesn't seem to value a degree from UNC very much. Instead, provide him with a lifetime pass to games between UNC and any Division II school on the schedule. Then he won't have to suffer through seeing Carolina lose and have those coveted seats in the Dean Dome for which he came to Chapel Hill.

On second thought, I wonder what would entice the Athletic Department to "lose" his application for tickets next year? Now, wouldn't that be a damn shame?! Sniff.

**Tom Sorrell**  
Professor  
Chemistry



Letters to the editor should be no longer than 400 words and must be typed, double-spaced, dated and signed by no more than two people. Students should include their year, major and phone number. Faculty and staff should include their title, department and phone number. The DTH reserves the right to edit letters for space, clarity and vulgarity. Publication is not guaranteed. Bring letters to the DTH office at Suite 104, Carolina Union, mail them to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, NC 27515 or e-mail forum to: [dth@unc.edu](mailto:dth@unc.edu).