

Public officials are only human

Perhaps one of the more disturbing reflections on the past year is the attitude revealed by many Americans concerning wrongdoing on the part of other Americans.

And there is somehow something very wrong about this attitude — something warped and out of perspective.

Maybe this attitude may best be described as one of insensitivity and oversimplification. But whatever it is, you can hear it from your friends, you can see it in the preoccupied, indignant look of the television commentators, and you can feel it in the words of the columnists and the politicians.

We all seem to be aghast and willing to make a spectacle out of those officeholders who have been touched by public scandal.

There seems to be an unwillingness to try and understand what the person in the office was like aside from the functions he performed as the holder of an office.

It even seems ironic that we let ourselves be so surprised by the frailty of man, his inability to resist all temptation and refrain from making mistakes of judgment — moral, legal and ethical.

Perhaps our own vehement criticisms, ruthless jokes and insensitivity reveal the biggest cover-up of all. We don't like to admit that maybe we too might do wrong or make poor judgments if we were in positions of power. So instead, we come on strong against those who have committed errors.

Most often those in power have not blatantly abused power. Some did. But others do it almost unconsciously, or else vaguely sub-consciously, rationalizing each step of wrongdoing along the way so that in the end, it seemed to them that they acted properly.

Overall we tend to write off these scandalized persons — at whatever level of government — as bad persons, failures.

Certainly punishments must be dealt out when wrongdoing is discovered and we must always be on the lookout for wrongdoing.

But would we were as quick to understand why people went wrong as we are to point the finger. We really need only look at ourselves to understand where they failed. If we were a little less self-righteous and insensitive, maybe our public officials would be more likely to see and admit their mistakes.

"I have my boys looking into your case . . . you have nothing to worry about!"



Bob Jasinkiewicz

Robbed of flowers and trust

The flowers weren't expensive or unique by any means. They were of the dried variety that the "flower ladies" usually arrange and sell in the fall and winter.

But they meant something to both of you, and even now you can think back to the day you gave them to her.

On the Saturday of the State game, after having worked all day in a downtown restaurant, she was sitting in the back waiting for you to come.

And you remember her smile breaking the autumn gloom, and how happy she was because no one had ever given her flowers before.

And finally you remember how you both rushed to the shopping center, before the stadium crowd let out, and bought a delicate Japanese vase to put them in—to bring some color and beauty to the basement dimness of your apartment window.

But you also remember when you were taking her for a visit home on Christmas Eve, and how you both felt, without putting words to the feelings, that things wouldn't be the same when you returned.

Santa Claus came, but not down the chimney, and not finding us at home, he took what we had instead of leaving us

what we didn't have. Now there's an old Talmudic saying that goes something like "whatever is mine is yours, and whatever is yours is mine," which is supposed to denote the essence of charity and selflessness.

There's also a Zen Buddhist story that tells of an old, poverty-stricken devotee of the philosophy who, upon meeting a thief in his hovel, offers him the rest of his possessions for the taking, including the tattered shirt off his own back.

But others are victims, never oneself, in spite of an inundation of crime statistics published and broadcast daily. That you are now a statistic cuts the spirit as much as it slashes a budget.

When you again turn the key to your apartment—and in the flash of an intuition you can already see what's gone and what it looks like where the things were before you even open the door—and your worst fears turn out to be true when the door is open, then all the philosophies of benevolence can't relieve the knot in your stomach or the weight that suddenly bears down on your knees.

Someone whom you don't know or may never know has violated a place, reserved for people who mean something to you, to take things that

1975. The United Nations has declared this to be "International Women's Year" and the January cover of *Ms.* magazine tells me: "It's Your Year." Women have, indeed, come a long way in their fight for equality and recognition. While all the injustices have not been obliterated, we have at least raised the social consciousness to a level where our demands must be heeded.

North Carolina high school women are now eligible for the coveted Morehead Scholarship. On national, state and local levels women are capturing political offices at an astonishing rate. Ella Grasso was elected governor of Connecticut and Susie Sharp of North Carolina is the first female chief justice of a state supreme court. While discrepancies still exist between the income of men and women we at least have the chance to compete for jobs once reserved only for males.

Television commercials are slowly beginning to portray us as chemists, doctors and business women rather than glorified maids. Children's books let little girls build treehouses and run through mud puddles instead of playing dolls and helping mother dry the dishes. Some toy companies are promoting their goods as appropriate for both sexes, helping to kill the notion that only boys like to play with trains and trucks.

Yes, progress has been made. In the past 10 years I have grown up in the midst of a social revolution that has changed the outlook and lives of women enormously. The women who rekindled the movement during the 1960s—Gloria Steinem, Betty Friedan, Kate Millett, and Germaine Greer to name a few—fought the initial battles for me. In some respects I have had opportunities served to me on a silver platter.

It is no longer assumed, as it might have been 10 years ago, that the only reason I am attending college is to grab a husband. The chance for a career as an independent female is open to me. I am not a freak if I prefer to prepare for a profession rather than cultivate my culinary abilities so as to be a more desirable wife and mother. Things have changed.

As a gender women have made long

strides. As an individual female I still have many conflicts to resolve within myself. Like most college women today I grew up in the transition period, caught in the demise of the traditional female role and the birth of the liberated woman free to plan her own future.

As a girl growing up in the late 1950s and early 1960s I was exposed to social conditioning which is outdated now but which significantly influenced me at the time. It is difficult to undo the damage of those early years.

For instance, as a little girl I still played with dolls and wore frilly pink dresses. When I wanted to romp outside with my older brothers I was encouraged to remain in the house and help prepare supper or clean up. My first grade reader still had Sally saying "See Dick run" while she watched from the sidelines. In the second grade I beat all the boys in my class in a footrace, but I could tell from their sneers that I should keep in my place—the unathletic girl's place.

Quickly I began to learn the feminine mystique. During puberty I devoured *American Girl* and *Seventeen* magazines as if their words were the Gospel. I copied every new hairstyle and

make-up technique illustrated; I did not have to be attractive for myself but for males. To prepare for adolescence I read all the dating etiquette books while the boys read mystery and adventure stories.

Soon I picked up the subtle coyness and charm that would allow me to wrap men around my little finger. I made a half-hearted attempt to learn how to cook, still believing the way to a man's heart was through his stomach.

Of course I always knew I would attend college and during one phase I dreamed of becoming a doctor. But always at the fringes of the dream was a husband waiting for me who would provide infinite security. Surely I could not make it through life unattached.

Then suddenly, things changed. I would no longer be ostracized if I decided to have a career without a husband and children. I was free to be myself and to develop my potentials fully. I was something of a shock. After all those years of conditioning I discovered that I had been spoonfed propaganda.

Which brings me to my present dilemma. As a child I was trained to think one way and now I can act

another. I find myself involved in a constant inner struggle to overcome those early ideas of femininity so deeply ingrained in me.

I can still bat my eyelashes and catch the attention of a passing male. I can feign weakness and have my packages carried for me. If it seems advantageous I can act like a brainless female. When the situation arises the old reflexes go into action and I find myself having little control.

It is not easy to drop the old role and adopt the new one, no matter how natural it seems in today's society. All during their lives men have grown up knowing they are expected to achieve, to use their educations and to have lifetime careers. Women have had that encouragement for such a short time.

I am confused, not afraid to accept the responsibilities of the future, but finding it hard to shed the passivity of the past. The blame for this bewilderment belongs not solely to me nor to the era in which I grew up but rather on the society that made the women's revolution necessary.

I will have to fight every minute of the day until I resolve this conflict. Better luck to the next generation.

Gerry Cohen

Socialism: economic cure

So, you haven't been able to find a summer job or a job after graduation, or your father or mother has been laid off work.

The economy doesn't look like it's going to get much better soon, as unemployment in North Carolina begins to spiral upward.

Meanwhile, 1974 House Speaker James Ramsey calls on the General Assembly to put a freeze on hiring in all state jobs, which means you might not get that state job you were counting on. Panic, panic, panic.

What kinds of problems do we really have, and what kind of solutions does the economy need? While local and state officials can make some dents in the problem, the economy and its management are basically functions for the federal government.

A recent pamphlet by Michael Harrington outlines many of the problems in a straightforward manner. Harrington assigns the blame to capitalism in general, and the welfare-capitalist, military-industrial state in particular.

In case you were unsure, that latter kind of state is commonly referred to as the United States of America.

Many distortions in American society have come about because of the heavy concentrations of power which have given small groups of private citizens the authority to make major decisions in key economic sectors while the rest of us get ripped off by the big boys.

Obviously, this analysis proceeds from a certain fundamental base: Something is basically wrong in a society where large numbers of people live in poverty while the government pays people to keep land out of production; where speculators can drive up the prices of basic commodities such as sugar; and where economic leaders have controlled wages and prices but not profits.

As Harrington points out, welfare-capitalism has had some advantages: Idle capacity has been put to work in public service type programs, and some modest gains have been made through a progressive income tax system.

Yet, the main beneficiaries of welfare-capitalism have been the rich and the powerful. Concentrations of power have continued to grow through conglomeration and merger.

The current economic squeeze is driving out many of the small businesses. While classic capitalism theory says this is good, the result will be even more economic control by a few large firms in each industry.

The average consumer is also being screwed in the energy market. The outflow of \$20 billion to the OPEC oil nations is having harmful effects on our economy while domestic coal and oil producers have artificially tripled and quadrupled their prices.

Natural gas companies are driving many North Carolina firms out of business by reducing production. Currently, natural gas prices are regulated and producers are holding back, hoping for an end to regulation when they can get more money for their limited stock of natural gas. Production is down, and they say it can only be increased if they are allowed to charge whatever they want, and hang the retired homeowner. Blackmail is a good word for the situation.

So, the economy begins to spiral downward, pushed by economic mismanagement, shoved by artificial energy pricing and kicked by the few who have an economic hold on the nation.

For the first time since the 1930s, a struggle over the basic nature of the American economy is in the works. Many, including myself, see the need for a socialist economy with a democratic control of the means of production and an end to selfish private management of the economy.

Short range goals must be the nationalization of the energy and utilities industries. Supply and pricing of energy must be controlled democratically. Private profit from economic problems must end, and the energy industries have been the chief culprits. They, and their utility allies, have shown themselves incompetent to play a part in our society.

Next, federal legislation must be passed to break up the multinational corporations and to require representation of consumers and workers in all interstate corporations that have significant impact on the economy.

Also, income must be redistributed. Tax loopholes for business and the rich should end, and the tax rates moved upward.

The whole process is rather painful. But in the next two years we will begin to realize that America must choose either a conservative capitalist economy—where profit is first and the economy cyclical—or an economy based on socialist principles. The current welfare-capitalist state is an economic disaster area.

Gerry Cohen is a UNC law student and member of the Chapel Hill Board of Aldermen.

Crackdown on High Noon soon?

Indications are, from several sources in the university administration and in student government, that some sort of crackdown on the High Nooners is imminent—possibly even today.

What sort of form this crackdown will take is not clear—it could be a strong warning with the threat of a bust, or even an actual bust.

It may seem unfair and hypocritical to some High Nooners that alumni and state legislators, as well as some parents, are demanding action when many of them undoubtedly have their own vices and when no apparent harm is being done.

However, the fact must be

realized that when the alumni and legislators start to push, the university usually has to give.

Also, it appears that the university has little choice but to take some action, for if the university doesn't, action may be taken from higher levels. Publicity in the *Raleigh News & Observer* about the High Noon society was so extensive that this is by no means just a campus issue.

So, a friendly word to the wise: Without a doubt, some action will be taken soon against High Noon if their normal routine is continued. Discretion and caution, not flaunting, are in order, for the consequences of any action are not likely to be pleasant.

The Daily Tar Heel

Jim Cooper, Greg Turosak Editors

David Ennis, Associate Editor
Lu Ann Jones, Associate Editor
David Klingler, News Editor
Harriet Sugar, Features Editor
Elliott Warnock, Sports Editor
Gene Johnson, Wire Editor
Martha Stevens, Head Photographer
Jim Grimsley, Night Editor

Bob Jasinkiewicz is a graduate student in journalism.