

Dangers of nuclear fission not stressed enough in nuclear energy column

letters

To the editor:
Julian Grajewski's column conveniently ignores a number of facts ("Nuclear technology the 'leading edge' for social and economic progress," Nov. 28). The most glaring examples of this are when he tries to play down the dangers of nuclear fission.

Fact: People have died in nuclear accidents — it is rare but it has happened.

Fact: The fuel purity in uranium reactors may be only 3 percent, but breeder reactors would use plutonium in a far more concentrated form.

Fact: An explosion is not the real danger of nuclear plants. If a meltdown broke through to the outside or into the ground, radioactive contamination of the air or ground water could be serious.

Fact: Terrorists would not have to seize a nuclear power plant to get plutonium. All they would have to do is hijack an Atomic Energy Commission transport.

Fact: When breeder reactors do come into line, they will not solve the waste problem. Breeder reactors simply turn one radioactive element into another — and once the plutonium product has been used up the radioactive by-products must still be dealt with.

Perhaps all the nuclear waste could be stored in a 250-foot room. But what does that mean? 250-foot square and how high? It's too vague. And that would be true probably only if the wastes were all solid. How do you store liquid wastes?

Furthermore, Julian conveniently ignores something important about energy sources. Usefulness of a fuel depends only partly on energy density. It also depends on the amount of energy needed to produce the energy, on the quantity and price of the fuel and on the social cost of maintaining the energy system. While there was plenty of natural gas, coal gasification was impractical. Why? Because of the added expense of producing it. You got less energy profit. So let's consider everything:

1) Given, nuclear and fossil fuels are more energy intensive.

2) Because of this, it is more convenient to ship fuel to a power plant and send out

electricity than to use it where it's needed. Power generators can hardly get above 70 to 80 percent efficiency. One quarter of your concentrated energy is lost right there. More is lost because of the added social cost of building and maintaining the power distribution system. On the other hand, because ground solar systems must be dispersed, energy is put to use right where it's needed — none is lost converting energy from one form to another and transporting it.

3) Energy intensive sources require that you go find the fuel and then transport it where you need it. Sunlight does all that free. Another advantage of sunlight is that while it is not concentrated there is plenty of it. You'll never run out. The only expense solar sources entail is building the generator and maintaining it.

4) And it seems rather silly for Julian to deprecate solar power while hailing fusion power as the great leap forward. The sun's our only natural, self-maintaining fusion plant.

Julian's assuming solar power supporters expect the sun to be the only source of energy (actually since fossil fuels are stored sunlight, almost all our energy has come from the sun). When solar energy is only a part of a household's energy supply it still will make bills lower in the long run. If you want to think in the long run, it's likely factories will end up moving into outer space: plenty of free energy and a good manufacturing environment! In outer space, mirrors don't have to be more than a fraction of a millimeter thick (so much for Cheops' pyramid). Julian dismisses outer space generators because they only produce one-fifth of the energy per unit of generating surface. He forgot something — you have a lot more room for generating surface in outer space!

Even his dismissal of 'soft' energy sources is illogical. Coal is derived from biomass, as is oil. Are these less efficient? And he distorts statistics to try to make his point. A solar house with mortgage will cost \$75 per month. That includes paying for the house! Everybody has the right to decide for themselves whether solar or fission energy is the energy source of the future (I do not deny

the usefulness of fusion energy — after all, solar energy is derived from fusion). But let's argue with all the facts, instead of conveniently ignoring those that don't agree with us.

Paul Deane
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Honor Code proposal

To the editor:
It is quite obvious that something is wrong with the Honor Code. A survey last year showed that 79 percent of the UNC student body believed "most students do not report violations of the Honor Code." The Supervisory Board of the Undergraduate Court and the Educational Policy Committee have studied the situation and have more or less recommended that the so-

Therefore, when violations of provisions not dealing with academic matters may be enforced in other ways, eliminate those from the code. For example, assault and battery are criminal offenses. They have no business in the Honor Code. Students caught with incorrect Student IDs and athletic passes as well as the person whose name appears on the ID or pass automatically could lose their athletic pass for one academic year. Appeals from this process could be heard by the Honor Court. By eliminating provisions like these the Honor Code would focus on its primary responsibility — preserving the academic integrity of UNC.

Another recommendation is to let faculty members realize that sometimes cheating is difficult to discover and easy to accomplish.

letters to the editor

called "rat clause" — the legal requirement that students report other students who violate the Honor Code — be replaced with a system of faculty proctoring. I have an alternate proposal.

One of the reasons the Honor Code is ineffective now is that no one thinks about the Honor Code. So publicize it. Posters reminding students that cheating runs counter to the entire academic community would be effective. A small box in the *Daily Tar Heel* stating that a student (not named) was given 96 hours to leave campus because he/she was convicted of a first-offense cheating violation would be appropriate. Since the Honor Code has generated such a furor, students have started turning in other students more and more. A directed campaign to increase the awareness of the Honor Code would do much to eliminate the need for a non-honor system.

Another reason the Honor Code is ineffective is that certain provisions in the Code which are not as important as the cheating sections are violated frequently. If I don't feel obligated to turn someone in who is borrowing a student ID for a game, why should I report someone who is cheating?

The design of Hamilton 100 is the best example of this problem. Desks are too close together. Large numbers of students take objective tests there. A cheater's heaven. The faculty should use some kind of proctoring where they feel it necessary. The attorney general doesn't refuse to investigate complaints made by faculty members.

Finally, let's recognize the "rat clause" for what it really is. It is the foundation of the Honor Code. You cannot have one without the other. I therefore recommend we change the name of the "rat clause" to the "honor clause." Keeping the Honor Code intact will demonstrate that students are serious about keeping Carolina honest and academically free. In the words of Chuck Lovelace, attorney general last year, "The self-governance, responsibility and freedom of students will diminish greatly with the abolition of the honor system, and this University will take another step toward mediocrity. Such is the cost of our prevailing apathy and our refusal to enforce reasonable standards of academic conduct among our peers."

Paul H. Arne
Member, Undergraduate Court

'Baldfaced lie'

To the editor:
I was somewhat surprised to learn from your recent headline (Nov. 22) that George Bacso was solely responsible for the lateness of the 1977 *Yackety Yack*. I believe the exact reading of the headline was "Bacso slack on deadlines."

Naturally I was curious to see in what way Mr. Bacso had been slack, since I hadn't seen any sign of that slackness myself. Unfortunately, the story contained little or no corroborative detail, leaving me to wonder if perhaps the *Tar Heel* had learned facts about George too awful to reveal.

Perhaps the *Tar Heel* ought to check with someone who has watched George Bacso work before it passes such a judgment on him (although it would be better if the *Tar Heel* would avoid making judgments altogether, particularly on its front page). Had the *Tar Heel* asked me, I would have told them that I personally watched George work to meet these same infamous deadlines until 4 or 5 in the morning from May to October. He did the work his business manager did not do, dealt with recalcitrant photographers, laid out 672 pages and edited 150 typed pages of copy, all with the same meticulous concern for quality, for the rightness of the *Yack*. Certainly this book is late because we missed our deadlines. But George didn't miss these deadlines for all of us. And it is certainly as true that the book is *this* late because of a whole series of unforeseeable and unavoidable production errors (numbering in the hundreds), and because of its size (124 pages larger than the '76 *Yack*) presented all of us with such a volume of work.

I suppose I have lost my humorous edge, but it is patently unprofessional and unnecessary for the *Tar Heel* to employ such words as "slack" on its front page. While the story was innocuous enough, bordering on untruth only because space limitations excluded so many important facts, the headline must be named something more severe. It is a baldfaced lie.

Jim Grimsley
Associate editor, '77 *Yack*

Not all Olivia Waltons

To the editor:
In a recent article in the *Charlotte Observer*, a Church of God survey was revealed, indicating the television shows which it deems most "offensive" and most "acceptable." Their choices are hardly a surprise to anyone; *Maude*, *Soap* and *All in the Family* topped the first list, while *Little House on the Prairie*, *The Waltons* and *Wonderful World of Disney* dominated the second. What is shocking, however, is a remark made by the director of the survey, seen in relation to the shows chosen. The Rev. Carl Richardson commented that "This survey says that millions of Americans are fed up with shows that pander to perversion in belligerent tastelessness, depicting unnatural family relationships as normal." I will be the first to admit that the "family relationships" portrayed in *Maude* are far from anything to which I have been exposed, but are those of *Little House on the Prairie* any more realistic? Granted, the situations in *Soap* are highly exaggerated, but are the "wholesome dramas" we see on *Wonderful World of Disney* not also a bit far-fetched? The stark difference in the issues handled by the two groups of shows is even more disturbing. I frankly could not care less whether or not Laura wins the spelling bee, or if Bobby can survive on *Magic Mountain* with only a can opener and his pet hamster. On the other hand, abortion, racism and political corruption are real and vital concerns of today. Bawdy, and even crude, though the "offensive" shows may be, I hold that they are quite "acceptable" and certainly not "unnatural."

I am tempted to conclude that the Church of God wants to back into an unrealistic view of the world. Yet much of their motivation lies clearly with an issue that traditionally has dominated content on television: the effect on children. Might I suggest, therefore, that "acceptable" shows can be just as harmful to young minds as "offensive" ones; for it can only be with great shock that an innocent child discovers that the world is not full of Olivia Waltons.

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The Daily Tar Heel

85th year of editorial freedom

Attend open meeting Wednesday Maligned system needs help

One of the first things one receives upon matriculating at this University is the "academic self-counseling" manual. This booklet, delivered personally by the U.S. Mail, proves to be an omen. In four years at the University, the student finds that "self-counseling" is about the best he can get.

In fact, he finds that mailing a letter would be about the only sure and fast way to contact an adviser.

The failings of the advising system are not surprising when one considers that the UNC advisee-to-adviser ratio ranges from a low 125-to-1 to a high of 504-to-1.

In the General College, where the most advice is needed, the ratio is lowest. But the advisees are so hurried they seldom have time to listen to a student's particular plans. Most General College advisers serve only one function — to make sure the budding student fulfills his General College requirements. They give little guidance as to which courses might best fulfill requirements and produce a meaningful, structured curriculum. No information is passed on to the student about choosing a major, structuring a curriculum or choosing among different educational philosophies (such as liberal arts, professional, technical and so on).

Once the student has left the General College behind, he gets a new adviser — this time in his chosen field. But all too often, as one member of the newly created Academic Advising Committee has noted, the extent of advising is signing preregistration forms — sometimes before they are even filled out. Once again, little if any information about developing a curriculum is given to the student. Although some departments require a specialization or choice of specific structures within the departments, most do not, and the student once again chooses classes by time and most often by professor.

But the blame doesn't fall solely on the University and the advising system. Students, some of them turned off by impersonality and red tape and some just not interested, don't give the system much of a chance.

"Students need to take better advantage of the services we provide them," says Professor Melvin Chambers of the pharmacy school. "The students should simply consult with their advisers more — we're in a better position to help them than they are to help themselves."

As much potential as the advising concept may have, it's clear that it serves little more than an administrative function here. The question is how to shore up the system's weaknesses with limited resources. Some have suggested more counseling by fellow students — such as RAs and newly appointed Academic Resource Persons. Others would require more professors to take part in the program. A partial solution might be to produce additional brochures giving students valuable tips on academic choices they will have to make. These time-saving booklets could be distributed by the advisers, who would answer questions on the materials. Also, the University might experiment with keeping general advisers on call at all times to answer the questions of any students who may walk in. This would eliminate wasted hours by students looking for advisers and advisers waiting in vain for turned-off students.

Dean Samuel Williamson of Arts and Sciences has appointed a committee to pinpoint the weaknesses of the advising system and to propose and evaluate measures to improve it. We hope this committee will be the first step toward revitalizing the system. There is obviously a great deal of work to be done, but with help, the committee should be able to make headway on a long-standing problem that has heretofore drawn only curses and invectives rather than constructive revision.

The Academic Advising Committee will meet at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday in Room 207 of the Carolina Union. Chairperson Doris Betts has encouraged students to come and speak at the meeting. Although the end-of-semester crunch is bearing down upon us all, we urge anyone with strong feelings about the advising system to go to the open meeting Wednesday afternoon.



Vicarious identification Motor car worship—who rides whom?

By JIM PATE

Probably the most pervasive problem in American society today is the automobile — where to park it, how to build it and how to keep it fueled without throwing the country into economic chaos or starting a war. As Thoreau pointed out, it has never been very clear if we ride on the cars or they ride on us.

No community escaped the effects of the oil embargo and gas shortages in 1973-74. Now everyone is dismayed by the prospect of continually getting less for more when they buy a new car. Environmentalists still are insisting, despite pollution control standards, that if we continue polluting at our present rate, it won't be long before the internal combustion engine will be obsolete simply because carburetors won't have anything to mix the fuel with.

As usual, the public outcry has been against the oil companies, the car manufacturers, the government — the evasive "they." This is not to say that these parties have not taken unfair advantage of prevailing situations or have accepted their share of responsibility. But few citizens put the blame where it really lies.

Despite all the so-called crises, Americans bought more than 10 million cars in 1976 — most of them large ones. We continue to buy big cars in spite of the very real and present problem of insufficient domestic fuel and rising prices.

In our "Buy-centennial" Year, Merrill Lynch economists estimate that we spent \$55.4 billion on automobiles and related accessories. In comparison, during the same year, we spent only \$51.8 billion on furniture and household equipment and \$63.7 billion on clothing and shoes.

Cars and money work well together in Hollywood film. The Academy Awards notwithstanding, the movies that make the most money on the whole these days are the low-budget, grade B movies and most of these are about, directly or indirectly, cars — primarily wrecked ones. For instance, according to a straw poll taken among North Carolina high school teachers, the most popular movie this summer was *Smokey and the Bandit*, which was about cops and truckers, plenty of chase scenes and lots of apple pie demolition.

The list of films and television shows about cars would be a long one. Some that come to mind immediately are *Gone in 60 Seconds*, *Vanishing Point*, *Car 54, Where Are You?*, *Adam 12*, *Herbie, the Love Bug*, and, of course, *My Mother, the Car*.

If you are one of those people who believe that machines are slowly but surely taking over the lives we lead, you'll be interested in a recent observation by John Holt, the renowned American educator: "Our schools are no longer teaching about science and technology, but about the worship of these things."

This cultural car worship manifests itself most immediately in those perverse TV commercials of grown men amorously

serenading their machines. Sergio Franchi certainly has that look in his eye — appearing so enraptured with his auto that he'd just love to customize her: i.e. strip her down and put in a straight stick.

But car worship is hardly surprising when you consider that automobiles are the biggest industry in America, after the oil companies, which are tied directly to the car companies in terms of fuel, lubricants and petroleum by-products to make tires and other necessary items. It is a worship of the world we have built around ourselves.

As a mode of transportation, cars perfectly reflect our technological times and modern man's alienation from himself. Cars are impersonal, isolating individuals from each other when they meet and separating a car's occupants in time and space from their immediate environment. Since they are separated from each other as they move about, people express their social status and their very personalities in what kind of car they drive and how they drive it.

But besides just getting to work or to the movies, there's the all-consuming hobby fascination with cars: the old ones, fast ones, cars from movies and the cars of famous people. The American populace seems to be rapt upon automobiles; from the weekend racing amateurs down to the jacked-up, customized street cruisers which much of the romanticism of our youth has revolved around for the past three decades.

Since our roads have been pushed through the last of the silence and the remaining wild species have been driven into reserves, zoos or to extinction, car manufacturers subtly have taken advantage of our vicarious desires and given us exactly what we wanted but never realized. They have named their products after wild animals so the American driver will feel as if he has control over something savage and untamed: the Cougar, the Impala, the Jaguar, the Cobra, the Thunderbird and the Firebird.

As cars have become smaller, more gas economical, with less horsepower, the Mustang is now coming into competition with the Colt, the Pinto, the Roadrunner and the Rabbit.

Cars also have been named after the world's playgrounds for the very rich, letting the average driver have some vicarious identification with his unspoken aspirations to the affluency of the American Dream. The El Dorado (the lost city of riches), the Monte Carlo, the Malibu, the Catalina and the Granada Fairmont.

Then there is the appeal to the underlying notion of royalty and rank: the Regency, the Regent, the Regal, the Ambassador and Le Baron. Of course, locations of exotic auto racing for the very rich have not been forgotten: Grand Prix, Bonneville and the Le Mans.

We can complain all we want in Chapel Hill and put the blame where we may. But the truth is as plain to see as the ornament on your hood. Even though we have done it in style, we have driven ourselves car-crazy.

Jim Pate, a junior, is a journalism major from Fairmont, N.C. He drives a gas hog.

Committee to study CGC budget woes

By ROBIN McWILLIAM

Following Washington's precedent, the Campus Governing Council has begun to look at itself with a critical eye. A recently appointed committee is to study the budgetary procedure the CGC Finance Committee uses to allocate student funds.

This committee has been appointed by the CGC itself, which is rather like a psychiatrist diagnosing his own mental maladies. We only can hope the diagnosis is nothing drastic, for where would we be if we found our governing council to suffer from schizophrenia or manic depression?

The old system of having the finance committee base "its decisions on assumptions and vague memories of what past CGCs have done" (to quote Student Body President Bill Moss), doesn't seem such an inefficient way of doing things. The new committee is, after all, unlikely to come up with anything any more valuable.

Phil Searcy, Finance Committee chief (I don't believe in chairperson, as the *DTH* would have it — "chairman" applies to both sexes), after bemoaning his loneliness in the execution of his office, tells us "some kind of criteria is needed to base decisions on." When will they realize we're sick and tired of what decisions are based on and want to know how they are made?

The system of allowing students to choose how a certain percentage of their fees is used, by checking off a list of organizations they would like to see funded, seems a good one. The only reservation I have is that some of the smaller clubs, such as the Crew Club, in which I'm not particularly interested but which I'd like to see continue, might sink because only the members checked it off on the list and people like me checked off organizations which interested us more.

Some of us might have applied to fill one of the two positions the Committee on Student Affairs appoints, but *DTH* staff writer Kathy Hart ("Committee will examine allocation of funds," Nov. 15) warned us that "the only criteria for nominations is that one must be a student enrolled at the University." She then, however, failed to list the other criteria.

The committee may serve us well, but member J. B. Kelly, speaker pro tempore of the CGC, wants it to "look at the time when the budget is drawn up." Does one not need to know how to speak before becoming speaker? I'm afraid this new committee will be rather useless if all it does is look at a clock during the allocation procedure. But then perhaps "speaker pro tempore" means "speaker for the time" and not "speaker for the time being." That's a dutiful avoidance of the verb "to be."

Robin McWilliam, a junior, is an interdisciplinary studies major from Edinburgh, Scotland.