

Professor studies controversial affects of drug

By MELANIE SILL
Staff Writer

A UNC professor is studying the offspring of women who were given a controversial drug in the 1950s that was thought to prevent miscarriages—a drug which might have caused serious damage to the reproductive systems of the female children of those women.

The synthetic estrogen diethylstilbestrol, better known as DES, was given to an estimated two to four million women between 1941 and 1971. Despite a report published in 1953 by a University of Chicago researcher showing that DES was of no benefit in preventing miscarriages, the drug continued to be prescribed to pregnant women until reports in 1971 tied DES to a rare form of cancer in female offspring of women given the drug during pregnancy.

Because of growing concern among persons whose mothers had been given DES during pregnancy, Dr. Wesley Fowler, associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the UNC School of Medicine, in 1973 formed an informal group of patients concerned about the effects of the drug.

"The press had girls absolutely petrified," Fowler said. "Patients for fear of dying of cancer even had to go under psychiatric treatment."

The group of patients, which Fowler calls a DES clinic, now numbers approximately 400. Although clear-cell cancer associated with DES has been found to be extremely rare, Fowler said research has shown that a number of abnormalities and other problems in the reproductive systems of offspring of DES recipients may be linked to the drug.

"There seem to be a number of unanswered problems associated with DES," Fowler said. "For instance, the number

of abnormal pap smears among our patients seems much higher than we'd expect in an average population."

Fowler and three other researchers have compiled a report of the reproductive history of 276 female offspring of women who received DES during pregnancy. A major conclusion of the report, which will appear in the medical journal *Fertility and Sterility*, is that "DES, given to mothers in hopes of maintaining threatened pregnancies, appears to have a deleterious effect on the reproductive ability of the female offspring."

Of 106 women studied who attempted pregnancy, there were 129 conceptions and 58 live births—a fetal loss of 43 percent for the first pregnancy and 37 percent for all pregnancies. Also, in the subgroup of women with anatomic abnormalities linked with DES, the fetal loss was 53 percent.

"The basic questions raised are why DES-exposed women have irregular menstrual flows, why they have trouble getting pregnant and why they have trouble maintaining pregnancy," Fowler said.

Menstrual and structural abnormalities identified in the study, such as vaginal adenosis (an abnormality of genital tissue), cervical hoods, uterine cavity abnormalities and tubal and/or ovulatory defects, may have been associated with the reported reproductive difficulties, the report stated.

Of the women studied with infertility problems enduring for more than 18 months, less than 10 percent subsequently conceived, the report said. Uterine cavity abnormalities were found in at least 60 percent of those examined and a variety of tubal and/or ovulatory defects also were present.

The findings of the study, which is being conducted on a continuing basis using patients in the DES clinic, stimulated interest in a DES Infertility Clinic, which probably will be instituted within a few months, Fowler said.

"What's happening is that patients are getting old enough to want to know what the effects of this drug on them are going to be," he said.

DES still is given as a post-coital contraceptive at the UNC Student Health Service and as an estrogen during menopause and for hormonal manipulation of certain cancers at hospitals in the United States, Fowler said.

"If it's given as a morning-after pill to prevent pregnancy and it succeeds in preventing pregnancy, then there's no problem," Fowler said. "If not, the fetus has the same risks as other DES-exposed individuals."

"When your back's against the wall and somebody's dying of cancer, you're going to do what is reasonable to save that person's life. If DES is the answer, you're going to prescribe it."

Before being given DES as an emergency "morning after" pill, patients at the University's Student Health Service must sign a written consent form. Information concerning possible adverse side effects of the drug must be read before the form is signed.

"The estrogen treatment may be associated with nausea and vomiting," the information sheet states. "Further, there is recent information suggesting a possible correlation between estrogen medication in pregnant mothers and the development of childhood cancer in female offspring."

"An individual receiving the MAP (Morning After Pill) treatment should recognize the possible danger and be prepared to accept the medical recommendation that she have an abortion if the treatment should fail and a pregnancy result."

A New York State Supreme Court jury ruled in July that the Eli Lilly drug company, a manufacturer of DES, must pay \$500,000 to Joyce Bichler, whose mother was given DES in 1953 to stop vaginal bleeding during her pregnancy with Joyce. Joyce later developed cancer and had to have her uterus, ovaries and

two-thirds of her vagina removed. The Bichler decision, the first case in which a DES victim won a major victory against a drug manufacturer, is under appeal.

"There are many, many cases before the courts now," Fowler said. "I don't know of any of my patients who are involved in lawsuits, although I have had inquiries about them."

In addition to examining and treating patients through the oncology division of North Carolina Memorial Hospital, the DES clinic tries to be responsive to letters received, Fowler said. "We try to be very responsive to inquiries by answering inquiries and special problems," Fowler said. "We do a lot of talking about DES."

Widespread administration of DES occurred in urban areas in the northern and northeastern United States, and gradually spread to other areas, Fowler said.

"It wasn't given commonly in North Carolina," he said. "Most of our patients were born up North and moved down South... We get primarily students and members of the military population from certain areas in the state."

Much major research has been done regarding the effects of the drug on female offspring, although there have been indications of problems involving the lower urinary tracts, smaller testicles and lower sperm counts than normal in DES sons, Fowler said.

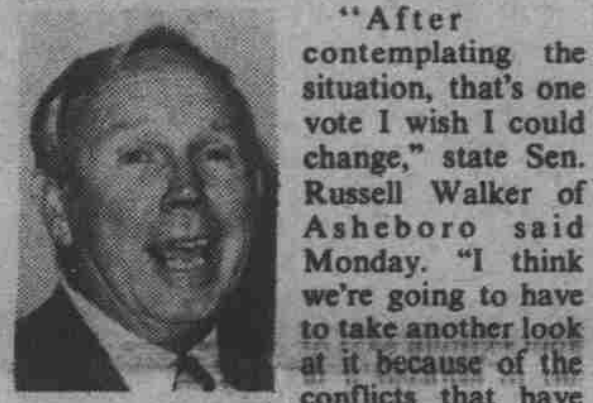
"As I see things in 1979, cancer is the least risk of DES exposure," Fowler said. "The abnormal pap smears, the infertility problem and the urinary tract abnormalities are occurring at a greater frequency than we'd imagine would be normal."

More information about the DES clinic may be obtained through Fowler's office in 5003 Old Clinic Building or by calling 933-1194.

Lawmakers regret school deregulation

By ANGIE DORMAN
Staff Writer

Some state legislators have said they made a mistake when they voted in May to deregulate the state's non-public schools.



Russell Walker, who is chairman of the state Democratic Party, and state Sen. Charles Vickery represent Orange County in the General Assembly.

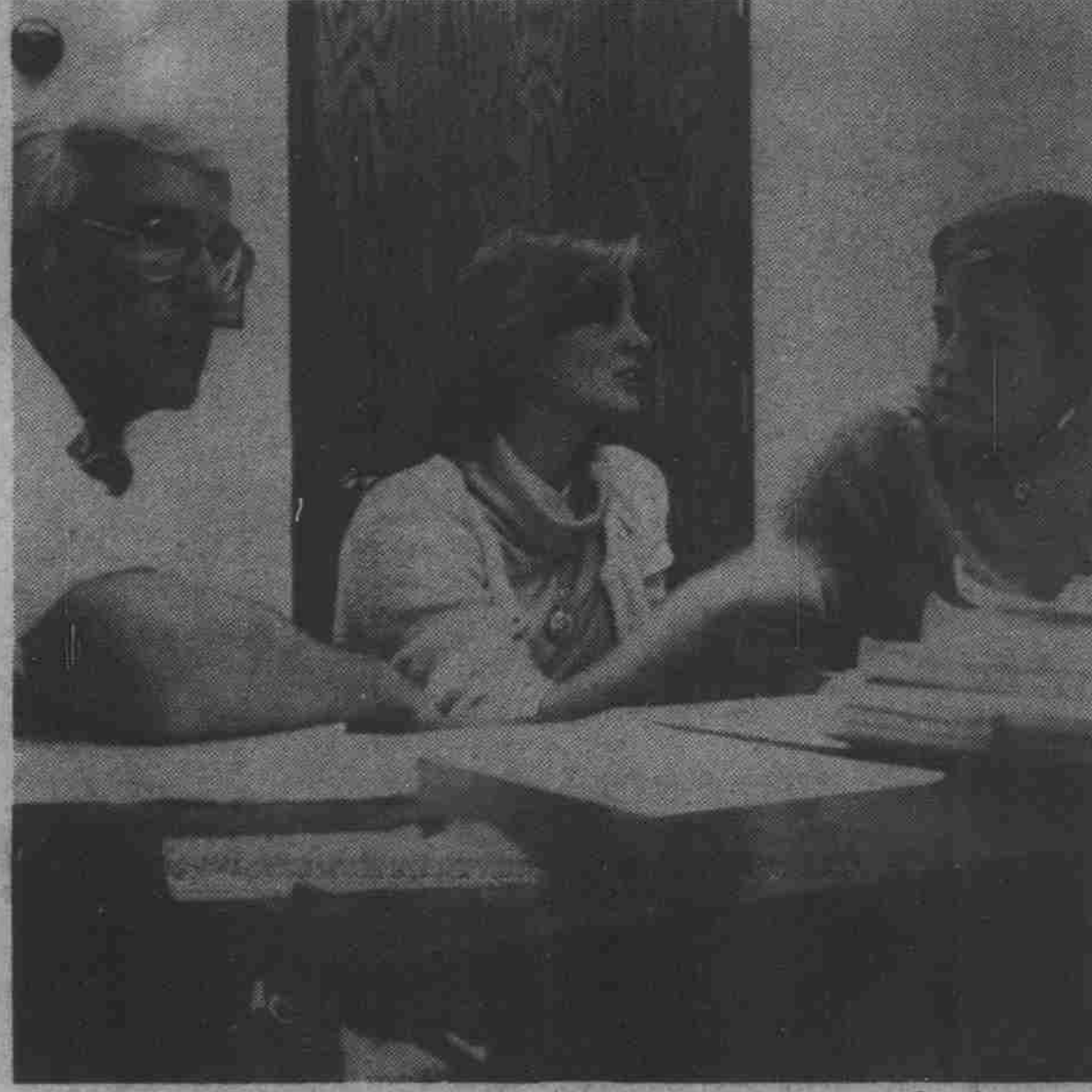
During its 1979 session, the General Assembly passed a bill which took away most of the state Board of Education's authority to regulate the state's non-public schools. Lobbyists for the fundamentalist Christian schools argued that the state was violating their freedom of religion as long as they had to meet requirements for state teacher certification, standardized curriculum and a traditional school calendar.

Since the legislation was passed, 32 maverick schools have registered with the state's Office of Non-Public Schools. They range from traditional church-affiliated schools to children of one family or several being taught with mail-order materials.

State education officials say the Compulsory Attendance Law is becoming less effective and they can not take action without some legislative changes.

"The situation is unreasonable and there is nothing we can do unless some legislative changes give the state school board more authority," William W. Peck,

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Leutze, Schofield, McCain discuss 24-hour visitation.

Housing board advises 24-hour visitation plan

By MARTHA WAGGONER
Staff Writer

The Housing Advisory Board approved 24-hour weekend visitation in University residence halls at its meeting Monday. The board's recommendation now goes to the Department of Housing and to Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs Donald Boulton for final approval.

The recommendation allows for open visitation 10 a.m. Friday through 1 a.m. Monday. Currently, visitation hours on weekends are noon to 2 a.m. Friday and Saturday.

The proposal for open weekend visitation came from a report prepared by the Residence Hall Association last spring. The board earlier approved a shortening of dormitory quiet hours.

The vote for 24-hour visitation was 6 to 3, with two members of the board absent. Students Eli McCullough, Beth Schofield, Mitch Cox and Bob Cramer voted in favor of the proposal. Professors Lou Lipsitz and Oscar Wilde also voted with the majority.

Student member Eloise McCain, Professor James Leutze and chairperson Sharon Meginnis voted against extending the hours. "I'm in favor of it (the proposal) with some conditions," Meginnis said. "I'd like some attention paid to intimate living relations and guidelines and tools to use in negotiating those relations."

The board agreed to include the votes of the two members who were absent from Monday's meeting in the report. Professor Ike

Reynolds and Rankin Harris, who is with the University Placement Services, were not present.

Leutze proposed that the board send both majority and minority reports to the vice chancellor. Meginnis said she will include her suggestions for changes in that report.

Dorm residents have the right to vote to shorten the visitation hours approved by the University, however, said James D. Condie, director of University housing. But Leutze said he doubted many dorms will decide to shorten the 24-hour visitation. "What the University says is some indication of how the University thinks it should be," he said.

Part 3 of the RHA report proposed that a judiciary board be formed to make recommendations for disciplinary action when a resident violates residence hall rules and regulations. However, *The Instrument for Student Governance* states that "no offense shall be recognized or disciplinary sanction imposed on any student except as provided in this Instrument." Condie said Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs James Casner has interpreted this paragraph to mean that no other judicial courts may be set up to apply punitive actions other than the ones set forth in the instrument.

RHA President William Porterfield said the judiciary board would not apply punitive actions but would make recommendations to the vice chancellor. Schofield said the Housing Advisory Board needs to specify why the judiciary board should be set up and what violations it would consider, however.

Candidate endorsement difficult for Black Caucus

By ANNE-MARIE DOWNEY
Staff Writer

"I've seen some good races before but this beats all," David Hinds said Sunday as he looked at the lineup of Chapel Hill mayoral candidates at the South Orange Black Caucus candidates' forum.

Hinds, chairman of the caucus, said the community and black voters in particular will have to make a difficult choice on Nov. 6 among the four candidates for mayor—Town Council members Gerry Cohen and Robert Epting, Joe Nassif, former chairman of the Orange County Board of Elections, and Harold Foster, a former civil rights activist.

The mayoral hopefuls discussed issues confronting the black community, and they all stressed their commitments to human rights in Chapel Hill. The black caucus will endorse candidates for Orange County offices on the basis of candidates' views of issues affecting blacks.

Northside residents are concerned about the possibility that the area will change from a residential section for low-income families into a higher priced neighborhood for University students. Northside is the area of town which borders Carboro. It traditionally has been a low-income neighborhood.

Ted Parrish, chairman of the Chapel Hill Housing Board, asked the candidates what they would do to provide low-cost housing, and said as it stands now "whoever has the most bucks, gets the most (housing) units."

Epting said he has suggested that the town investigate the possibility of obtaining single family dwellings instead of apartment complexes for public housing. Most of the town's federally funded public housing currently is in apartments.

The key to improving the housing situation, Nassif said, is to work for more federal funding. In order to solve the housing problem, Cohen said,

the town has to encourage the University to build more student housing.

"That will take the demand off this neighborhood," he said.

Because he lives in the Northside area and faces the same problems as the residents, Foster said he would work for them if he became mayor.

"I hope you remember those who have struggled with you and vote them on," Foster said.

The issue of the continuing growth of Chapel Hill was the focus of the Town Council candidates' discussion.

While he said he wants to direct the growth of Chapel Hill, Jonathan Howes said: "I don't want to be the one to call the name of the last person to enter Chapel Hill."

"We aren't talking about stopping growth, we're talking about managing it," incumbent R.D. Smith

said. Candidate Bruce Tindall, a member of the town transportation board, said the town has to continue to grow or the housing problems will never be solved.

Joseph Straley, a University physics professor, said he opposed the construction of the Interstate 40 link near Chapel Hill and the Town Council's request to the state Department of Transportation that a southern bypass be built around the town. The roads would only encourage more growth, Straley said.

But Mayor James Wallace disagreed with Straley about the planned southern loop.

"I'd like to see us be an island and divert traffic around us," Wallace said.

"One day in the course of days, we will be one community, and that will be very appropriate," he said. Joe Herzenberg said he would give priority to acquiring open-space land in the Northside area in planning future growth.

Parks commission

Land bond opposed

By JOHN ROYSTER
Staff Writer

The Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation Commission announced yesterday that it is opposed to the \$300,000 Ridgefield land acquisition bond issue.

The referendum, to be voted on in next Tuesday's municipal election, would allow for the town of Chapel Hill to buy about 69 acres of land in the Ridgefield area, which is across the U.S. 15-501 Bypass from University Mall.

The referendum, if approved, would provide \$300,000 for the purchase of the land.

The tract would be used by the town for "passive recreation," said Chick White, chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission.

"If the referendum is not passed, the Parks and Recreation Commission, the town Planning Board and the Town Council will sit down and come up with a new proposal for next spring," White said.

"The problem with the present proposal is that most of the land is a swamp," White said. "So it provides not for active, but passive recreation."

White said a different proposal would provide for both active and passive recreation and "meet the needs of various

sectors of Chapel Hill.

"This (next week's referendum) really satisfies the needs of only a subcommunity (located adjacent to the Ridgefield tract)," White said.

A 10-acre subdivision has been proposed for the area.

In a statement released after its 6-2 vote against the referendum, the Parks and Recreation Commission said: "The Ridgefield neighborhood also urged that greenways be put through this property. However, greenways can best be acquired through the acquisition of easements rather than by the expensive purchase of the total property."

"This year's initiative to acquire the Ridgefield land resulted from opposition to a proposed subdivision rather than from overall plans for open space and recreational needs of the town as a whole."

The Planning Board and the Recreation Commission have been authorized by the Town Council to find potential areas for acquisition by Chapel Hill for recreational purposes after the current referendum was put on the ballot by the Town Council.

Proponents of the land acquisition bond have said the town's voters should not pass up the opportunity to save open space land.

State able to avoid most economic ills

By JONATHAN RICH
Staff Writer

Although North Carolina consumers may be feeling the pinch of an economic recession, state economists say the state itself is faring surprisingly well during the economic slump.

Consumer-oriented industry will suffer, but the new industries flocking to the state have bolstered the economy and the employment figures, contributing to the mildness of the recession in North Carolina, government economists say.

"Recently, there has been a tremendous influx of new industry in the state, especially in non-traditional areas such as metal working, electronics and computers," said Ken Flynt, chief economic adviser to Gov. Jim Hunt. "We shall continue to build and expand regardless of a recession. This industrial development will in fact act as a buffer against a recession."

Nine months into 1979, industrial development investments have exceeded \$2 billion. The state Department of Industrial Development expects the year's total to reach \$3 billion, tripling the \$1 billion invested in 1976.

Meanwhile, business activity and employment, usually the first to become sluggish in an economic slowdown, have increased in the state in recent months while suffering nationally.

"We are experiencing a consumer recession," Flynt said. "Consumers are feeling the effects of inflation and are buying less. Unfortunately, we have a consumer-oriented industry, with half of all manufacturers selling directly to the consumer."

Mike Rakovskas of the state Department of Industrial Resources agreed that normally the state economy would suffer as revenue to the consumer industries dropped.

"North Carolina's traditional problem is its high dependence on non-durable goods, such as textiles, food, furniture, and tobacco," Rakovskas said. "During a recession consumers cut back on expenditures of these items."

The state industrial index ranks textiles as the largest industry in terms of profits from out-of-state sales in North Carolina. The textile industry is followed by

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