

The Daily Tar Heel

93rd year of editorial freedom

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Pricely pain for would-be snow bunnies

By LORETTA GRANTHAM

Isn't it amusing how people will actually pay for discomfort? In literal terms, Americans everywhere feel no compunction in spending an untold number of dollars on anguish.

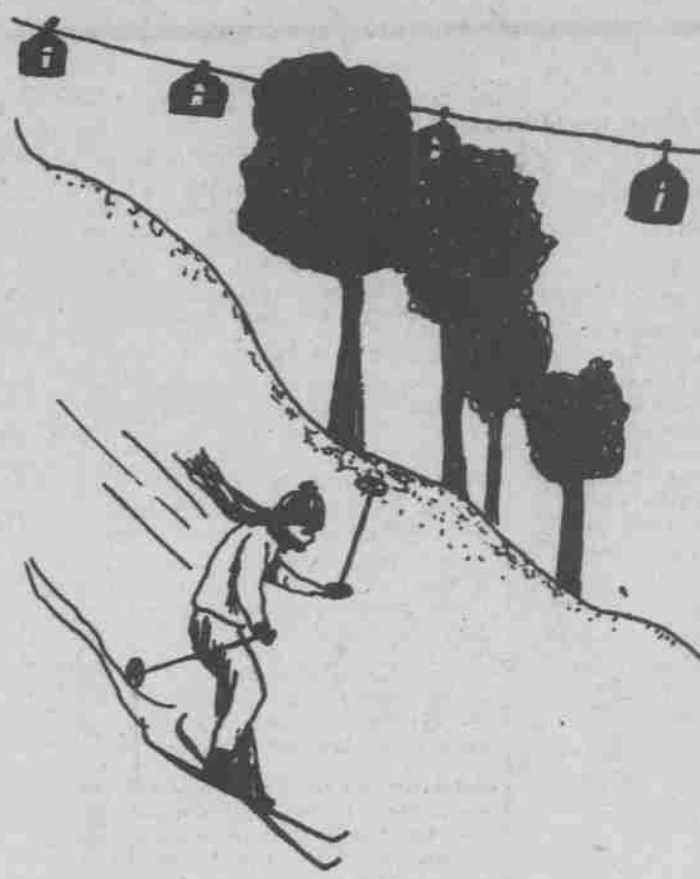
Consider, for instance, the common winter sport — snow skiing. Of course, the slope posters and brochures are enticing and filled with breathtaking, candid photographs of lovely vacationers whisking down the mountainsides. But in reality, these folks are just expensively dressed bundles of fright uncontrollably racing to destruction.

Sure skiing is "easy and fun for the whole family," but what about stopping? The most popular method currently utilized by beginner-slope addicts is "body slamming." This includes smashing into trees, fences, snow blowers, lift supports and/or lodge walls — not forgetting, by the way, that body slamming into other skiers is an much frequented technique of ski brake invention for the amateur.

Despite this dilemma, as well as the freezing cold, the wet socks and those awful lodge "heat-it-yourself" sandwiches, fun lovers continue signing checks and pulling out credit cards to fund their weekends of ski-inflicted pain.

A few years ago I first ventured onto a whitened slope with a church group. Ever notice that a lot of people take their first ski trip with a church group? Some say it's because of the fellowship and economy of going with a crowd. The untold story, however, is that most first-timers don't object too strongly to having a clergyman around — just in case.

Anyway, my initial struggle involved ski-boot mobilization. This doesn't mean coming down the mountain but walking around the lodge. Because of their weird design, ski boots force their wearers into a slightly squatted position. Everybody knows, of course, that if you unlace the top few hooks, you can stand up with reasonable dignity. But I, being a strong-willed novice, attempted to get around without anyone



noticing my oddly crouched position. I certainly didn't look like a sexy snow bunny. I looked more like I had a severe calcium deficiency.

Once I got the basics down pat (and myself out of the comforts of the toasty lodge) I decided to conquer the lift. I've never been so terrified in my life until I witnessed those swinging, airborne park benches in action. "Just relax and sit right down as it bumps up behind you," said the snow pros.

I relaxed all right and collapsed into the slush before my lift seat even got near me. Embarrassingly enough, the operator had to shut off the motor for a few seconds so that I could be scooped to safety. So much for beginner's luck.

My nerves began to regroup, however, at the top of the slope. Sure, it was Sugar Mountain's simplest run — "Easy Street" — but I suffered no humiliation. I valued my life.

Youngsters of no more than five years raced past me, so I hoped that everyone would just think I was tall for my age. So what if I was the only one on the hill old enough to have a driver's license? This was a new game.

It took nearly 40 minutes for me to edge to the bottom of the incline because I spent most of my time in a prone position — if you know what I mean. Thank goodness I had coated my old Levis with Scotchgard. No, I didn't have one of those sleek Spandex body suits.

As I carefully placed each portion of my bruised frame next to the lodge fireplace that evening, I thought to myself, "Why had I spent hard-earned money on a day's worth of suicide attempts?"

No one had approached me about the U.S. Olympic Ski Team tryouts; no gorgeous blond ski instructor clad in a L.L. Bean nordic sweater had asked me to join him over a cup of coffee; no one had done anything but snicker and say, "You OK?"

I was not only out of money thanks to transportation, ski rental, equipment insurance, hotel bills, three cans of Scotchgard, hot chocolate, locker fees, lift tickets, Ben-Gay and Band-Aids, but I was also thoroughly disgusted with myself.

I had planned to become the next "Suzy Chapstick," but all I had accomplished was personifying the agony of defeat.

Yet with all this clouding my past, I still go back when I can afford the trip. Yes, I have a dream — one day I'll leave Easy Street for whiter pastures. Maybe I'll even go to the top and give old "Tom Terrific" a run for his money.

Of course, if I want to blow money on painful experiences without having to migrate westward to colder temperatures, there's plenty of local alternatives — like ARA food (a \$100 meal plan!), a paid subscription to the Phoenix or an F-107 parking permit. But for now, I think I'll just save up the bucks for spring. I hear grass skiing is a cinch.

Loretta Grantham, a sophomore journalism major from Greenville, is a staff writer for The Daily Tar Heel.

Reagan's uneducated policy

The Reagan Administration's proposal to reduce federal aid to college students apparently contradicts its earlier push for tuition tax credits. The cuts in grants and loans would harm expensive private institutions at the university level, and the credits would benefit them at lower levels.

But the "paradox" meets in a single end: the disintegration of public education.

Both policies intend that families only pay for what they get in education. The tax burden of a public system won't rest on those who send their children to private schools, and expensive college educations won't cost the government.

For primary and secondary public schools, loss of revenues creates an obvious threat. If reductions in federal grants and loans pass Congress, the dangers facing private colleges could confront state-owned universities even more fiercely.

With extensive cuts, students would flood the state-owned universities and

tremendously burden the system. After tax-paying residents begin demanding that the system admit their children because they already support it financially, the overcrowded universities would close their doors to out-of-state students.

When this happens, a stagnant, narrowly focused student body results, and the uni of "iversity" would certainly overwhelm the di. Even in-state students suffer, because residency then restricts freedom of choice far more than Education Secretary William Bennett forecasted when he called for "divestiture of certain sorts: stereo divestiture, automobile divestiture, three-weeks-at-the-beach divestiture" before aid would be granted.

Reagan's federalist policy could fracture the nation's open network of public schools into separate and unequal factions. Public education is a foundation of American society, and it's our responsibility as Americans — all of us — to support it.

Flaws in election laws

This year's Student Government elections are fast fading into the past. But before they pass from our memory altogether, it would be worthwhile to perform an autopsy of sorts on what turned out to be a most turbulent political season.

Disregarding the particular controversial personalities in this year's campaign, there are characteristics in the elections process here that encourage the non-constructive, negative campaigning witnessed during the past elections.

Negative campaigning can be described as that which merely criticizes candidates' personalities and positions without offering serious, viable alternatives. This definition differs from comparative campaigning, in which the personalities and positions are compared to illustrate the differences between alternatives. Comparative campaigning is constructive, when properly and ethically done, in raising the consciousness of the electorate's choice. Negative campaigning, however, is destructive.

Politics is a process of decision-making that requires consideration of the different sides of an issue. Presenting just the "negative" aspects of one side of an issue merely sets the decision-making back. This destructive influence in the political process is clearly undesirable.

Yet the current election laws for Student Government actually strengthen negative campaigning. The most important characteristic of our election laws is the limit on campaign expenditures, which is \$400 in the case of the presidential race. Generally, this limit can be beneficial to the political process by preventing the availability of funds from

being a factor, by allowing all candidates an equal monetary opportunity of being heard and by keeping campus politics within reasonable bounds.

If everyone operated constructively, the limit would be an unmixed blessing. But the expenditure limit places an unfair restriction on the serious candidate when negative campaigning occurs. That candidate then must divert scarce resources to counter the negativism or simply not respond if the limit has already been reached. In both cases, the victim and the fairness of the campaign suffer. Negative campaigning therefore becomes very effective.

Unfortunately, no provisions in the election laws limiting negative campaigning exist. Some might say that controls on negative campaigning would be a violation of the freedom of speech. Some controls, however, could still allow free speech but limit those forms that are harmful to individuals and the community's political process. The federal elections law is a precedent of this rationale.

What is needed is a prohibition on any expenditure on negative campaigning. Unfair, untrue or misrepresented negative campaigning could — and should — be punished under the present Honor Code. These interpretations should be expanded to include any expenditure on materials that are solely negative towards a candidate, which constitutes a harmful interference in the elections process.

Winston Churchill said that democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the rest. We should constantly try to improve this sacred yet imperfect process.

READER FORUM

Cabbage Patch Kids: lovable tots or devil dolls?

To the editors:
In Tuesday's article, "After 2 years, Americans still Cabbage Patch crazy," the possible scenario of the first Cabbage Patch kidnapping was dramatized. Well, here's something interesting that the DTH might have missed. This comes from the Feb. 1985 issue of *Omni* magazine.

Omni has an article on Connecticut exorcist Ed Warren who claims that the Cabbage Patch doll has

been targeted by the devil. The article sites that according to Warren, one of the dolls told its owner, "You and I are going to be together forever. I'm not just a doll — I'm the Lord of Hell." Warren says that when he arrived on the scene, the doll was levitating eight inches in the air. Warren made the sign of the cross and held out his crucifix and the doll fell into his crib. He then buried the doll and sprinkled holy water on the grave.

Warren gives another example of a case where a Cabbage Patch doll tried to strangle its owner and of another doll who induced "nightmarish hallucination." In both cases, Warren performed exorcisms and buried the dolls.

Warren says these "diabolical infestations" occur when the dolls are bought by childless women who treat their Cabbage Patch dolls like real kids. Some buy clothes and jewelry for their dolls and one

woman, Warren says, even had a whole nursery. Warren explains that the devil looks on such behavior as a sign of human weakness and is trying to take advantage of the situation.

I can't wait for when the dolls start rotating their heads all the way around and vomiting pea soup!

Tommy O'Brien Morrison

What is this, junior high?

To the editors:
This past year UNC students have been subjected to frivolous and petty journalism that I hope will be avoided under the new editors. A prime example is the article by Vicki Daugherty, "Relationship of giving, taking and laughter" (Feb. 15), regarding the relationship of two roommates. I am sure that Allison Beck and Debbie Street are thrilled that they have been "best friends" for ten years, but quite honestly, no one else cares. Perhaps this shallow subject matter would be appropriate in a junior high school paper, but

this is a university. And I'm sure most university students would rather read articles more pertinent to themselves as students, citizens and human beings. So please, Rickert and Schmidt, try your best to limit irrelevancies that you print, unless of course you plan to add a social page to the DTH.

Oh, Allison and Debbie: hang in there. Maybe you can have a double wedding someday.

S. Smith Chapel Hill

'DTH' cross words

To the editors:
Fear not, for the DTH did not draw my ire by placing the crossword puzzle on the back page Monday. In fact, my reaction was quite the opposite. I was elated. All day Monday, before I read your disturbing editorial note, I bounced around campus praising the talent and acute observation of the fact that for daily crossword doers, the back page is an ideal, more accessible location. Other crossword doers agree: Arne Rickert was a doer too. He understood our plight. We were happy. And the weather was so nice that day.

The prospect of no longer having

to fumble around, folding my paper every which way, thus preventing me from ever actually reading the paper, thrilled me to no end. "Now, I thought, "I can both attempt to do the crossword each day and read the paper!"

But much to my dismay, I learned that the placement was only due to an oversized ad.

Arne, you tricked and deceived me. I almost thought you were one of us. I almost thought you understood.

Amy T. Schutz Winston

No cheese giveaway here

To the editors:
I have a bone to pick with ARA Food Services. No, I'm not writing about the mandatory meal plan; I'm upset by a much more basic issue. Monday night, my roommate and I decided to grab a quick bite to eat after water polo practice. We went to The Commons in search of something cheap. Assuming grilled cheese sandwiches to be one of the cheapest foods, I checked the price. I was shocked to see it was \$1.05. Then I checked the price of cheeseburgers — 67 cents. Now, I ask you, what should be more expensive, two

slices of bread with a piece of cheese or a bun with cheese, along with a slab of meat (soy beans?) in the middle? Maybe after a few more years of formal education, I'll be able to understand this situation. Until then, I'll wonder why this university continues to allow one food service to establish a monopoly that can only hurt the pocketbooks of the students who own meal cards or buy food on campus.

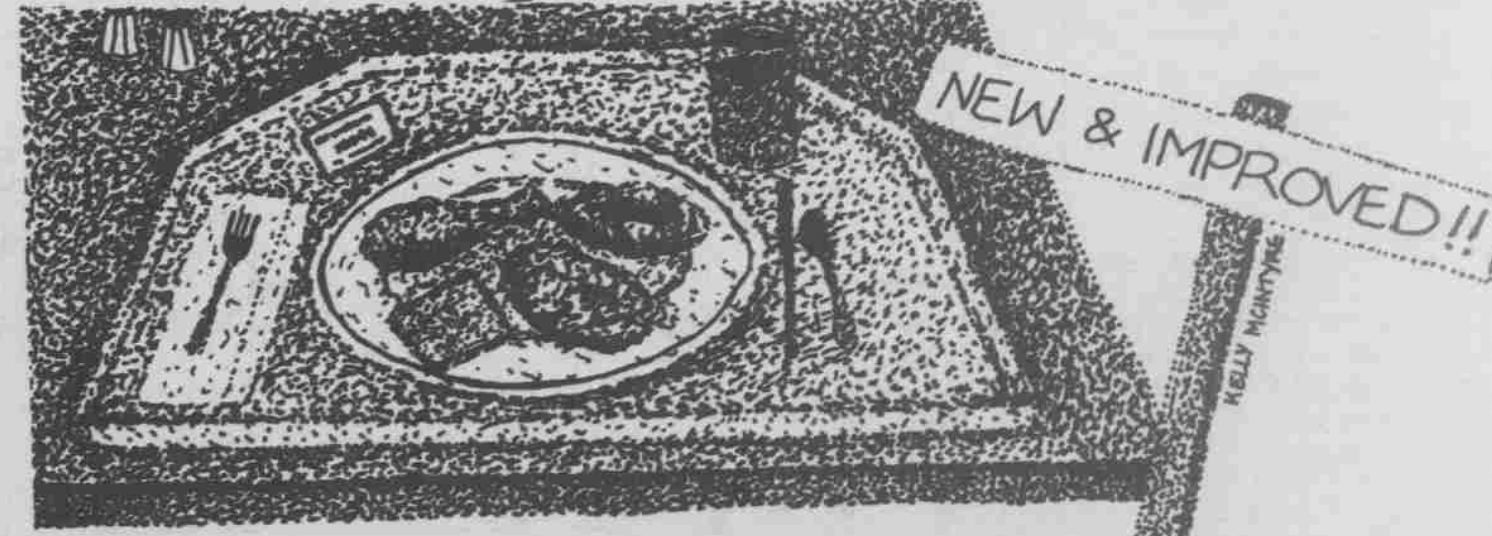
Greg Camp Ehringhaus

ARA makes a believer out of a skeptic

By GREG HECHT

About this time last year I was a skeptic concerning the so-called vastly improving ARA Food Services. I had eaten in the Pine Room for two and a half years and felt that this commercial distributor was a high priced, low variety, and cheaply composed food organization. Even after having worked in a program with ARA to find out people's complaints and implement changes, I was still suspicious. After all, why should I have suspected anything different from my previous experience with ARA? I suggested competition as a source of improvement in a campaign as well as cooperation as I still do advocate on a smaller scale, but I am happy to eat my words on some of my complaints and some finer meals.

ARA brought in Tony Hardee to improve the food services and after watching a year of real improvements, I believe it. He and many fine people under him such as Phyllis Smith and Cheryl Pleasant Bey have responded to student complaints and got students involved in the process. A wider variety of entrees exists, even wider than that of K&W. Prices have been lowered on several items to try and let students come out with a well balanced \$3 meal, which is not easy to do. If you go to K&W, as several students in Student Government have, you will find a list of items or entrees of roughly equivalent prices or possibly lower. The prices are usually within a nickel's difference one way or another. Hardee made a conscious effort to do this as well as going to dorm government meetings to gain input and make concrete reforms with such input. There are more vegetables in the meal lines,



there is a cleaner kept cafeteria, more fruits have been added to the snack bar stores, etc., these seem like little details, but altogether they become vast improvements in the system and they came about by ARA talking to students and students talking to ARA. If you have a gripe with the service, you will find that Hardee will talk to any student about it and take action if warranted. I know. When Student Government talked to ARA about hiring more students, ARA cooperated in a student employment drive that increased student employment in the food service by more than 25 percent the next year. They initiated and paid for most of the program. The next time you have a complaint, talk to Hardee or another ARA administrator. You might find a person who is responsive to your complaint and concerned about students' nutrition and relative costs.

If they were not concerned, they would pull out of UNC. ARA has not made a profit since it has been here and is still not raising prices. In addition you will find out that ARA did not

request the \$100 mandatory meal plan. The UNC administration and the state agreed on this to help pay for the Lenoir renovations. Most schools in the country have a mandatory plan and usually a full plan. Otherwise, operators have a difficult time making money, and yes, ARA is a commercial distributor. Still, ARA did not ask for the mandatory plan, but if we were going to gain an improved food service the state required us to have some plan. One hundred dollars is miniscule in comparison to the benefits received from the new Lenoir and Commons. In addition, students were involved in a survey two years ago and they dramatically voted for a mandatory plan to gain renovations.

All this praise of ARA is not to say do not keep a watchful eye out. It is to say thanks. Hardee and crew have made a believer out of a skeptic. I feel they have been responsive to students' needs and will continue to be.

Greg Hecht is a senior political science major from Atlanta.

The Daily Tar Heel

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