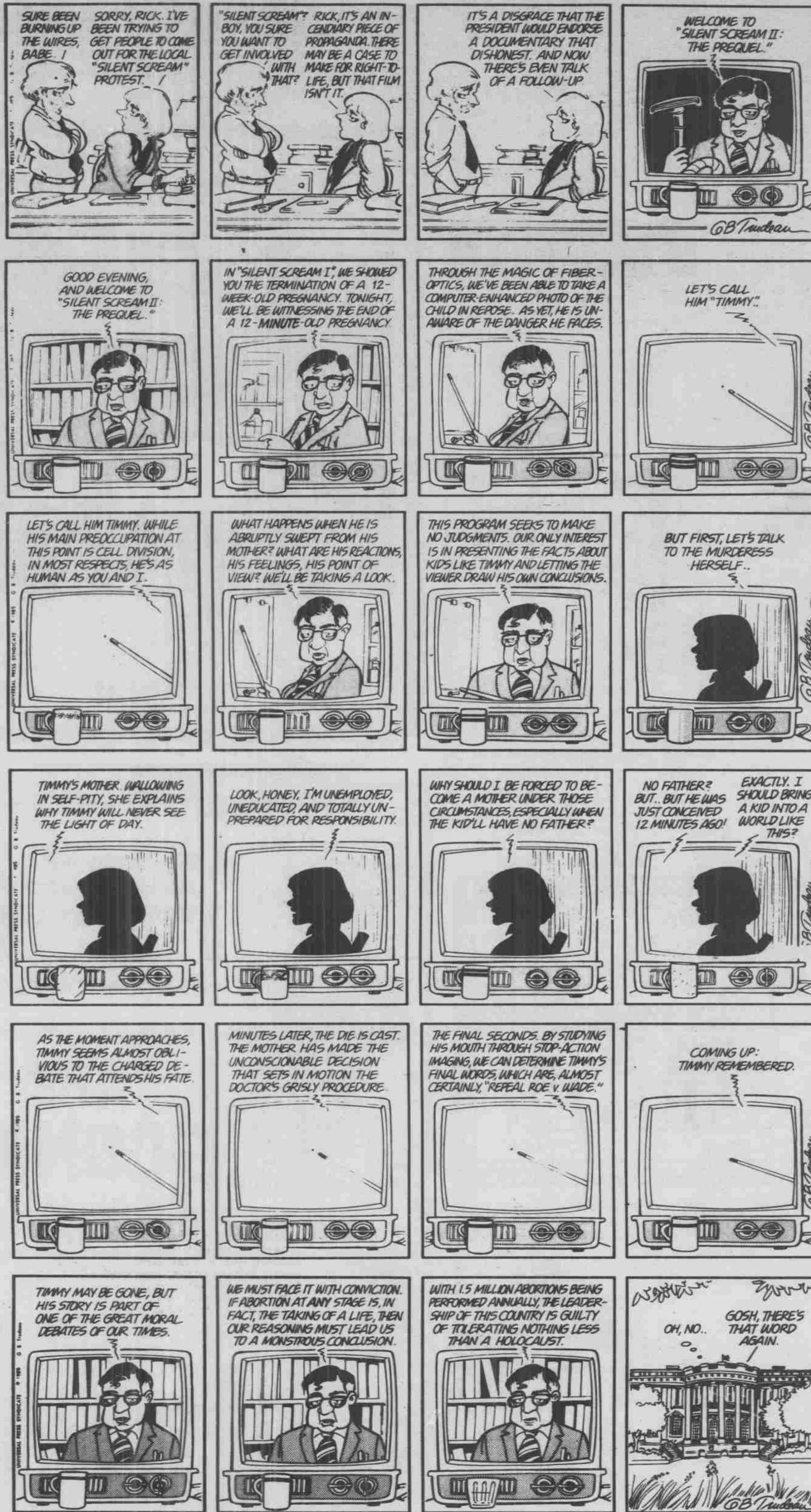


# Doonesbury Special



## Editor's Note

Earlier this month Garry Trudeau, the cartoonist behind *Doonesbury*, put together a series of six strips for the syndicated cartoon distributed by Universal Press Syndicate to over 800 newspapers worldwide. The syndicate did not wish to release the strips on the grounds that they might offend and, following discussions, Trudeau agreed to withdraw them. According to Laura E. Obolensky, Editorial Corporate Coordinator of *The New Republic*, Trudeau then contacted the editor of the magazine and offered the strips to him. They appeared in the issue of June 10. Subsequently, Obolensky told me, 20 to 25 papers have contacted the magazine for permission to reprint the strips. *The Tar Heel* is happy to join those publications and grateful to *The New Republic* for their kind permission to do so.

*The Chapel Hill Newspaper* has recently announced its decision to drop *Doonesbury* altogether. A spokesman for the paper refused to comment on the decision and referred me to their editorial while commenting that it was a decision of the paper's editor and publisher, Orville Campbell.

Mr. Campbell's editorial acknowledges that it may arouse some controversy and admits that: "If it were left up to our young staff, *Doonesbury* would still be a part of the paper."

Campbell states that: "Where there is controversy in America, there is *Doonesbury* offering up opinion in a very offensive manner." He goes on to complain that no newspaper should have acceded to Trudeau's requirement that they publish the strip a certain size. We have no problem with that. Mr. Trudeau is offering a product for sale with certain requirements to its use, which he is perfectly entitled to do. If papers do not want to agree to it then they do not have to buy the product, as Mr. Campbell is no longer doing. Mr. Trudeau has every justification — it is all too easy to shrink the comics to near illegibility when space is pressing and I regret that we have to reduce *Bloom County* as much as we do at the moment to get it all in.

Campbell then makes an apparently irrelevant comparison: "Suppose our editorial policy on local people, from the governor down, was to ridicule them in our editorial columns without allowing them any space to reply. That wouldn't exactly be 'freedom of the press' as we define it." Firstly, everyone Trudeau satirizes (he does not 'ridicule') has the right to reply and freedom to do so.

More importantly, Campbell is not exercising freedom of the press himself by censoring *Doonesbury*. We deplore this decision and assure our readers that we will not be doing so — even when Trudeau's politics conflict with our own.

— Jim Greenhill