

The Daily Tar Heel

94th year of editorial freedom

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Editorials

Setting the wrong standard

When speaking before a formal gathering, UNC Chancellor Christopher Fordham often likes to describe N.C. public higher education as a system that has attained excellence with modest resources.

Based on SAT scores of UNC students, Fordham has plenty of statistical muscle to back up his statement. However, when studying the same data for N.C. secondary education, the same claim could not be asserted.

College admissions reference books such as The Public Ivys have generated publicity that has bolstered UNC's national reputation. The good PR has contributed to an increase in the caliber of UNC students as gauged by SAT scores that continue to rise. UNC's current freshman class boasts an average SAT score of 1,085, the highest of any in the University's history.

However, the situation in N.C. secondary education is far less promising. SAT results from the 1985-86

school year show only South Carolina students ranking lower than North Carolina's. Students from the Tar Heel State averaged a paltry 835 composite score (out of a possible 1,600). South Dakota ranked first with a composite average of 1,098.

Of course, the SAT is not the end-all register of college preparatory skills; charges of racial and socio-economic bias have been leveled against the exam. However, the SAT (and the ACT, preferred mainly by schools in the Midwest and West) serves as the best available comparison of college-bound students from different regions of the nation. North Carolina has been measured against the other 49 states, and the state's record is abysmal.

In this era of nationwide educational reform, North Carolinians deserve better. Strong direction and increased financial backing on both the state and local levels to better prepare students — not only for the test, but for college-level work — is required.

Ill timing befuddles affairs

A facet of the Daniloff-Zakharov drama that has not received as much attention of late is President Reagan's war on the Soviet mission here in the United States. In calling for 25 Soviet diplomats to leave the country, the president might only be adding to the problems that have recently plagued U.S.-Soviet relations.

When the FBI arrested Soviet United Nations employee Gennadi Zakharov, the plan seemed simple enough: arrest a spy, announce it to the world, slap the Soviets on the wrist. But the Soviets, of course, did not take such abuse lying down, and retaliated by arresting Nicholas Daniloff, an American correspondent, on spy charges. Now the two countries are in a fuddled state of foreign affairs, still trying to arrange a summit.

In March, long before the arrest of Zakharov, Reagan ordered the Soviet Union to cut personnel at its mission from 243 to 218 by Oct. 1, leaving 25 would-be spies out in the cold. The Soviet Union also has U.N. missions for its Ukrainian and Byelorussian republics, raising the overall Soviet contingent to 270, compared to the United States' 130 members. Reagan's order would, over the next two years, reduce the Soviet mission staff by 100 to 170, a figure that might induce the

Soviets to curtail their use of the U.N. as an avenue for espionage.

There is little doubt that the Soviet Union uses its U.N. mission to spy on the United States. Because of its size, it is relatively simple to give a spy some obscure post within the Soviet mission. But other countries spy on the United States as well — some of them friends, some not. Being spied on as the host country of the U.N. comes with the territory.

That is not to say that the United States should allow the Soviets to get away with using the auspices of the U.N. for espionage. Reagan's intent was to protect U.S. interests. Arresting Zakharov and expelling 25 other suspected Soviet U.N. spies are thus efforts to safeguard national security. But kicking diplomatic spies out of the country does not solve a security problem, it only creates another one. In their haste to clean out a "nest of spies" at the U.N., Reagan and the CIA misjudged the political timeliness of the move.

Just when the United States and its leaders need to secure a summit with the Soviet Union, the usual bantering about who spies the most returns. The U.N. and Daniloff affairs must be resolved via meetings of the two nations, not via satellite. Otherwise, hopes for a summit dwindle markedly.

Quiz yourself on the Box's new shows

It has come to our attention lately that some of you may read this column as a diversion, an escape from your scholarly duties.

This must cease. College is for learning, with every passing nanosecond, you should be expanding your mind, broadening your horizons, exploring your universe, expanding your mind, broadening your . . . oh, we mentioned those already.

So, to facilitate your horizon-broadening, take note of the following quiz about new programming on The Miracle Box. (That's "television" to those who take mankind's greatest invention lightly.) Some of the shows you'll see described will indeed debut on the big three networks this fall; others are ones we've made up. When you spot a bogus show, just take your favorite appliance, throw it out your residence hall or apartment window, and shout, "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take it anymore!"

Anyone arrested by Chapel Hill or University police for disturbing the peace will be declared "winner."

"ALF" — A comical, puppet-like extraterrestrial — an alien life form, or "ALF" — crashes through the roof of a suburban home and develops an appetite for the family cat after his home planet, Melmac, explodes. Mondays, NBC.

"Starman" — Another extraterrestrial, this one resembling a human, beams down to earth to help rear his and his earth-dwelling mate's half-alien son. Robert Hays stars. Fridays, ABC.

The Bottom Line

"Rip-off City" — Sylvester Stallone dons his Rambo garb once again — only this time to fight ruthless television producers who steal ideas from recent movies such as "Howard the Duck" and "Starman." Executives from throughout the TV industry also star, with Aaron Spelling insulted in effigy every other episode. Days and network to be announced.

"Downtown" — A street-wise cop deals with murderers, drug-dealers, pimps, prostitutes and hotheads on a daily basis. Michael Nouri stars. Saturdays, CBS.

"Barney Millertown" — A reject from the police academy constantly complains to his superiors at a Fuquay-Varina precinct, telling them he's sick and tired of widows asking him to get their cats out of trees. Rodney Dangerfield stars. Days and network to be announced.

"Sidekicks" — Gil Gerard stars as a middle-aged policeman who nabs criminals with the aid of a 10-year-old karate whiz. Fridays, ABC.

"Swiftkicks" — Chuck Norris plays an irate Nielsen viewer who journeys to Hollywood to teach certain scriptwriters the meaning of "reality." His methods of instruction include a devastating uppercut and strategic kicks to certain parts of the anatomy. (Viewer discretion is advised.) Days and network to be announced.

Tar Heel Forum

Sports through the eyes of a 'traitor'

Jim Surowiecki
 Staff Writer

A week ago, I picked Kansas to beat UNC. I also picked Florida State to win last Saturday. To those of you who faithfully read the DTH last year, my choice probably came as no surprise. In fact, somebody told me right after the Kansas selection that I was the first person in the short history of the DTH's college picks to take UNC's opponent.

Actually, it's not true. But that doesn't really matter. What does matter is the thought behind the statement. The person who told me that hadn't checked to find out whether he was right or not. He just knew he was right. After all, I'm James "Mr. Big East" Surowiecki. So of course I was the first to pick against our beloved Tar Heels.

The mindset which prompted that encounter is a mindset which attacks what sportswriting should be all about. More, it's a state of mind which attacks the entire process of formulating opinions, of learning. It's a mindset that condemns any attack on this school's sports program as treason, as something inherently without value. It's a state of mind disturbingly similar to the "Love It or Leave It" doctrine pushed on critics of America. And it's a state of mind that pervades not only this beautiful campus but also all of American sport.

I originally wanted to talk here about my stand on the Big East in 1984-1985, my freshman year. But that's done. If you read me, you know what I said. If you didn't, you don't, and that's probably good. Let it die.

More relevant to what I'm literally meandering about is what happened at midseason last year. What happened was, I wrote a notes column. The column was written when UNC was 21-0 and on top of the world.

In any case, I wrote in that column, among other things, that Kenny Smith was having a disappointing season. Not a bad season, but a disappointing season. My argument was based on the fact that he had declined in every offensive category and yet he was

up in turnovers. Unfortunately, I self-indulgently threw in an invidious comparison to Pearl Washington that did nothing but obscure my point. People were not pleased.

Dean Smith said I didn't know anything about basketball. Letters, angry letters, were written, some suggesting I'd be better off at another school. Through it all, though, no one was looking at what Kenny Smith was doing for the team. The argument went, "Kenny has been great the last two years. He is therefore great now. Besides, he's the starting point guard on the No. 1 team in the nation, a team that's 21-0. He must be having a great season."

But there was very little said about how Kenny was actually playing, about the tangible contributions he was making compared to those he had made in the past. Instead there were a lot of platitudes about what an exciting player Kenny Smith was, and how inspirational he was to the team. They were the same words people use to justify Steve Garvey, the same words used to defend Pearl Washington's performance two years ago.

To be blunt, don't give me that. Those platitudes were bulls— then and they're bulls— now. Bill James, the greatest baseball analyst who ever lived, expressed the difference between knowledge and bulls— rather succinctly when he wrote, "Knowledge is something that can be objectively demonstrated. Bulls— is something you just know." I can demonstrate that in 1985-1986, by all standards available to us, Kenny Smith had a worse year than he did in 1984-1985. But the people who didn't believe that just knew that he was having a better year.

People were not looking at the evidence and then reaching a conclusion. They were

starting with a conclusion and then trying to find the evidence to back that conclusion up. Now everyone does this. But it's wrong. We shouldn't begin with an answer. We should begin with a question and from the extant evidence derive a conclusion. We have to put aside our assumptions and prejudices to look at the facts.

Thus, when I was formulating that column I didn't begin with the assumption that Kenny Smith was having a disappointing year. I began with the question, "What kind of year is Kenny Smith having?" I looked at the stats, compared them to previous years, saw they were worse, looked at his overall play, and reached a conclusion. Then I ran that conclusion in print.

The details of the controversy are interesting, but they're also meaningless now. This is another year for Smith. He had a magnificent summer overseas. In many respects, he is the key to the Tar Heels in the season ahead. He is the premier point guard in America. I expect him to have a campaign worthy of that title. And I'd like him to have such a season. But if he doesn't, then he doesn't, and no amount of wishing will make it so.

I'd like to add a final note. There is a strong attitude on this campus that we in the sports staff should somehow be like Carolina Blue, that our coverage should be consistently positive.

I don't buy that in the least. Don't tell me I should love UNC sports and that loyalty to school is all that matters. Hey, the heat comes with the turf. If someone plays well, we should say he's playing well. If he's not, then we should say that too. And the standards shouldn't be personality or classiness. The standards should be what the man does on the court. Because what a player does and what a player shows us, on the court, or on the football field, or on the baseball diamond, is ultimately what sports is all about.

Jim Surowiecki is a junior history major from Cheshire, Conn.

Illogical column

The following is an open letter to Marguerite Arnold ("Homophobia threatens us all," Sept. 8).

To the editor:
 Marguerite, there are so many inaccuracies and distortions in your column that I hardly know where to begin to make any sense of them.

First of all, I feel the need to correct the comments you leveled against my good friend of 10 years, Jim Wooten. To say that Jim is trying to measure up to a certain way of thinking is to totally ignore the facts. He and other College Republicans, as well as Students for America members, sometimes have to take stands on issues that they know will be harshly criticized by many of the liberals on this campus. Here, it is much easier for one to conform to the prevalent liberal view than to take a well-thought-out stance on an issue.

As for calling College Republicans and Students for America members fascists, racists and homophobes, I believe that this is an indication that your arguments against their beliefs are so weak that you must resort to mere name-calling.

As for your next ill-founded statement, it is incorrect when you say that Jim and others are trying to deny the CGLA's right to exist because they are working to end student subsidization of the CGLA. The conservatives realize that a vast majority of the students at Carolina have moral and religious qualms against funding for the CGLA and that it would be preferable that the group exist on voluntary contributions. Many groups on this campus function quite well without student fees being used in their operation.

Furthermore, I seriously doubt whether Jim or anyone is against fathers changing their babies' diapers, no matter how badly you misinterpret a law. As for the remainder of your column, it is so illogical that it is impossible to respond to it.

RODNEY BAUCOM
 Senior
 Biology

Tyrannical rule

To the editor:

In the Sept. 10 story about Students for America's call for a referendum on funding for the Carolina Gay and Lesbian Association, Student Body President Bryan Hassel reminded us that "one function of a democracy is to represent the majority, but another function is to represent the minority."

I would add that Hassel and all other elected officials have an added responsibility. As direct policymakers, they must also actively work to ensure that all minorities, even unpop-



Letters

ular ones, are not repressed by the "tyranny of the majority."

SFA members seem to believe that the majority of students are opposed to student funding of CGLA. Even if that is true, does that mean it is right to deny the group funding? And if an election is held, and indeed the majority expresses an opinion concurrent with SFA's, does that mean Student Congress members should be bound by such a mandate? I hope not.

As recently as 20 years ago, blacks were still considered second-class citizens in the South because the majority, in effect, said it was OK. Fortunately, federal and state legislators realized, with much reminding from the civil rights movement, that this situation was blatantly unconstitutional and a basic infringement upon human dignity.

Elected officials acted against the will of the majority because they realized that the people, at least on this issue, were wrong. If the rights of minorities had been put to a public vote, it is entirely possible that there would be no blacks, Hispanic or Asian students at UNC in 1986. They could be found at "separate but equal" institutions elsewhere.

Unfortunately, homosexuals are frequently subjected to discrimination in our country today. Why? Because they love differently. As long as the fear, hatred and prejudice that allow these abuses to exist continue, educational and informational organizations such as CGLA are imperative.

SFA members are constantly decrying their comparison to fascists. But whether they realize it or not, the tactics they are currently attempting to employ are frighteningly similar to those practiced by past fascist organizations.

The Nazis, too, tried to use the most valuable tool of a

democracy — the free election — to advance their hatred. Unfortunately, they succeeded, and ten million people were slaughtered. I hardly mean to suggest that if SFA is successful in February that gas chambers and crematoria will be established in May, but one must realize that this local drama is, but a small part of an ultra-conservative push all over this country to deny certain citizens their civil rights. If SFA is successful today against homosexuals, toward whom will they direct their hatred next?

We Americans are sometimes oblivious to how fragile are the freedoms we take for granted. For that reason, we must act as guard over our rights and sisters' civil liberties. We must remain ever-vigilant against those who would attempt to deny any American his or her unalienable right: the right to exist. I urge all students who are truly for America to contact their elected student representative and express their concern over this latest manifestation of hate on our campus.

CHRIS ANDERSON
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Firm opinion

To the editor:

It occurs to me that law generally "seeks to legislate morality" — as Marguerite Arnold said of General Statute 14 in her Sept. 8 column — specifically to prohibit acts that a consensus judges immoral and thus dangerous to society.

For example, most of us agree that theft, murder, rape, child abuse, trespassing and even indecent exposure not only violate accepted standards of morality (though each of us sets his or her own standards), but also victimize innocent

people. On what basis, then, do we decide whether to legislate sexual behavior? After all, we must have a value system by which to judge what is moral, dangerous, innocent and just.

I was surprised when Arnold identified herself as one of those "who ultimately believes that God shows the way." Without introducing God and ultimate accountability to His standards into the argument, it would be hard for me to find a basis for objecting to or endorsing any particular system of morality. Because I believe that God has provided a standard, I expect to clash with people who do not recognize that standard. It is rather confusing, however, to find myself branded "homophobic" and my ideology labeled idiotic and detestable by someone who claims the same authority. Is Arnold talking about the God of the Bible, who gave us the phrase "against nature" to describe "vile passions" and condemned "men with men working unseemliness" (Romans 1:26-27). Certainly Arnold must set standards for herself, but she should check her sources. She seems to have been more accurate in identifying her ultimate authority when she said, "Neither do I like to be told what I may or may not do in an act of love with whomever I choose."

I am trying neither to argue the value of G.S. 14 nor win converts to Christianity. I do consider homosexuality a threat, as the word "homophobic" seems intended to convey, to the morality of society. But that opinion, distasteful as it may be to Arnold, is a rational and consistent application of a system of values which, I believe, stands on unshakable foundations.

MARK BINGHAM
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 English