

The Daily Tar Heel

96th year of editorial freedom

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Drinking is a serious business

Question: What's the mating call of the Southern Belle?

Answer: I'm so drunk.

National Collegiate Alcohol Awareness Week couldn't have come at a better time.

If you attended either of last weekend's all-campus parties, it's not hard to see why Chapel Hill once held the raucous title of "Beer Capital of the World." You didn't even have to be drinking to fall on your face: the carpet of beer cans and bottles was enough to trip the most sober of partygoers.

And with homecoming festivities beginning in earnest tonight, one gets the impression the party is only just started. Beer, bands, the opposite sex and more beer will provide more entertainment than any healthy young adult could want. By Saturday night, the past week and a half will be the stuff of which college memories (and memory loss) are made.

Coinciding with this celebration of school spirit is National Alcohol Awareness Week. What fortuitous timing. The University, which has been planning since August, obviously saw the opportunity such an awareness program presented. Just as students get down to seriously contemplating some serious drinking, the University has the chance to make them think twice about that drinking.

This week, the University, along with concerned student organizations,

hopes to stress "responsible" drinking habits and abstinence from drug use. It's a worthy endeavor, especially since many students come to Chapel Hill without ever having been introduced to alcohol or learning their drinking limits.

Such ignorance will be countered with "mocktail" parties and an alcohol-free bar at the Union Cabaret, gathering students in a festive, though non-alcoholic, atmosphere. "Skills" tests will attempt to show, through example, the effects of alcohol on reaction time and motor reflexes. While students watch, they will also be presented with contracts pledging that they won't drink and drive.

With any luck at all, students will take notice and amend their drinking ways. It is true that people tend to get offended when told, "You can have a good time without drinking." It's a rather self-righteous statement, and it puts everyone on the defensive. But the idea is not to stop drinking, but to encourage responsible drinking, as in, "You can have a good time drinking and not have to live to regret it."

The Ehringhaus Field all-campus party on Friday could reflect the wisdom of such a maxim. Everyone should have a way to get home safely, and no one will have to find Polaroids of the night before stuffed beneath their pillows the next morning. Who knows, the Southern Belle may even change her tune. — David Starnes

Hostage-taking unjustifiable

Journalists are accused often of unfairly judging those about whom they report. But last week in a Raleigh courtroom, the co-workers of a small, eastern N.C. newspaper were the victims of an unfair judgment.

When a federal jury on Friday acquitted Eddie Hatcher and Timothy Jacobs, who took as many as 20 hostages at the Robesonian newspaper in February, they did a great disservice to the hostages, their families, the people of this state and the integrity of the judicial system.

Hatcher and Jacobs claim the 10-hour siege of the newspaper office was the only option available for them to protest the injustices done blacks and Indians in Robeson County. But the fact remains that they endangered the lives of 20 innocent people. The jury ruled the injustices done Hatcher and Jacobs outweighed those done the hostages. Why?

Hatcher, in his closing remarks to the jury Thursday, called the takeover "compassionate" because none of the hostages were hurt. The hostages may have another description for the action.

Robesonian Editor Bob Horne said, "It seems to me the message is, if you have a grievance, to take hostages, put them in fear for their lives and say you did it for your own protection

because you feared for your life.

"I can say a lot of our employees feel their rights have been thoroughly violated twice — first by Eddie Hatcher and Timothy Jacobs, and now by this federal jury."

Assistant U.S. Attorney John Bruce said the acquittal was his failure, but many more people are hurting because of it.

Granted, the problems in Robeson County are unique and especially troubling in light of the racial tension reported there. But allowing two men to throw legal and moral conventions to the wind by putting others' lives in jeopardy — even if they do promise no harm will come to them — is simply anarchy.

Somewhere, a line must be drawn to separate legitimate protest through civil disobedience from crime. Unfortunately, it was not drawn at the Hatcher-Jacobs trial.

If any good can be said of the hostage-taking incident, it did bring publicity to the injustices suffered by two-thirds of Robeson County and the reported corruptness in law enforcement there. When charges are leveled at those perpetrators, it can only be hoped that justice is more fairly served than it was in this case, and that the victims are truly vindicated. — Sandy Dimsdale

Dead celebrities a powerful marketing tool

Imagine a conversation in the not-too-distant future. The subject? Socrates. "I was interacting with the master the other day. It was truly a mind-boggling experience."

"The probing questions! The sheer mastery of contemporary educational concepts!"

"Not to mention the graphics and the 60-day warranty!"

Yes, that's right. Socrates has now joined the ranks of Chuck Yeager and Bill Cosby as television endorsers. What makes the use of Socrates' name on an educational computer unique is that he's dead. I began thinking about this, and decided that dead celebrity endorsements are the wave of the future:

■ Dead celebrities can't refuse to endorse your product.

■ Dead celebrities are timeless and won't suddenly lose popularity like Rodney Allen Rippey or Emmanuel Lewis.

■ Dead celebrities don't get paid. With this potent new marketing tool in hand, I've developed a whole range of products associated with famous people who are six feet under.

■ Louis Pasteur for Pasteurex mold and mildew stain remover. Who knows more about mold than the self-proclaimed "God of Fungi" himself. Let's face it — the stuff that's growing in your bathroom is only going to show you're a bad homemaker, not prove to be a miracle drug. Why not get rid of it with Pasteurex? Pasteurex uses patented Petri 5000, a cleaning agent so

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powerful it'll knock your socks off. Take it from Lou himself, "With le Pasteurex, le mold will disappear."

■ Ho Chi Minh for Ho Chi Minh weed killer. From the jungles of Vietnam to the lawns of America comes a guaranteed way to get rid of weeds and any other unwanted foliage. It comes with its own bulldozer applicator so you can defoliate in comfort. We all know that these plants are used as cover for insurgent rodents, so eliminate the problem by eliminating your yard! Liberate your home from weeds today, with Ho Chi Minh weed killer.

■ Ivan Pavlov, for Uncle Ivan's dog food. Forget those little dog whistles; the one sure way to make your canine come a-runnin' is Uncle Ivan's dog food. Based on a time-honored Russian recipe and proven through extensive research to be the best, you won't even need a dinner bell to get your pooch to come eat din-din. Uncle Ivan's: guaranteed to make their mouths water!

■ George Washington, for the Washington Lil' Lie Detector. Better than Gobots or even Nintendo, this fun new toy from NorthCo will help your little J. Edgar Hoover test the patriotism of everyone in your neighborhood. Utilizing the latest Cherytech technology, the Washington

Lil' Lie Detector will detect anything from a fib to treason. Teach your kid a valuable lesson about civil rights and rid your block of commies! Plus, if you order now, you'll receive absolutely free a Comprehensive Urinalysis Program (CUP). Call today!

■ Henry VIII, for "Ol' Hank" condoms. Henry VIII was known for his gourmet taste, his benevolent leadership and, most importantly, his women. That's why the people here at Goodyear have developed "Ol' Hank," condoms, in the spirit of England's chubbier king. Henry VIII didn't have to deal with AIDS, but you do. If you lead a sexually active lifestyle, you ought to take precautions. As Ol' Hank himself says, "Don't behead — be safe!"

To pay for all these items, you'd need a whole lot of credit, which brings me to the final endorsement.

■ Karl Marx, for the American Express Red Card. "Do you know me? Sometimes when I'm out combating the imperialist lackeys of the bourgeois ruling oligarchy I run out of the people's money. That's why I carry the American Express Red Card. You charge, but you don't have to pay your bills, further hastening the inevitable decline of the global capitalist elite. I recommend it to every proletarian. The American Express Red Card — don't leave your commune without it!"

David Ball is a freshman political science major from Atlanta.

Readers' Forum

Vatican/U.S. speech defended

To the editor:

In "Why stop with Catholics" (Oct. 6), John Schaber presents a remarkably well-written propaganda piece. Given his distortion of my GAIA lecture, it appears that Schaber's real message to the campus community is that "the issues presented by Dr. Mumford are off limits for discussion on this campus for students and faculty alike. Freedom to think or to speak out on these issues should be curbed."

The United States has security interests and the papacy has security interests. Sometimes the interests of the two are in direct conflict. The best example: population growth control. The U.S. National Security Council determined a decade ago that world overpopulation is a serious national and global security threat and published this conclusion.

The existence of the papacy rests on papal authority. If papal authority is sufficiently undermined, the institution itself may perish. Solutions to the overpopulation problem — such as family planning, abortion and equal rights for women — undermine papal authority. The Vatican has concluded that these solutions to the overpopulation problem will so undermine papal authority as to threaten the Church's existence in its present form. The National Catholic Reporter has published this conclusion. The Vatican's behavior is being driven by its fear of losing power.

In talking with the GAIA group, I did not "blame" the greenhouse effect on the Vatican. I simply pointed out that because there is a relentless linkage between population growth and global warming, Vatican opposition to population growth control will make it more difficult, if not impossible, to contain the devastating greenhouse phenomenon.

Webster's Dictionary defines bigot as "One obstinately or

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intolerantly devoted to his own church, party, belief, or opinion." I urge UNC students not to be bullied out of exercising their freedom of thought and speech by bigots shrilly insisting that their opinions prevail. If we are stymied by this intimidation, it will not be possible to successfully deal with the greenhouse effect and the many other problems which are directly or indirectly worsened by overpopulation.

STEPHEN MUMFORD
Doctor of Public Health

Lil' ol' stereotype

To the editor:

Thank you, Winston Lloyd, for pointing out in your commentary on "Designing Women" (Omnibus, "Edited 4 Television," Oct. 13) that Southern women don't really say "Lil' ol' me." I just wish somebody could have told Ron Shelton that before he had Susan Sarandon spout the phrase in "Bull Durham." I almost wretched in the theatre

when she said it. But, if someone had told him that, they would have also had to tell him that all Southern women aren't air-headed sluts, either. That would have been no good, because then lil' ol' Ron would have watched all those episodes of "Hee Haw" (character research) for nothing.

ROGER ALFORD
Senior
RTVMP

Pledge to people

To the editor:

George Bush loves the American flag. That's fine. I am fond of it, too. But how much does Mr. Bush love the people who make those flags? Where was George last week when President Reagan vetoed the textile bill so badly needed by our state's textile workers and textile communities? If the bill needed work, where was Bush? This administration has done nothing for textile workers.

Mr. Bush wants us to show respect and allegiance to the

flag. But how about some allegiance to the weavers and dyers of cloth? People need to wave a paycheck just as sure as they might have need to wave a flag. Patriotism means people, too, Mr. Bush, not just pledges, promises and putting your hand on your chest.

I'm voting Dukakis/Bentsen. The Democrats have a longer and better record of protecting the rights and the livelihoods of working people in this country. That is something I can stand behind.

PAUL HOLMBECK
Durham

Letters policy

The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments and criticisms. When writing letters to the editor, please follow these guidelines:

■ The DTH reserves the right to edit letters for space, clarity and vulgarity.

■ All letters must be signed by the author(s), with a limit of two signatures per letter.

Pledge expresses what America should be

As a daily reader of The Daily Tar Heel, I have rarely felt inclined to dispute a writer's opinion because "this is America." But Marguerite Arnold's column "Pledging allegiance to freedom of choice" (Oct. 13) has been the exception this year. I don't oppose Arnold because I'm a Bush supporter; I believe Bush is using the issue incorrectly and is a loser. I oppose and dispute her viewpoint because the Pledge has become a pledge of hope and promise. Also, Arnold should research the background of a subject before she writes about it. She claims the Pledge was written by a child who won a contest in the 1800s. Not quite right. In 1954 Congress added a phrase to the Pledge of Allegiance, the words "one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." So those who have a problem with this section, should write their Congressman!

Yes, I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. No other statement people make in honor of our country contains so much non-political hope and expected promise for the future. Numerous Supreme Court justices and other government leaders through the years have addressed this issue. Only in a republic such as ours are we allowed to disagree with our government without fearing punishment or

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naïl. Try to write an article attacking a national pledge in most other countries. You would be lucky to have it seen by many peers, much less get it printed in the press. The American style of government allows us to dispute each others' views, in the press, without fear. As the old saying goes, "Love it or leave it."

Justice Potter Stewart, in the dissenting opinion *Engel vs. Vitale* (1962) wrote, "I do not believe that this court, Congress, or the President has by the actions and practices... established an 'official religion' in violation of the Constitution." He concluded, "What each has done has been to recognize and to follow the deeply entrenched and highly cherished spiritual traditions of our nation..." Nowhere in the pledge are we told what God or whose God we are to honor. Arnold is the one who used the phrase Protestant in her attack. She formed that opinion without anyone telling her what religion was being addressed. Our Constitution allows for freedom of religion, and the pledge in no way violates this right.

Again I say George Bush is wrong to make the Pledge mandatory, but Arnold is equally incorrect in trying to denounce

the Pledge itself. People react positively to the Pledge because it is our attempt to express a hope and feeling of a country that we want to exist. Under the current administration these values may be hidden or misused, but if enough of us vote for a change, we will see the America we ask for when we repeat the Pledge. Our forefathers faced certain perils that we have outgrown. We now face other perils, the very existence of which it was impossible that they should foresee. Modern life is more complex and intense, and the tremendous changes wrought by the extraordinary social developments of the last 30 years are felt in every fiber of our country and political being. But I have faith that we shall not prove false to the memories of our forefathers. They did their work, and they left us the splendid heritage we now enjoy. We in turn have an assured confidence that we shall be able to leave this heritage unwasted and enlarged to our children.

If a child could give us the ability to pledge allegiance without making a political statement in this age of hidden messages, then thank God for our children! Maybe our future is looking bright! Hand me those shades! Sing it, Kate Smith!

Vance Spinks is a sophomore public policy major from Hillsborough.

The Daily Tar Heel

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 Production: Bill Leslie and Stacy Wynn, coordinators; Anita Bentley, Leslie Humphrey, Stephanie Locklear and Leslie Sapp, assistants.
 Printing: The Village Companies.