

Opinion

'Chill wind' for abortion

"The signs are evident and very ominous, and a chill wind blows."

Those were the words of Supreme Court Justice Harry A. Blackmun, author of the 1973 Roe vs. Wade decision, in his minority opinion on Monday's Webster vs. Reproductive Health Services decision.

The "chill wind" of the Webster decision did not overturn Roe vs. Wade, at least not yet.

But the decision may leave a lot of women seeking abortions out in the cold.

The Webster decision upheld Missouri abortion laws prohibiting public employees from performing abortions and forbidding the use of public hospitals or other public facilities for abortions.

This goes a step beyond denial of government funds for abortions. Under such a directive, a woman cannot have an abortion in a public hospital even if she pays for it herself.

Under Missouri law, poor women will have to turn to more costly private institutions. Rural women will have to travel hundreds of miles to urban clinics and private hospitals. Women with health problems who are too high-risk to have abortions in private clinics will have to wait until these clinics raise enough money to finance an upgrade in technology.

Essentially, abortion for these women will be made more difficult than for most. And while abortion rights technically remain

intact, there is no longer anything protecting those rights from future damage.

The next victims appear to be teen-age women. The court has agreed to hear three abortion cases in the fall term which, among other things, will probably require parental consent for many, if not all, abortions for minors.

While the outcry from extremist groups is expected and precedented, the real test of the court decision will be with the American people.

The court has actually given Americans the opportunity, in effect, to put abortion to a referendum once and for all.

Recent polls indicate that most Americans favor abortion, but feel that some restrictions should be implemented. Just what restrictions should be placed on abortion is not clear.

Abortion is going to become a campaign issue in races for state legislatures. Protests by extremist groups will become intense.

In the meantime, let's hope that women in the process of making some of the hardest, most painful decisions of their lives are not harassed by extremist groups or thwarted by financial hardship. Let's also hope state legislators are not overwhelmed by their new responsibilities to determine abortion rights in their states.

And let's hope the "chill wind" does not turn into a full-force gale.

— Sarah Cagle

Washburn offers lesson

Chris Washburn, ex-member of the N.C. State basketball program, was drafted into the National Basketball Association with a \$3 million contract. His dreams were dashed recently by his violation of professional basketball's substance abuse policy for the third time.

Washburn is a man blessed with obvious physical ability. However he, like many athletes, was valued only for this physical ability and not for his human status. Washburn's ability to excel on the basketball court helped him through school, and his head was filled with dreams of money and fame.

Washburn, at a young and impressionable stage, let these dreams fill his life. Ignoring school, he was pushed along the education system, believing that life held only basketball, an expensive contract and fame. Washburn was never taught how to handle that success and fame; he was taught it would be easy, and he believed he could do anything

and go free because he was famous.

Now, the system has cracked down, and Washburn has been left to pick up the pieces. He has been banned from the NBA with nothing to fall back on, the dreams of money and fame are dead, and he will wait out the next two years toying with his shattered career.

Could anything have stopped this tragedy?

Coaching.

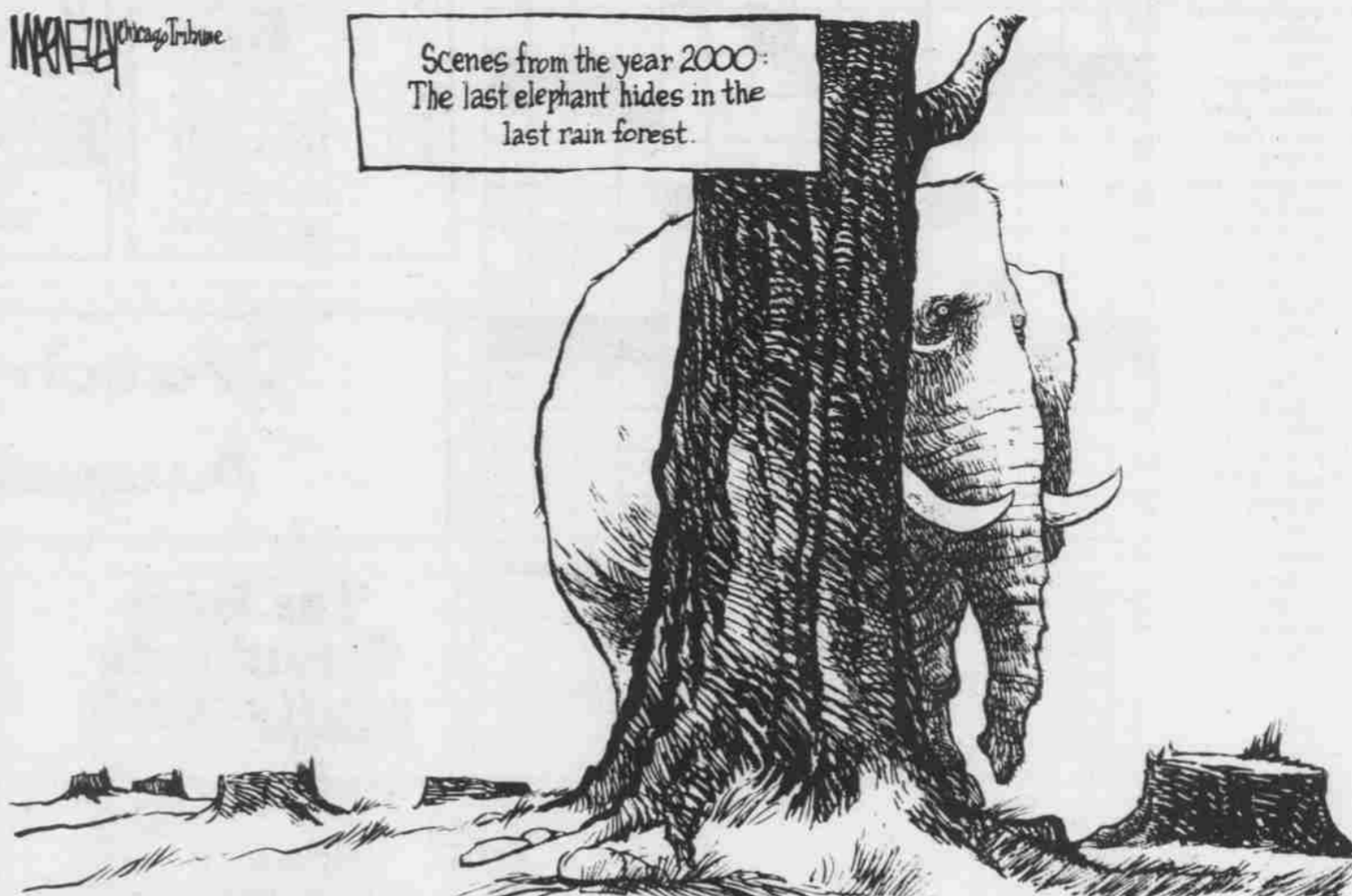
If the people in Washburn's life had helped him learn how to handle the success instead of focusing on the success itself, he may not be in this situation. If someone cared enough to instill in him the will to win at life and not just on the court, he may still have his dreams today.

Washburn is the current sports star crushed by greed in athletics — and if those in the athlete's life don't strive to teach more than victory at any cost, he won't be the last where there is no victory.

— Randy Basinger

MAKEDY Chicago Tribune

Scenes from the year 2000:
The last elephant hides in the
last rain forest.



Reader's Forum

To the editor:

A recent article in The Tar Heel, "Grads unite for benefits" (June 29), contained a number of factual errors. The writer, Paul Bredderman, stated that Graduate Students United (GSU) has presented the administration with a petition requesting that all of the nearly 5,000 graduate students at UNC receive a minimum stipend of \$4,000 per semester. In fact, GSU has not yet petitioned the administration.

The graduate students and faculty in the department of history delivered a petition to the Provost last spring. GSU has not yet approached

the provost with our concerns and objectives and will not do so until we have researched them (we aren't grad students for nothing).

Your reporter's statement that we are requesting "that all of the nearly 5,000 graduate students at UNC receive a minimum \$4,000 per semester stipend" is a lovely idea, but it's also incorrect.

Of the nearly 5,000 graduate students, only 2,427 receive stipends, according to Graduate School Dean Henry Dearman (Chapel Hill Newspaper, 6/21/89). We want to see those of the 2,427 who earn less than \$4,000

per semester raised up to that level. (We do not want to see graduate student stipends leveled or the number of stipends reduced). Two other objectives — tuition remission to the in-state rate and free medical insurance — would also only benefit those graduate students who receive stipends. But since almost all graduate students receive a stipend at some point in their program, we'd all benefit in the long run.

Cindy Hahamovitch
Graduate Student
History

Memories of Summer, 1989

Eric Chasse

Staff Columnist

emergency landing even over the ocean by utilizing one of the several convenient oil slicks around U.S. coastlines.

Personally, I think 1989 will be remembered as the summer of the movie sequel. Has anybody else noticed the local theaters lately? You've got "Star Trek V," "Ghostbusters II," "Karate Kid III," plus about a half-dozen other flicks with retreaded plots. Somebody should tell Hollywood that the writers' strike has been over for a long time now; it's OK to come up with an original story line every now and then.

The classics never had sequels; it just wouldn't be natural to see an ad for "Gone with the Wind II: The Reconstruction Years" or "Casablanca III: Follow Bogie and Bacall as they open a bar 'n grill in Hoboken." Catch a clue, Hollywood — the truly great movies don't need sequels. I mean, "Police Academy VI" didn't exactly receive an abundance of Oscar nominations, now did it?

Of course everyone makes a lot of money on sequels, but the recent rash of Roman numerals on marquis signs leads me to believe they're taking a good thing too far. Pretty soon we'll start seeing blockbusters like "Ishtar III" grace the silver screen; then we'll know that society as we know it has officially ended. Fire all the writers and shoot three films at once — just change around the scenery and the camera angles. Change the titles a little, release the flicks about six months apart and gross \$20 million on each one. Not bad for a week's work.

As long as this sequel craze is confined to Hollywood, I suppose it is relatively harmless. With any luck, the rest of society won't catch on to this disconcerting trend, this bastion of unoriginality and shameless replication. For if the plague did spread, before long even our memories would run together ...

"Oh, I remember the summer of '89. It was just like '92 ... or was it '93?"

Eric Chasse is a senior from Hopewell Junction, N.Y., who is just ticked-off that he can't afford to pay five bucks a shot at the movies.