

TCU DAILY SKIFF

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Abortion, not speakers, issue of debate

By Brooke Rose
Staff Writer

TCU administration and faculty said making students aware of the different issues dealing with abortion is more important than choosing a winning debater.

"If there was a winner, it was the audience who got to see different styles and content presented in a different way," said the Rev. John Butler, university minister.

"Having a winner in the debate wasn't a goal," said Laura Puckett, program coordinator for Student Activities. "We wanted to present both sides and let everyone decide."

The debate between Sarah Weddington, the attorney who defended

Roe vs. Wade before the Supreme Court, and Phyllis Schlafly, former head of the Stop Equal Rights Amendment movement was held Tuesday night at Ed Landreth Hall Auditorium.

The debate ended with a question and answer session which dealt with many different aspects of the abortion issue.

"The students asked very important questions," said Peggy Barr, vice chancellor for student affairs. "It made me proud to be a part of TCU."

The first question presented to the debaters was about the death penalty issue.

Schlafly was confronted by a student for saying no person has the right to take the life of another person and

asked if she believed in capital punishment.

"I said no one has the right without due process," Schlafly responded. "Those killed through the death penalty have had due process."

Weddington had no comment on the issue but stressed that it is an important one.

Schlafly continued, "Society has the right to stop a criminal, make an example of him, and make the world see that the punishment fits the crime."

Weddington then explained that if someone thinks the legal system is perfect then they might think the punishment always fits the crime.

Weddington approached the issue of abortion due to pre-diagnosed dis-

eases by telling a story about a couple who had suffered through the death of their first child who was born with a birth defect. Weddington explained that the mother's second child had been pre-diagnosed with the same disease.

"I would not choose for the parents," Weddington said. "But the parents should have the right to decide."

Schlafly quickly said, "Why don't you just have the deformed baby and then kill it?"

In response to the question of when life begins, Schlafly said life cannot be determined by the passage of a law.

Schlafly said she believes life begins when the 23 chromosomes of the female and 23 chromosomes of the

male unite.

"There is no question it is life," she said.

Weddington argued there is more of a definition of death than life. She said death has been legally defined as the cessation of brain waves so life begins when the brain begins functioning.

"You can't have brain activity until there is a fully developed spinal column and the brain can synapse," Weddington said.

Weddington said the spinal cord is not developed until the eighth or ninth month of pregnancy.

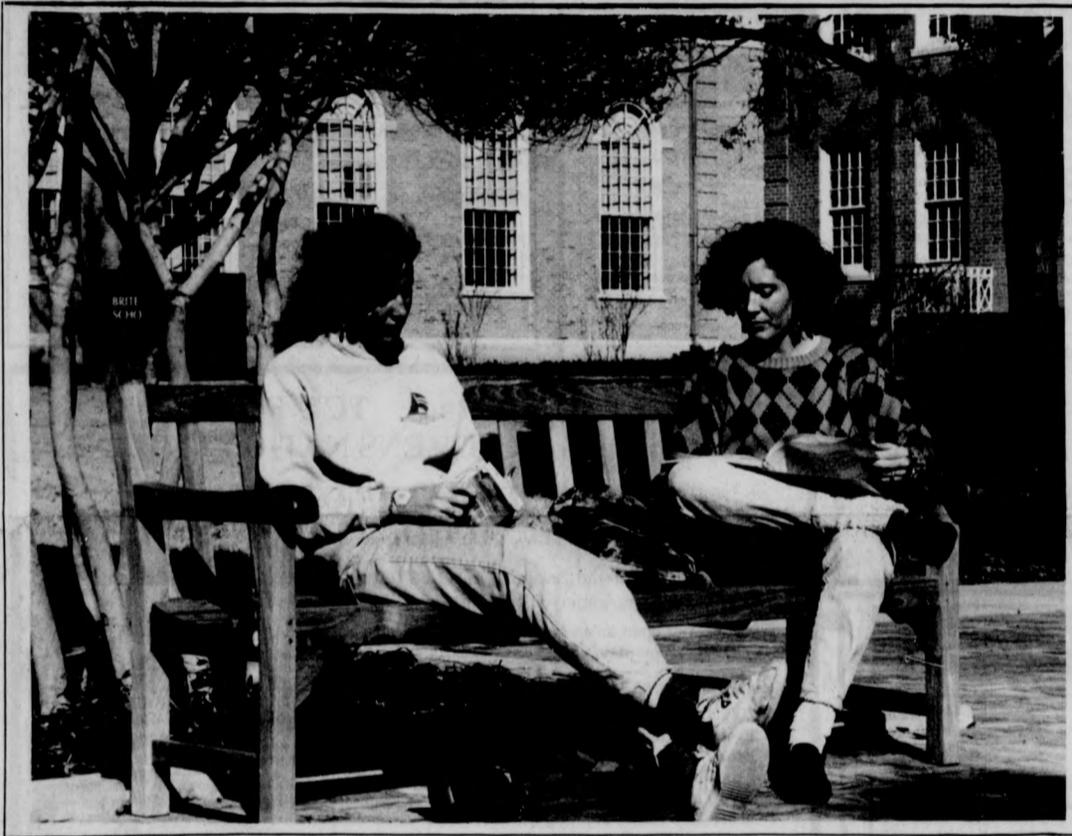
The request of an abortion due to rape or incest is an issue Schlafly feels is unnecessary.

"I'm not sure abortion due to rape even exists at all," Schlafly said. "It's unnecessary to address the one or two percent due to rape before addressing the other 99 percent."

Weddington said there is no reporting on the reasons for abortions. The report Schlafly referred to was done by a doctor who used to do abortions Weddington said.

Weddington used a legal approach to the abortion issue, said Butler, while Schlafly presented a more religious, medical and emotional view.

"Both had their own style and both were good at bringing people back to their perception of the issues," Butler said.



TCU Daily Skiff / Rob Robbins

Bench warmers - Liz Rhein and Janet Gernhauser, both sophomore pre-majors enjoy the warm temperatures on Wednesday.

Headlights shine in support of police

By John Arend
Staff Writer

Officers from the TCU Police Department are joining citizens and law enforcement officials from all over Dallas and Fort Worth in their support of police.

Headlights beam from TCU patrol vehicles as officers carry on their normal activities in a silent show of sadness and commemoration for the officers slain in the line of duty.

Officer John Chase of the Dallas police department, was shot three times with his own gun Saturday after stopping a motorist on a routine traffic check as about 40 people watched.

Some of the onlookers even encouraged the assailant by yelling, "shoot him, shoot him," witnesses said.

"The two or three people who yelled encouragement were obviously upset with the way the Dallas Police have been dealing with minorities," said William Head, director of the criminal justice department at TCU.

The Dallas Police have faced criticism over their treatment of suspects and dealings with minority group members.

"The Dallas Police Department has problems and must deal with them. They will not go away just because people are turning their lights on," Head said.

Since the shooting, however, thousands of citizens from all over the Metroplex have joined law enforce-

ment officials in a strong show of appreciation and support.

"The Fort Worth police department has sent a special honor guard to participate in ceremonies in Dallas, but are showing support in general by just going out and doing a good job everyday," said Doug Clarke of the Fort Worth police department.

TCU Police Chief Oscar Stewart said the enormous amount of media attention to this incident has had a catalyst effect on the public.

"Since the media was right there on top of it, the public has been exposed to it and has gotten a tremendous chance to voice their feelings," Stewart said.

Reactions around the TCU campus have been mixed.

"I feel really bad for the officer's family, but my feelings toward the police haven't changed that much," said junior journalism major Kaye Allen.

"The police are doing their jobs, and it's terrible when things like this happen, but the police are the police," Allen said.

Many citizens are showing their support by driving with their headlights shining.

Adjunct professor Lanette Causey said she had been turning on her headlights but wasn't sure whether she was supposed to on Wednesday.

The American Automobile Association is in favor of supporting the police, but warns, "People are forgetting to turn off their lights when they park and leave their vehicles."

Senate affirms court nominee

WASHINGTON (AP) - Anthony M. Kennedy's Supreme Court nomination sailed unanimously through the Senate Judiciary Committee on Wednesday and went to the Senate floor for an expected swift confirmation.

Majority Leader Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., a committee member, said he would be willing to waive procedural requirements to allow a Senate vote Friday or next Monday on President Reagan's selection of the federal appellate judge from Sacramento, Calif.

The committee's action was praised by Reagan and Attorney General Edwin Meese III, with the president saying it "gives us considerable confidence that the nation will soon have a full court." Reagan said: "I look forward to a positive vote soon by the Senate that will bring this distinguished and scholarly legal mind to the court."

Before the 14-0 vote, senators praised the 51-year-old Kennedy as open-minded, an advocate of the constitutional right of privacy, one who respected Supreme Court precedent and a judge with an expansive view of constitutionally protected liberties.

But liberal senators also said Kennedy's former memberships in clubs with few women members, and some of his more than 400 decisions, showed an insensitivity to women and minorities. These lawmakers expressed hope, however, that Kennedy would change his views on the job.

"We learned that Judge Kennedy is a case-by-case judge," said Sen. Patrick J. Leahy, D-Vt., whose comments summed up the liberal position.

"Nor, it appears, does he have an agenda to reverse scores of important Supreme Court decisions. Rather, Judge Kennedy has respect for many of the major rulings that the court has

handed down in the last three decades."

Despite the unanimous vote, there were moments of acrimonious debate at the committee meeting—not about Kennedy, but over the defeat of Reagan's first nominee for the high court vacancy, Robert H. Bork.

Bork was so much on senators' minds that Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., kept referring to Bork in his remarks when he meant to say Kennedy.

The most vivid statement came from Sen. Gordon Humphrey, R-N.H., who said he was looking for a reason that Kennedy was cautious during his confirmation hearings, in setting boundaries on the right of privacy.

Humphrey said he concluded Kennedy "was being ultra-careful . . . with the entrapments of Robert Bork still on the floor" and "still dangling from the chandeliers."

"Judge Kennedy didn't want his

guts ripped out by the senators on this committee, senators, some of whom in the debate over the Bork nomination, wittingly or unwittingly, functioned as front men for powerful lobbying groups opposed to Robert Bork."

Disputing Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, Sen. Dennis DeConcini, D-Ariz., said Bork "was not lynched by politics."

Bork was defeated because senators "didn't think he would interpret the Constitution in a meaningful and fair way," said DeConcini, a self-described conservative.

Among the liberal groups that carried on an effective campaign against Bork, only the National Organization for Women has announced opposition to the nominee. NOW has contended some of Kennedy's rulings, and his former membership in clubs that had virtually no women members, show he is a sexist.

Students against pluses, says poll

By MariCarmen Eroles
Staff Writer

The House of Student Representatives conducted a poll that revealed the majority of students are against the Academic Excellence Committee's proposal to add pluses and minuses to grades.

About 100 opinions were collected and the majority of students are against the proposal, said Lee Behar, president of the House.

The new grading would only give

more significance to the grades but not harm students, said a letter sent to the faculty by the Academic Excellence Committee.

But one of the reasons given on the poll to reject the proposal was that it will drastically affect people who are planning to go into graduate programs.

"In MBA programs, law and medical schools, a few tenths of a grade point can decide whether someone is accepted or not," Behar said. "I think

it would definitely have an impact."

The system under consideration is currently used by the graduate program in the School of Business.

An A plus and an A would be a 4.0, an A minus would be a 3.7, a B plus would be a 3.3, a B would be a 3.0 and so on.

"Some students are against it because they believe it does not reward good students," Behar said. "If you work hard enough to get an A you should get an A, not an A minus."

An alternative would be to have pluses but not minuses like other universities have, he said.

"A good alternative would be to have the 4.3, 2.1 GPA but to list next to each class the grade with minus and plus like they do in Austin College," he said.

"Personally I would recommend one of the alternatives," Behar said, "and the GPA calculated as now but it would be good to list the pluses and minuses by the grades."

TCU relief work nets recognition

By Chuck Hendley
Staff Writer

TCU's Hunger Week has broken several records and gained national recognition in the past, and the \$16,866 raised this year shows TCU's continued commitment to the end of world hunger.

Andrew Fort, faculty chairman for Hunger Week said, "I think this year was a great success in that we raised more consciousness than ever before."

"We didn't raise as much money as last year, but we were aiming more toward education, so I'm very pleased," Fort said.

Lindy Nelson, student chairperson for Hunger Week said, "In the past we have always been more concerned with the monetary goals and haven't stressed education enough, so this year we really pushed education and received a favorable response."

"We were aiming at \$15,000 because we wanted to put the total amount given to world hunger over \$100,000," Nelson said.

The amount raised this year puts TCU's total donations to hunger relief at \$102,000.

Nelson said the participation from students and campus organizations is what made the week so successful.

"A lot of new ideas and excitement were generated this year,

and the committees were all really fired up," Nelson said.

New ideas for Hunger Week that Nelson said were popular this year and would be used in the future include the letter-writing campaign, the car bash, a massage booth and the competition between organizations.

Another event added to this year's Hunger Week events was a trip to the Loaves and Fishes volunteer serving line and the Food Bank of Greater Tarrant County.

"This year there was more student participation than ever before," Nelson said, "and all the organizations who participated had bigger roles this year."

For the second year in a row, the Hunger Week auction was the most successful moneymaker, raising over \$3,000. Meal card donations totaled \$2,381, (including \$1,000 matched in donations from Marriott), UNICEF card sales of \$1,870 and the Crop Walk, \$1,862.

Panhellenic Association raised \$300, the residence halls made \$262 with its "Time for a Change" campaign, the Campus Christian Community sponsored-jail donated \$954 by arresting faculty, staff and students, and the Environmental Conservation Organization contributed \$1500.

TODAYdiscovery

NEWLINES

Digital Audio Tape closer to U.S.

Consumer digital audio tape may finally become available in the United States.

Ford Motor Co. is the latest company to join the ranks of those testing the market for DAT players.

With Sony Corp. providing the hardware, Ford announced plans in mid December to offer DAT players as an option in Lincoln Continentals in limited markets this June.

Disputes with record companies over software copyright issues has prevented big-name suppliers from marketing DAT players in the United States.

The record industry is concerned about lost revenues, because DAT can produce high quality copies of records, analog tapes and possibly compact disks.

The Recording Industry Association of America is pushing for legislation that would require a circuit in all DAT players that would prevent the copying of pre-recorded materials containing a special code.

Until the issue is resolved, major record companies are boycotting DAT and DAT recorder and player makers are not marketing their products.

Meanwhile, DAT players are being sold in Japan and are entering the European market despite similar copyright disputes.—*Electronics, December 1987.*

Class discusses organ donations

By Lisa Touye
Staff Writer

The recent death of a student, Leslie Ann Soussi, and her family's donation of her organs and tissue were topics of discussion in Pat Paulus' non-majors biology class when class started this semester.

Paulus, an assistant professor of biology, said the class discussed whether individual students were willing to donate their organs and tissues if they were needed after their death.

Most students said they would donate their organs and tissue, but not many had seriously thought about it or discussed the topic with their family.

When Paulus asked for a show of hands of people who had marked yes in the organ donor's spot on their driver's license, only four of the 90 students in her class raised their hands.

"There are no readily available figures on what percentage of organ donors are college age," said Anne Wagner of Southwest Organ Bank, Inc. in Dallas.

"But the upper age limit for donors in the U.S. is 65 years," Wagner said.

Age sometimes doesn't matter in terms of the recipient, Wagner said. "Younger organs are more desirable, though," Wagner said. "The younger the donor the less use the organs have had—even if the donor is particularly healthy for their age, younger organs are more desirable."

"A lot of children who are diagnosed early with severe liver disease or other fatal illnesses will donate their organs," she said.

When choosing organs for trans-

plant, tissue compatibility and blood typing are taken into consideration, Wagner said. It is important to match the blood type and the separate tissue according to major antigens because the better the match the less the possibilities for severe rejection of the tissue transplant, she said.

Most successful donations and transplants result from related donors and recipients, Wagner said. This is because siblings share many of the same antigens, she said.

Parents can rarely accept donations from their children because their tissue is less compatible than that of their siblings.

Immunosuppressant drugs, drugs that suppress the immune system, are important in helping a transplant to grow and to take, Wagner said. But the problem is that these drugs also lower the body's resistance to disease so transplant patients are carefully monitored for infection, she said.

The infection can come from viruses hidden in the transplant tissue or from the environment, which is why typing tissue also serves to determine if there are any viral diseases in the tissue, she said.

"Obviously, if the person had hepatitis or a known cancer then their tissues would be unsuitable for donation and transplant," Wagner said.

Body weight is also an important consideration in organ donation.

"There are strict guidelines on body weight for transplants," Wagner said. "Because the organ's function is seriously impaired if it is too small or too large for the recipient's body."

Other factors in transplants are re-eligibility and viability, Wagner said.

"Through UNOS—United Network of Organ Sharing—a computer net-

work, we can match recipients and donors," Wagner said.

"At any given time there is a need for 11,000 kidneys, 600 hearts, 120 heart and lung combinations, 430 livers, 50 pancreases and 5,000 corneas nationwide," Wagner said.

The viability time of different organs vary considerably. Viability refers to the amount of time between the organ being recovered, preserved and transplanted into a new recipient.

"Viability of a kidney is 40 to 72 hours, a liver is 8 to 10 hours, a heart is 4 to 5 hours and corneas remain viable for 2 to 6 hours," Wagner said.

"Skin and bone viability varies because it can be frozen," she said.

Wagner said that donations increased from 184 donors in 1986 to 221 donors in 1987.

"Organ donations are strongly tied to the gift concept," she said. "If one family member disagrees we don't push it."

People can choose to donate and sign the organ donation box on their driver's license or their family can donate their organs after their death, Wagner said.

"It is really important that even if you have signed a donor card that you talk to your family or spouse about it," she said.

Donation costs the family nothing, Wagner said. But transplants are quite costly.

The national average cost for a kidney transplant is \$32,000, a heart transplant about \$125,000, a heart-lung combination transplant costs around \$167,000, a liver about

\$267,000, and a pancreas about \$30,000 to \$40,000, Wagner said.

Insurance bears most of these costs, she said. And should a transplant not take, that person is the first in line for a new organ, Wagner said.

Kidney transplants are the most common and have the most options, Wagner said.

"A kidney can be taken from a cadaver as well as living related donors," Wagner said. "Now we're getting into donations from living non-related donors like a husband donating a kidney to his wife if their tissue typing is close enough."

A year from now we will see whether the law makes a difference in organ donation, Wagner said.

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Toxic water detected in lead pipes

By Lisa Touye
Staff Writer

Testimony before members of Congress two weeks ago revealed that many drinking fountains with lead plumbing in the United States are spouting water contaminated with lead.

"This problem is found mostly in older areas in the northeast United States," said Leo Newland, professor of biology and geology and director of the environmental sciences program at TCU.

"It's not a problem in Texas," he said.

The problem lies in what type of material the water pipes are made of and whether the water passing through them is acidic or alkaline, Newland said.

"Boston water is more acidic and can dissolve lead in pipes more readily than Texas water which is more alkaline," he said.

Water pipes in the northeast United States are made of lead, while most pipes in Texas and the West are made of copper, Newland said.

A small amount of lead is used to solder copper water pipes together, but that little amount does not contribute to lead absorption in drinking water, he said.

Lead that reaches the brain through the bloodstream lowers the ability to interpret information and permanently lowers mental capacity.

"Lead is strongly attracted to sulfur enzymes in the brain," Newland said.

These sulfur enzymes are essential for the brain to function, he said.

When lead encounters sulfur, the newly formed compound is almost irreversibly bonded and results in permanent brain damage, Newland said.

"Children exposed to lead during development are particularly vulnerable," he said. "Once the damage is done, it cannot be reversed."

Lead in food is much more harmful than lead in the drinking water, he said.

Lead particulates are given off from the combustion of leaded gasolines and are inhaled by people, Newland said.

The reduction of lead in gasoline and the conversion of cars over the years has significantly decreased the level of lead particulates in the air, he said. Now about 80 to 90 percent of all cars run on unleaded, he added.

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COMMENTARY

Abortion issues still unanswered

By Michael Hayworth
Commentary Editor



Fifteen years after Roe vs. Wade, Sarah Weddington is still arguing in favor of abortion.

Unfortunately, the logic of her argument does not match the style and flair with which she presents it. In Tuesday's debate, she appeared much more at ease and in control than the often-wooden Phyllis Schlafly, but her main line of argument concerned a side issue.

Weddington spoke about the issue of who is to choose. The question she brought forth again and again is whether the state should have the right to decide what a woman will do with her pregnancy.

"Does the state have the right to decide, or does the individual?" she asked.

But that issue is a secondary question. The primary question deals with whether either has the right to decide.

Is a fetus a human being? That is the only question which can be at the center of the abortion debate. If a fetus is a human being, then no right of privacy on the part of the mother can allow her to abort it.

We do not accord all rights to all people. However, if any right is universal—accorded to all people—it is the right not to be killed.

If the fetus is a human being, it has a right not to be killed, and abortion is no different from murder. Indeed, it is pre-planned murder with help from an abortionist.

Only if the fetus is not a human being does the issue of choice come in. If it is not a human being, we must decide what it is. We may find it a valuable organism and still choose to protect its right to live so that it may become a human being, or we may choose to allow the mother to abort it.

The foundational question in determining the morality of abortion is this: What makes a human being a human being?

Is it brain function, as Weddington wanted to argue? We use that to de-

fine death in adults. But when brain function stops in an adult, it doesn't come back. In a fetus, brain function and all other features are in development.

Fetuses develop on a continuum, not in sharply obvious steps. How can we decide when a fetus becomes a person?

We know that by the seventh week of pregnancy, the major body parts are present and proportioned. By the fourth week of pregnancy, the heart appears and the brain begins to develop.

At the moment of conception, the fertilized egg contains all the information necessary for the development process and the continuum has begun.

If we rule that life begins in any certain stage and pick a day—say the day the brain appears—as the day when the fetus becomes a human life, what kind of life was it the day before that?

How can any point other than the beginning of the process, the moment of conception, be ruled as the beginning of human life?

Certainly, an embryo at that stage does not have all the rights an adult human has, but neither does a toddler or a teen-ager. Rights also develop on a continuum.

But the right that is inherent at the beginning of that continuum, the very bedrock of all other rights, is the right not to be killed.

Weddington's argument that the mother has the right to choose what to do with her pregnancy is a side issue that can only be considered if a fetus of a certain stage is not a human being. The Supreme Court evaded this issue, making Roe v. Wade one of the worst legal decisions of all time.

The court should have heeded the medical ethics maxim that says, "If there is a chance for error, err on the side of preserving life."

For abortion to be moral or legal, two questions should have to be answered:

If an embryo does not become a human being at the time of conception, when does it become human?

If it becomes human at some point after conception, what was it the day before it became human?

THE BUSH/RATHER INTERVIEW (THE SIMPLIFIED VERSION)



Bush got ambushed

By Leif Anderson
Columnist



CBS is well on its way to becoming the network of idiots.

Don't know what I mean? Last week, Jimmy "The Greek" Snyder became an idiot by discussing the "breeding" of black athletes. Monday night, it was Dan Rather's turn to be the idiot, conducting a pointless and stupid interview with Vice President George Bush.

Monday night's interview was supposedly to address "the issues" of the 1988 presidential campaign. Bush had planned on discussing issues such as education and the federal deficit.

Instead, Rather brought out his shovel and continued the pointless questions regarding the "Iranamuck"

Before the interview, Rather narrated a story about Bush's Iran-contra role and his contention that he raised concerns within the White House about the sale of arms to Iran.

"The record (concerning the scandal) is riddled with inconsistencies," Rather said, referring to a CBS News poll that found a third of Republicans questioned believe Bush is hiding something.

On many occasions, the vice president has expressed his feelings about the scandal. In fact, Bush has answered every question except one.

"You know what I'm hiding?" Bush asked. "What I told the president. That's the only thing. And I've answered every question put before me."

What more does the press want? The vice president has told all that he has been asked to.

During the interview, Rather was pressing "old news." Why? I'm not quite sure. Perhaps he doesn't like the vice president. No, that's too logical.

Rather ended the interview rather abruptly by asking Bush whether he would hold a news conference and answer all questions on the Iran-Contra scandal. Bush responded by saying that he had held numerous news conferences.

Rather, who seemed frustrated and angry, ended the debacle by responding "I gather the answer is no."

A network anchor should possess excellent skills of interviewing. That person should cover all issues of the campaign.

Those are skills Rather did not exhibit Monday night.

The immediate response to Rather's childish behavior was overwhelming. The interview prompted hundreds of calls to both CBS and Bush headquarters around the country.

The obvious consensus? Unhappiness about the way Rather conducted the interview.

CBS needs to do two things. First, the vice president should be interviewed by someone who will allow him to express his feelings on many issues.

Most importantly, Rather should be terminated as the CBS anchorman. Just like "The Greek," he has shown himself to be an embarrassment to CBS.

America must approve peace

By William O. Beach
Guest Columnist



Greg Davis' recent column on the U.S.-backed Contras was informative, but incomplete.

I have never been to Central America, but by looking at the larger picture, I can understand some of the policy that the Reagan Administration is pursuing.

Several of the top military men in Nicaragua have made open statements espousing the Marxist-Leninist doctrine. General Secretary Gorbachev has admitted on American television that the USSR has been supplying the Sandinistas with aid, both economic and other, and that the aid would continue.

The foot dragging regarding some peace process seems to be the classic ploy in politics, used to

undermine U.S. aid to the Contras. Granted, peace is possible, as long as it is in the interest of the United States.

Also, the United States and the Soviet Union have embarked on a new path of friendship, but please remember that if the Soviet economy was in better shape than it has been, this path would not be open. It is only open because the Soviets need it to be. And anyone who thinks that the Soviet Union has abandoned its adventurism is living in wonderland.

The president of Nicaragua has held out his arms to the Soviets, and their response has not been lukewarm. Daniel Ortega has been seen in the company of such luminaries as Fidel Castro and Moammar Ghaddafi. Friendships like these cause American policy makers to be somewhat loathe of Ortega.

Understandably so. The ending of the fighting, peace, and cessation of American aid are three very separate things.

As mentioned before, peace can

only come if it is agreeable to the United States. This is a very hard bone for people to swallow, and I can understand why. But to think that the Central Americans can ever truly run their own affairs independent of Washington is in direct defiance of the facts of life.

North America is just too close to its southern neighbors. Events that occur there can and do affect the U.S., and the idea that we ought to leave the poor Nicaraguans alone is dangerous.

The price now is high, aid is expensive and there are no guarantees that it will work. The Contras do undertake terrorist operations. But how much higher the price if communism were allowed to take hold?

The truth is that the United States will do anything in its power to stop Soviet or Soviet-backed influence in Central America.

Thus, it should be, unless we would welcome the day we wake up to a situation similar to October 1962, without the advantages we enjoyed then.

Schlafly, Weddington give poor performance

By John Moore
Guest Columnist



The abortion debate between Sarah Weddington and Phyllis Schlafly Tuesday night fell far short of being a rational and informative discussion. In fact, it was little more than a mindless squabble.

Tuesday night's debate could have covered virtually any topic and, because of an obvious lack of debating skills on the part of both Schlafly and Weddington, the result would have been the same.

The first thing the debaters did wrong was they allowed the topic of

conversation to wander from the subject of abortion. I made an audio recording of the debate and upon playback discovered that out of a total debate time of about 2 hours, 20 minutes was spent on irrelevant material.

Schlafly and Weddington deemed it necessary to discuss everything from the ERA movement to the death penalty. If those subjects play anything more than minor roles in the abortion issue, I certainly am not aware of it.

True, it was the audience that brought up the non-related topics. However, the debaters kept bouncing ideas off one another in an attempt to impress the audience with their infinite knowledge.

I heard someone seated behind me ask a friend what "comparable pay"

had to do with abortion. Good question.

Another mistake the debaters made is they spoke at the same time. Such an act is deemed unforgivable by most public speakers and is the sign of an unskilled debater.

How was the audience supposed to draw a logical conclusion about the debate topic when it couldn't hear half the material that was introduced?

With two opinions going at the same time, the most that could be heard and understood was a small portion of each.

What turned me off most about the debate was the "holier-than-thou" attitude exhibited by both Schlafly and Weddington. The audience appeared to agree that many perfectly legitimate questions were met with a rolling of Schlafly's eyes and one of

Weddington's barely suppressed giggles of disbelief.

Neither Schlafly nor Weddington was prepared to effectively back up any of the claims they made. This became more and more obvious as "facts" and "statistics" flew back and forth between the two debaters.

At one point in the debate Schlafly said, "Roe vs. Wade authorized the killing of the unborn baby throughout the 9 months of pregnancy."

Later, Weddington challenged Schlafly's statement by insisting that Schlafly had given erroneous information concerning the outcome of the 15-year-old court case.

Weddington said that the Supreme Court actually ruled that the state can only authorize an abortion up to and including the third trimester and that after the third trimester the state can

regulate abortions.

I am assuming that the primary purpose of the Schlafly vs. Weddington debate was to educate. At least that seems to be a fairly safe assumption considering the debate did take place at a major university where learning is supposed to be the basis for all activities.

If educating the public was the primary purpose of the debate, then Sarah Weddington and Phyllis Schlafly failed in their endeavor. I do not think that anyone who attended the debate had the opportunity to learn anything new about the abortion issue.

It is the duty of "professionals" such as these to educate the public and make each and every one of us think. When public speakers fail in their task, it is the audience who suffers.

TCU DAILY SKIFF

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