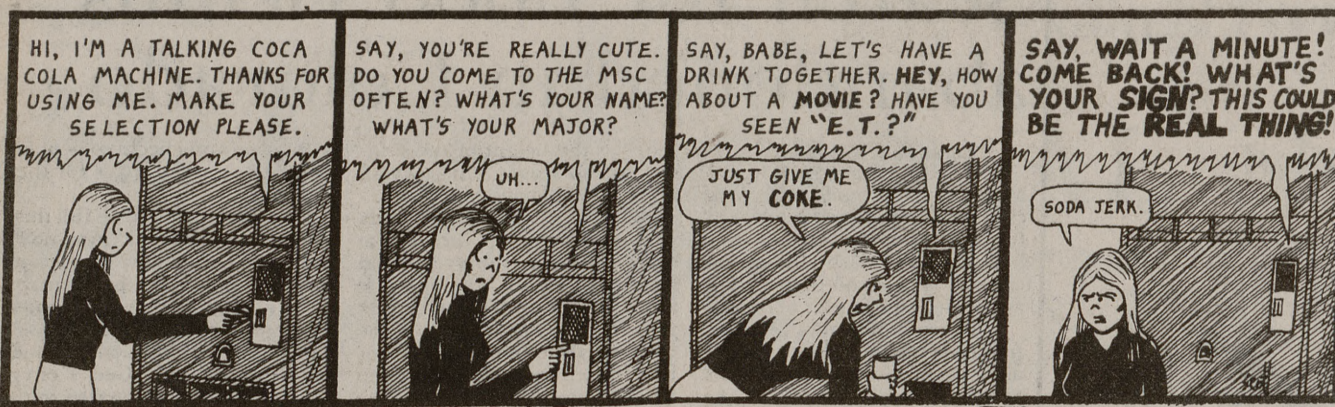


Warped

By Scott McCullar



Insanity

Continued from page 1
mitment to an institution.

On July 13, former Texas A&M student Leighton Hurst was declared not guilty by reason of insanity in the May 1981 stabbing death of his roommate, Joseph Dill. Dill, a freshman accounting major, was stabbed 48 times; Hurst testified he thought Dill was a Soviet spy trying to kill him.

Psychologists and psychiatrists for both the prosecution and defense testified that Hurst suffered at the time of the stabbing from "schizophreniform," which is relatively unpredictable and acute but fairly easy to treat. However, District Court Judge Bradley Smith ruled that 14 months of psychiatric and medical treatment had corrected Hurst's condition, and released him from custody. Hurst is still seeing a psychiatrist, although such treatment was not required by the court, and is attending welding classes.

"I just want to put it behind me," Hurst says. "I'm deeply sorry for what happened, and I feel real bad about the whole thing. All I want now is to pick up the pieces of my life." Barbara Sue Dill, the mother of the victim, says "no one who commits such a brutal crime should be set free. He should either be in a prison or a mental hospital. Suppose he has a relapse. He could hurt someone else."

Dr. Barney M. Davis, a Houston psychiatrist, testified for the prosecution in the Hurst trial. He said Friday the likelihood of a recurrence of Hurst's psychotic episode "is felt to be very small," and added that this particular disorder "is less likely to

recur than any other illness we see."

Davis said he is "relatively comfortable" with the decision not to commit Hurst to a mental institution.

"At the time that I saw him he was sane, and I would not predict that he would have a recurrence,"

However, Davis said, "I think there are some gaping holes in the whole process (of the insanity defense)." He emphasized, though, that he thinks the Hurst ruling was a good decision.

"Somebody else with a different family and different circumstances that had done the same thing would probably not be nearly as willing to continue treatment."

The decision to let the judge rule on Hurst's sanity came from Brazos County District Attorney Travis Bryan III, who said Friday that a jury trial would have been a waste of time: two psychiatrists and a psychologist for the state, along with a defense-hired psychiatrist, testified in a hearing that Hurst had been insane.

"The judge," Bryan said, "did the only thing he could have, given the status of the law and the evidence presented. I have no argument with the judge's decision." However, Bryan said the current insanity defense — not guilty by reason of insanity — should be abolished.

"We ought to have two different types of correctional facilities: one for normal prisoners and one for the mentally ill," he said. "I don't think it would be fair

to expose other prisoners to (mentally ill inmates)... and they (mentally ill inmates) need to have other types of rehabilitative treatment," he said.

"Nevertheless, what is needed is an incarceration for a long time."

However, Bryan is pessimistic about changes in the law. "The Hinckley case has focused attention on the insanity defense, but public outcry about the insanity defense is nothing new, and the law is still on the books."

"I assume it will stay the same. I don't agree with it, but I assume it will stay the way it is, despite the public backlash."

State Senator Kent Caperton also thinks changes are needed — but he is optimistic about the possibilities.

"There is a definite need to change the (current) law," Caperton said Friday. "A jury needs to be able to find a defendant guilty but insane at the time of the act... and the defendant be removed from society to protect society."

"We don't need a law that lets horrible acts go without separation from society."

"Without question, I think

we'll see the Texas Legislature deal with the issue in its next session. We'll never do away with the insanity defense altogether, but I think there definitely will be a change in the current procedures."

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Heart parasites fought by researchers at A&M

United Press International
WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. — A Wake Forest researcher whose work has drawn international attention recently is looking for ways to battle parasites that cause massive damage to the heart and other tissues in the human body.

Dr. Raymond Kuhn, working with scientists at Texas A&M University, is trying to determine how widespread the parasites are among coyotes in Texas.

Kuhn said scientists want to determine which of the body's immune responses are effective against the parasite *Trypanosoma cruzi*, which causes Chagas' disease.

Chagas' disease is the prim-

ary cause of heart disease in Central and South America, with one out of three deaths in South America attributed to the disease. Kuhn said it is not unusual for children ages 12 to 15 to die of heart attacks with little in the way of treatment.

The parasite is a formidable opponent because of its ability to survive the body's immune system, Kuhn said. During the first six weeks after the initial infection, the immune system is powerless against the fast-growing parasites, he said.

"If we knew how they survive, we could possibly figure a way to circumvent that mechanism," said Kuhn, whose work has attracted more than \$600,000 in grants from federal agencies

and the World Health Organization in the past two months. Kuhn said the parasite attacks all the body's tissues for some reason they don't know.

Kuhn said a single parasite all it takes to cause Chagas' disease.

As the insect bites and sucks his blood, it deposits the parasites, which live in the bug's intestines. When the victim later scratches the bite, the parasites enter the wound and enter the body.

Once the parasite enters the body, it bores into a cell and begins to reproduce.

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Astronauts show shuttle flight films

United Press International
SPACE CENTER, Houston — Astronauts Thomas "Ken" Mattingly and Henry Hartsfield Monday said the final test flight of space shuttle Columbia proved it is ready for routine operations and invited America to "come fly with us."

Mattingly said: "This agency has put together one of the most spectacular pieces of machinery that you can ever imagine."

Hartsfield agreed: "We do have a reusable, reliable and highly versatile vehicle. We have demonstrated a system maturity that far exceeds what one might have expected after just four flights."

Mattingly, 46, who commanded the seven-day mission that started June 27 in Florida and ended July 4 in California, and Hartsfield, 48, showed a 20-

minute slide show and film showing spectacular scenes of launch, orbit and landing as well as crew activity in space.

Hartsfield said the first four flights emphasized test objectives, but future flights will emphasize payload service as the shuttle program starts serving paying customers.

Hartsfield said the first commercial payload to fly on the shuttle, the continuous-flow electrophoresis system designed to purify biological materials in orbit, showed promise for the next five scheduled flights.

The device is being flown on the shuttle under contract with McDonnell-Douglas and Johnson & Johnson.

The fifth flight of space shuttle Columbia is scheduled for November.

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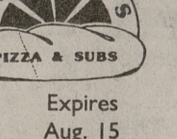
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