

Godwin, who may be faced with this choice is less than a year's time. He had two perspectives to the question of whether the education is more than the degree? First he felt that, "It depends on whether or not your family is in a financially stable situation and if so; the money can outweigh the school." Also people have to rate their priorities and if education is a key factor, they should stay in school. When asked whether he would leave early, he had a slightly different answer. He stated that his "Life is planned where he can do both, and he would [only] sign under the conditions, that he could come back and graduate the following year." In essence he feels that the money is worth more than the degree if you are forced to leave only under financial circumstances which involve supporting your family.

I do not blame sophomores Elton Brand, -the number one pick in the 1999 NBA draft-, William Avery and freshman, Corey Maggette for leaving -one of the country's finest basketball programs, - Duke University to pursue a chance at stardom. They left a lower level of stardom at Duke to embark on a higher level in the NBA. At this level their hard work not only gives them glory, but a nice paycheck as well. We must not forget our very own Antwan Jamison and Vince Carter who decided to go to the NBA. Vince Carter was even awarded the NBA Rookie of the Year for the 1998-99 basketball season. I am sure that he felt that he made the right decision. Most athletes who play college sports see it as a stepping stone to the pros. In the pros, they have the potential to become millionaires. There are not many jobs where a person with a college degree can make a million plus dollars a year, maybe not in a lifetime. By staying in college the player risks the chance of getting injured and the opportunity is gone within the wink of an eye. Even individuals who choose not to attend college, I wholeheartedly agree with their decision. Look at Kevin Garnett, who plays for Minnesota Timberwolves. He signed a six year \$125 million dollar contract in 1997.<sup>2</sup> It is virtually impossible for anyone to make those kinds of earnings. We can not forget Kobe Bryant with the 1100 SAT score,<sup>3</sup> who used his brains to make the smart choice. He can always go back and get his education later. He does not even have to worry about paying loans back when he is done. Everyone says that money is not everything, but it is the main reason why high school and

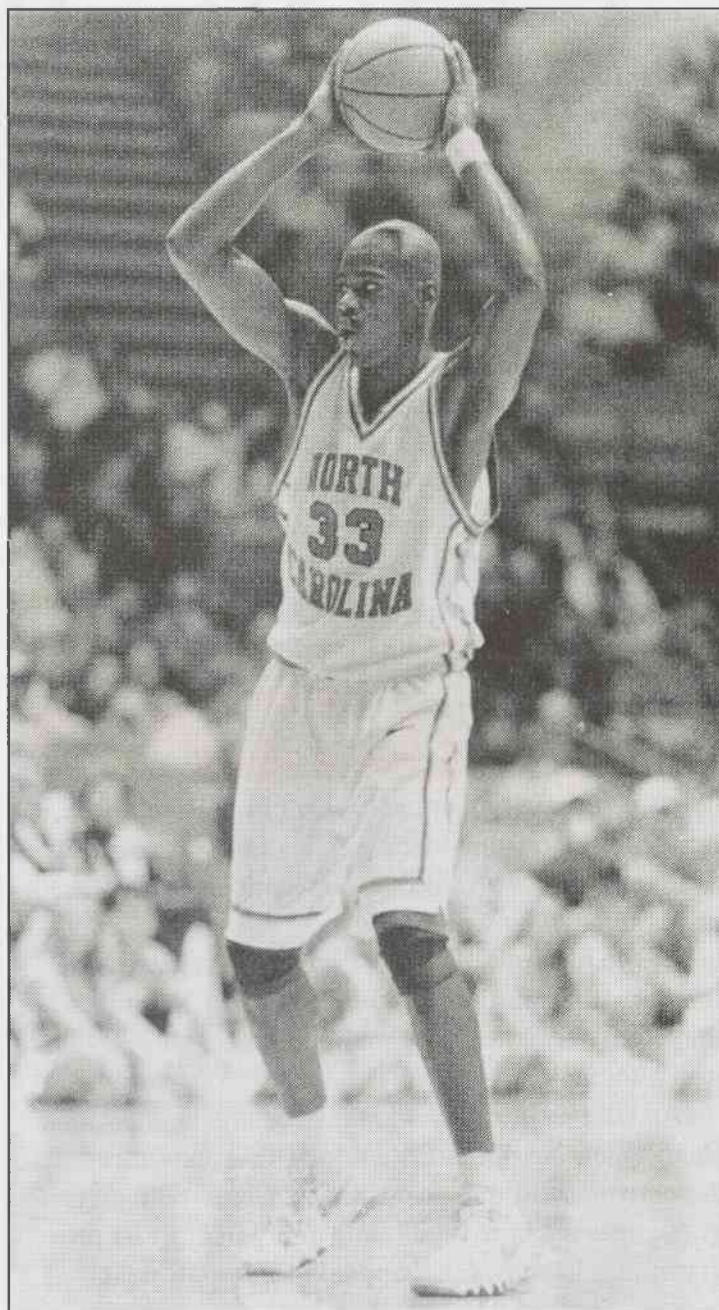


Photo: courtesy of UNC Sports Information

collegiate athletes opt to leave early. To answer the question, is the money worth more than the degree? It is not my call but, my answer is simple; seize the day. A person should not overlook going back to finish their education, but they should take the time and weigh their options. They will not always have the physical ability to shoot a jumper, hit a homerun or make a touchdown.