

The Seahawk

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Editorial Viewpoint...

Activism? On this campus?

For a brief, shining moment last Thursday, it looked as if UNCW was ever so slightly beginning to shake its well-known reputation for student apathy. A small group of students, taking umbrage at some of the Walt Disney Company's labor practices abroad, did more than just sit around and complain to each other about it.

They spoke out - publicly.
Holy Smokes!

Even though there were only five protestors, the very idea of students acting in such an activist manner certainly shocked some school officials. A couple of personnel from the Career Service office, which hosted the Walt Disney internship presentation where the demonstration occurred, had to get a quick refresher course on students' rights to voicing their opinion.

Not only is that covered in the UNCW Code of Student Life, but in the Constitution

of the United States; the Constitution carries an obscure passage known simply as the First Amendment, part of which reads, "Congress shall make no law respecting...the right of the people peaceably to assemble..."

All in all, though, both sides handled the situation reasonably well. There were no confrontations or raised tempers, no shouting, no disruptions of the planned flow of events, and no need for police presence (although one officer did appear for a few minutes just to make sure all was well).

The best part about it was that it showed that there are students at UNCW who do have the guts to stand up, speak out, and be counted. There are students who don't accept the status quo or the 'party line' about issues important to them, as so many others here do.

Keep it up, folks! Let's lose this pathetic reputation for apathy.



Editorial Viewpoint...

Where are we learning our language?

Since the invention of the telephone, society has shifted from the written focus of past centuries to more oral communication. Anyone could pick up the phone and have a quick conversation with a friend across the country whenever they wanted instead of writing a six-page epic detailing the last three months of his life that may take weeks to get to the recipient.

This shift in emphasis from the written to oral also changed the way educators taught writing. Punctuation and grammar, while still important, were not emphasized as much because they were not needed in every day life. Content was more important than form.

Though the telephone made social writing obsolete for most of the twentieth century, the proliferation of e-mail has made letter format nearly as important for the modern world as it was for the Victorians.

The problem with e-mail is that proper English vanishes as soon as someone logs on to their account. It's as if, because e-mail is almost always instantly discarded, it doesn't matter whether the sender capitalizes "I" or uses ellipses where a comma would be more appropriate.

Now that many e-mail providers come equipped with spell checking programs, the danger of looking like a complete idiot is somewhat lessened. But spell check

only catches words that aren't real, "likes" instead of "likes"; it will skip over "licks," although that is just as wrong in a sentence that is supposed to read "Bob likes Jane." Put the other words in place of "like," and spell check will only tell you that "likes" is wrong. As far as the computer is concerned, "licks" is okay, though the recipient may have another opinion.

The same problems seen in casual e-mails are also apparent when a student relies on spelling and grammar checking programs to catch all the mistakes in a paper, proposal or lab.

Upper-level professors expect that students to be able to write clearly on essay tests, proposals and lab write ups. Students who never learned the rules find themselves losing points on papers simply because they never learned the rules.

What can be done about students who graduate from college and cannot write a clear and intelligent sentence? Do we blame the English department for not teaching something students are expected to know before they come to college? Do we blame the students themselves for simply not knowing the basic rules of the English language? That hardly seems fair, since the technical aspects of our language are contradictory and confusing to people who have never been taught the rules.

Letters To The Editor

Dear Editor,

We were looking through the paper and noticed that there are no articles concerning outdoor track and field. Our season has been in progress for quite some time now and we still have no publication. Our mens team has been CAA championships for three years in a row and are striving for their fourth.

This is an extremely big accomplishment and deserves to be followed. The women's team has also been progressing immensely towards their first-ever CAA championship. We are the largest team on campus, although we still don't receive any recognition.

We would greatly appreciate it if you would take some time and follow the UNCW track and field team. Thank you for your time.

Track and Field Athletes

(Editor's Note: For more on the issue of sports coverage, please see 'Sport Notes' on page 19.)

Dear Editor,

On behalf of the Azalea Dog Training Club, I would sincerely like to thank all the people who helped me increase awareness about this not-for-profit organization. In particular, I would like to extend my gratitude to those who donated their precious time and efforts in order to make this worthwhile project successful. They are Susie Bartlett, Michael Batuyios, Jennifer Bostic, David Brown, Andrea Casiano, Pia Collier, Rhiannon Dillard, Ashley Fagundus, Angela Goss, Susan Hughes, Ashley Kooman, James Mendillo, Joseph Morcos, Dianne Matthews, Vincent Nelson, Julie Owen, Kimberly Robles, Jennifer Schaar, Jessica Slusser and Mandy Stanfield.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

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