

What is the Super Bowl?



By Sage Donpineo
STAFF WRITER

The viewing audience world-wide for the World Cup was 700 million. The viewing audience in the U.S. alone for the Super Bowl last year was 106 million.

Why is the Super Bowl such a big deal?

In a way, it seems to recall the primitive days of our earlier ancestors — men using force to get what they want.

But maybe that is why it is so exciting to watch. The gladiator aspect of the game — two teams physically duking it out — brings out our blood-thirsty, frenzied side. It's action-packed with a side of danger, guaranteed to ramp up the adrenaline and testosterone.

A study by Scientific American shows that watching your team win boosts testosterone, while the fans of the losing team have a decrease in their testosterone levels. This plays into the notion of social domination and competitiveness that has ensured our species' survival — sur-

vival of the fittest.

Perhaps we are biologically prone to become somewhat addicted to these exhilarating and dangerous sports. After all, nobody watches chess for the excitement.

Physicality aside, one has to wonder at the ethics of spending \$2.5 million on a 30-second ad which, according to CBS, was the average rate last year. The most watched ad last year was the Betty White Snickers ad, which has more than two million views on YouTube.

I admit I enjoy watching the Super Bowl ads as much as the next person, but I don't think that's an adequate justification for indulging in the pomp and circumstance of the Super Bowl. And that's before all the money spent on the halftime show.

America is a land where we do everything big — big cars, big houses, and big sporting events. But while half the country is going big, the other half is going hungry.

What if the NFL used some of the millions of dollars the Super Bowl generated to promote sports in disadvantaged neighborhoods? I would feel a lot better about

watching the Super Bowl if they made even a small effort to help their less fortunate viewers use proceeds from their Super Bowl fortune.

All in all, despite its problems, the Super Bowl is something we do together as a nation. It's something

that unifies us. At the same time, on the same day, a third of our country sits down and watches the Super Bowl, a sporting event that has, arguably, overtaken the World Series. Regardless of your opinion of the event, you have to agree that, in today's world, unity is something we all need to strive for.

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Religious Emphasis Week opens spiritual dialogue



By Andrew Glass
STAFF WRITER

Earlier this month I sent in a letter resigning my membership to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon).

This happened with the realization that I needed to do a bit more soul-searching. Last semester, I began attending the QLSP Friday worship and just recently joined the Men's spirituality group.

It was because of all this, that I was excited for Religious Emphasis Week this year. I was hoping to hear a heart-felt discussion of religious values and concerns and was not disappointed.

I was deeply struck by the honesty and sincerity of those who joined in the discussions held on campus throughout the week.

"If you came tonight for answers, you're not going to get them," said Rev. Dr. Lindon Eaves, an Episcopal priest and geneticist. This statement described what the week was about.

The purpose of Religious Emphasis Week — and religion in general — is not necessarily to be able to say you found the answers to the difficult questions but to search for them. That is why the activities put on by the Guilford Council of Religious Organizations were discussion-based.

Eaves' role as a scientist and a priest, seemingly contradictory, was eye-opening. During Eaves'

The discussions during these events gave me hope.

I found comfort for my newly sparked spiritual journey in the panel "Faith after Four Years at Guilford." Thanks to the absence of a large audience, we were able to sit in a circle and discuss informally.

At the panel, seniors discussed their religious experience at Guilford, both good and bad. They talked of when they felt the same discouragement and lack of faith that I have felt recently and how they were changed and strengthened by it.

The lack of an audience made me realize the inaction of large portions of the Guilford community in taking advantage of these activities designed to help college students. I understand that in college sometimes mentioning "God" is taboo, however, that makes the dialogue all the more needed.

These discussions and activities were made for the students, and without their participation, they cannot be successful. If you consider yourself religious, spiritual, or don't know or don't care, you have a voice that needs to be heard. And maybe you'll learn something about yourself in the process. I did.

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enlightening lecture, "Spirituality, Cosmology, and Anthropology," he spoke of how both science and religion claim to have a certainty that reality doesn't necessarily support, drawing a comparison between what many consider to be polar opposites.

"The majority of religion is finding the language of awe," he said.

BURSTING THE BUBBLE

Weighing the value of progress in schools



Kara Thomas
FORUM EDITOR

Seeing Early College students walk through campus on their way to class is not an unusual or noteworthy sight at Guilford. And soon it will be just as accepted at UNCG.

The Guilford County Board of Education recently approved the creation of a middle college program geared towards high school students who are both struggling in traditional high schools and are interested in health-related fields. This program, in addition to helping the students succeed and hopefully lowering high school dropout rates, will also help solidify the recently restructured health sciences program at UNCG.

The creation of this new middle college program may not seem newsworthy by itself. But when you know that, according to Teacherportal.com, North Carolina ranks in the bottom 50 percent of the country for average teacher salaries, the creation of an expensive new program seems less favorable.

And when you know that, according to the News and Record, the salary for the principal of this program — which will open with about 50 students — is going to be \$99,000, the creation of this expensive new program seems almost unreasonable. And that doesn't even include the salaries for the three full-time teachers that the program will open with.

Improving education should always be a goal because the children in school today will become the people making all the decisions tomorrow. But this new program won't be a serious improvement when every other higher education institute in the city already has early or middle college programs.

"I don't think we've spent the time molding and shaping and tweaking the existing middle colleges we have," Deena Hayes, a Board of Education member, said to the News and Record.

With that in mind, this new middle college program will simply be another weight on an overly strained school district. And this new weight will be a costly one.

The program will be funded in part by private funds, but will also draw on federal dropout prevention funds and money from the state budget, according to the News and Record.

"During tough budget times, it's even more important to use proven ideas to expand educational opportunities for our students," said Maurice Green, Guilford County Schools superintendent.

Green refers to Guilford County's middle and early college programs as "proven" because the school district is supposedly a national leader for offering its high volume of innovative high school programs, according to Beth Folger, Guilford County schools' chief academic officer.

If that is in fact the case and the beyond basic high school programs that Guilford County schools offer are some of the best nationally, than shouldn't our teacher pay be some of the best nationally? The people that are the backbone of those seemingly exceptional programs, the people who teach these children and inspire them to stay in school, should also reap the benefits of the innovation.