

The Daily Tar Heel

97th year of editorial freedom

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Take the heat

Valvano responsible for his players

Jim Valvano announced last week that he does not plan to resign as N.C. State University's basketball coach and he believes the university is to blame for the academic abuses in the athletic program. Instead of trying to place the blame and save face, Valvano should be more concerned with the education of his basketball players and rebuilding NCSU's academic integrity.

board opinion

Valvano said he did not feel responsible for wrongdoing in the university's athletic program. He said he had been trying to strengthen academics in the program and had not been aware of the abuses uncovered during the recent investigations. Is it possible that Valvano, who until recently was athletic director, was such an out-of-touch administrator that he was completely unaware of the NCAA and academic violations in his own basketball program?

Valvano said he did not believe his players did anything not allowed by the university's system. In response to the call for his resignation, he said he should be allowed to remain as basketball coach to help repair problems in the system. As athletic director, Valvano had his opportunity to shape policy in the NCSU athletic program. The reports of abuses show clearly just how he chose to shape it.

And if he saw problems, Valvano should have used his position as athletic director to address these flaws. Instead, he chose to ignore them and refused to work with investigators looking into the allegations.

Valvano has said he did not initially cooperate with the investigation of the Poole Commission, made up of members of the UNC Board of Governors, because

university officials told him it was not necessary. This was an excellent opportunity to play an active role in uncovering the problems in NCSU athletics, but Valvano chose to focus on the NCAA investigation because "that's the body that can really put your program out of business." Obviously, Valvano is more concerned with threats to his program than the education of the young men under his guidance.

The coach also has defended the low graduation rate of his basketball players by arguing that it is similar to the rate for the university's student body. But his low rate is indefensible — since 1980, 24 percent of Valvano's players have graduated, a figure that increases to 32 percent when the number of players who transfer and graduate from other colleges are included. Under Dean Smith, 164 of 168 UNC basketball lettermen have graduated.

Valvano argues that he is not responsible for the basketball program's graduation rate because he is not a teacher, but he should still feel responsible for putting his players' future ahead of his win-loss record. Valvano also claims he does not influence the admissions process, but it is doubtful that former basketball standout Chris Washburn's 470 SAT scores impressed the admissions board.

While a coach's job is to win games, a quality education must be the main priority. With the establishment of a new compliance officer to ensure that the university abides by NCAA rules, NCSU officials are taking the first tentative steps toward positive change. Valvano should forget about trying to place the blame on the university and devote his energies and influence to focusing on why he is there — to help his basketball players.

SEACing solutions

Saving world requires everyone's help

Members of the Campus Y's Student Environmental Action Coalition are finally getting a chance to catch their breath after an eventful — not to mention highly successful — weekend. Threshold, a monumental effort to unite students from across the country for a conference on the environment, was a tribute to the careful planning and unwavering dedication of its organizers. Now it's time for the entire UNC campus to unite and support SEAC's efforts to keep the enthusiasm and momentum from the conference going.

SEAC's national campaign, chosen by participants' votes at the conclusion of the conference, is to save the Tongass National Forest. The forest, which covers most of Alaska's 500-mile long panhandle, is being destroyed by timber companies that have contracts allowing them to cut down trees at low prices. The logging not

only disrupts salmon streams in the area, but it also poses a threat to one of the nation's great wilderness areas. While concern for tropical deforestation grows in this nation, one of our own forests desperately needs our attention.

While some may feel this goal focuses on an issue too remote to arouse concern, it is probably a very good choice for a first attempt at a unified nationwide campaign. By having a specific target, students across the country will truly be working together on a common goal. Concrete paths to achieving this goal also exist, chiefly through the nationwide lobbying of Congress to enact strict legislation that would preserve the forest. This means that everyone's efforts will be directed toward and impact upon the same place, which will be more effective than more diffused action.

Other suggestions for national campaigns that focused on community problems, while being less appropriate for a unifying national goal as the Tongass Forest, should certainly not be forgotten. Perhaps the most outstanding of those was the suggestion that students conduct "audits" to find out if their schools have ties with businesses whose activities are detrimental to the environment and to protest any such ties. This could be very productive, in that it would encourage environmental responsibility on the parts of the nation's universities, while at the same time sending a message to irresponsible corporations to clean up their acts.

There is no reason that students at a university the size of UNC cannot lend strong support to students at other schools to conquer the threat to the Tongass Forest and at the same time start to question their own school's impact upon the environment. But it will take the cooperation of the entire campus, not just SEAC members.

Anyone who attended any part of the conference came away both inspired and shaken. The sincere concern for improving the environment displayed by such a huge number of students was truly moving. At the same time, however, Threshold participants learned about and discussed an overwhelming number of environmental crises that require immediate attention, from dioxin-contaminated bleaches used to whiten coffee filters and milk cartons to the frightening prospects of global warming. Fortunately, many people are ready to act against these problems, but it will require everyone's effort to truly eradicate them all. — Mary Jo Dunnington

The Daily Tar Heel

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Trick or Treat.

Jimmy

College love in multiples of seven

On Halloween night, a couple of girls I've been friends with for many years applied various flammable petroleum by-products to my hair to make it stand up as though I'd dropped the waffle iron in the bathtub, in an effort to turn me into my costume, Wolfgang Mozart's bastard brother Ed. While they carved huge slices out of the ozone layer with propane spritzers and freon mousse, I asked them the same question any over-inquisitive dork with nothing better to think about would ask.

"So, how's your romantic life?" Amy scowled and lashed out about some romantically dyslexic dude in Georgia and Chris just sighed with the disillusionment reserved for small children with kites on rainy days. It was then, like a tired parent at a picnic, I realized that the days are getting shorter, the trees are turning a cold red and yellow, and November, the treacherous month for the weak of heart, is here.

November being the sexual land mine month it is, and with so many people I've seen going through terrible trouble with their relationships right now, I guess this is as good a time as any to spew a few observations I've made in my short little lifespan walking around on this planet.

"That's 49 years to you and me, folks." The first thing to learn is that due to the social and academic whirlwind, you age in dog years in college; that is, every day you live is worth seven days in the real world. Every week you spend with a romantic partner is worth a month and a half outside the Research Triangle — and you didn't wait two hours for him in the Pit, you waited 14. Things happen so quickly here that you can go from not knowing someone from Adam to kissing them, from breaking up with them to plotting an elaborate revenge, all within the course of one week. Combine that with the fact that we still have all sorts of uncounted hormones whizzing around our bodies, the very junior high freakazoid chemicals that allow us to go into a shower on top of the world and emerge suicidal, and you will understand how hard it is to keep a comfortable, nurturing relationship around here. So, sufferers, rest assured that you are doing a good job just keeping yourself from falling down the front steps of Lenoir. OK?

What's worse, anger or boredom? So eventually comes the age-old question: Is it worse to have no hope of ever meeting the right



Ian Williams Wednesday's Child

person, drowning in a sea of asexual indifference, dying an old maid/man because nobody interesting ever came along ... or to have a hopeless crush on someone who shows absolutely no signs of reciprocating? Well, obviously nobody wants either etched on their tombstone, but if you look at the way we live our lives, the answer's pretty obvious. Everything about college seems to be geared toward meeting the other gender — mixers, bars, clothing stores, restaurants, dorm parties, clear down to where we sit in class. I'd wager that thinking about the other sex takes up about 85 percent of all waking hours' thought.

Now us humans have to be a little off-balance to operate; we need to be slightly miserable to drive us to do anything, or else we'd just sit around on cushions eating grapes and sniffing white-out ... so it is better to have an unreciprocated love for someone else, if only because it gives us something to think about. A mental scratching post, if you will. And don't worry, nobody here's going to die an old maid just yet, unless I get hit by one of those damn trolleys tomorrow.

Beauty, Age, and Where Guys Go Wrong. Maybe they missed a key week in science class in third grade, or maybe they watched one too many episodes of Charlie's Angels or something, but guys seem to suffer from the delusion that not only is it just the pretty girls in life that are suitable for furthering the race, but that pretty women stay pretty forever and ever. I realize that is hopelessly reverse sexist, but it is a true fact that a part of every guy wouldn't mind pledging eternal allegiance to either Miss November or Paula Abdul. It takes a rare, mature mind to realize that long after the opposite sex starts gettin' kinda leathery, intelligent and cool men and women stay intelligent and cool forever and ever.

The Worst Storms Start Slowly. For some reason, we think of good things as regular, common occurrences (good friends, wonderful food, sunny days) and bad things as sharp,

sudden thunderbolts of crap (earthquakes, car crashes, tetanus shots) — things that take only a microsecond to wreak havoc. When you're dealing with relationships, however, it's absolutely unbelievable how easy it is to slip into a deep sleep while things gradually grow awful. When I went home for Christmas my freshman year, my parents started to get along a lot worse than usual. After a few days of growing tension and horrific dinner conversations, I sat with my baby sister and brother on Christmas Eve, watching the twinkling Christmas tree lights, and listening to my parents throw antiques at each other upstairs. That night, after 23 years of marriage, my dad walked out and didn't come back, and when I walked out into the snow in the middle of the night, I realized a couple of things. So many things happen for so long while you aren't looking, and if you keep putting off dealing with a problem, you can go a whole lifetime in a bad dream. And the other thing I found out was that I don't really ever have to grow up. I've seen what some people do when they get there, and I think I like my Etch-a-Sketch a whole lot better.

What's wrong with a kiss? Bear with me. I saw a show on PBS the other day that talked about a possible sister star to the sun that revolves back around every few million years. This, they believe, may be responsible for the very regular periodic mass extinctions that have occurred, including the dinosaurs. The way I hear it, the sun will become a red giant in a few billion years, dwarfing the earth in fiery hydrogen and helium. We have an average of 55 years left to live; that is, if we survive tectonic plate shifting, various terminal diseases, and asteroid collisions that might hit this insignificant little planet in the middle of this average galaxy.

So again I ask, what's wrong with a kiss? If two people are attracted to each other, and the problems are few, kiss each other, damn it! Show some affection! Do something stupid, daring or even illegal! As long as you don't hurt anybody, the world is your romantic oyster. And I promise, your conscience, your parents, the sister star and Ed Mozart will wish you well ...

Ian Williams is a senior music and psychology major from Los Angeles, Calif., who spent his formative years designing "I Luv Ya" Hallmark cards.

Readers' Forum

Spangler's behavior not at all surprising

To the editor:
I don't know much of the details of the athletics scandal at N.C. State, but it is nice to know that your staff cares enough to start digging into the ethical questions raised by UNC-system President C.D. Spangler's behavior (Spangler strikes out: UNC-system president should resign, Oct. 26). Although the whole mess saddens me, it doesn't surprise me, which perhaps is worse.

We live in interesting times, folks. Jim Valvano rides to riches and fame on the backs of illiterate boys barely old enough to vote. Spangler finds time to quash the Poole report after his failed buyout bid for R.J. Reynolds and between corporate board meetings.

On the national level, our former president whores himself and the highest office in our nation to the Japanese for \$2 million. His former HUD secretary, occupant of an office with enormous power to help people who so desperately need it, refuses to answer questions about his eight years of managing a feeding trough for crooked contractors.

Back in the Tar Heel state, we watch a preacher get 45 years in prison for ripping off his followers, while the Carolina football team racks up another year of losses after a booster club with fistfuls of dollars and no sense forced out a perfectly competent, decent and successful coach.

Yeah, interesting times. The scary part is that when you get on a roll reciting this stuff, it's hard to run out of examples.

Where did these people come

from, anyway? Did they come from alien pods? Did they drink too much fluoridated water?

I'm not sure, but I suspect the answer's not that simple. I do know, though, as a graduate student in the business school — one of the nation's top-ranked schools of business — that the grapevine says more than one graduate business student last year was caught red-handed cheating. Apparently they are being allowed to finish their studies, graduate and walk out with the same piece of paper that I'll get. You figure it out.

MARK PRUETT
Graduate Student
Business

Headline acronyms confusing to readers

To the editor:
What is happening to the Daily Tar Heel? Lately the headlines have been filled with references to TDI, SRC, CIAAC, BOT and a myriad of other miscellaneous groups of letters. Now, I know that almost every group these days feels the need to use acronyms to describe themselves and their pet causes, but the Tar Heel's use of acronyms in headlines has gotten out of control.

One front page headline on Monday, Oct. 30, contained three acronyms. Another headline the same day, on the same page had two.

This jumble of letters in big type is very confusing to read. With the number of acronyms in front page headlines, it takes almost as long to decode the headline as it does to read the story. In

some cases you have to read the story just to figure out what the headline is about.

I always thought the headline was supposed to tell you what the story was about.

According to the Associated Press Style Book, acronyms are not supposed to be thrown in whenever it's convenient ... "In general, avoid alphabet soup. Do not use abbreviations or acronyms which the reader would not quickly recognize."

If I have to read a story to find out what an acronym in a headline stands for, then that acronym is not one I would "quickly recognize."

I hope the writers and copy editors of The Daily Tar Heel take this as a challenge to write professional, understandable headlines and to leave the alphabet soup to Campbell's.

KATHERINE MOORE
Senior
Journalism

McKinley's sentence as fair as any other

To the editor:
Jim Bakker should not be required to serve a jail term because thousands of people rely on him for spiritual guidance.

As ridiculous as this may seem, it is exactly the same logic that the DTH and Lisa Jordan use in their respective articles ("McKinley's punishment too severe" and "Sentence does not just punish the guilty one," Oct. 30) regarding the sentencing of Dale McKinley.

Simply because innocent people are affected by a sentence should

never affect its severity. If a corporate executive is convicted of driving drunk, no one suggests that the executive be released because a jail term would adversely affect his business. The sad truth is that nearly every conviction in any court results in some loss by an innocent party.

But the fact that innocent people are hurt is not the fault of the court. Nor is it the responsibility of the court to protect those people. The drunken executive took responsibility for his actions when he got behind the wheel, and Dale McKinley took responsibility for his actions time and time again through his leadership in the CIAAC protests. Both knew the possible consequences of their actions; and if they didn't, they should have. Ignorance of the law is never a defense.

I am sorry for the 50 students who have lost an apparently bright and interesting teacher. But the honor court cannot and should not use that as a basis for determining the severity of the punishment. If they do then they are in effect saying, "We will punish the guilty based on who they are and not on what they did," or in other words, "Jim Bakker should be a free man."

TRENT GAZZAWAY
Senior
Accounting

Letters policy

The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments and criticisms. When writing letters to the editor, please follow these guidelines:

• All letters must be dated and signed by the author(s), with a limit of two signatures per letter.