

# Discussion Key to Reforming UNC Honor System

It has been a couple months since the open Honor Court case of two computer science students brought accusations of incompetence and bias across the pages of The Daily Tar Heel.

But now that the controversy has passed, it's time for us to move on and address the real question here: Was this case an aberration, or are there real problems to be addressed with the honor system? And if so, what's the best way to handle them?

We are not alone in asking these questions. The University of Virginia has been grappling with reforming its own honor system for years. Like ours, it is one of the school's most valued traditions.

Just before Thanksgiving, a special panel reviewing UVA's honor system suggested major changes for its time-honored tradition. After concluding its review, the panel said there were clear racial disparities in the system and that its cumbersome process made the school liable to lawsuits.

While we don't necessarily face all the same problems at UNC, the recent computer science

## RUDY KLEUSTEUBER POINT OF VIEW

cheating cases, where 24 students were charged from one class, have demonstrated that our own system still has issues.

The chancellor himself just recently asked the faculty for a review of our own system. "No systems is without flaws," he told the DTH last week. "I'm just asking questions."

And that's exactly what we should be doing. The review by faculty certainly will help us find flaws in our system.

But we, the students, also need to form our own assessment. Or at the very least, we should start talking about where we want to go from here.

We need to ask how we want our Honor Code enforced – whether the system that tried those 24 students this fall is the same system you'd trust with your own academic fate. And we need to ask ourselves exactly what "honor" means to us today.

We can consider just making our system simpler.

At UVA, the review panel recommended keeping its "single sanction," which automatically expels any student convicted of cheating. Furthermore, any witness who doesn't turn cheaters in immediately is equally guilty and gets the same punishment.

But I think we're moving in the opposite direction here. In fact, UNC recently did away with its own "rat clause," which requires students to snitch on their classmates. And systems that are simpler aren't necessarily more fair.

Maybe what we need is simply to have our system be more visible – better understood and acknowledged by the students. But because of University rules and, more importantly, federal law, disciplinary hearings at UNC must be held behind closed doors.

In general, unless the student requests that the hearing be open or that the record be disclosed, no information about that hearing can be given to the general public. The result of this is that the rest of us have only second-hand knowledge of how the honor system works.

For the sake of discussion, consider this possible solution. In the real world outside UNC, everyone is invested in the legal system through jury duty. In fact, it's jury duty that makes us trust that convictions handed down in court are (to use Al Gore's favorite phrase) "the will of the people."

What if we had jury duty for honor cases at UNC? Like in the real world, it would need to be mandatory, and students would need some sort of orientation on how our student laws work before they could hear a case. It sounds like a hassle, but consider the benefits: Many UNC students would have the opportunity to serve, giving a better understanding within the student body of how the system works.

We might also have more confidence that the system was ultimately being run by average students, rather than a group of self-selected Honor Court appointees – a group that DTH columnist Ashley Stephenson disdainfully described as "college kids in grownup clothes."

But then again, maybe that's a bad idea. It would mean that this small-world campus might get a little smaller; you might meet some-

body only to realize that you convicted him or her last year for plagiarism.

Or maybe you have an even better idea? Even if you just want to talk, there are students and faculty who want to listen. To begin an ongoing discussion about the honor system, the Student Advisory Committee to the Chancellor is holding an informal open forum at 7 p.m. today in Paul Green Theater.

If you can't make it, don't worry: There will be an even bigger discussion at the beginning of next semester. If you don't go to a discussion, consider sending a quick note to your Student Congress representative or to anybody involved in the honor process.

Don't let others decide what happens for you, because ultimately the system belongs to all of us. Make your own decisions, and then make your voice heard.

Rudy Kleusteuber is a junior biology major from McLean, Va., who swears he has neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this editorial. He can be reached at rudytootie@hotmail.com.

# Help Prevent Sexual Assault

Dear Advocates for Sexual Assault Prevention,

I didn't even realize what I was doing until I saw the sign: Orange County Rape Crisis Center. I could not believe that I was going to a rape crisis center. Somehow coming to this building and beginning this process made what had happened to me years before finally real, and I didn't like that feeling.

It was a lot easier to try to ignore what had happened, but it was always there – every time I kissed another guy, every time I passed the place where I had been attacked, every time someone said the word "rape." I had been raped – a fact which I had not faced until now, until I saw the sign for the rape crisis center.

It was not fair that I was forced to do this. I knew what terrible things sometimes happened to women – but never did I imagine that something like that would happen to me. But it had. And as I entered the rape crisis center for the first time and met the other anonymous, equally nervous women, all I wanted to do was go home – back to life in Carrboro and forget that I had ever been there.

Ten weeks later, I emerged from that same place a different person – 10 weeks full of all the expected crying and Kleenex and also full of real joy and friendship. I could never tell what happened inside the walls of the rape crisis center, so I won't try. It is enough to say that it gave me hope for my future and myself. I am now able to really feel what happened to me. To grieve for the part of me that was lost. To understand the part of me that has changed. To comfort the part that still hurts. But, more importantly, I am able to celebrate the better parts of myself. The rape was a tragedy. But the healing process has been beautiful. And I am a better person for it. When I first entered the rape crisis center I was terrified to

## KATHRYN KOOISTRA KINDL SHINN POINT OF VIEW

be there, but when I left ten weeks later, I was terrified to be without it...

Sincerely,  
A Survivor

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While this is a friend's story and not our own, it's a common story for those that have benefited from the Orange County Rape Crisis Center. This story of healing and survival is the reality for countless sexual assault survivors. Reality is difficult to face sometimes, especially regarding painful issues. We at Advocates for Sexual Assault Prevention are all too aware of the reality of sexual assault. However, we know that many students might not be, so we want to set the record straight.

Reality check No. 1: Sexual assault happens to people you know. While you might think you don't know anyone who has been assaulted, you probably do. Rape is not something that happens in other places to other people who are different from you and your friends. It can happen to anyone; Chapel Hill is not immune to this. Does anyone remember BOLO?

Reality Check No. 2: Rape is not a "women's problem" – it's a social problem with far-reaching consequences. It can lead to depression, suicide, fears of intimacy... the list is endless. And while we have the stereotype that women are the victims, up to 12 percent of men have experienced some sort of sexual assault or violation.

Reality check No. 3: The rape crisis center needs UNC's support. The center depends on the sweat of its volunteers and generous donations to keep offering help to survivors. We at

A.S.A.P. are hosting Night of the Divas, a fund-raiser for the center, at 7 p.m. Thursday in the Great Hall. Night of the Divas will feature UNC's and the community's finest dancers, dramatists and musicians as they show their diva style and sing, dance or act to raise money for the center. With a line-up including Opeyo!, Modernextension, blank canvas, Carolina Style Tap, Jazz and Ballet, Kamikazi Hip Hop and Mezmerhythm, plus individual performers, it's a night you won't want to miss. The cost? Three dollars. That's less than a pack of cigarettes, less than one beer, less than a movie – for two hours of entertainment. You can still go out and celebrate your Thursday night, but come see the divas first.

We could tell you all the statistics. We could tell you that one in four college women will be the victim of a rape or attempted rape. We could tell you that 68 percent of rape victims know their attacker. We could tell you that one in three sexual assault survivors are under the age of 12. But we aren't trying to frighten you with a bunch of numbers. We want to tell you that you can help. You can come to the Night of the Divas, bring a friend, enjoy the show, and know that you are doing your part to help a truly noble cause.

We at A.S.A.P. are grateful to be able to give back to the organization which gave so much to a friend.

Kathryn Kooistra is a senior women's studies major from Cary. She is the co-chairwoman of Advocates for Sexual Assault Prevention. Reach her at kooistra@email.unc.edu. Kindl Shinn is a sophomore history and political science major from Concord. She is a member of the Night of the Divas steering committee. Reach her at kshinn@email.unc.edu.

# Clarifying Cultural Confusion

I would like to clear up a few things about my article Nov. 20. It was not my intention to offend anyone, and I would like to apologize to anyone who found it insulting. My major is international studies, and my interest lies in learning and understanding differences between cultures, and especially between needs to have nationalistic ideas. I myself don't understand nationalism, and perhaps I should have made that clear in my last article. I was not trying to suggest that Zimbabwe is a better place than the United States and my comments about the election were part tongue-in-cheek, part honesty. Besides, Zimbabwe has a dictator!

I just believe that if someone can become president based on an electoral vote and not a popular vote, there is something wrong with democracy. That is not "one person, one vote." But it is miles closer to a democracy than Zimbabwe, and other countries, have to offer. I don't feel that I need Political Science 41 to have these opinions. And I don't think that they are completely outrageous either. I have listened to enough talk shows and read enough articles on the subject to know that I am not the only person to have these opinions.

I am still so amazed that people in this country are even allowed to have an opinion. When I was living in Zimbabwe and the Clinton scandal was going on, I was shocked that people have this freedom of speech. I grew up in a country where almost all forms of media are government-run and where people disappear when their ideas differ from those of the president. That made the experience of watching a president nearly lose everything, including his wife, just because people are allowed to speak out, highly impressive. I am not saying that I agreed with the charges: I felt that Clinton's private life was none of the public's business – at least up until he lied under oath.

When I moved to this country two years ago, I couldn't believe that people didn't talk about when they would be leaving it. In Zimbabwe, I grew up with the idea that I would be leaving. It was never really an option for me to stay there. And I accepted that idea, because it was the norm. It is really weird to come here. Even two years later, I am shocked that people aren't talking about when they can "get out." This is your home... and you get to stay here!

My situation is as follows: I am a United States resident,

## KIRSTY CARTER POINT OF VIEW

and have only lived here for two years. I believe that I am Zimbabwean, having lived there for 18 years, yet I have no right to live there anymore because of the crappy law there that states if you

leave for more than one year, you lose your right to live there again. I have never lived in the United Kingdom, yet I am a British citizen. How screwed up is that? This, I think, is what has made me a non-nationalistic person.

I can't see anything from the eyes of a particular nation or culture.

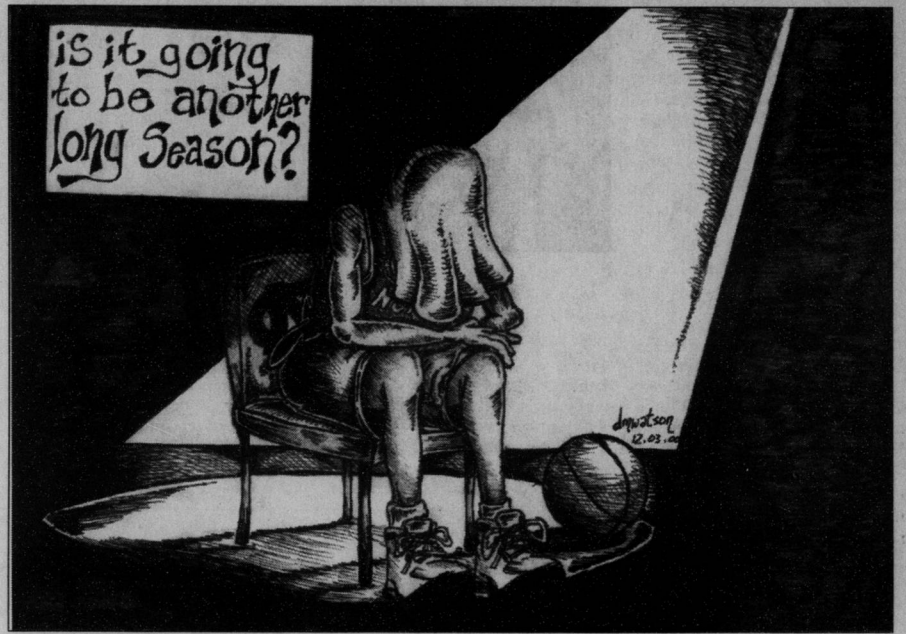
Even in Zimbabwe, I was "different" from the majority of the people because whites make up only 0.5 percent of the population. Perhaps this is why I feel like I have a "calling" to a career in international studies?

There is something in all this babbling that reminds me of an interview some dude did with Charlize Theron a while back. I always assumed that she was American until I watched this interview and I discovered that she is, in fact, a South African. The guy asked her when she moved to the United States and her response was, "When I was 19." This really scared me. The reason was two-fold. First, I thought, "Well she can hardly say that she is South African if she moved here when she was so young!" But then I realized, "She was older than I was when she moved here." And at that moment I knew that I would always like to be a Zimbabwean. OK, so it's a screwed-up place and the world thinks that it is a joke. But it is home.

And I will never be allowed to go back. And this is your home. You have cool stuff like peanut butter cups and Saturday Night Live. But more importantly, you have freedom and you CAN stay here.

And I do think that it is a great place. I am sorry that I came across as someone who doesn't appreciate it. I thought about that over Thanksgiving Day when my parents were out of town and I was without turkey. And I realized that, like religion, I have no answers. The world is weird but one thing is without a doubt. We are living on the best planet in the solar system.

Kirsty Carter meant to go into Room 12A, not 12. (Monty Python reference... A prize will be awarded to the person who can guess to what she is referring.) Reach her with comments and abuse at kirsty@e-zim.com.



# Abolishing the Death Penalty Removes Individual Autonomy

## T. L. MOUA CARTOONIST

respected that same right in another? If he cannot speak on his own behalf, then surely we can't for him either."

The strongest argument abolitionists have made is the claim that not only is the death penalty arbitrary but also racially and socioeconomically biased. There is strong statistical evidence to support this, yet I will argue that this is

irrelevant to the moral validity of the death penalty as a form of punishment. It only states that the justice system may be imperfect because it is run by fallible human beings and is no demonstration that the death penalty itself is an evil. Action should be taken by abolitionists to correct the justice system but not to systematically abolish its forms of punishment. If abolitionist reasoning is correct, all forms of punishment are arbitrary and evil already.

Against another abolitionist claim, I would like to make the point that the death penalty today is humane. We have come a long way from the days of stoning and drawing and quartering (William Wallace's death in "Braveheart") to lethal injection, which causes unconsciousness in a few seconds. The irony to me is that are murderers this selective when they choose ways to kill their victims? In most cases it is the victim who dies the more inhumane death, yet abolitionists forget about their dignity and humanity.

The ultimate claim many abolitionists have made is one that draws on our moral and human sensibility. This is the claim that by showing mercy or forgiveness in not executing a convicted murderer, we are evolving in our moral and human nature and developing beyond an eye for an eye or lex talionis. If abolitionists will make such a claim, I also will make the claim that by executing, we are doing the most moral and humane thing.

Kant's "Theory of Respect for Persons" states that we should treat all people as morally autonomous and valuable beings with hopes, dreams and ambitions that we are obligated to

respect. This means we cannot manipulate them, abuse their weaknesses or trust, or use them to our own goals. We must treat them not as mere means to an end, but an end in themselves, and they must be given free reign to make their own decisions and accept their own rewards and costs. How does this apply to the death penalty?

Say you go home today and receive a letter from UNC stating that all of your hard work has been for nothing: your degree will be given to someone else who did nothing to earn it and no justification will be given for it. Would you not feel a sense of injustice? You would and might say that you deserved those things, you did action A that led to result B, and are entitled to its end. By having that end taken away from you, you have been violated and your autonomy not respected.

If this sense of injustice can be applied to the reward of a good deed, then it must also apply to the punishment of a bad deed. For the same reasons that we feel violated when something good we deserve is taken away from us, we should also feel when a punishment we are deserving of is pardoned. By not rightfully executing a person for the crime of murder, we are in fact manipulating them and treating them as objects and not as whole and dignified human beings. We are saying they are too stupid or irrational and have degraded them to animals or savage brutes incapable of accountability and entitlement to their just desserts, the same way we would do if we took away a good from them that they deserved. This is a form of slavery and ultimately a violation of human dignity and worth. There would be no point working hard or in deterring murder because on both levels you would never be receiving what you were entitled to.

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The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader submissions. Their opinions do not necessarily represent the opinions or views of the DTH or its editors.