

## Creating mix tapes takes thought, effort

BY CHRIS COLETTA  
MANAGING EDITOR

There's a great scene in "High Fidelity" in which Rob, played by that incomparable loser John Cusack, ruminates about the art of making a perfect mix tape.

Rob sets down basic rules for anyone who's going to try to create such a tape, which he claims should be the perfect encapsulation of some visceral emotion, one you want to convey to your listener.

Well, he's right. And we here at The Daily Tar Heel — in an effort to expand your gift-giving repertoire past flowers, chocolate and used DVD copies of Adam Sandler movies — hereby offer the following advice in an effort to make your Valentine's Day mix successful:

1. Don't put songs by these artists on any mix tape, ever, no matter how tempting it might be:

Celine Dion. Mariah Carey. Winger. Air Supply. Lionel Richie. Good Charlotte. And Clay Aiken.

Doing so shows a complete and utter disregard for the boundaries of good taste, and any decent human being would dump you on the spot.

2. But cheesy stuff like Britney Spears' life anthem, "I'm a Slave 4 U," is acceptable, given that your significant other has a sense of humor.

If you do it seriously, though, you deserve to be tarred and

feathered.

And then hung, drawn and quartered.

3. Do make sure to lure your recipient with songs you know he or she likes.

If you like Scandinavian death metal, but your honey is into 50 Cent, you might want to consider easing her into your musical mind by throwing "Magic Stick" on your masterpiece.

This is one of the key lessons Rob learns at the end of "High Fidelity," and it's crucial to your success.

4. Don't use multiple songs from the same artist.

So you're sitting here, thinking it might be a good idea to use "Something" and "Dear Prudence" on the same tape.

The thing is, you're wrong. Nobody wants to put up with that crap.

5. Do make sure that you're really using romantic, sexy or otherwise appropriate songs for Valentine's Day.

There are lots of songs out there that sound like they could be chirpy — but when you examine the lyrics, you realize they actually were written by sad, bitter boys and girls who just got dumped.

Robert Smith, this one's for you.

Contact the A&E Editor at  
artsdesk@unc.edu.

## Straitjacketed teddy bear stirs controversy, anger

### Toy meant to be funny, company says

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MONTPELIER, Vt. — The Vermont Teddy Bear Co. plans to continue selling its "Crazy for You Bear" through Valentine's Day, despite protests from mental health advocates.

The bear, wrapped in a white straitjacket with a red heart on the front, comes with commitment papers and is meant to convey out-of-control love, the company says.

"We recognize that this is a sensitive, human issue and sincerely apologize if we have offended anyone," the company said in a statement.

"That was certainly not our intent. This bear was created in the spirit of Valentine's Day, and as with all of our bears, it was designed to be a light-hearted depiction of the sentiment of love."

Mental health advocates consider the bear "a tasteless use of marketing that stigmatizes persons with mental illness," Jerry Goessel, executive director of the Vermont chapter of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, wrote to the Shelburne-based company.

"A straitjacket is not a symbol that we want to associate with

sales of a teddy bear for loved ones over Valentine's Day," Goessel said. "And the use of commitment papers, legal documents committing an individual to involuntary treatment, is not something to be taken casually."

Gov. Jim Douglas also has called the bear insensitive and inappropriate.

Goessel asked that the 15-inch bear, which sells for about \$69.95, be pulled from the company's shelves.

He said his position is supported by other mental health advocates.

The company said it would discontinue the bear, but not before Feb. 14.

"This bear was developed just for Valentine's Day and is not a permanent addition to our product line," the company statement said.

"This bear will remain an offering for Valentine's Day."

Vermont Teddy Bear Co. President Elisabeth Robert said the company had planned the bear as a one-time offering for Valentine's Day, and it will continue selling the bear until it is sold out.

She said the company is "truly sorry if we hurt anybody with this

bear" but added that freedom of expression was at stake.

She said the bear got "the highest favorability rating" from customers.

The complaint is the first received by the company about the bear, which began selling at the beginning of January.

Vermont Teddy Bear spokeswoman Nicole L'Huillier said the company takes Goessel's concerns seriously.

"We in no way are trying to ridicule or make fun of people with mental illnesses," L'Huillier said. "The bear is meant to express the sentiment of how someone might feel about someone else around Valentine's Day."

Robert said the bear is meant as a funny Valentine's Day greeting and has been popular among customers.

"We made a very difficult decision not to withdraw it from the market," she said.

"I listened to customers, from a lot of feedback from our employees. These people are Vermonters who really don't like to be told what to do."

Vermont Teddy Bear Co. — a 20-year-old company known for its Bear-Grams, which include candy and a personalized message for the recipient — sells more than 450,000 bears a year.

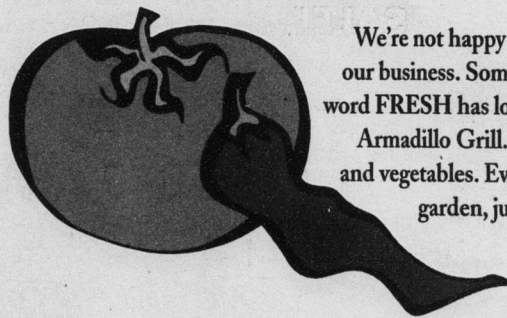
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