



NATHAN NYANJOM
A DIFFERENT ANGLE

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Arnold taught me to not cop out

Performing the least amount of work to achieve a desired end makes sense.

We've all used SparkNotes in lieu of reading a book from cover to cover, and when we were called upon by our parents to do chores that they themselves did not want to do, we realized that by passing off our orders to our younger siblings, we in fact could have the last laugh.

While these two examples can be justified as innocent and innate, they nonetheless are cop-outs — failures to fulfill a responsibility or commitment squarely.

Copping out of chores through delegation to younger siblings was one thing — as long as our tattletale brother didn't mix with our belt-carrying father, we had no consequence to fear.

My equation involved two sisters and a forested backyard.

Here in 2008, however, Americans are copping out more frequently on larger issues like never before, and this, my friends, is unacceptable.

Gastric bypass surgery and liposuction are cop-outs. The purest way to lose weight is through diet and exercise — Arnold Schwarzenegger taught me that. Boldly, however, thousands of Americans each year go against the wise words of the man who accurately portrayed Conan the Barbarian, as they sign up for these surgeries and quick fix their overweight bodies, going under the knife instead of going to the gym.

While both exercise and surgery result in weight loss, only one is natural, and it is important that we realize that. We need to fully respect the Jareds of our country, not for their ability to hold up jeans in Subway commercials, but for their decision to achieve weight loss the right way through daily exercise and fresh eating.

Mother Nature agrees with this notion. Liposuction brings with it side effects of bruising, swelling and scarring, while working out to achieve a slimmer form only carries the side baggage of deep burning the next day.

Ron Burgundy knew what he was talking about.

Copping out is present everywhere. Take the realm of academia, and the age-old question of whether or not to drop that class. Of all of my friends who have told me of their personal renditions of this classic drama, none have decided to stick with the course. After all, why stay and risk getting a D in something when you can just take it later?

This logic, while sound, is morally wrong. When the going gets tough, the tough get going — they don't cop out. Dropping a class in which you are struggling is nothing more than an admission of defeat, a reflection of one's unwillingness to work harder to achieve success, and the realization that the same class will have to be retaken in a later semester.

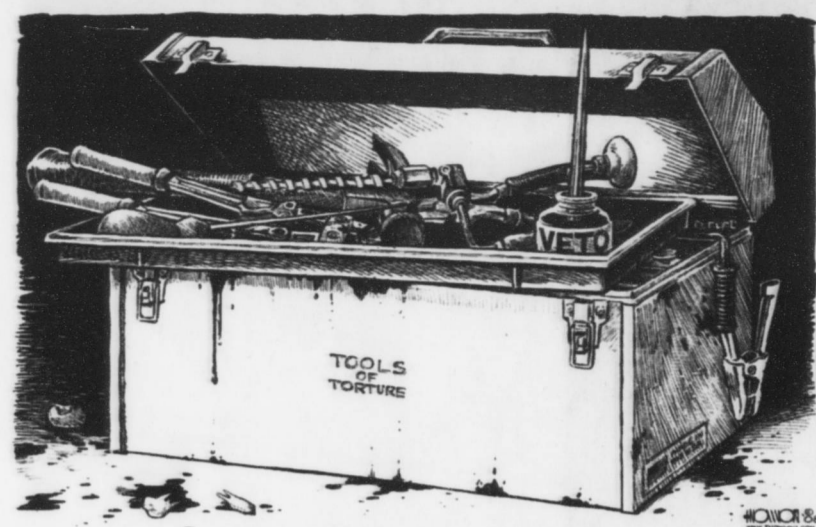
I realize that dropping a class is sometimes a necessary action. A 45 percent on a midterm that counts for half of your grade is hard to overcome. While the immediate, short-term benefits to dropping a class are visible, the negative, long-term consequences need to be realized as well. These include not only a future semester with an added class, but less experience in weathering the storms of life. That is a greater threat than a weakened grade point average.

"I can always come back" isn't a great answer either — just ask Ricky Williams.

We all cop out. I brushed my teeth without toothpaste yesterday, and I'd bet on me doing it again. That being said, it's important that we realize that we are judged by our actions — both individual and collective — and that character is a long standing habit.

Next time you go to Wendy's, don't cop out by getting a yogurt or substituting your fries for a salad and small drink. Either way, it's fast food. Pay an extra 40 cents, and go all out.

EDITORIAL CARTOON By Terrence Nowicki, The Western Front



Thank you

Response of University, police commendable after shock

Without a doubt, everyone has been in a state of shock since the death of our Student Body President, Eve Carson, two weeks ago. Yet students, police and officials at UNC have all come together to produce commendable work in the face of a tragedy.

The Chapel Hill police department has certainly done its job, pulling people from all over North Carolina to work on the Carson case and arresting two suspects within a week.

Our thanks goes out to everyone on the local, state and federal levels involved in the investigation.

Recognition is also due to all of the people who called in with information about the two men charged with Carson's murder.

Many tips were received after the two ATM surveillance photos of the suspects were released, and without the public's aid the police department might not

have made such quick arrests.

On the University front Chancellor James Moeser deserves commendation. Within hours of Carson's identification as the shooting victim, a short memorial was held in Polk Place at which Moeser delivered a touching speech.

Since then he has sent students and parents several understanding e-mails to keep everyone informed and reassure them of campus safety.

UNC as a whole has kept students very aware and is taking care of everyone's needs to the best of its abilities. The campus is offering free counseling services for students and has provided coping resources for parents, faculty and staff.

We applaud the decision to carry on with testing Alert Carolina, as safety is certainly an important issue right now.

In addition, UNC made the worthy decision to cancel class-

es and open the Smith Center for a public memorial service Tuesday. This, in addition to the candlelight vigil held March 6, was greatly appreciated and will not soon be forgotten.

The outpouring of community response has also been powerful. Between the responses on The Daily Tar Heel online memorial wall, the patchwork quilt under construction for Carson's family and the huge turnout at all of the services held, this campus has truly come together during a difficult time.

We'd also like to thank other universities that have extended their support to UNC. Several encouraged their students to wear Carolina blue Tuesday or attend the memorial service, and the Carolina blue ribbons worn by fans at the Duke-UNC basketball game March 8 were a meaningful addition.

The strength of this community has shone in its response.

Easy notification

N.C. needs unified system for probation information

Is there a system that coordinates information about criminal offenders for the courts and probation officers?

We thought it was a fair question, and one that has been on people's minds since learning that one of the two suspects charged with Eve Carson's murder, Demario Atwater, had been arrested twice since he started probation, but not jailed.

So we asked Keith Acree, the director of public affairs for the N.C. Department of Correction, if a unified system existed.

"Yes and no," Acree told us. We wish he could just say "yes."

There's a central database that lets court officials know if a defendant is on probation, sure enough.

But the state mostly relies on the probationers — those on probation — themselves to tell probation officers about any arrests or convictions, which is a horrible system.

Atwater had been charged twice with possessing a firearm, which violated his probation, since at age 21 he is already a felon. One of the arrests, in

June 2006 in Granville County, led to a conviction.

He is still awaiting trial for the other arrest, in Durham in November, from which he's also facing a charge of possession of marijuana with intent to sell.

Theoretically, the probationers are kept honest by random spot checks conducted by their probation officer, who pulls arrest records by hand to check for new entries. And, sometimes, helpful friends and family might clue officials in.

But mostly, the state has just been hoping convicted criminals will be nice enough to tell their supervisors about their offenses, possibly sending themselves back to jail.

Maybe before computers this was about the best that could be hoped for, but now it's just ridiculous not to use technology to keep probation officers up to date every time one of their charges comes in contact with the legal system.

We'd like to see some sort of national connectivity eventually, but there's no reason to put off setting a system up within North

Carolina. Much of the necessary infrastructure — the connections that let courts know who's on probation — already exists.

We know that confidentiality laws mean that the department of corrections has to be very careful about what records it centralizes. But this shouldn't pose a problem, since the arrests and convictions in question are already public information and are supposed to be disclosed to the probation officers.

As we make this recommendation, we want to make it clear that we're not saying this would have saved Carson. Too much is still unclear about what breakdown in the system left Atwater out of jail and about what his role in the crime was.

But the tragedy has made people aware of the probation system in this state, and even this cursory glance shows that probation officers don't have the information they need to do their jobs effectively.

It's information the state can give them easily enough, and it's a crying shame they don't already have it.

Negative reinforcement

State should pay fees if it loses public records suits

Love the feel of the sunshine?

A recent poll of candidates for the upcoming election season showed that they think it's too cloudy in the state government.

More than 70 percent of the candidates said they favored changes to North Carolina's current sunshine laws to mandate that the state pay the legal costs of parties who win public records lawsuits against the state.

And those candidates have picked the right bandwagon to which to hitch their campaigns.

Sunshine laws are state freedom of information legislation that allow unrestricted public access to certain records. But as with many things in the

legal code, the devil is in the details.

North Carolina's sunshine laws allow residents to sue government agencies for records they believe fall under the classification as public. The state then has to prove that the records should be exempted from public access.

Examples of exempted documents are state tax records, criminal investigation records and records about industrial expansion.

Filing a lawsuit takes a lot of money, and while N.C. law allows for successful civil suits to have the defendant pay the plaintiff's court and attorney fees, in many cases judges choose not to award it.

It's time for a change.

The state needs to make it mandatory for the plaintiff's legal fees to be paid by the defendant if the suit is successful so that a lack of financial resources does not preclude someone from challenging the state for public records.

This change would force the state to be more stringent in how it follows the sunshine laws because of the monetary risks associated with these civil suits.

It's not often that there is such strong and bipartisan support for anything, so with throngs of candidates favoring a more open government, the obvious step for the General Assembly to take is to enact this reform.

After all, the public deserves to know what its government is doing.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

"Since I've been here, I've never seen the Dean Dome come together like that."

MIKE TARRANT, STUDENT BODY VICE PRESIDENT, ON THE CELEBRATION OF EVE CARSON'S LIFE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Feel strongly about something that has been printed? Post your own response to a letter, editorial or story online. VISIT www.dailytarheel.com/feedback

Killers are not shown how to value their own lives

TO THE EDITOR:

The recent mystery surrounding the Eve Carson case and subsequent hunt for her killers rewound my mind back two decades to another vicious, senseless act committed on another UNC student.

Her name was Sharon Stewart, and her tragic end began the night of Aug. 24, 1985. I had just completed my first week of classes at UNC. As a group of friends and I headed downtown to our first official frat party, a 16-year-old named Maxwell Avery Wright stalked 22-year-old graduate student Sharon Stewart and her roommate Karla Hammett as they walked along Franklin Street.

Upon reaching Stewart's car in the Swain Hall parking lot, Wright forced the women inside the vehicle at knife point and made them drive away from campus. Hammett escaped harm. But it would be days before we would find out how Wright had attempted to rape and had savagely stabbed Stewart and had stuffed her dead body into an oil drum that had been left in a construction dump site east of Greensboro. Another teenage killer. Another productive life silenced. For what?

As (those charged in) Carson's (killing) hid out in Durham, Stewart's killer, now in his late 30s, remained in prison, fulfilling a life sentence. I have to wonder, almost 23 years later, if anything has changed in our society.

Do our at-risk youth consider any options for their futures other than jail or death by bullet? Do they have dreams? Or are they simply killing machines? The video footage of the Carson defendants in court was telling. Their faces showed no sign of anything youthful or emotional. They simply looked dead.

Feeling anger toward these men and clamoring for justice is easy. I admit joyfully texting friends and family with the news that the "perps" had been caught. Declaring that these young men deserve what they get because they do not value human life is also easy.

What is difficult is to ask how these and so many other young men and women have gotten to the point where they do not value human life. The answer is also difficult to swallow: No one has shown them how to value their own lives.

What triggers the divergent path that violently steers an innocent child from a path of promise and productivity onto a path of self-loathing and destruction? Who or what is responsible? More importantly, who is accountable? Certainly we are relieved when a killer is taken off the streets and locked up for life. However, are we certain we have protected ourselves from the true perpetrator?

For most of us, we will be outraged by this killing for a while longer. Our minds will get dizzy thinking about the societal implications involved in trying to solve such a far-reaching problem. It will become too overwhelming. We will busy ourselves with our lives. Eventually we'll forget. And eventually, on another night, another valued life will intersect with another broken soul.

Allison Pike
Class of 1989

Editor's note: The length rule was waived.

SPEAK OUT

WRITING GUIDELINES:

- **Please type:** Handwritten letters will not be accepted.
- **Sign and date:** No more than two people should sign letters.
- **Students:** Include your year, major and phone number.
- **Faculty/staff:** Include your department and phone number.
- **Edit:** The DTH edits for space, clarity, accuracy and vulgarity. Limit letters to 250 words.

SUBMISSION:

- **Drop-off:** at our office at Suite 2409 in the Student Union.
- **E-mail:** to editdesk@unc.edu
- **Send:** to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, N.C., 27515.

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Carson represented much for the UNC community

TO THE EDITOR:

I cried. I didn't know her, but it didn't matter. I cried. I cried for her. I cried for her family. I cried for her friends. I cried for our beautiful campus and town. I cried for our society. I cried for us.

WHY? WHY? WHY?

She represented our future. She represented hope. She represented joy. She represented commitments and promises.

My tears are slowly dropping as I am writing this.

Why? I never met her. She was not in my class.

No, no, no, wait... I knew Eve very well, but I never met her.

She was my daughter, my young sister, my friend's daughter.

She was one of my students. She was a Tar Heel.

She represented hope. She represented future. I cry for US...

And what we have become.

Amir Rezvani
Professor
School of Social Work

Class of 2006 empathizes with the UNC community

TO THE EDITOR:

Some might consider us the lucky ones. Having arrived in Chapel Hill just less than a year after the events of Sept. 11, 2001, as the class of 2006, we were spared the experience of having to cope with these unfathomable attacks while on a university campus. Having graduated in May 2006, the vast majority of us found ourselves elsewhere when the little slice of Carolina blue heaven that had become part of us all unexpectedly devolved into a little slice of hell with the loss of Eve Carson on March 5, 2008.

Whether or not we knew Eve personally (as many of us did), the news of her untimely death has sent shock waves throughout our alumni community.

We hold in our thoughts and prayers the deepest possible sympathy for Eve's family and extend to them all the support that a group of 4,000 young adults can offer. We stand in solidarity with all of the students, faculty and administration at UNC as we all mourn and attempt to move forward without the strength of character, intellect and leadership that this pillar of our beloved alma mater once offered.

Perhaps some might deem our absence during the face of these two tragedies as highly fortuitous. Rather, we know our true luck originates in being able to associate ourselves with an institution that could produce such an outstanding citizen as Eve Carson.

Bobby Whisnant, Jenny Peddycord and Jason Warner
Class of 2006 Officers

The Daily Tar Heel

Established 1893,
115 years
of editorial freedom

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