

# OPINION

This column represents the views of the Old Gold and Black Editorial Board.

## University should review rape policy

With Rape Awareness and Prevention Week approaching Feb. 9 through Feb. 15, the university community again draws its attention to the very real problem of sexual assault and rape on the Wake Forest campus.

While the Justice Department's National College Women Sexual Victimization study reports that 35 cases of rape will occur for every 1,000 college women in a given academic year, the percentage of rapes or attempted rapes that are reported is fewer than 5 percent.

Nationwide, the underreporting of sexual assaults is a recognized problem, and this is reflected on our own campus. In a 1997 survey of Wake Forest students conducted by the Policy Group on Rape Education, Prevention and Response, only 5 percent of those who met the criteria for having been raped or sexually assaulted reported the incidents to University Police.

This inherent underreporting of sexual assaults inaccurately portrays the severity and prevalence of rape and sexual misconduct on campus. While the federal Clery Act mandates all colleges receiving federal student aid publish an annual crime report by Oct. 1 containing three years worth of campus crime statistics, two reported forcible sex offenses were not included in the crime report published in Sept. 2002. These errors, coupled with the underreporting of campus sexual assaults, reflect a serious flaw in the methods by which sexual assault crime data is collected by University Police.

Although the Clery Act requires collecting crime statistics from all campus security authorities, including residence life and housing staff and resident advisers, team coaches, faculty advisers to student organizations, and others, no enforced system to collect crime data currently exists to accurately portray reported incidents of sexual assault and rape. As a consequence, many of the cases of sexual assaults go unreported in the annual crime report, creating a false illusion that rape is not a problem at Wake Forest.

In compiling the statistics on the number of sexual assault and rape cases on campus, University Police needs to actively pursue data from campus security authorities to account for all reported cases of sexual assault on campus and accurately reflect the gravity of this problem. A convenient system, whether electronic or otherwise, needs to be developed and enforced for campus security authorities to effectively report all cases of rape and sexual misconduct. Even if some victims of sexual assault

or rape fail to report these incidents to campus authorities, more accurate sexual assault data will help combat the misrepresentation of rape on the campus and create a more supportive environment on campus for victims of these crimes.

Furthermore, the university should review the judicial processes by which rape and sexual assault cases are tried. Several students who claimed they were sexually assaulted told the *Old Gold and Black* they felt the judicial system did not provide justice in their respective cases. The "clear and convincing" standard used to determine guilt, described by judicial officer Ricardo Hall about as on par with "reasonable doubt," is especially difficult to establish in sexual assault cases as evidence is hard to obtain and the influence of alcohol often factors into the testimony. An expert on college sexual assault policies said this standard inhibits the university's responsibilities to protect its students.

Between fall 1999 and spring 2002, only two out of eight students charged with sexual assault were found responsible, although in several of the cases students were charged with the much lesser offense of sexual misconduct.

The university needs to reexamine sentencing of sexual crimes altogether and should take into consideration the severity of an action when determining a punishment for sexual misconduct and "lesser" sexual offenses. The university has an obligation to protect the students and the community and should review the 'clear and convincing' standard, keeping in mind that the university is not a court of law, and its punishments not as severe as incarceration.

While University Police should be highly commended for their supportive efforts for reported sexual assault victims, programs such as PREPARE and Rape Aggression Defense should be recognized for their roles in increasing rape awareness and prevention.

The athletic department also deserves praise for its decision to revoke the scholarships of three athletes found guilty of sexual misconduct. This action displays the serious stance the department takes on sexual assault and was much more appropriate than the \$125 fine imposed by a judicial panel. The judicial system should take the lead in punishing these crimes more severely and reevaluate its sexual assault and rape policies to be more supportive of the real victims in these crimes.

Sexual assault is a real problem on campus and deserves treatment as such by those in positions of great power.

## Man of your dreams tells of his own

In troubled times, find hope in these simple goals for a simple man.

It seems more and more likely that we are going to go to war with Iraq in the coming weeks, which is a frightening thought to me. Seeing as how in peacetime I get hurt more than a woman who doesn't know her place, the probability of me getting injured



Krys Mroczkowski  
EDITORIALS EDITOR

in a time of battle seems dangerously high. Therefore, I am making sure to spend the next few weeks as if they were my last, because you never know what may happen.

There are many things I want to do before I die, and I'd like to share a few of them with you in the hopes that I may inspire you to do something other than draw nipples on the girls in the bra section of the Sears catalog - pervert.

One of my life ambitions has always been to get fat. That way, people could look at me and say, "Man, that guy is fat!" For those who don't know, "fat" means "cool" amongst inner city folk. Although I have tried for years to put on the pounds, I can't even top 200. Maybe I should ask one of the

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former Thetas.

Another dream I have had since I was a young boy was to grow up to be a junkie, just because that one commercial told me that I couldn't be ... or shouldn't be ... or something like that. I could never really pay attention to it because I traded my Ritalin to my next-door neighbor in exchange for the bra section of the Sears catalog. Anyway, now I'm hooked on meth. Goal accomplished! I also have many goals that I have set for myself since being at this university. I always wanted to make the Dean's list ... not the list for the grades, but the list where he puts people he wants to have sex with. That's an actual list, right?

While these are all goals that I can achieve by my own hands - and other parts of my body when need be - there is one dream I can only sit and hope comes true. Since I have been at school here, I have wanted to see the Wake Forest basketball team go to the finals in March.

Although we are having a good season so far, never underestimate our ability to choke more than a novice in a scene with John Holmes. Who decided to let Steve LePoor play anyway? They call him a "sharpshooter." A sharpshooter in

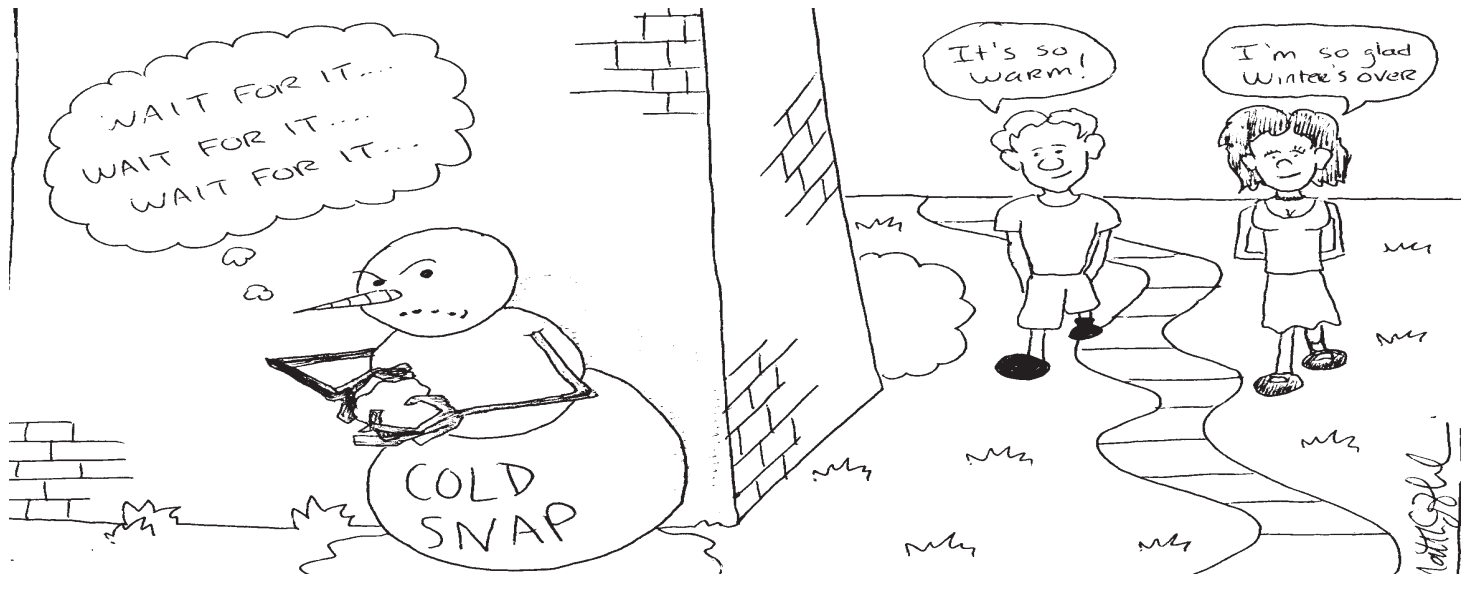
what, Duck Hunt? He certainly isn't one on the court. There is supposed to be a joke here involving LePoor's shots, rims, and prison inmates, but the censors won't allow it. And if our next few games are anything like our games against Duke or Virginia, we will be headed back to the NIT, which is basketball's equivalent of Romper Room - just like the Seattle Bowl. I'd like to be optimistic about us beating Duke at home, but our last outing against them looked like a trout for the YMCA team. But I digress ...

Some of my goals and dreams may seem pathetic, but remember, I'm a pathetic person. Plus, the lower you set your standards, the easier they are to achieve. That's why I will only hook up with Pi Phi's. Still, there are some dreams that I have that I know I will probably never achieve, like seeing all the Golden Girls naked or making the perfect glass of Tang. And it doesn't matter if I don't fulfill them, it only matters that I have them, because if we didn't have our dreams, then what would our parents criticize us about?

So in these upcoming days, which very well may be our final days, just remember that dreams are more than just a place where you can pretend you are a pirate. They are the one thing that the madmen of this world can never take from you. Well, unless they kill you, and then I don't know what to tell you.

And there you have it, straight from the Horse's mouth.

Krys Mroczkowski, better known as "Horse," is a senior history major.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Bush's tax plan puts the money where it belongs

I would like for everyone to ask themselves this question: How many people are employed by an average worker who makes \$30,000 a year? You probably came up with the same answer I did; zero. Liberal critics oppose Bush's tax plan because it is a "tax cut to the rich." However, those that make the highest fifth of incomes are most likely to be the ones that own businesses and provide jobs for the middle class. Without the top fifth, there would be no middle class. We would all be equal - equally poor. While this would come with the benefit of happy, uncomplaining liberals, I am not sure it is worth that cost. Flattening taxes may draw heavy protest from the left, but it will allow the top fifth to do what they do best, which is making money. In the process, they will drag the economy up with them.

It is not only counterproductive to tax the upper fifth more than the rest, it is immoral. While the rich reap little benefit from social programs they are not eligible for, they pay the brunt of the cost. The top 5 percent of income earners pay 64 percent of income tax, according to a recent highly publicized presidential study. Not only do they pay more because they make more, they must pay a higher percent. If they are stockholders, they are double taxed on dividends. The last time I checked, the meaning of the word "slavery" is being forced to work for another's good, and what exists in America today is a system of partial slavery.

That being said, it is important to remember that Bush's tax plan is not just for the elite; it includes cuts for all Americans. The Liberals complain because the rich get a tax cut at all. They would rather see one for everybody except the rich. I find this view hard to explain unless they operate in a state of complete economic ignorance. They want the upper fifth to create jobs, but at the same time they want to tax all their

earnings away from them. This is just plain silly and would be laughable if it weren't so dangerous to the well being of all Americans.

Bush's plan for the economy would be better still if he cut government spending instead of introducing around \$500 billion in new government programs during the State of the Union Address. Reducing the deficit is good fiscal policy. But at least Bush is trying to put a little more money where it belongs - in the pockets of the people that earned it in the first place. Allowing people the freedom to spend their own money will benefit the economy, and thus all Americans, more than any self-destructive, feel-good Liberal plan.

Jacob Lyles  
Sophomore

### For revenge, send your enemies to the HEC

Is there someone on campus who keeps pissing you off and you're trying to think of a way to get them back? Well, here's a solution that I bet you never thought of: simply accuse them of cheating on a test. Whether they did it or not, you might be surprised with the amount of destruction that such an allegation can cause.

I was recently summoned to testify before the Honors and Ethics Court on behalf of an acquaintance accused of cheating on a final exam last semester. After being told of the evidence against this individual, I was extremely surprised that such an allegation would even warrant a court hearing. It was obviously a case in which someone was attempting to get revenge by accusing another of cheating. The evidence was that there was no evidence ... just an angry girl out to ruin the life of one of her classmates. And if that was her motive, then she obviously succeeded.

Although the accused was found innocent of the charge, the accuser succeeded in getting revenge. As a witness, I sat in the lounge outside the

courtroom (if that's what you want to call it) for four hours, waiting to tell the council what I witnessed ... nothing. My night was lost, but I was not the only victim of this charge. There were four other witnesses, an investigator, a defender and the accused individual's family, who were in the lobby, waiting, for over four hours. The person accused of cheating spent their entire Christmas break aware of the charge, yet unable to do anything about it. Try knowing that you will have a hearing in a month to decide whether or not you will be able to continue attending school, and also knowing that you were totally honest during the test. You were just trying to pass the test, like everyone else in the class.

I am not writing this in order to point out that in the Honors and Ethics Court, the accused is considered guilty until proven innocent - although that is my opinion of the council. That is a different subject for a different day. I am writing this in order to point out the outrageous and almost humorous allegations that occur almost every day at our university. So, if anyone out there is looking for a way to get revenge, I recommend accusing someone of cheating. Because it doesn't matter if you have any evidence or if you were even in the person's class. The case will go to the council regardless. And if the accused is lucky, then he or she will get off. Obviously, common sense has no place in the Wake Forest judicial system.

Matt Swain  
Freshman

### Our letters policy

We welcome letters. Send yours via e-mail to letters@ogb.wfu.edu, by campus mail to P.O. Box 7569, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27109, or deliver it to Benson 518. We reserve the right to edit all letters for length and clarity. No anonymous letters will be printed.

## OLD GOLD AND BLACK

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