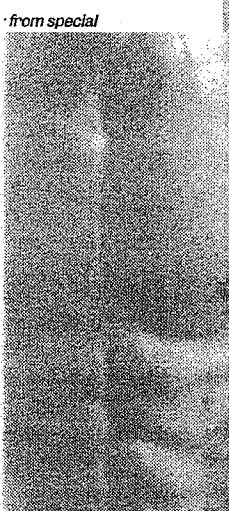
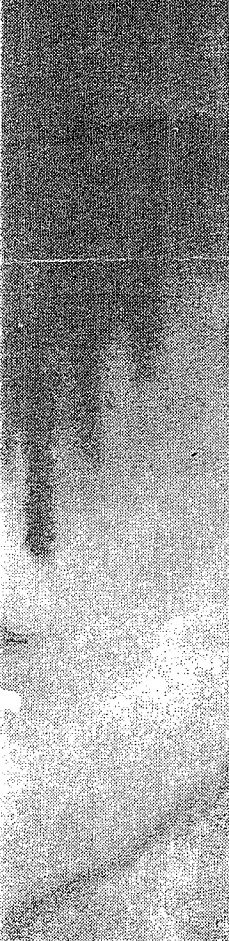


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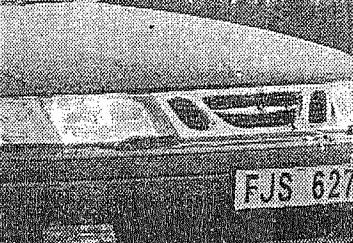


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Advocate

commentary

Teaching with &#%&*!

By Ken Krayeske

A friend took his 12-year-old daughter to a University of Connecticut men's basketball game. An astute observer, she asked, "Dad, if UConn is winning by 20 points, why is the coach still screaming at the players?"

A more pointed question might have been this: Why is Coach Jim Calhoun swearing at the players? Calhoun teaches with expletives. He paces the sidelines, popping his gum, saying, "What the fuck are you doing?", "Play basketball. Make a fucking shot" or "That's not a fucking fast break!" Bad calls elicit comments such as "That's fucking unbelievable!", often audible 10 rows back in the Civic Center.

But most sitting behind the UConn bench are Husky employees, family and friends, not ones to complain. With the Huskies ranked first in the country, Calhoun's methods will withstand criticism and be defended.

Calhoun is the only coach in NCAA history to win 250 games at two different Division I schools (UConn and Northeastern). Many of his players go on to the pros. But does his winning percentage and financial power grant him license to holler words that would get his players or any 11-year-old ejected from any game? We all speak like sailors on occasion, but do Connecticut citizens want a leader who conducts himself so? Is it too much to demand dignity from the bench?

The style certainly wouldn't be tolerated elsewhere. Would Gov. John G. Rowland earn respect on the House floor by screaming at Minority Leader Bob Ward, "That's not how you introduce a fucking bill!" or thrusting his hands in his pockets and yelling to Assistant Minority Leader Brian Flaherty, "Avoid fucking substance in a debate"?

Isn't there a more effective way to teach and be a role model?

Calhoun's counterpart on the women's team, Geno Auriemma, avoids acting out. He yells, but with less body language and fewer obscenities.

Players, idols themselves, seem unfazed by the double standard. Calhoun wants to explain a mistake, says sophomore point guard Khalid El-Amin. "I wanted to play for a coach like that," El-Amin says. "When he does that, it's not because he hates me, but because he's trying to reach me. He's doing that for our best interests."

Nor does it upset Calhoun's UConn peers. UConn baseball Coach Andy Baylock doesn't jump up and down in the dugout after questionable third strikes. "Baseball is a different game," Baylock says.

Does Calhoun's winning percentage and financial power grant him license to holler words that would get his players or any 11-year-old ejected from any game?

Still, he understands Calhoun's reactions. "I don't mind the on-the-court theatrics. It doesn't matter. It's such an emotional, intense game," he says.

Of the eight UConn basketball coaches in Baylock's 35 years, Calhoun is the best. "He's got good kids," Baylock says. "If you go to a basketball game, young kids will be hanging all over the players, and they'll be signing autographs. He teaches them that. That doesn't come automatically. If it looks like he's hard on them on the court, he is. It's positive."

Of course, UConn coaches may look past Calhoun's tough love because basketball finances baseball and other UConn sports. "With the income it brings, all the programs benefit," Baylock says.

Calhoun, meanwhile, is confident his players benefit, so opinions be, well, damned. He compares his high-decibel lessons to Indiana's Bobby Knight, who tossed chairs. "It's how we try to teach. We try to get our kids not to repeat mistakes, and we can't worry what people think," Calhoun says. "I'm not here to offend or please fans. You coach for yourself. Be who you are."

He learned his tactics from his high school coach, a taskmaster from Boston, who mentored the 15-year-old Calhoun after his father died. "Go get 'em isn't good enough. He taught me that in life, you have to continue to pursue excellence. Even though he was tough, you may have even resented it, but you approved," Calhoun says, adding that stress from basing an entire salary on 32 nights' work fosters an emotional reaction. "There's only one place in America: number 1. One thing I would never want is a kid to say, 'I could have played harder.'"

But is it valid sportsmanship? Theatrics don't win games, says Ken Best, a sports talk show host on Bridgeport's WPKN. "If Calhoun hasn't motivated his kids in the week before the game," Best says, "it doesn't mean anything what he says on the bench."

Calhoun certainly uses fewer 'F' words in practice, instructing students how to penetrate Villanova's zone defense or how to stop Boston College's four-guard offense. Carrying that ethic to games shouldn't be hard. I'm not recommending washing his mouth out with soap, but bad language soils clean victories.

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the scoop

UConn, UGame, UAtc

Why did the University of Connecticut get millions in state funding last year while the other state universities got virtually nothing? Maybe it's because UConn knows how to wine and dine legislators. Take the little soiree UConn officials threw before the January 12 UConn men's basketball blowout over Notre Dame. UConn brass invited all alumni—those who happen to be state legislators—to dinner. They rented a skybox at the Civic Center, offered an open bar, and catered a dinner. Because UConn is a state agency, legislators need not report at least \$75 in food and courtside tickets as a lobbying visit. Legislators rubbing elbows with UConn President Phillip Austin and athletic director Lew Perkins included Senate Majority Leader Kevin Sullivan (D-West Hartford), and state representatives Sonya Googins, (R-Glastonbury), Reginald Beamon (D-Waterbury), Tony Tercyak (R-New Britain), and Kevin DelGobbo (R-Naugatuck), among others. And before March Madness, look for a pre-game party for non-UConn alumni legislators.

City Council Rumbblings

Last week someone in the state comptroller's office faxed most members of the Hartford City Council stories critical of Deputy Mayor Frances Sanchez. The articles, taken from the January edition of the Spanish newspaper *La Voz*, knock Sanchez as a double-dealer and a plague on the Latino community. The story, in Spanish, recounted how in November Sanchez and Hispanic leaders interviewed candidates to fill the seat vacated by Luis Ayala. Frontrunners included Carmen Sierra and former City Councilman Eugenio Caro. Although Sanchez promised to notify the candidates of the final choice—Caro—Sierra says she has yet to hear officially. Sierra, who withdrew herself from consideration to keep peace in the Latino community, works in the comptroller's office. She says she wasn't the faxer. "I haven't seen it yet," she says of the article. "Every time I go to these small little places (of distribution), they disappear." Sources said Sanchez herself removed some.

Doublespeak Award of the Week

How many words does it take to say "no"? At the Hartford City Council meeting Monday, January 11, Councilman Alphonse "Malaprop" Marotta needed dozens. Councilman Mike McGarry asked Marotta, the head of the committee forming the city's agenda for the state legislature, if the city planned to ask the House to put off revaluation for another year. Marotta's abridged response: "Our agenda does not include revaluation or the staying of revaluation. No one on the task force would take that position without the positive affirmation of the Court of Common Council." Mayor Mike Peters, sensing the need for a direct answer, interjected, "So the answer is 'No.'" Um, yeah.

Getting Tough on (Likely) Criminals

This legislative session's "tough on crime" issue may have emerged: bail bonds. In the wake of the brutal killing of a Bridgeport mother and her son, who was a witness in a murder case, State Sen. Donald Williams (D-Killingly) and State Rep. Michael Lawlor (D-East Haven) announced last week that they want to strengthen the protections Connecticut offers witnesses. They also want to look at whether too many dangerous criminals are released on bond.

But Sen. Alvin Penn (D-Bridgeport), chair of the Public Safety Committee, offered even stronger words about bail bonds at a Wednesday press conference with Williams, Lawlor and other legislators. Penn wants the state to look at the source of "financial intervention on certain crimes." It's wrong, he says, for someone to be able to walk into a courthouse with "\$50,000 in a towel" and get someone out of jail with no questions asked.

Karen Clarke and her 8-year-old son, Leroy Brown Jr., were killed on Jan. 11. Brown was a witness to an early 1998 attempt on the life of Rudolph Snead, Clarke's former boyfriend. The alleged trigger man was Russell Peeler. When Snead was murdered in May 1998, Peeler was again the lead suspect. Widespread public speculation has Peeler a suspect in the murder of Clarke and Brown. However, Peeler has not yet been charged with anything.

Whether or not scrutinizing funding sources would raise civil liberties concerns is undetermined at this point. Penn says he has not "totally defined what the crimes are," but figures drug offense, murder and other "high-profile felony and capital crimes" should be included. He has sent a letter to Gov. John Rowland asking for a blue ribbon panel to be appointed to study the matter.

—Ken Krayeske and Jarrett Murphy got the Scoop

Huskies, Swooshes and Sweatshops

The story behind UConn athletic merchandising

By Ken Krayske

The terms of UConn men's basketball coach Jim Calhoun's contract with Nike are none of our business.

To prove his point, Calhoun asked my age (26), mortgage payments (\$400 monthly rent), health (good), and marital status (single). Calhoun admits he is 55, healthy, married and that he has two children who moved out. "Beyond that," Calhoun says, "I'm not going to reveal personal details. I don't feel the need to know other people's business and I don't think they need to know mine." As long as UConn's ethics committee and the NCAA approve his behavior, he says he answers to no one.

UConn women's basketball coach Geno Auriemma refers comment on his dealings with Nike to university officials, who lack details.

Nor are the coaches the only ones to benefit from Nike's largesse. Both the women's and men's basketball teams receive thousands of dollars of free equipment annually as part of Nike's deals with the coaches and school. Varsity men's soccer coach Ray Reed also has a private contract with Nike.

Nike counts about 200 colleges and coaches of all sports on its roster. Nike won't release annual how much money college sales generate for its \$10 billion empire. But Bill Battle, the CEO of Collegiate Licensing Company (CLC) in Atlanta estimates that nationwide, college goods account for \$2 billion to \$2.5 billion annually in sales, or about 18 percent of all sports marketing in America. For UConn, licensing and merchandising translates into \$400,000 of its \$21 million athletic department budget.

Perhaps if Nike didn't have such a poor labor record in its overseas factories, Calhoun's and Auriemma's refusals to discuss their dealings with Nike would be less of an issue. But to critics, endorsement contracts condone sweatshop conditions. If Duke University has its way, a code of conduct will soon force most college clothing manufacturers to comply with fair labor standards.

The idea originated in May

1997, when Jim Wilkerson, Duke's marketing head, saw a TV show about sweatshops and began to ask what Duke, which counts Nike among its top licensees, was doing to free itself from sweatshop associations. Wilkerson's research, with help from the Duke group Students Against Sweatshops, led to a college task force to write a code of conduct. "I'm optimistic that it will provide for significant improvements," Wilkerson says. "Our codes will include requirements for independent external monitoring so that we can determine the level of compliance or non-compliance with the code by licensees."

Other universities liked the idea, along with CLC, which represents about 160 leading schools—including Southern Connecticut State University, UConn and other Big East competitors—in contractual merchandis-

ing negotiations. Nike was the only major manufacturer to participate, Wilkerson says. Nike spokesman Vada Manager expects the collegiate code to use some of the language created by the recent code of conduct signed by the White House's Apparel Industry Partnership, recently ratified by Nike and other clothing giants.

The code standardizes legal, environmental, and ethical standards for factories and calls for workers' rights like prevailing wages, 48-hour work weeks, overtime pay (no more than 12 hours weekly), one day off weekly, no child laborers under 15, and freedom to unionize. Labor unions, labor rights groups, non-governmental organizations, and consumer rights groups like the AIP code and its one set of monitoring principals, Manager says. "What we are trying to avoid is 200 universities and 200 codes of conducts," he says.

"I don't think they are advertising per se. We as a university are given X number of dollars of athletic equipment to wear, and they in turn benefit by being associated with a successful basketball program."

—Jim Calhoun

Calhoun knows about the labor problem, but he says his team needs equipment. He was one of the first 18 coaches to sign with Nike in 1980, and he says Nike has educated him about

the situation and what it's doing to improve. "A lot of people in the apparel industry are so much more aware that if they are going to reap these benefits and gains, they are going to have to pay prices of scrutiny," he says.

Meanwhile, Nike annually gives the UConn's men's and women's basketball teams 140 to 160 pairs of shoes each, as well as uniforms, warm-up gear and travel equipment. In return, Nike wants brand recognition, Calhoun says. "I don't think they are advertising per se. We as a

university are given X number of dollars of athletic equipment to wear, and they in turn benefit by being associated with a successful basketball program. It's mutually beneficial."

Nor is it an anathema to the concept of the amateur student athlete, Calhoun says. He considers merchandising deals consistent with NCAA policies like television commercials during games. "You're talking about amateur athletics that sells tickets to games," he says, noting that basketball funds UConn's other 650 scholar-athletes.

Former UConn star Rebecca Lobo remembers not even questioning where equipment originated. "It was before it was in the mainstream consciousness," she says. "We didn't think about it. You were thrilled to get free sneakers." During her career (1992-1996), Auriemma was with Asics and Reebok. He signed with Nike this year. Reebok signed Lobo, a member of the WNBA's New York Liberty, and granted her a shoe line. She says after watching a Reebok video about its human rights record, she feels confident.

The code concept might work well for the WNBA or other leagues, she says, but she doubts individual players, except for Michael Jordan, have the pull to demand a code as part of their shoe deal. "I don't think athletes carry quite the clout people think they do. Especially if a woman said, 'I want this and that to happen,' they wouldn't have a shoe with their name on it," she says. "I think it's quite a ways away."



KEN KRAYESKE PHOTO

To critics, endorsement contracts condone sweatshop conditions



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