

Sandeep Suresh
ENGL 106
Letter to the Editor: *The Exponent*

Don't Forget the Wabash

It is evident from the sight of the dirty water and the unpleasant odor that the Wabash continues to be polluted. The pollution has reached a peak, and we must put a stop to it. The question is, "Are we doing enough to save the river at present?" Is detouring the Wabash enough? It helps, but I think we should also address bigger problems facing the river. We should use the winter to plan so we can take action in the spring. In the summer, we can mobilize volunteers to raise awareness about the larger problems facing the Wabash: soil sedimentation in the river and soil nutrient pollution (high nutrient levels encourage bacteria like *E. coli*).

If we analyze the problem, we find many causes of pollution in the Wabash. Last year, Ronald Turco, director of the Indiana Water Resources Research Center, said the two largest sources of pollution in the Wabash are faulty waste treatment plants and rainwater from fields where animals graze. He also mentioned eroding soil, which carries nutrients, and in turn, encourages bacteria to flourish.

These challenges call for a strategic plan involving the whole community. First, awareness of the problem includes educating schoolchildren and the community about the polluted Wabash. Second, participation of the community through small annual events such as 'Detrash the Wabash' and workshops like River Vision held last year allow residents to discuss ways to clean the Wabash. Last, however, we must address the most serious pollution problems (erosion and high nutrient levels) by forcing government officials to take up the matter seriously and implement feasible solutions.

The future of the Wabash remains uncertain, but our efforts can create a cleaner river for everyone. During these cold winter months, don't forget the Wabash.