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Office of Student Affairs

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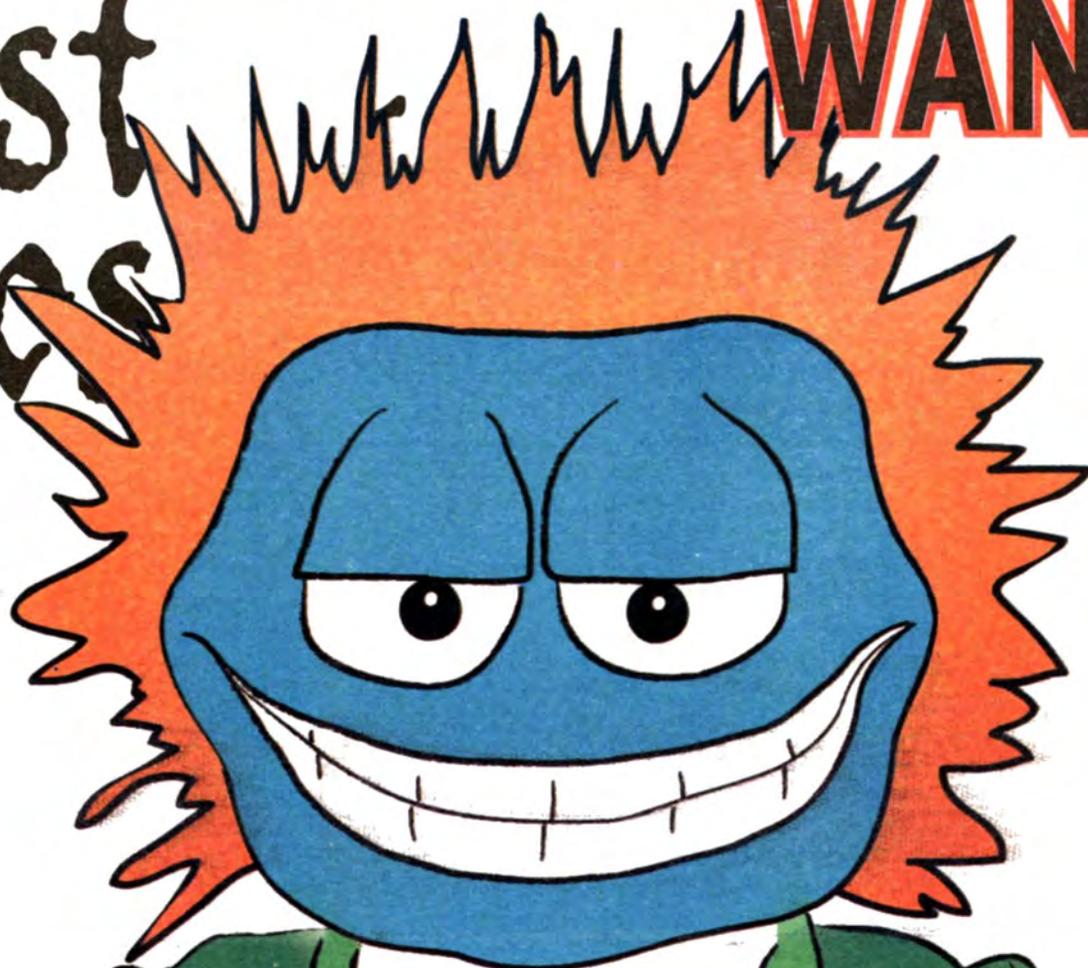
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Kimberly Allen, *et al.*

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# UNCLE TEMOC WANTS

# A Modest Proposal



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# YOU TO VOTE

graphic illustration by michael seeligson

Comet Cafe: April 10-12

## Editors' Commentary:

# Take your pick for SG President (but choose Felicity for Vice President)

The time has come to elect Student Government leaders, those fearless individuals who will represent us for a year of committees, meetings, and panel discussions.

Our modest opinions are inherently biased. We don't pretend they are not. However, we wish to share our analysis on the key differences between the candidates to help you make an informed decision when you cast your ballot: Sifting through the electoral mumbo-jumbo and politicized jargon in the two campaigns, we modestly present the real choices:

SG Presidential hopeful Manfred Mecoy is a hard-working frat-boy who supports sports and student life. He has great ideas and wants to build school spirit on campus. He plans to mount a Temoc PR campaign and boost university pride. But Manfred's enthusiasm is offset by his unfamiliarity with the job. He can come off weakly and, as you'll read, did not make a good impression with our fellow editor (page 4). Manfred will be as uncomfortable with administrators as he is talking to large groups. However, he will work tirelessly and through a genuine passion for UTD, could overcome his lack of experience.

Basheer Benhalim, the incumbent SG president, is a diplomatic, well-spoken hand-shaker who will retain the respect he has built up with certain groups on campus. He is not afraid to make enemies and will stand up for what he thinks is right, rash as it sometimes may be. He's a strong leader who will cut corners to get things done, which, though effective, can leave an unsatisfactory feeling overall. His silver tongue covers up for an average SG term this past year. Basheer is a skillful politician who plays favorites and represents UTD well both in Austin and with administrators. He will attend events, but probably will

not wear the face paint you might expect to see on Manfred.

It comes down to this: If you favor school spirit and student life, Manfred is the better candidate to energize the student body. If you seek inspiring presentation and confidence among students, administrators and major donors alike, Basheer is the clear choice to continue serving the students.

For the vice-presidential slot, *AMP* resoundingly endorses Felicity Lenes. A diligent hard-worker, Felicity is both well spoken and professional. Although young (she's a freshman), she has already built a reputation as the type of person who does what it takes to make things happen. She works well with administrators and is a tireless perfectionist.

Ryen Maddox, on the other hand, is a sorority girl who has shown little leadership potential. She doesn't inspire the respect she will need from her senators to be effective. Although sweet, we need a tireless worker bee in the VP's office. She has had three years to make a name for herself and has not.

If the past several years are any indicator of their roles, the President will shake hands and make speeches, while the Vice-President will crunch numbers and stay up late doing the work to bring initiatives to fruition.

Our analysis (keep in mind you can vote split ticket): for Vice-President, Felicity is the ideal choice. She's smart enough to recognize that a well-run, well-respected SG office is in the best interest of UTD. For president, if you want a cheer leader who will try to increase school spirit, then vote for Manfred. If you value experience and poise over energy, then vote for Basheer.

Vote April 10-12 in the Student Union.

A  
Modest  
Proposal

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*Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the editor or writer of the article and are not necessarily those of the University administration, The Board of Regents of the University of Texas System or the Board of the publication.*

Comments, Suggestions? Flattery, Fan-mail? Email us at [amodestproposal@gmail.com](mailto:amodestproposal@gmail.com)



# Stump Speech

## Student Government Presidential Candidates:

*A Modest Proposal* presents the candidates in their own words, vying for your votes in the SG election April 10-12th.

for more coverage see pages 4-5

### Student Action Alliance



#### by basheer benhalim

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Thank you for making this year as your president truly exceptional. Over the past year, we have all moved one step closer to graduation and our futures beyond UTD. I'm pleased with the positive changes we have brought to the campus, and am seeking the opportunity to continue serving you by bettering UTD.

This year I worked tirelessly on the Commission on Residential Housing to address the issues we face with Waterview Park, because the quality of residential life is a direct reflection of the quality of Comet life.

Additionally, the importance of UTD academics cannot be underestimated. I am proud to say that I spent over 150 hours working on next year's tuition proposal. Our tuition plan for next year helps give students predictability and the opportunity to plan on how they will fund their education.

Additionally, we opened the UTD Cricket Pitch (multi-use sports field). This project has taught me that real change takes time. Each of our many developing projects are a reason why I want to continue the work I began this year as President

again next year.

While I, and, under my guidance, the Senate, have made significant contributions to this campus, Comets still face significant challenges. I helped create a recommendation that addresses the quality of advising by setting up a system to audit advisors every 3 years. In the coming year, I look forward to tackling such challenges like implementing a better advising system.

Outside of the classroom I want to continue to focus on student life and, in particular, athletics. We have outstanding teams on campus who often win their conferences and big tournaments. Next year I plan to expand on a program we developed this year to provide bus trips for students to away games.

But the most important issue to me is accountability to students. I am driven to ensure that the funding process is transparent, so that we know where our dollars are being spent. This year I proposed the creation of the Student Entertainment Operating Board, whose job it is to make sure that Meteor Theater and SUAAB spend our dollars efficiently and effectively. Next year, I will continue to lead on issues of accountability by making sure every one of your dollars goes to make your experience here more worthwhile.

I look forward to serving you again in the coming year and ask for your support on April 10-12 to make sure that you get the representation that you deserve. Commitment, Experience, and Vision make me the choice for real change.

### Partnership for Progress



#### by manfred mecoy

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I decided over a year ago that I wanted to serve as Student Government President, not because I wanted another line on my resume or because my name might look good on a business card, but because I know that this office is key in changing The University of Texas at Dallas for the better, in molding it into the school I know it can be.

From the moment of my decision until today, I have worked as hard as I can to ensure that I am prepared and qualified for the position. I was an Orientation Team Mentor, where I helped organize Comet Camp; I held key positions in my fraternity, including Philanthropy Chairman and Recruitment Chairman, and have organized and run major events for these offices; I spearheaded the effort to turn Crush, the new school spirit organization, into a student-run group, and acquired it a budget for next year; I've served on the Student Media Operating Board, Big Event Planning Committee, and chaired the School Spirit Committee.

These, along with other commitments, have kept me busy over the past year and

given me insight into what it is that Student Government needs to focus on.

First and foremost, Student Government needs to start representing the students better. Most students, when I ask what SG has done for them, have responded with, "little to nothing."

Student Government is here to solve problems for students, to give them representation on the campus and state level. Students should feel that their representatives are listening to them and working on problems that are important to them, something that will be a key item on my agenda if I'm elected.

One of the largest issues on students' minds is campus beautification, something that I want to make a priority. I also plan on focusing on school spirit, creating opportunities and incentives for organizations to work together to create bigger and better events, and, overall, making UTD a community of students instead of just a place where we go to class.

I want to make A+'s mean something so that professors have a reason to give them, add language minors, change the bookstore to a co-op so students can save money, and make Waterview a better place to live. I want to create incentives for professors to help undergraduates with research, fix the parking problems by adding lots where necessary, and have a spring break when other schools do. I want to dedicate myself to Student Government and to you to make this school more than a classroom – I want to make UTD a community. Join me in our Partnership for Progress.

Student Government presidential elections **April 10-12**

# You choose...

the guy who will take the SG president's big leather chair



*The info I think  
you need to  
make the right  
decision*

*(and the Facebook pictures  
they wish they'd deleted)*



by kimberley allen

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**B**asheer, hands folded across his chest, comfortable in his president's desk, is the prototypical career politician in training.

Chances are you spend your days studiously engaged in the annals of academia and haven't met the candidates for the top spot at Student Government next year. Lucky for you, I've taken some time away from ye olde' books and have sat down with both candidates for a good chat.

I interviewed the candidates to communicate to you their character, abilities, and goals for leadership at UTD.

Basheer Benhalim, the incumbent presidential candidate, is a senior and will be finishing his second major in economics next year. Basheer has been heavily involved in campus organizations, including Student Government, since coming to UTD in the spring of 2003.

With his legs propped comfortably on his president's desk, Basheer is the prototypical career politician in training. He is accustomed to leading, having held numerous influential positions and helping to found organizations such as University Democrats and the Rotaract Club.

Many students run for office because it's an attractive feather to place in their cap. My impression of Basheer is just the opposite—he is passionate about UTD, about the students, and about holding office. Besides having taken the time to form vital relationships with key decision-makers on campus, he has the broad range of experience necessary to address the issues that SG encounters each year.

Basheer is an industrious individual—

**M**anfred epitomizes the cleaned-up frat boy who can look smart for an interview but leaves you wondering if he's capable

he still pays all his own tuition and fees—and is keenly aware of SG's responsibility to handle students' money wisely. However, Basheer's recent attempts to require accountability from SUAAB were met with strong opposition from both SUAAB employees and some members of SG, but he says that budgetary oversight is in the best interest of students. Personal issues aside, Basheer believes that "accountability is simply the right thing to do," and he is willing to make the hard decisions.

In addition to having experience, Basheer has a larger vision for the university that extends beyond the boundaries of UTD's campus. He is actively working to form relationships with Texas legislators and is lobbying for additional monetary

support from the state. Included in his vision for next year are plans to get approval for Greek housing and a campus shuttle service.

Admittedly, Basheer has his dark side as well—many are quick to call him a "sleazy politician who hasn't done jack-

Enter Manfred Mecoy: an undeclared sophomore and member of the "gentleman fraternity," SAE. Manfred epitomizes the cleaned-up frat-boy who can look smart for an interview but leaves you wondering if he's capable. Manfred has become more involved on campus in the past year, first as an OTM and then as a representative in SG. Although he admits he is not a member on SG's executive committee, he has no knowledge of the "inner workings

## Modest Issues

### Dorms

Most students say that dorms would be good for the freshman, although they wouldn't want to live there themselves. Thus far, no decisions have been made.

### Student Services Building

A new building would house several student-oriented services. If approved, each student's fees would increase by \$71 per semester. The rest of the funding for the building will come from the state.

### Student Life

This perennial issue is an easy target by each candidate, and yet it continues to go unresolved.

### Campus Beautification

Another easy target for candidates. The overwhelming majority of students believe UTD's campus could use an extreme makeover.

### Tuition

While tuition increases are necessary, no student is eager to contribute more money to the cause. SG helps bring the conflicting interests of students and administrators into balance.

### Greek Housing

There are concerns on both sides of the issue. Many believe that greek housing would improve student involvement on campus; others are concerned about the problems that could arise.

of student government, he was chair of the School Spirit Committee that redesigned the previously horrific and big-toothed Temoc (for which we undoubtedly owe him a debt of gratitude).

Described by one fraternity brother as "very driven to attain leadership positions," Manfred decided to run for president before even being elected as a senator. One advantage Manfred says he possesses over Basheer is that he's "more enthusiastic, less tired, and won't be burnt out" if he is elected. While there's something to be said for the energy a new candidate brings, it rings hollow. I'm reminded what Fausto Coppi (go check Wiki) said: "Age and treachery will overcome youth and skill."

Knowing that good intentions and

buckets of enthusiasm really only pave the road to an ineffective school year, Manfred has outlined a few tentative plans for the future. For one, he promises to open SG to be a more "representative organization for the student body" and says he will work towards campus beautification. Aside from his other good idea—creating incentives for professors to encourage undergraduate research—he is unsure of what else he would like to accomplish as president. (This, however, should not reflect upon those running on his ticket; Felicity Lenes, in particular, seems to have it together.)

In summation, neither is perfect for the job. It is up to you, dear reader, to decide who leads next year. Vote April 10-12 in the Student Union.

## Modest Opinions

1. What issue(s) are most important to you in the upcoming SG election?
2. Who are you going to vote for and why?

### Michael Provost Junior, Software Engineering

1. Tuition cost. Also, I've heard SUAAB being critiqued for not being responsible enough to the students but they are the one that goes out of the way to get student feedback. I wish Student Government would get to know the student body better.
2. Manfred and Felicity because I've seen Manfred everywhere around campus so I know he's in touch with the students.

### Neal Gupta Senior, Biology

1. Fixing the pavement on the Green parking because the gravel damages tires. Also, changing Spring Break to match the other UT schools.
2. I don't know.

### Greg Armistead Freshmen, Psychology

1. I care about getting alcohol on campus because I work at the pub and I see what it would do for campus life. Now that Richardson is a "moist" county, I want to see Student Government starting that issue back up again.
2. I would only vote for a candidate that would pursue alcohol at the pub in the future.

### Malinda Ballard Sophomore, Undeclared

1. The proposed fee to cover the cost of a new student life building. I am for it because the government will probably fund a lot of it and because it's for the students.
2. I am going to vote for Basheer and Ryen because Basheer has been President before and he knows what he is doing.

### Roman Starsky Freshmen, Undeclared

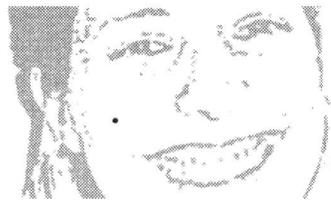
1. The Comet Café needs revising. The food is atrocious. Baylor's cafeteria is like heaven. Reforming our food service is my biggest priority.
2. If I'm going to be quoted, I really can't disclose that.

# Bars are for malteds now?

***Reach for an O'douls:***

**Overzealous Texas booze-cops claim**

**drunkenness is illegal even without driving**



**by sophie rutenbar**

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So the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission must have been a little short on cash last week. The TABC, in conjunction with the Irving police, arrested 30 people in a sweep of 36 Irving bars on charges of public intoxication.

The TABC claims the move is a proactive attempt to stop drunk driving before patrons have a chance to get in the car, but TABC agents didn't stop to check if those they arrested were actually driving.

Instead, according to an NBC 5 interview with TABC Capt. David Alexander, "Going to a bar is not an opportunity to go get drunk. It's to have a good time but not to get drunk." If that's the case, one wonders why bar patrons don't head off instead to Chuck E. Cheese's, or why bars don't serve cream soda instead of beer.

An attorney friend heard from a waitress arrested for serving two "publicly intoxicated" men. She served them each four beers over the course of a full dinner — in the restaurant of the hotel where both were staying. Not only were they both arrested for public intoxication, but she was also charged with serving alcohol to an intoxicated person.

One would assume that an officer of the law would need to test if the blood alcohol level is greater than the legal limit of .08 before making an arrest.

Even then, it's questionable whether four beers in combination with a good meal could put a red-blooded American male over the top.

But intoxication is also defined in Texas law as "not having the normal use of mental or physical faculties by reason of the introduction of alcohol, controlled substance, a drug, a dangerous drug, a combination of two or more of those substances, or any other substance into the body" (Public Intoxication Statute of Texas Section 49.02).

When an officer believes that someone fitting the above definition might endanger themselves or someone else, grounds for a public intoxication arrest are created. They don't even have to be intending to drive home, as those men obviously weren't.

This statute provides enormous flexibility to officers, since alcohol can start affecting you almost as soon as you start drinking.

As soon as an officer is able to notice an alteration in your behavior — for instance, things seeming a little more laugh-out-loud than normal — it's an easy jump to assuming you might be a danger to yourself or someone else.

Public intoxication is a Class C misdemeanor, which while it'll leave your pocket no more than \$500 lighter, won't rob you of your right to vote like a committing a felony would.

So if this issue gets you all fired up, the place to start is exercising that vote, or at least your voice. Let your legislators know what you think of TABC's actions and that at the very least, you'd like a more precise definition of the charge of public intoxication. Then maybe we'll feel safe to drink beers in our bars again.

# INTRAMURALS

## improving the best



by michael seeligson

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Imagine the perfect intramural experience. Is it during the day or at night? Are there throngs of people watching the game, or are there ten games taking place simultaneously? Are multiple sports competitions in the same season and at the same time, or are they spread out so that it is possible to take part in all of the sports offered? How do students keep track of an updated schedule of events?

Intramural sports games are one of the most attended and participated student activities at this university. One count totaled 1,500 participants in last fall's flag football tournament. In light of increased participation and a dated system, there are some changes to be made. To date, the Recreational Sports department is doing a fair job at continuing the programs offered and is finishing a survey to gauge interest in not-for-credit classes. This article does not seek to find fault, instead attempting to highlight a few areas for improvement. When I asked students the previous questions, each answer was unique, but there were a few common areas of frustration among students that can and should be addressed.

### Web service

The first and arguably easiest improvement to intramurals would be to increase the online interface of the program. Currently, students can find a calendar of events on the recreational sports website, but the calendar is limited to information regarding sign-up deadlines, captains' meeting dates, forfeit fees and similar information.

While all of this information is important, it does not present the mid-season information that can often change. If a game is canceled, the website will not show that data. The website does not even have a schedule of games for any one sport.

Thus the first recommendation is to create a larger website, with a sub-page for each sport, listing times and

dates of regular- and post-season games. All of this information is posted in the activity center on a regular basis, so there is not a supply issue. Additionally, the schedules are clearly printed from a computer, so the formatting is already finished. The amount of time and energy it would take to post static, updated schedules for each sport online is minimal and would enhance the overall experience.

More easily informed students would not have to show up to canceled games or miss playoff games entirely.

Ultimately, the Rec Sports department should allow teams to sign up online with student id numbers. Forfeit fees could be charged to the captain's student account as opposed to using checks. The system could be interactive and dynamic, allowing participants to manage accounts and easily track upcoming tournaments or see when they are scheduled to compete.

towards one team or another out of the picture. If there were a stronger organization of support and training, perhaps referees could miss fewer calls and keep personal bias off of the court.

### More divisions

The Comet Cup needs to be a bigger deal, with more promotion and a ceremony at the end of the year presenting trophies to the top three teams in each of four categories: Fraternities, Sororities, General Campus, and Freshmen. There should be plaques in the activity center that freshmen are shown during orientation and Comet Camp.

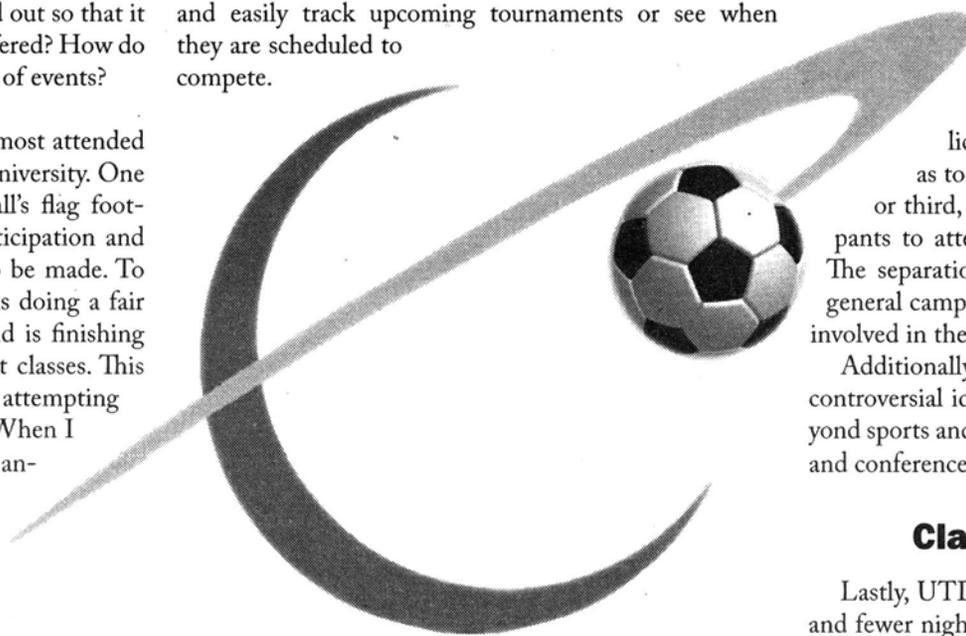
Students should be able to register comet cup teams online and then, with an improved interface, track the competition throughout the year. More publicity would inform students all over campus as to who is winning and who is a close second or third, providing more incentive for non-participants to attend intramural games and pick favorites. The separation between Greek organizations and the general campus will allow multiple organizations to get involved in the race.

Additionally, and this is an optional and potentially controversial idea, the comet cup could be expanded beyond sports and include Comet Cups for attending sports and conference events.

### Classes during the day

Lastly, UTD needs to move to more daytime classes and fewer night classes. If 85% of students finished with class at 7 PM, then the early evening could be open for intramural activities. This would pull more students to watch games and even allow interested faculty to attend events at a reasonable hour.

The Rec Sports department does not have control over UTD scheduling, and does an admirable job starting most events at 10PM so that a large number of students can participate after class. It is disappointing, however, to see all day events on Monday or Tuesday. If students have class between the hours of 10 and 7 on those days, then they cannot play in the all day racquetball tournament. A simple solution would be to hold these day-long events on Saturday, thus not competing for classes and maximizing the number of people who can participate.



graphic design by michael seeligson

### Referees

Anyone willing to miss out on playing intramural games to referee deserves our thanks. The competitions simply could not continue without the participation of these student employees.

The refereeing can, however seem somewhat inconsistent. Many students complained that what is a foul under one basket is never called on the other side.

Being a fair judge in an athletic competition is always difficult and even professional football referees have instant replay. Still, it would be good to keep personal bias

# Staining the rescent



by ben dower

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As the civil war in Iraq progresses (or progresses towards starting), a full understanding of the roots of the conflict becomes more and more important. Most people have little knowledge about the differences between the Shiites and Sunnis, the roots of their conflict, and whether they've ever lived in a long, permanent peace. With this in mind, I set out to educate myself on answering some of the big questions about why members of these two groups seem so intent on killing each other. Before we can negotiate a permanent peace, we need to understand the history behind the conflict. Even if it doesn't seem that relevant to us, for some it's worth dying for, and therefore it deserves some attention.

The Prophet Muhammad founded the Islamic religion in the seventh century. He lived in the Arabian Peninsula, a place dominated by nomadic tribes of various religions, primarily local polytheist beliefs, but with the occasional Jewish or Christian group. When he was forty years old, it is said that he experienced a divine revelation while meditating in a cave outside of Mecca. Eventually, he began to preach to the people his new religion, built off of existing Jewish and Christian beliefs, which he claimed had been debased by time.

The outspoken prophet was eventually forced to flee Mecca for Medina. Shortly thereafter the two cities went to war. By the time Muhammad died, he and his followers had united virtually the entire Arabian Peninsula. His successors were known as caliphs and their heirs ruled more or less continuously in the Arab world until the breakup of the Ottoman Empire. The Sunni branch of Islam believes in the legitimacy of the first four caliphs and their successors. The Shiites, on the other hand, believe that the legitimate religious authority was passed on to Muhammad's family. They recognize only the heirs of the fourth caliph, Ali, who was the cousin and son-in-law of the prophet Muhammad.

Most Shiites recognize twelve imams, although other sects recognize fewer. These imams follow a line of descent from Muhammad and are believed by the Shiites to be sinless and with an infallible authority directly from God. Both the Shiites and Sunni include the five pillars of Islam in their doctrine, although they categorize them differently. Both accept the Qur'an as their sacred text but

## The why and how of the Sunni-Shiite conflict

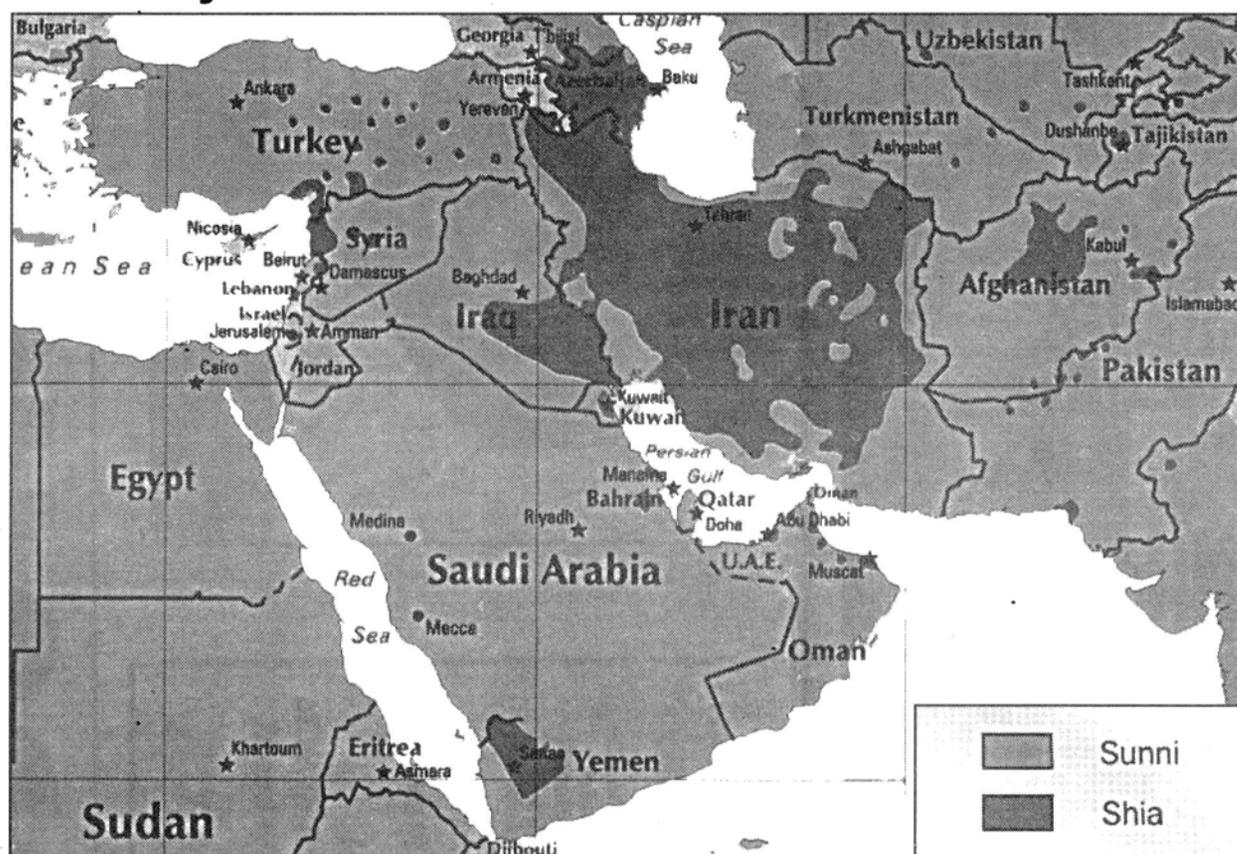


illustration courtesy of the UT Library

take a different approach to the recorded oral tradition, or hadith. This text serves as a record for what Muhammad said, did, and approved in others' actions as well as the sayings and doings of his companions. The Shiites contest some of the hadith transmitted through individuals who rejected the descendents of Ali ibn Abi Talib.

From the beginning these two groups didn't get along. Upon succeeding to the caliphate, Ali fought in a series of wars during which one die-hard supporter struck him down for seeking a compromise with Mu'awiya, who would become the next caliph. Ali's son Hussein eventually fought for the title but was killed in a hopeless battle, insuring that Mu'awiya's son Yazid would inherit caliphate and making himself a great martyr for the cause. Despite his death, Ali's grandson (the third imam) continued his line solidifying the division between the Shiites and Sunnis that continues to this day.

The Sunnis make up approximately 80% of Muslims in the world today, compared to 20% Shiites. Partially because of this, throughout history the Shiites faced persecution from the Sunnis, building a historic sense of identity to correspond with the differing beliefs. The Sunni orthodoxy was championed by empire after empire, start-

ing with the Umayyads and continuing to the Ottoman Empire. There were, however, places where the Shiites dominated. The Safavid Shahs, for example, in modern day Iran, upheld the Shiite beliefs against the Ottomans.

Looking at the conflict in Iraq, we must remember the long history of fighting between the two religious sects. As Americans, it is hard to appreciate the immense importance of heritage and past. Our national past is negligible, a petty three hundred years, compared to almost one thousand five hundred. In addition, most Americans identify themselves by religious and ethnic ties only as a secondary identity in comparison to national, occupational, or cultural affiliation. It is too easy for us to simply say, "Why can't those uncivilized Middle Easterners just get along?"

Before we can take steps towards peace, we must first understand the mentalities of the parties involved and appreciate both their differences and their common ground. The incredible depth of information and history tempts us to forego empathy or cultural appreciation when in fact we must do the opposite. Hopefully both sides will be able to overcome a violent history of mistrust and come together, if not in unity, then at least in tolerance.

# Rallying le backwards

Why French youth should support a law to let themselves be fired...



by aidan skoyles

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*Sacré bleu!* Pierre, Margaux and Frédérique are protesting on the wrong side of a dispute over new labor laws. Instead of rationalizing a solution for their country's problems, they're turning the economy into *crème brûlée*.

A new French law would allow employers to say *bon voyage* to workers under age 26 for any reason during their first two years of employment. The French youths think this is a terrible idea, and hundreds of thousands have taken a *pied-à-terre* in the streets, protesting *en masse* in opposition, in some cases violently.

But passing the law could in fact decrease unemployment.

Current French labor laws make it next to impossible for employers to fire workers and as a result many are reluctant to take on anyone at all. Once hired, the employees are as familiar with the labor laws as their employers – they know they won't get fired. In many cases, if a company does say *au revoir*, then it must continue paying that person's salary for the duration of their initial contract.

What's the motivation to work hard, to be productive, to help a business prosper ... if you know you can't be fired? I'm not saying one only works hard when the *guillotine* is over one's neck, but the risk of losing a job certainly motivates. Changing the law could encourage students to work harder at their jobs, impressing employers enough to keep them on long-term.

French student Laurent Beaulieu (an exchange student at UTD last year) summed it up: "In France, social stuff is always a big deal." *C'est la vie*. What a shame when social upheaval in the face of potential improvement is *de rigueur*.

For the past several weeks, French Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin has been trying to pass the new law, the *contrat premiere embauche*, or contract of first employment, and has rigidly stuck to his guns in a *tête-à-tête* with youth labor leaders who insist on its abandonment.

French unemployment, at 10%, is double that of the U.S.; for those under 26, the French rate skyrockets to 23%. Clearly something must be done, and at least the demonstrations have opened a dialogue on the subject.

These demonstrating youths (the vast majority of which have been non-violent) want the same type of protections that their parents have enjoyed in the French socialist state. *Fait accompli*. But it is those very protections that have led France into the quagmire it now faces: low growth and productivity, staggering pension costs and high unemployment. They think: Why work if the government will pay you not to? Why work hard if you know you can't be fired? This is a bad *raison d'être*.

Beaulieu explained to me that the new CPE contract would allow employers to pay only 8% indemnity (unemployment compensation) if the employee is fired. To him, the CPE means less job security and less indemnity, "and this is not OK. The government needs to put more indemnities if they want to put less work security," Beaulieu wrote.

But this cannot be a successful sentiment. It's self-inflicted *trompe l'oeil*. It is up to today's French youth to acknowledge their situation, and to put forth the effort necessary to rectify it.

The protesters' actions, as described by one member of the European Union parliament Danny Cohn-Bendit, are "defensive, based on fear of insecurity and change." *Touché, mais oui*.

It's time the protesters took ownership of their problem and fixed it themselves rather than relying on, and simultaneously bitching about, their government.

Over the course of history, the French have had a way with revolutions (*déjà vu?*), but in this case (though it pains me to say so) their government has a very good point.



photos by Reuters

# Making ¢ents of minimum wage

why raising the bar is better than threatening the stick



by ben dower

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With American poverty hovering between 11 and 16 percent since the 1970s and a welfare system more dysfunctional than the Osbourne family, there is clearly room for improvement. Once upon a time, welfare recipients only needed to be impoverished to receive federal aid. In reaction to the increasingly perceived undeserving poor, more requirements were gradually added over time for potential recipients to qualify. Welfare recipients had to be actively looking for a job in order to receive aid.

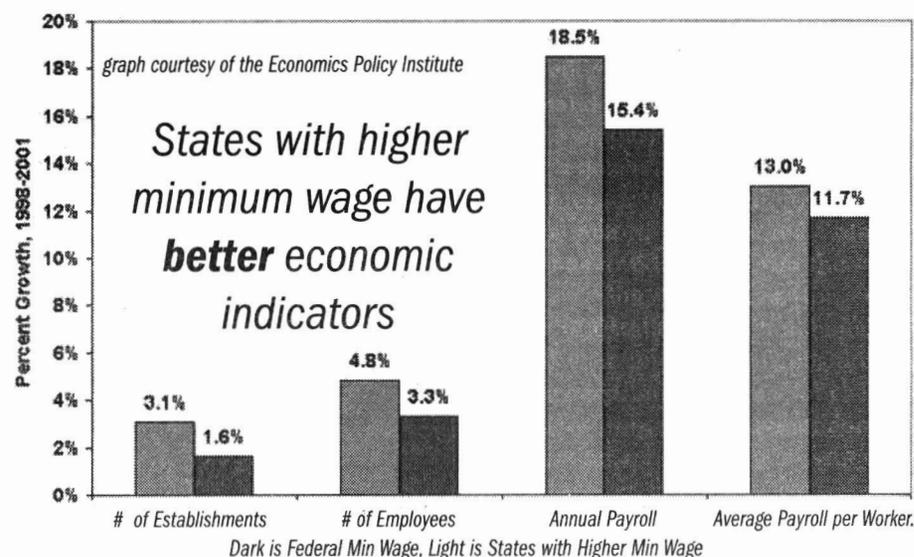
However justifiable, this created a major flaw in the system that remains prevalent today. As the beneficiaries begin work, their government assistance rapidly disappears. This removes much of the incentive for finding and holding jobs, as their real income remains steady (with aid disappearing as fast as wages increase) until earnings double the current minimum wage.

One solution to this problem has been to cut off the aid if the recipients do not

hold a steady job within a certain time span of joining the program. The stick side of the carrot-and-stick approach, this tactic is both harsh and expensive. For one thing, it requires caseworkers to effectively monitor their recipients, which creates both additional cost and the risk of deceit, corruption, and loopholes. It also punishes the children, who might go hungry without the additional aid. Often children are left unsupervised while parents go to work or are left with unfit caretakers such as an older sibling or drunken spouse.

There is, however, another side to encouraging welfare recipients to get off the caseworker's list and onto the payroll. For every stick punishing failure, there must also be a carrot for positive behavior. Right now, that reward amounts to \$5.15 per hour, often with little or no other benefits. Supporting oneself, much less a family, on such a low wage is the challenge of millions of Americans. No one wants to prop up an idle lower class, but with such a small incentive, it's not surprising that so many people bounce back and forth between welfare and low paying jobs.

A bright, inner city hoodlum, growing up in a world of drugs, gangs, and prostitution has all the incentive in the world to score \$100 an hour selling drugs instead of getting a demeaning service job at minimum wage. The abstract fear of jail can only do so much when your girlfriend is (or maybe you are) pregnant for the third



time, and the electricity has gone out again because you couldn't scrape enough money together to pay the bill.

Still, despite their eagerness to transform idle recipients into diligent workers, conservatives have fought tooth and claw to keep minimum wage at a—well—minimum. Their reason is all too obvious: business interests. If minimum wage is raised, it should result in a loss of efficiency and increased unemployment not to mention lost profit. However, there are some basic assumptions that must be necessary for this argument to apply, assumptions that aren't necessarily true for the low-end job market.

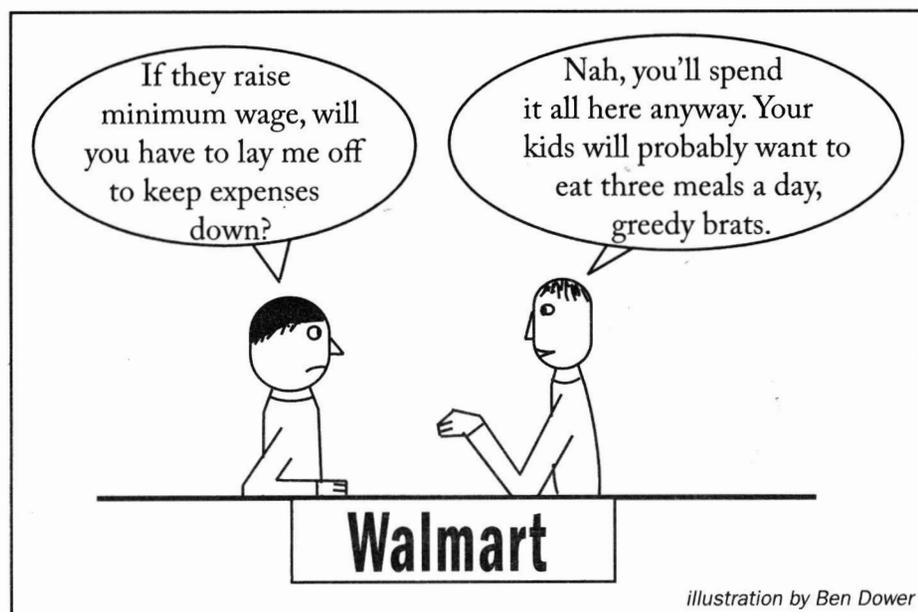
Perfect knowledge is one prerequisite that is violated. Although consumers can easily check the prices of restraints, housing rent, or virtually anything else, there is both a societal stigma and a lack of practicality in comparing wages. Asking someone how much they make is seen as extremely rude in this country, deterring wage comparisons. Furthermore, most help-wanted signs and want ads avoid mentioning specific numbers, especially at low wage establishments.

Another condition for the normal supply-demand arguments to apply is the ability of the demanders to go where the supply is good for the getting. In other words, if you can't afford a car, you're limited to places within walking distance of public transportation. The farther away a

place is, the harder and more expensive it is to get there. Yet, higher-paying jobs tend to be far away from the cheap housing. The consumers that can afford to buy expensive stuff aren't living in the low-income neighborhoods. Thus the lower-end job market is extremely limited, made even more so by the characteristics of an exhausted worker that doesn't have the time or energy left to call around looking for new job opportunities.

There are facts to support all this supposition. Some states (namely those in the Northeast and on the West Coast) have a minimum wage that is actually higher than the federal minimum wage. Surprisingly, these states show more economic growth than those that use the lower, federal number. This isn't conclusive proof of a cause-and-effect relationship by any means, but certainly an interesting statistic to consider.

With almost half of America's poor working full time jobs, I see little reason not to reward their efforts with more than nickels and dimes. Had the minimum wage risen as fast as CEO compensation since 1990, it would now be \$23.03 an hour. Particularly compared with other inefficient, complex, and corrupt federal aid programs, minimum wage is a relatively simple way to help America's struggling poor and still reward hard work. Now, if only we could get the business lobbyists to see it that way.



## 20 percent of *Mercury* staff finds *Mockery* funny

Following their pseudo-annual tradition, *The UTD Mercury* dedicated the back pages of its April 3 edition to an attempt at sarcasm and wit, and a giant pictures of three penises. Classy!

But the "fool" for the *Mockery* this year wasn't a string of clever jokes.

"How great is this? *The Mockery* is supposed to be funny - but it's not," one of the two elated Mercurians chuckled. "The joke's on you!"

One interviewed Comet summed up general student opinion: "From the moment I picked up the paper until I put it down, I was choking from fits of laughter. Someday I plan to read it."

"I was slightly confused," another freshman reported. "They claim to have been making this kind of stuff up for twenty-five years. I don't buy it. Shouldn't they be good at it by now?"

There was a group of excited students concerning the 'Auction Notice.'

"Dude - are they really selling half kegs? I want to work for them!"

Other students were more interested in the *AMP* bin. "If we buy them, will they deliver the paper straight to me?" they asked.

## UTD Alma Mater changed to hard rock

After months of continual infighting, the UTD music department announced its decision.

It took a good week of deliberation, but officials decided to change the tune to parody Nirvana's 'Smells Like Teen Spirit.'

"The conclusion seems perfect," UTD's Mel-lah Dee chimed in. "First of all, most of the students don't know the words to the Alma Mater, and no one knows the words to 'Teen Spirit,' so we think it's a pretty fair trade off. Now students can mumble along at the top of their lungs, or get drowned up by the kickin' bass we decided to add."

The new choice also has other benefits.

"We always have that kid who stays seated, or yawns and mumbles 'watermelon' a bunch during the mantra," the department chair said.

"Now, with the added mosh pit, if Mr. Joe Boring wants to stay out he'll just get trampled by all of our proud and dedicated students. Harsh? That's the price of school spirit."

# UTD Bookstore to sell "Presidential Bling"

## Dr. Daniel: "We need cash money with the quickness"

by Fiddy Cent

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RICHARDSON, TX (AMP) - With the immense success of Dr. David E. Daniel's recent investiture, UTD will help alleviate some of its financial troubles by introducing new garb for sale at the bookstore.

Students at the investiture seemed decently interested in the remarks made by the guest speakers and most found what Dr. Daniel had to say relevant. But a majority agreed that it was simply too hard to concentrate after Daniel had been "medaled" by Provost Wildenthal.

"Man, I saw some shine, and whooo-wee! Dat's some 'Bling' man, B-L-I-N-G!" reported a source whose name the reporter could not correctly spell. "After I saw that, I couldn't concentrate on nothing else. Whoo!"

Dr. Daniel had an interpretation of his own: "To the university, I say this: Everyone potentially should get crunk in this activity center. I am looking at you, and I see some younger women who could potentially get this party started if they put some bump in their jump. I offer this proposal up to the student body. Everyone in favor, proceed to raise the roof," said Daniel.

He then poured alcohol onto the stage from a golden goblet, which is now available in the bookstore in replica form, and busted a move.

There were mixed reactions to the availability of the new merchandise.

"Ordinarily, I'm a proponent of global warming theory. However, after seeing all the ice now at the UTD bookstore, I'm afraid the world is in danger of freezing over with some funkified jewelry pride. I'm not down with any Fort Knox-offs in my bling; this stuff appears to have it going on," a prominent geoscientist on campus stated.

He then bent his fingers into some sort of arcane symbol, and offered a choice selection of profane statements about people hating on him.

The bookstore also attempted to further put its finger on the pulse of campus, offering new "urban" music which features "thumping" drum rhythms and bass guitars. The lyrics are also spoken instead of sung, normally by angry men. The administration offered their begrudging support to this endeavor, but immediately turned it down



photo by Benedict Voit

Newly invested President Dr. David E. Daniel proudly displays the Presidential medal presented to him at UTD's official ceremony. "My mom always told me: Go for the Gold," Dr. Daniel reported.

after learning that "skeet" could potentially mean more than an enjoyable day of sporting amongst men of fine learning and speech, with border collies and lemonade and oh so much gaiety.

To top things off, the university has invested in a gigantic chromed-out vehicle known only as the "UTD-destroyer", which apparently is made from numerous precious metals and cost the university the gross national product of a small country to make.

The vehicle is designed for riding out to impress local crews, getting ladies, and representing. The vehicle will be formed by combining cars driven by each dean, and it will take up battle against opposing schools.

## "Your Mom" wins SG presidential election

The Student Government Election Committee announced the results for the recent presidential election, revealing a landslide victory for a write-in candidate. "Your Mom" won the election by the greatest margin in school history.

Bashful Been-Ailin, the incumbent president, was stunned by the news. "I don't know what to say. I suppose if the student body wants Your Mom, I can't stop them."

The election, which only weeks ago seemed like a close race, had one of the highest turnouts in years. Voters rushed to the polling booths, eager to cast their votes for the write-in candidate.

"Something about the idea of her as the president energized the students," a member of the Election Committee said. "I've never seen so many students enjoy voting so thoroughly."

"This new leader certainly has a charisma that appeals to the students," said Man-friend Mikey, Been-Ailin's opposition. "I'll admit that I would have placed my vote for her if I weren't running myself."

No vice-president has been selected as of yet. The Election Committee wants a recount of the votes to determine which of the two write-in candidates, "Dick Hertz" or "Turd Ferguson," actually won. Neither candidate was available for comment.

## Taking Back Sunday to bring "Myspace" to life

In their performance on April 12, Taking Back Sunday looks to bring to UTD a complete microcosm of the popular website MySpace, complete with awful music, badly quoted poetry, and asymmetrical hair with long bangs.

The band, popular among the middle-to-high-school audience of MySpace, has also promised to take numerous pictures of itself looking sad and angry to share with other alienated people who may "add" them as friends.

The band, who is most famous for a song about holding a gun to their heads, also intends to talk about needing to feel, bleeding their life away, and not being understood.

# Students get creative when considering Lent abstinences

by bunny easter

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RICHARDSON (AMP) - UTD students, ever eager to show their unending creativity, have lent some "alternative" ideas as ways to celebrate this season.

### Students give up sex

Inspired by the holiness of the occasion, and touched by the underrated Josh Hartnett flick, *40 Days and 40 Nights*, several UTD students have banded together to give up sex for Lent.

"I think that it is smart to abstain from sex for Lent," said one student who wished to remain anonymous.

"It lets you focus on school for almost a month and a half. Besides, it's not like anything is really changing for me."

Indeed, most of these students admit to not really having to change their lifestyles.

"One of my friends talks about some girl from his home in West Texas, but I think he's lying," one student remarked. "Other than that, we've just been playing video games to compensate—just like always."

The Pope has deemed these students heretics.

### Students give up homework

Seeking to exploit the concept of Lent, several students have given up homework for the holiday.

"It's great! Now every time that my teacher tells me to do a lab report, I just laugh in his face," said one especially giddy student. "The best part is that he's Catholic too, so he can't argue!"

Some classmates have complained about these students' commitment to abstaining from homework. However, when interrogated about their complaints, most of the classmates admit that they simply wish they had thought of it first.

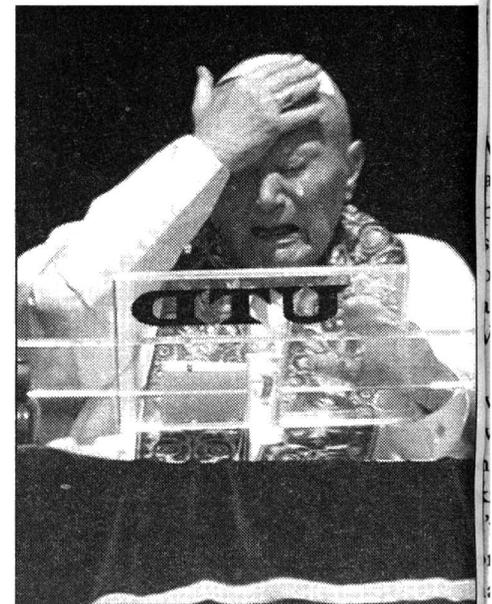
The students have also recently sent an appeal to the Vatican in an attempt to stretch Lent out until after finals.

The Pope has deemed these students heretics.

### AMP gives up the letter "E"

The editors of *A Modest Proposal*, the alternative newspaper on campus, announced their plans to refrain from using the fifth letter in the alphabet for the thirty of Lent.

"I don't know how long we'll be able to pull this off," remarked one editor. "We probably should have stuck to the letter 'Q'. There's not much to say



Because of selected abstentions, the Pope has deemed these students heretics.

about Al Qada these days."

Some contributors admit to being skeptical about this new standard, but they usually give into peer pressure when they see that all the cool writers are doing it.

The Pope has deemed these students heretics.

## UTD attempts to limit UTA immigrants

by judge roy scream

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Dr. Daniel announced plans today to close the UTD borders to prevent UT-Arlington students from immigrating to Richardson.

"It's really become a problem," an official from UTD said when asked for comment. "They've been stealing parking spots from our students for years now and it needs to stop. Either they do the Comet-O, or they go back from whence they came."

The catalyst for this announcement was the recent discovery of an underground tunnel that runs from Arlington to Richardson. University officials fear that this tunnel has allowed UTA to smuggle countless students and illicit textbooks to the campus for at least the last five years.

Some supporters of the closure have tried to persuade the administration to erect a 15-foot tall wall between the two universities. Critics, however, point to the tunnel as a sign that the UTA students will find a way to get to the campus, even if a wall is built.

"Having open borders will not only be a strong goodwill gesture towards UTA, it will also allow their students to seek the sort of education that those of us here have become accustomed to," said Jan McDoogie, an activist against the border closings.

"We should not feel threatened by them and we should not be afraid of them bringing their culture and language here. Diversity is what helps separate UTD from other universities," McDoogie continued.

Some UTD students have been passive about the issue. "I'm totally fine with them

coming here because they just take the classes all the UTD students don't want," one Comet reported. "I mean, they're not paying tuition, so they can't possibly be held responsible, right?"

However, not all students share that opinion. Throngs of one to two students have been rallying outside the Student Union, picketing the administration for major reforms.

A group of students are prepared to create what they call the "Campbell Patrol." They have armed themselves with a crippling form of the "whoosh" that, they claim, will ensure the sanctity of the University, its history, and its future.

The UTD police welcome the new arrivals: "More people we can give unnecessary tickets to," they smiled.

# American ports indefinitely blocked

## #3327, #4327 under attack; torrents no longer functioning

by **Doo Bye**

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WASHINGTON (AMP) – Americans are in a state of shock, as numerous crucial ports have been blocked or invaded by outside forces. Numerous Americans report loss of data, inability to connect with loved ones, and, worst of all, an inability to log on to World of Warcraft.

"At first, it was just a minor annoyance. I was able to get by on the means I had. But when I was forced to download Blizzard's newest patch from their direct downloader, I knew the world I had once lived in was gone. I've been without BitTorrent for days," said the UTD student. "I want to know how this happened."

The ports are being attacked by a hacker known only as "The UAE", and attempts to decrypt this arcane acronym have gone unsuccessfully by American intelligence.

"We think it might be an abbreviation or some longer name," an unnamed source from the shadows reported. "In a worst case scenario, it will be a very smart hacker from some Middle-Eastern country like Qatar or the United Arab Emirates."

Apparently the U.S. government had been trying to establish a deal to move a substantial amount of server security over to this hacker's root company.

But the deal was heavily scrutinized for its complete disregard of really big legal terms and confusing paragraphs and sub-sections,

leading opponents to dub the proposition completely "un-American." It wasn't long thereafter until the attacks on American computing began.

The ACLU has come out in support of "UAE," arguing that when Al Gore invented the internet, he meant for it to be a public forum for ideas.

"This 'UAE' is simply expressing new ideas in practice. In essence, this is the best education we could possibly hope for, because it is a real world situation that we must struggle to work through," one of the lawyers argued. He continued by claiming that "...it's really only a matter of ti-" but the rest of the statement was lost due to a connection failure.

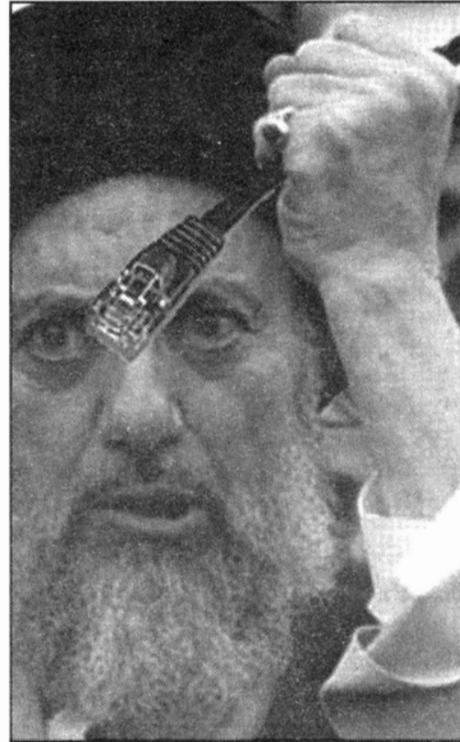
The error message "You got served" was promptly displayed thereafter.

The White House has taken a defiant stance, arguing that international port control is essential to "friendizing us with the others," and U.S. refusal to work with these foreigners "...sends the wrong message about our democratic commitments."

But leading Democrats feel otherwise.

"The real issue here is how susceptible these ports were to attack in the first place," a top Democratic official was claimed to have stated in the first of twenty-seven "Top Priority" reports released today.

"Numerous loopholes and security breaches existed far before this attack. What this serves to show is that this administration, lead by President Bush, does not have at the top of their priorities the well-being of the average American game player, LAN



Police sketch of perpetrator "UAE"

user, and illegal downloader," she continued.

President Bush, recovering from an injury sustained during an ill-advised round of Nerf Wars inside the White House, claimed that the accusations were "hogwash" and that his administration had never dealt with "computerizationizing" issues.

He did claim, though, that freedom was the goal, democracy the key, and it was more crucial than ever that America stay the path.

## Vince Young somehow wins Final Four

Not content with his domination of USC in the Rose Bowl, Vince Young arbitrarily decided to enter March Madness and assert his control over the entirety of college sports.

Entering the NCAA basketball tournament alone, Young poured in a total of 678 points over the course of the tournament, got more rebounds than the whole Florida team, and only incurred penalties when his football instincts kicked in and he tried to run a bootleg for a lay-up.

He also accidentally knocked the entire bench of North Carolina unconscious when he dove for a loose ball due to his superior strength and speed.

"I just ran the game play Coach Brown gave me," said Young, even though Texas football coach Mack Brown was not involved in any way, shape or form in Young's run through the tournament.

It was later revealed that Young thought the tournament was a very large pick-up game that consisted of the smaller, weaker brothers of many football players he knew. This would explain Young's repeated demands to put money down on each game.

However, NFL draft experts do not expect this performance to increase his draft ranking, as Young apparently cannot take tests without carrying it 47 yards for a touchdown.

Young plans to combat this perception by challenging every NFL owner to a sport of their choosing in which he will defeat them while tied to a large stone block weighing thousands of pounds.

**The UTD Uranus: Proposing Immodesty one blatant lie at a time.**

Email: amodestproposal@gmail.com with story ideas

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# THE O'REALLY FACTOR



by kimberley allen

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These days, it's hard to know which news sources sensationalize and inflate the truth. Fortunately, AMP is a serious publication that never exaggerates for dramatic appeal. Our investigative journalists worked around the clock to uncover the cold, clammy facts in these top news stories:

## Britney sculpture gives birth to controversy

O really? A life-size sculpture of Britney Spears (see picture) entitled "Monument to Pro-Life: The Birth of Sean Preston" will go on display April 7th at Brooklyn's Capla Kesting Fine Art gallery. The sculpture will be on display for two weeks, which, as David Hinckley of the NY Daily News said, "is about the length of time for which the real-life Britney, in a better world, would have been famous."

It seems the sculptor, Daniel Edwards, has a knack for pop icons and controversial art.

That is ... if it can even be called art. Edwards calls the statue "seductive," which effectively discredits any art-worthiness it may have had. The already thread-bare line between nude "art" and pornography is quickly unraveling, although I'm certain we can agree that Britney is no Venus de Milo.

Well, if it can't be art, then surely it can be the emblem of a morally righteous campaign for life! Edwards claims he has a "new take on pro-life. Pro-lifers normally promote bloody images of abortion.

This is the image of birth." Unfortunately, yes, he is absolutely right.

If you're wondering where the bear-skin rug comes in, Edwards says that the image from the back is so "powerful" that there needed to be an equally "powerful" image in the front. (*Editor's note: mysteriously, a picture of Ms. Spears bodacious bottom cannot be found on any of the news agencies photo sites.*) Aside from being a bit unrealistic (the bear looks more pained than Britney does), I've yet to hear from anyone who's decided to give birth on a floor, much less a bear skin rug.

Although it's a little early to tell, news of the figurine seems to have created a slough of unintended effects. For one, sales of birth control and "morning after" pills have skyrocketed. Panicked women all over the world are also blaming the statue for nightmares and sleepless nights.

Ironically, the pro-life sculpture has had the opposite effect that it intended. While Edwards says the sculpture portrays the beauty of life and birth, abortion rates have dramatically increased in the past few weeks. O Really...?

Those more scrupulous women who are not taking the pro-choice route have resorted to joining nunneries, saying that the image of giving birth to Kevin Federline's offspring is enough to make any woman chaste.

## Three Earthquakes Level Iranian Villages

O really? Normally, I wouldn't report any boring geological news. However, I can't help but notice that in Google News, the headline below this is titled "Pentagon plans record-breaking explosion." Merely coincidence?

One British news source reported the U.S. "has not ruled out military action and is considering the feasibility of destroying underground warhead development sites

Britney: Hit me baby, one more time...

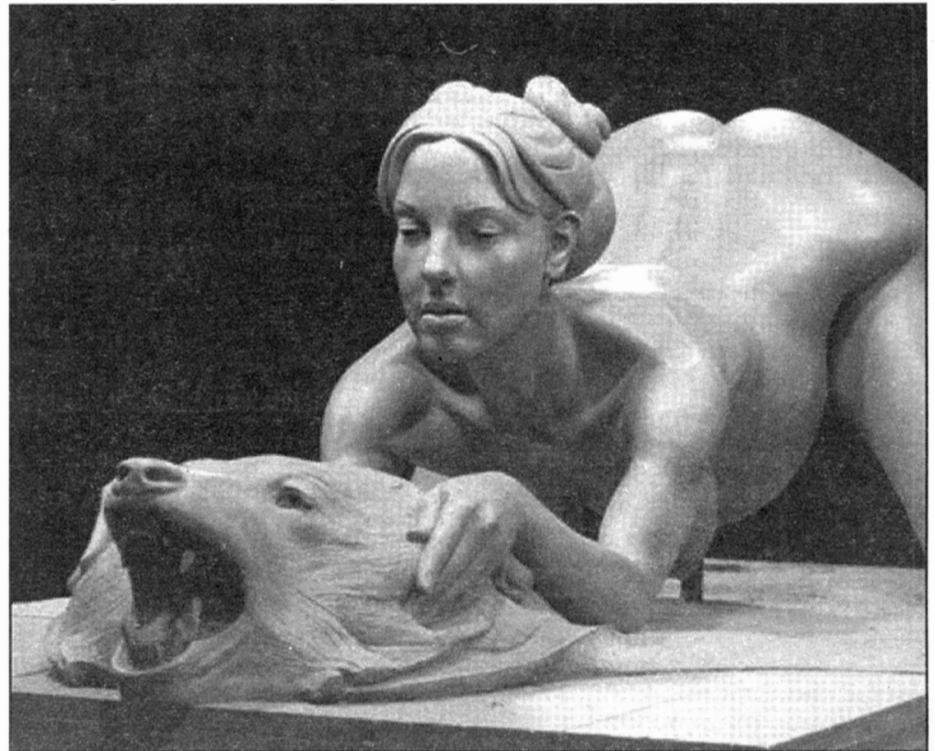


photo from cbsnews.com

This sculpture entitled "Monument to Pro-Life: The Birth of Sean Preston" by Daniel Edwards portrays Britney Spears giving birth on a bear-skin rug. I'd much prefer a sculpture of her holding Sean Preston while driving and call it "Monument to Bad Parenting".

Iran is alleged to have built."

It seems that after Iran's claim that its missiles can "hit two targets using multiple warheads and avoid radar detection," the U.S. felt it was necessary to one-up the competition by leveling three Iranian villages while avoiding seismograph detection.

Rumors have already begun floating over the Internet that President Bush has developed what they call "Weapons of Mass Seismic Activity."

White House spokesman Scott McClellan says the U.S. takes no responsibility for disasters in the Middle East and declined to comment further.

The U.N. is unlikely to form a resolution against the U.S., particularly since it already has one against Iran, but they have threatened to take away the President's coupon for two free drinks at post-assembly parties. Perhaps they don't realize he "done been 'sober' fer years."

## Feds still in hot search for new FEMA chief

O really? The White House is currently searching for someone to replace former

FEMA chief Michael Brown. Brown was removed in the politically disastrous wake of Hurricane Katrina.

All the top candidates have dropped out of the running. President Bush is hoping to hire someone with experience that even vaguely relates to disaster relief. (The abysmally incompetent Brown was the "Judges and Stewards Commissioner" for the International Arabian Horses Association before coming to FEMA—and I wish I was kidding.)

Sadly, the most obvious candidates for the job are unwilling to leave their state or local positions to head the nation's disaster relief organization. Most say they'd rather lead the IRS. There have been, however, numerous applications from the heads of other equestrian organizations.

One top official from the American Consortium of Equestrians was denied an interview for the position of FEMA chief on the basis that he is unqualified for the job.

The disgruntled applicant is filing suit against FEMA for discrimination. Although he declined an interview with AMP, he was recorded mumbling the statement, "George Bush doesn't care about equestrians."

# Iraq from a Blackhawk: A Series Part 2 of 3

by **stephen holmes**

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*Editor's Note: Stephen Holmes is a former UTD computer science student from Houston. He is now serving in Iraq. We will be running his recollections in the next several issues of AMP.*

*Last month finished: I managed to get the mic cord untangled with just enough time to think "Oh @#%&\*, the door's open."...*

**D**erryl, a staff sergeant, was out first. As ye olde booke of infantree tactics teaches us, we're supposed to dash out a few steps and hit the dirt. I've done enough of that in my time.

Hitting the dirt becomes an art form after a while. Luckily for us, our LZ was in the middle of a small farming field so the only unpleasantness there was that this field might be fertilized by cattle.

Pushing that aside, I flipped my night-vision monocular down and was very relieved NOT to see the Mongolian horde running at us (which I half expected). The bird stuck around for a few extra seconds to make sure everyone had bailed before it leaped back into the air again and was gone. The others from our lift followed quickly thereafter.

The building 30 to 40 meters in front of us was... Objective J09? No, J04? We flipped the approach angle at the last minute so now everything's on the other side. Our group consolidated quickly after the birds left, and 1st platoon cleared the first building by force. No gunshots.

After they had marked it as clear and started to move to the next building, the command group and I moved in to set up our temporary command post, which involved flopping down and resting my back against a wall in a pitch black prayer room.

Listening to the battalion radio in one ear, I heard all kinds of things. The company to our east was just touching down. Marines were patrolling the Euphrates. The battalion commander wanted to know if we could get a UAV



photo by USAF

**Sergeant E5 Stephen Holmes, formerly a computer science major at the University of Texas at Dallas, flies in a Blackhawk helicopter during missions over Baghdad. Mr. Holmes is currently serving in the 10th Mountain division in Iraq.**

(Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) on station. The Blackhawks were halfway back to base to get lift 2, and our heavy support company was...

Gunfire. Crap. Machine gun fire. Sounds like it's to the east. J06? J05? Sounds like a decent-sized weapon, too: 7.62mm, for sure. PKM? Yeah, that's too many rounds for an RPK. I wonder where...? Wait for it... Yep, there they are. Our guys firing back at it.

They probably couldn't see the muzzle flashes right away. Hey, is that a Coke can over there? I wonder if this family drinks Coke all the time or if it was just a one time thing. Maybe a gift to a child. Hey, the gunfire stopped.

"Adder 6, Adder 26."

The CO answered: "26, this is 6."

What came next was a triumph of the modern soldier: "6, this guy was shooting at us."

Thank you, lieutenant.

I can't quote the rest of the conversation, but basically some moron had decided to stay and fight instead of running away, and 2nd platoon had to take him down. No casualties to our side. Undaunted, 2nd platoon continued on

their mission.

The next couple of hours went by far smoother than anyone anticipated. Our platoons began to systematically clear and search the cluster of target buildings in the pre-planned order. The first couple of buildings turned up nothing. Then, 3rd platoon's dog team found something.

Stylus, the more experienced of the two dogs, had found something buried in the soft earth at the bank of the Euphrates. 3rd platoon began excavation and soon hit the tip of something metal, so they radioed to the CO to check it out. And off we went.

The excavation site was no more than 300 meters away, which wasn't much of a trek. Not with PVS-14 night vision monoculars.

Thank you, Congress.

Now I can see where I'm going in the dark, instead of trying to decipher the goop you see through PVS-7Ds.

A hop, a skip and a jump later, we were staring into a two-foot deep pit with a victorious Private Phillips standing to one side. The rusted iron shapes at the bottom were undeniably old ar-

tillery rounds, the tips still intact. By the time all of them were uncovered, we counted more than 200. The battalion commander was ecstatic. An IED made from a single round could potentially injure a dozen soldiers and kill a handful. Three or four piled together can destroy one of our armored Humvees. Everyone loved Stylus from then on.

Everything was quiet for several hours until about half an hour after dawn, when 2nd platoon's position was attacked with mortar fire. Not chemical mortar rounds, thankfully, but nonetheless, taking mortar rounds is not very fun. However, since this was a company-level mission, we brought OUR mortar teams with us, making the threat much more endurable.

For every incoming round taken by 2nd platoon, they were able to discern a little more about where the firing came from. Once they located the point of origin, our own mortar tubes were spun in that direction and the mortar men went through the exact science of taking a forearm-sized metal object and projecting it 2 kilometers out of a four-foot tube.

It was my first time being in the vicinity of the mortar team when they're lining up a shot. Apparently, fine manipulation of mortar tubes requires a great deal of yelling. This guy yells a bunch of numbers at another guy, and then that guy messes with a handheld computer while yelling out the numbers again (apparently to himself).

Next, he yells out a new set of numbers, and two OTHER guys yell those new numbers back at him before one of the new guys yells expletives at the guy he's working with. It's a very scientific process.

Just as the tubes were up and ready to fire, the battalion commander suddenly nixed the whole thing, deciding to use Apaches instead. Sadly, the sound of heavy Apache rotors was enough to scare the enemy off; they got away scott-free. Again, no injuries on our side.

Things settled down thereafter, and then 1st platoon found something that made the discovered artillery rounds look like firecrackers...

# USA patriotism MIA in WBC

## Lack of national support at baseball tournament disappoints



by jonathan lane

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On March 16<sup>th</sup>, I watched as the United States baseball team suffered a 2-1 loss to Mexico in the World Baseball Classic. The team, stacked with perennial major league all-stars, walked off the field dejected, knowing they had completely embarrassed themselves. When I watched these players on the screen, I did what any good American would do: I laughed.

Two weekends previously, I had the opportunity to watch Team USA in an exhibition game in Arizona against the San Francisco Giants. At the time, I was somewhat excited about the World Baseball Classic, but part of me felt that it was nothing more than a marketing ploy. After all, the team's roster was made up of players who were some of the most recognizable names in the sport. If the intent was to sell jerseys, the easiest way of doing so would be to put names like "Jeter" or "Clemens" on the back of them.

With that attitude, I walked into the gift store fully intending to buy an Australian team hat. I was saddened to discover that the hats of only a few teams were available. I paid the 25 dollars for my South African hat and went back to the stands hoping that the Giants would manage to upset the United States.

I wasn't alone in that sentiment. As the next few days rolled by and the WBC began play, the only mentions of the tournament were when the United States lost. Everyone in the States seemed to hold the viewpoint that this tournament was merely an exhibition until the all-stars on

“ There was something infectious about watching many of the Latin fans cheer on their country... I never wanted to be among American fans ”

Team USA met up with the all-stars on Team Dominican Republic. The only thing worth paying attention to was whether or not the Cuban players would defect from their country.

I did eventually become engrossed in the tournament. There was something infectious about watching many of the Latin fans cheer on their country with the sort of fervor that is seldom seen anywhere in this country. I desperately wanted to be around the Korean fans, wearing face paint and screaming for the team, or to be with the Venezuelan fans, banging drums and waving flags. However, I never wanted to be among the American fans. The sort of passiveness that we showed as a country is usually reserved for the spectators at a mid-August Kansas City Royals game.

This passiveness is indicative of American apathy as a whole with regards to international sports. Not only is it not expected for an American to support our country's athletes, but it is also almost frowned upon to do so. When someone walks around with a Team USA shirt, regardless of the sport, he or she will receive strange looks from other people. Walk around wearing a Brazil soccer jersey and people will think that you know what you are talking about.

It's obvious that Americans aren't this



photo from AP wire

America's early exit from the World Baseball Classic was almost as embarrassing as the general lack of support from its fans. Many showed lackluster enthusiasm for the tournament.

passive towards sports as a whole. I've seen people cry over the loss of meaningless college basketball games, and I've seen people hug people they don't know when a baseball player hits a homerun. Fans even manage to get into fights against fans of their team's "rivals." There are dozens of sports channels, and one of the largest annual traditions is to gather with a bunch of people to watch the Super Bowl. Americans clearly have the capacity to be passionate about international sports; we simply choose to be apathetic.

The Olympics are a great example of the apathy of the American sports fan. Don't get me wrong, we will watch certain events. However, sometimes we watch because they are events that actually interest us, but often we do it because the media has done a good enough job hyping a certain athlete that we feel an obligation to watch. We usually don't watch it because we have an overwhelming sense of American pride. If that athlete loses, he or she is a national disgrace; take the skier Bode Miller, for example. If the athlete wins, they might get on Jay Leno, if they're lucky. We'll

completely forget about him or her until the next Olympics rolls around. At the same time, a guy who hit a jump-shot at the buzzer in a basketball game 14 years ago will live on in our collective memories for years, even if he doesn't do anything particularly spectacular afterwards.

I felt ashamed when I was watching the WBC championship game, and I saw how much the game meant to the Japanese and Cuban players and how little the tournament mattered to us as a nation. I still feel a little bad that I prefer my South African hat to my brother's USA cap.

I wish that we all took a little more national pride in our sports and approached it with the same passion that we do for our professional and collegiate sports. I know that when the World Cup starts in a few months, I plan on waking up early to watch our nation try to match up with the international powerhouses and that I will actually hope that the team does well. I really hope that I am not the only one planning on doing this. Who knows? With any luck, we might even find it more fun than rooting for South Africa.



# My TWO Cents



by **richard voit**

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Extra! Extra! Read all about it! March Madness ends. In April. Is this odd to anyone else? As odd, perhaps, as the Florida Marlins considering a move to San Antonio. The San Antonio Marlins? Puh-leeze! But back to the issue at hand. I mean, I was as ready as the next guy to see the NCAA tournament end, but the folks at Amazon.com got a little overzealous. Did anyone else get an email from Amazon the morning of April 3, exactly 11 hours before the tip off of the NCAA championship game, proclaiming UCLA's victory?

Maybe the Bruins did, and that's why they forgot to show up during Florida's 73-57 pasting. The loss was so bad that legendary 10-time NCAA champion UCLA coach John Wooden checked into the hospital with what the doctors called "a bad case of embarrassment."

John Wooden isn't the only one who's embarrassed right now. He shares that distinction with your favorite growth-hormone injecting, bovine-muscle-enhancing, testicle-shrinking slugger and mine, Barry Bonds. Bonds was recently outed by two San Francisco Chronicle reporters as a steroid user and cheat. Now he'll be booed every time he steps up to the plate. But that's not all. Perhaps most embarrassing is the telltale sign of a washed up celebrity: he now stars in his very own reality TV show (see Simpson, Jessica).

Sheesh, all this controversy and the season has just barely started! Baseball pundits are calling this season the dawn of a new era of post-steroidism. I think they're just trying to drum up support for a slow-paced game made even slower by the extinction of the homerun. Here's my one question: is it sad that more people are looking forward to next week's episode of *Lost*?

I'm sorry, I don't mean to knock America's Pastime like Mexico did in the World Baseball Classic. You know that when October rolls around, you'll watch the World Series. And I have a pretty good idea of who I think will win this year. Unfortunately, Japan is ineligible. As for the Major League squad with the best shot? I wouldn't listen to me. I missed all the Final Four teams in my bracket. Never again

will I print predictions beforehand. Except now. The Rangers will most decidedly not win the World Series. You heard it here first.

One team that does have a reason to be excited this year is the New York Mets. The Mets opened their 2006 season with a hope of not sucking and a rash of applications for jobs throughout the organization. I couldn't understand it at first, but then I remembered Anna Benson. Benson is, of course, the wife of ex-Mets pitcher Kris and herself a former stripper. She publicly promised that if she ever caught Kris cheating, she would sleep with all of his teammates, coaches and even the grounds crew. Well, now she's filing for divorce. Her reason? His infidelity. Is it inappropriate to suggest that conversations around the water cooler in the Mets' clubhouse aren't referring to new bats when they include the words "good wood"? This just goes to show that the biggest (and dumbest) cheaters in baseball don't necessarily take steroids.

Speaking about dumb sportsmen, did you hear about the youth minister at a Christian school in Missouri who went totally Ron Artest on a student during a dodgeball game? The 16-year-old student nailed the youth minister with a ball, knocking off his glasses, prompting a retaliatory push and kick in the groin from the youth minister. The student, ever the Christian, turned the other groin. If you missed the incident, it will be re-airing all week on ESPN 8, the Ocho.

On a less painful note, here's some big news. Bad boy wide receiver Terrell Owens signed with the Cowboys last

*From merciless minister beatings, to a mammoth moth problems, to Mets marriage mishaps. Cashing in with my opinions . . .*



month. There was a lot of controversy surrounding Dallas' courting of Owens, who missed most of last season because of his bad behavior, but I just have one question. Would it be too corny to suggest that T.O. was in "time out" for the last nine games of the season?

I think the Cowboys will be a good fit for Owens. His career in a nutshell: he went from a team that consistently beat the Cowboys in the late 90's (the 49ers) to a team that consistently beat the Cowboys from 2001-2004 (the Eagles) to a team that consistently beat the Cowboys last year (the Cowboys). Super Bowl aside, here's hoping for team harmony.

Such a harmony is shared around the world due to only a few events. Nothing brings the world together quite like fear of a global pandemic, like AIDS, avian flu, or a Japanese victory at the World Baseball Classic. But what comes close to fostering that sort of international camaraderie is the Olympics. It gives a city the chance to show itself off to the entire world and to overcharge for cheesy visors with a silly logo.

It's not all fun and games, however, for the planning committees. Think about the last few years. We had the bribery scandal in Salt Lake City in 2002, the lack of infrastructure in Athens in 2004, and the lack of prime time curling in Torino in 2006. But Beijing 2008 faces perhaps the biggest test of all: moths. I am not making this up; these winged creatures are wreaking havoc on the city.

Apparently, the vibrant moth community didn't get the one-caterpillar-per-family memo. And if you've ever left your light on at night with your window open, you'll know that lighting a giant Olympic torch won't necessary solve any moth problems. Before we go, I have one hope for China - that solving moth problems is easier than solving math problems. Or meth problems.

Movie Review: **Final Fantasy VII**

# *Advent Children* takes after father

**Movie a worthy sequel to greatest game ever**



by john mclean

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*If you've seen this movie already (and if you're reading this article after the giant "Final Fantasy VII" at the top, chances are you have), skip over the plot rehashing and read the next-to-last paragraph; it still applies to everyone.*



screen shot from Square-Enix

Tifa is less than pleased with those of you who have seen her newest movie but don't plan on buying a copy. Remember the unholy beatdown she put on Loz? Without using Final Heaven? You know you don't want any of that, unless you're a kinky bastard. Sicko.

Final Fantasy VII: Advent Children is the movie sequel to the video game Final Fantasy VII for those of you who do not follow such things, or do but live under a rock. Those who have not played the game will enjoy the movie; those who have will be enraptured by it.

The plot of the movie is quite simple, yet it provides sufficient force to explain the events within the movie. Two years after Sephiroth's defeat, Midgar suffers from a mysterious disease known as geostigma. Furthermore, three Sephiroth clones have emerged and are searching for Jenova to have the Reunion. Cloud and Co. get drawn up into things and have to save the planet... again.

Character development is practically non-existent in the movie. Cloud, who has become a lone wolf since the game ended, must rediscover his strength and return to

the path of the hero. No one else receives any sort of development. The viewer knows nothing about the three Sephiroth clones except that they are Sephiroth clones.

But if you've played Final Fantasy VII, you'll know that this is not a flaw, as it allows the movie to focus on its strongest point: the battles, which are among the greatest I have ever seen.

I cannot convey their magnificence properly, so I will not even try. But, if you haven't played the game (shame on you!), then all you need to do is find a friend that has (which won't be hard) and he will gladly fill you in on what you need to know.

The graphics are breathtaking. The verisimilitude of the CG is astonishing — you will often forget that this is not live action. Both the textures and the characters' movements are stunningly realistic, and the

only flaws are the movement of hair and the appearance of wetness: two difficult tasks that the animators couldn't perfect.

The music, composed by the legendary Nobuo Uematsu, is just as impressive. Using a mixture of original pieces and various remixes of tracks from the game and encompassing multiple genres of music, Uematsu's music perfectly complements the film's visual artistry.

But what truly makes Advent Children great is its attention to detail. All the little things that you could hope for are there. The full cast of the game makes an appearance, from Aeris to the Turks. Characters use their limit breaks in combat, and music drawn from the game's original soundtrack is matched to corresponding events within the film. There are countless other details; every one of them will make you smile.

And for those interested in this movie that have not already acquired copies one way or another, it is imperative that you actually purchase this DVD. The last time Square-Enix made a movie — back when it was just Squaresoft — they lost money on it. This is quite a large risk on their part, and they're banking on the popularity of FF7 to pull it through. If you ever want to see something like this again, including a possible remake of FF7 for the PS3 (if you're unconvinced, check out the tech demo for the PS3, which was included with Final Fantasy VII: Dirge of Cerberus), then you should buy this movie.

I have a potentially unhealthy attachment to Final Fantasy VII. This movie brings joy to my heart. Even if you've never played the game, the sheer beauty of the film will be enough for you to enjoy.

# 'Axe Effect' gets axed



by **bobby janecka**

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Gentlemen of UTD, we at *A Modest Proposal* understand that times are tough. During a period in your life when movies like *Animal House* and *Van Wilder* inspire us to pursue great, amorous conquests, we can only lament at having to live in the land of Temoc. Why, in the latest freshman class alone, females outnumber males nearly two-to-one (sic)!

Thankfully, we the phallus-wielders have an arsenal of secret weapons, if the commercials are to be believed. That's correct; I'm talking about the renowned "Axe Effect" boasted of by the makers of the selfsame deodorant bodyspray.

In order to better describe this notorious effect, this brave reporter took time out of his latest post-midnight shopping trip to Wal-Mart to bring you the facts. When you use Axe Body spray, is it true that "your new and improved male musk is released into the atmosphere, quickly reaching nearby females?" Perhaps everything that the Internet says is true, but we

at AMP seek a higher standard. I certainly hoped to find out.

On finding the Axe section among the deodorant and manly scents, I was amazed at the selection. With no fewer than eight masculine flavors to choose from, how could I be certain of selecting the most potent, the most virile of the bunch?

It was difficult, but since they were out of *Kilo*, the only logical choice in its stead was *Tsunami*. I mean, what's more powerful and manly than a giant life-threatening wave? I eagerly snatched the can and rang it up at the self-checkout.

Shortly after, I stepped outside into the parking lot to apply the stuff and return to finish the shopping trip. If the Axe Effect was all they promised, I was sure to have a few romantic encounters before I hit the checkout again.

The directions instructed me to "spray all over including your chest, neck, underarms — anywhere you want to smell great." Since I wanted to smell great everywhere... and they never specified how much to use... I just erred on the side of caution and used the whole can.

Now I don't know whether you've ever smelled Axe before, but have you ever been in a club and a large beef of a man lumbers past, enveloping you in some mystery soup of expired Old Spice, sweat, and three different types of cologne? Well Axe is like that, times ten.

After I could breathe again, I headed back into the store, reveling in my accentuated male musk. I was like a walking can of manly concentrate! I gave a winning smile to the greeter as I passed (she smiled in return, but took a few steps back as she did). I could tell the Axe was working already, not five minutes after putting it on; I was awing senior citizens with my rugged sexiness.

The plan from that point on was to

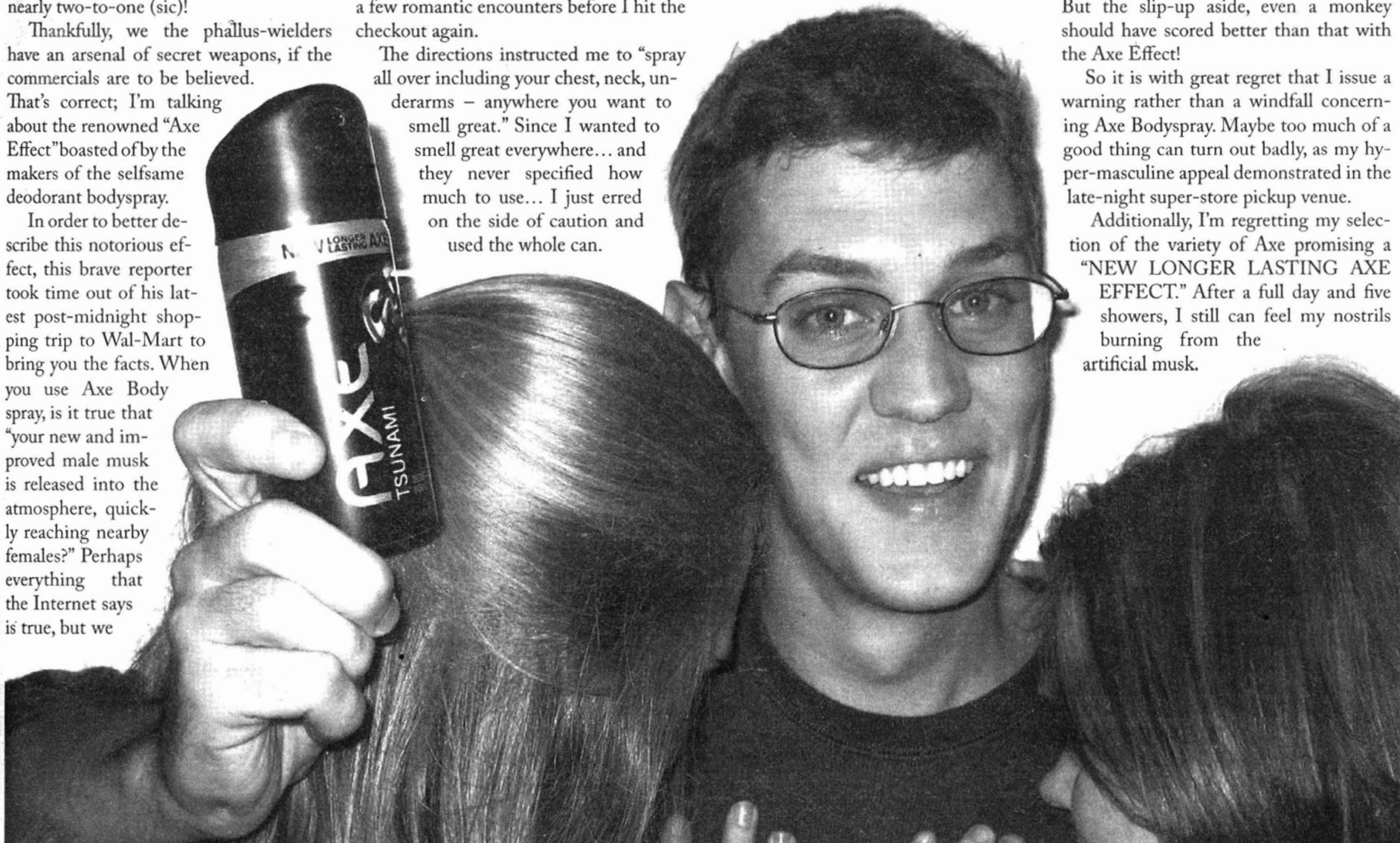
conduct a random survey of all the eligible lady customers I encountered in the store. I grinned suavely, sauntered up to them and asked suggestively, "On a scale of one to ten (ten being the highest), how much are you attracted to me right now?"

Like I said, that was the plan. Unfortunately, things didn't exactly go as planned. Following a couple 2's, a 1, and a "Gross, f-off!" I soon ran out of available females. I tried resorting to floor stockers, but they were considerably less than eager to help, and I had to abandon things entirely.

Obviously, I was at a loss to explain what went wrong. I will admit that in my eagerness to Axe up, I forgot to make a control run, asking the same question to ten females, without the aromatic aide. But the slip-up aside, even a monkey should have scored better than that with the Axe Effect!

So it is with great regret that I issue a warning rather than a windfall concerning Axe Bodyspray. Maybe too much of a good thing can turn out badly, as my hyper-masculine appeal demonstrated in the late-night super-store pickup venue.

Additionally, I'm regretting my selection of the variety of Axe promising a "NEW LONGER LASTING AXE EFFECT." After a full day and five showers, I still can feel my nostrils burning from the artificial musk.



# SPIN ZONE

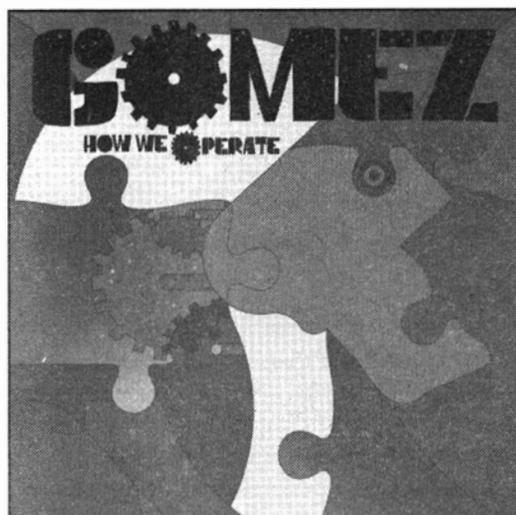


by Jordan Youngblood

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## Let's hope April showers bring better May CDs

### GOMEZ – How We Operate (ATO Records; release date 05/02/2006)



Way back in the ancient days of 1998, a band named Gomez came out with a debut album called *Bring It On*. Sounding like a bizarre mixture of Delta blues and Brit-pop, it won the band accolades, the Mercury Music prize, and a couple of decent-charting singles. Flash forward to now, where over the past eight years Gomez has met with decreasing commercial success on each album following *Bring It On*, and now finds itself on a smaller label (ATO instead of Virgin) with something to prove. Thus, *How We Operate* is their slickest, most pop-oriented effort to date, doing away with the electronic experimentation of *In Our Gun* and the classic-rock fixation of *Split the Difference* for gleaming guitars and concise songs. Each previous album could be counted upon for at least one epic-length track; *How We Operate* doesn't have a single one past 5:20. This isn't necessarily a bad thing, as "girlshapedlovedrug" is about the simplest, catchiest thing

the band's even penned, with guitarist Tom Gray getting center stage for once. "Notice" welcomes the album in with shakers, acoustic picking, and Ian Ball's unhurried tenor until opening up to a warm, fully orchestrated verse; "How We Operate" has a vaguely Middle Eastern vibe and stop-start bass to contrast Ben Ottenwell's sandpaper voice; "Charley Patton Songs" pulls out the bombast with chiming bells and a middle-section crescendo. However, the album can't escape the shadow of its older brothers. *Bring It On* is still the best record they've done, and many tracks sound like weaker echoes of past glories. Ottenwell sounded like a revelation over the murky "Get Miles" in 1998; now his Eddie Vedder-on-cigarettes voice has a hard time finding a decent collaborator in this radio-friendly environment. It's by no means a bad record, but the band still hasn't made the stunning follow-up their first record hinted toward.

**RATING**

7

### THE FLAMING LIPS – At War With The Mystics (Warner; available now)



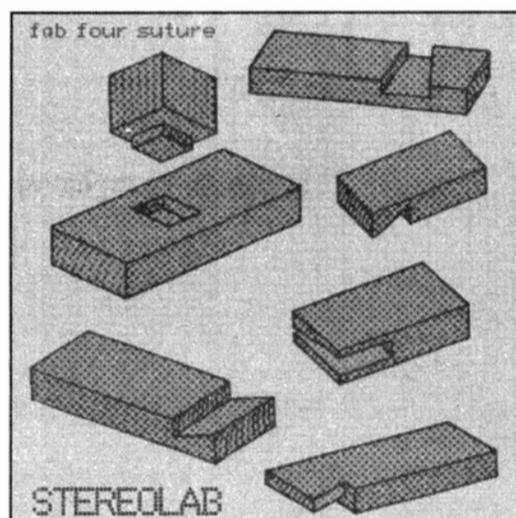
Wayne Coyne is a bizarre man. The guy normally performs covered in fake blood with dancing fuzzy animals and confetti around him, attempted to make an album by synchronizing 40 car radios (instead, he made one that has to be heard by playing 4 CDs together at once), and has been directing a movie about Christmas on Mars for what seems like about a decade now. For all his quirks, the guy could get away with far more after a career of brilliant, touched pop albums, peaking with 1999's *The Soft Bulletin*. Yet with this, his band's 11th album, Wayne can't seem to decide how bizarre he wants to be. "The Yeah Yeah Yeah Song" swerves from a great rock single to about 45 seconds of horribly atonal singing, daring the listener to keep going (hell, even a voice at the end of the song goes "I didn't make it all the way through that"). "Free Radicals" is a Prince imitation gone badly awry, "Haven't

Got a Clue" is a pale imitation of the successful elements of *Yoshimi Battles the Pink Robots*, and "Goin' On" is a sadly anticlimactic closer. Wayne's lyrics are stuck somewhat too; a retread of material written better over the last two albums. However, even with these faults, a Lips album never collapses completely, and the high points here pull the album into "good" territory. "The Sound of Failure" is killer 70's pop complete with wah-wah guitar and flutes, "My Cosmic Autumn Rebellion" has a massive guitar solo that renders all other instruments nearly inaudible, "The Wizard Turns On..." could be Pink Floyd if they'd recorded in the 2000s, "It Overtakes Me" bounds along into a gorgeous acoustic ending, and "Pompeii Am Gotterdammerung" is one of the best songs they've ever done. Run, don't walk, to buy the Lips' past catalogue if you don't have them already; use iTunes to pull the best ones off of this.

**RATING**

7

## STEREOLAB – Fab Four Suture (Too Pure; available now)



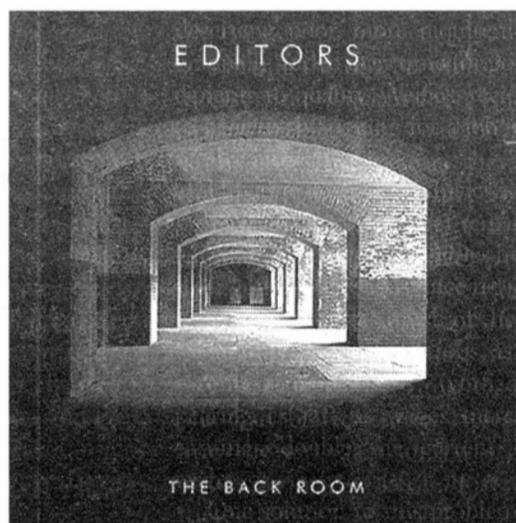
Technically, this isn't a true album; "Fab Four Suture" is a compilation of 4 singles released over 2005 by the band, arranged into a fairly smooth song sequence by the band. Knowing this, it's easier to forgive "Kyberneticka Babicka Pt. 1 and 2" for being for the most part aimless knowing that they were originally filler on a single. Outside of these two tracks that bookend the album, what remains is Stereolab sounding more muscular and confident than they have in years, expanding upon the return to form of Margerine Eclipse to play quite convincingly for a 15-year old band. "Get A Shot Of The Refrigerator" shimmies along on spy-movie keyboards and insistent drums, "Interlock" has

an immediately memorable bass/horn hook that sounds like a 1960's cop show; "Vodiak" sprints through its 3:19 with barely a moment to rest, and showstopper "Excursions into Oh, A-Oh" shifts into high gear for its final half, rivaling even "French Disko" for the band's best full-fledged rock moment. After their wonderful show last Saturday at Nokia Theater (complete with lead singer Laetitia Sadler showing that a French accent and playing trombone can charm even the most cynical), Stereolab seems intent on proving that even with more than a decade and a half behind them, they still remain relevant and potent. Count me convinced.

## RATING

8

## EDITORS – The Back Room (Kitchenware/red; Available Now)



Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, right? Well, Editors are basically laying Ian Curtis's grave with thank-you cards right now. There's a fine line between resembling and stealing, and lead singer Tom Smith sounds so uncannily like Curtis that Paul Banks of Interpol should thank his lucky stars; there's someone else now to absorb his most common criticism. Interpol stole from Joy Division; Editors steals from Interpol; thus, you're getting the 1980's third-hand. Certainly it's not a fault to sound like another band, but what genuinely great bands do is transcend their influences to create something altogether theirs. The first three tracks hint at what the band could do: "Lights" pounds its way out of the gates, with Smith pleading "I've got a million things to say"; "Munich" runs to the Gothic dance floor

with sped-up pinging U2 guitars and the best vocals on the album; "Blood" will most likely fit quite nicely along the Killers and the Bravery on the radio, but has enough melodic sensibility to stand out on its own. The problem comes when the band doesn't deviate from the formula they've set up and ultimately swallow the CD in ennui. There's nothing as utterly chilling as Joy Division's "She's Lost Control", nothing as majestic as Interpol's "NYC", nothing as long lasting as "Never Stop" by the Bunnymen. If you haven't heard those songs, well...Editors might sound like a whole new world. For those experienced in the world of mope-rock, however, the best this album will do is remind you, "I haven't listened to Unknown Pleasures in a while."

## RATING

5

## Ten tracks to try for March/April 2006 (it won't hurt!)

*Some of these were mentioned in the article, some haven't come out quite yet, and others are older. All should be available through iTunes or eMusic.*

1. Calexico – "Letter to Bowie Knife" (Apr. 11)
2. Mogwai – "Travel is Dangerous"
3. Graham Coxon – "Don't Let Your Man Know"
4. Band of Horses – "The Great Salt Lake"
5. Flaming Lips – "Pompeii Am Gotterdammerung"
6. Stereolab – "Excursions into Oh, A-Oh"
7. Islands – "Rough Gem" (Apr. 18)
8. Ambulance LTD – "Country Gentleman"
9. Centro-Matic – "Calling Thermatico"
10. Morrissey – "Life is a Pigsty"

# Number Crunching



by walter voit

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by erica neiser

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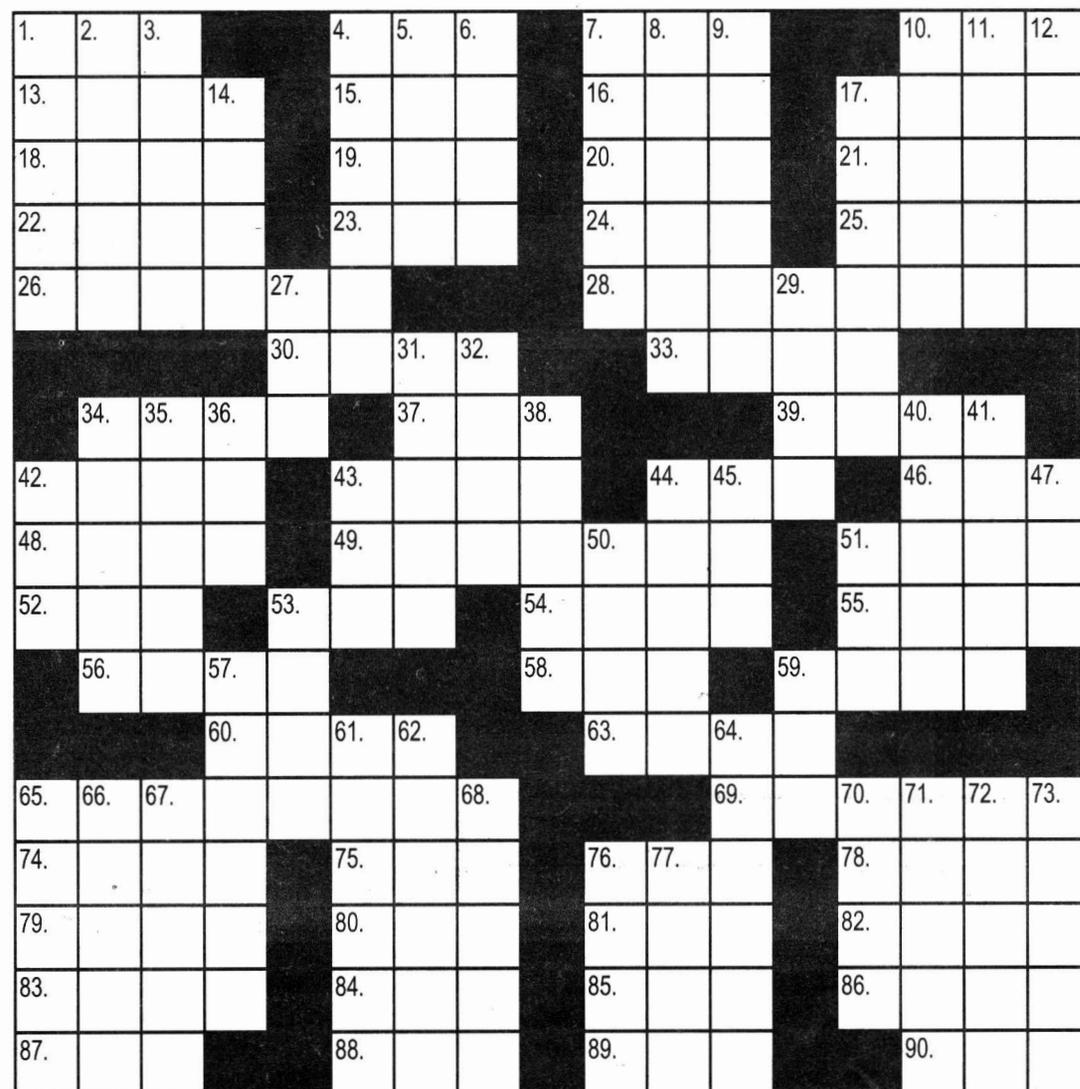
## ACROSS

1. \_\_\_ Five: Michigan athletes
4. It can be natural?
7. Gift of \_\_\_ (or chatter)
10. Same as #24 across
13. Distant
15. Lode load
16. Epoch
17. Kind of Lisa
18. Nickname Hermione and Harry would give
19. Conflict
20. Lubricate
21. Large goat
22. Powers' lifeblood
23. Nightmare street tree
24. Muscovian Library (abbr.)
25. It can be The First?
26. Themed thinker with name-sake theorem on surface integrals
28. Puzzle theme, to the point?
30. "Indivisible" unit
33. Collection of lines connecting pentagon vertices
34. Singe
37. Dignitary (abbr.)
39. Muscovian royalty
42. Whip
43. \_\_\_ of my existence
44. Animal noise?
46. Animal noise
48. Plunge
49. Variable puzzle theme?
51. Swedish "Dancing Queens" and co.
52. Protestant African American Church letters

53. Wham! Or Bang! in Madrid
54. Zoot Suit \_\_\_
55. Humble in spirit
56. Chicken Cordon \_\_\_
58. Only sibling's nephew to you
59. Rows
60. Small forearm bone
63. Viewed
65. Integral to puzzle theme?
69. Apple lover who also loved successive approximations
74. Uzbek Sea
75. Dry and ironic
76. Grad test
78. Operatic solo
79. Collections of points to themed thinker
80. Long time
81. Poetic always
82. Downed in water
83. Conversed with "buddies"?
84. CS folder storing raw code files that in not bin or inc
85. Nut follower?
86. Nature walk
87. Trend
88. Aus. island state
89. Where ozone is
90. Hallucinogenic drug acting on the serotonin receptor

## DOWN

1. Grows crops
2. Underway
3. Stringed instrument
4. Saddle point in one dimension
5. Word of mouth
6. Disease agent
7. Themed thinker \_\_\_ Cantor
8. Gets up
9. Kind of box
10. Mechanical man
11. Raise upper lip
12. In a relaxed manner
14. Castle
17. Ones who deal with #15 across
27. Corn unit
29. Puzzle theme
31. Ellipses
32. Chinese vase dynasty
34. Ascend
35. Shanty
36. Years-alive status
38. Looks at colleagues?
40. Old sap
41. Graduation attire



42. Agency that nixes edibles
43. Animal noise
44. Annoying humming noise
45. Animal food
47. Lively tree?
50. Resumes
51. Doctors org.
53. Last international phonetic alphabet word or African tribe
57. Themed author of The Elements, a treatise on #28 across
59. Themed certainty
61. Rockies, Dodgers, Diamondbacks, Padres and Giants
62. \_\_\_ borealis
64. MC squared
65. Muslim leader
66. Sweet smell
67. Poisoned
68. Lip \_\_\_ : mouths lyrics
70. Soap oneself
71. Path
72. Animal noises
73. Nude
76. Jewels
77. Stink

answers to March crossword:  
*The Frogs*

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| M | A | C | H |   | L | A | S | I | C |   | S | A | M |   |   |
| A | D | O | E |   | O | U | T | D | O |   | M | I | N | E |   |
| M | I | D | I |   | U | V | U | L | A |   | A | N | A | L |   |
| M | E | E | D |   | I | S | N | E | S |   | G | E | N | O |   |
| A | U | D | I | O | S |   |   |   |   | T | A | I | W | A | N |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | L | I | R | A |   | A | N | N |   |   |
| C | I | N |   |   | E | I | F | F | E | L | T | O | W | E | R |
| B | O | O | B |   |   | I | R | A |   |   | T | O | R | A |   |
| S | U | R | R | E | N | D | E | R | E | R |   | W | E | T |   |
|   |   |   |   |   | I | L | E |   |   | E | L | S | E |   |   |
| T | S | E | T | S | E |   |   |   |   | T | R | O | O | P | S |
| R | A | N | A |   |   | D | R | A | M | A |   | O | R | A | T |
| A | N | D | I |   |   | L | E | G | I | T |   | G | E | N | R |
| I | T | E | N |   |   | E | N | A | T | E |   | L | O | D | E |
| T | A | R |   |   |   | S | O | R | E | S |   | E | S | A | W |

# Ample Distractions

We hope you enjoy our new amazing addition to the AMP puzzle page this month. We warmly welcome wild ideas and simple submissions from Comets, Comettes and Commies alike. Enjoy!

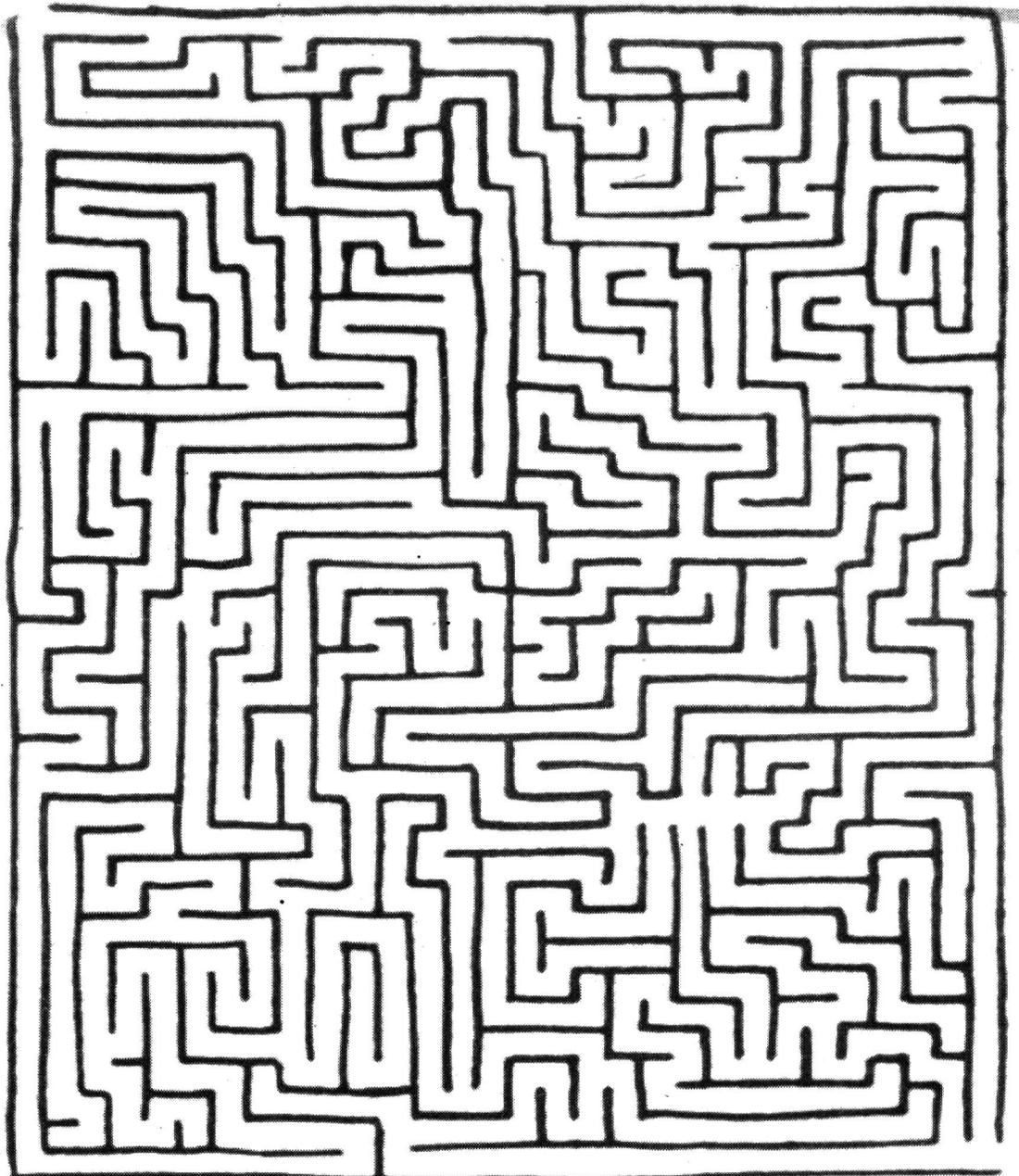


by walter voit

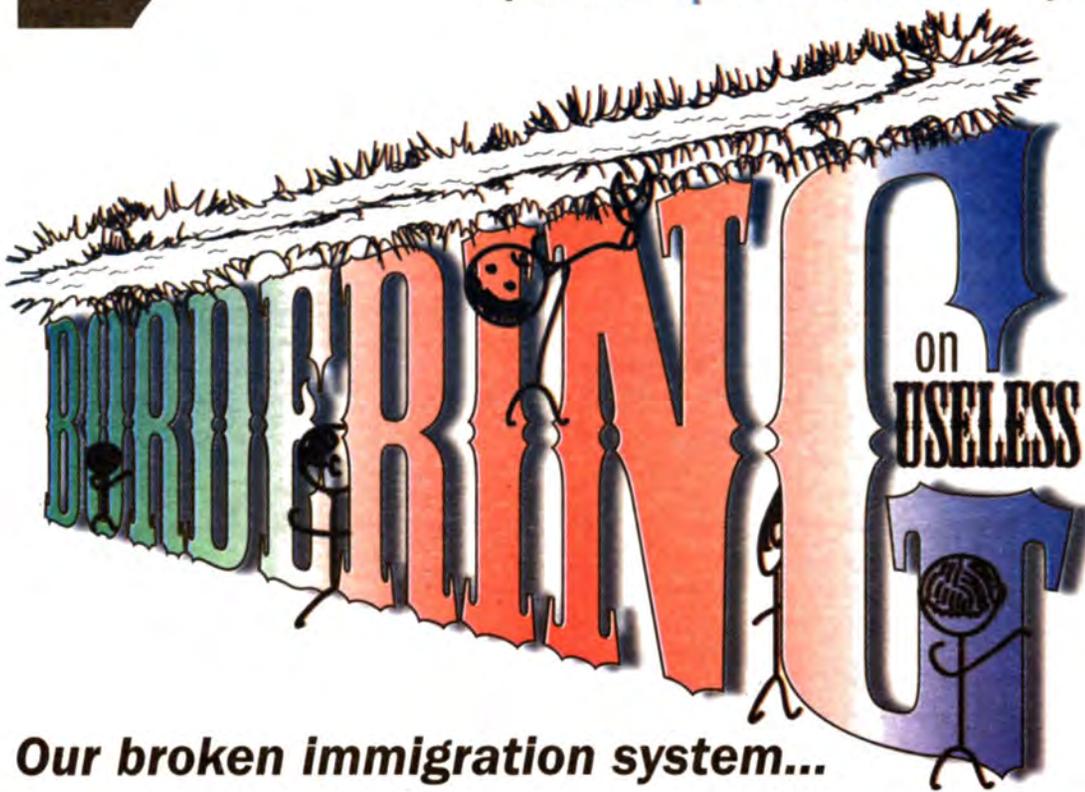
wvoit@student.utdallas.edu

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| 2 |   |   |   | 1 | 8 | 6 |   | 7 |
|   |   |   | 9 |   |   | 5 |   |   |
| 6 | 2 |   | 8 |   |   |   |   | 1 |
|   |   | 8 |   |   |   | 4 |   |   |
| 1 |   |   |   |   | 3 |   | 2 | 6 |
|   |   | 7 |   |   | 9 |   |   |   |
| 8 |   | 2 | 1 | 5 |   |   |   | 4 |
| 4 | 1 |   |   | 8 |   |   |   |   |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   | 4 | 1 |   |   | 5 |   | 7 |
| 3 |   |   | 9 |   |   |   | 8 | 4 |
|   | 1 | 2 |   |   | 5 |   | 9 |   |
| 2 |   | 7 |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | 3 |   |   | 9 |   |   | 4 |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | 7 |   | 1 |
|   | 5 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 4 | 2 |   |   |   | 8 |   |   | 5 |
| 1 |   | 8 |   |   | 6 | 4 |   |   |



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|   | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | D | 5 | 0 | 1 | 4 | E | F | 3 | 6 | B | 8 | 7 | C | A | 9 |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | C | 3 | 7 | A | 8 | B | 5 | 0 | 9 | 1 | E | 4 | 2 | D | 6 | F |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | 3 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 8 | E | B | F | 7 | D | 9 | 6 | 5 | C | 2 | A | 0 | 4 | 3 | 1 |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | 5 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 1 | E | 6 | 2 | 0 | 3 | B | F | 5 | 8 | 9 | D | A | 4 | C |
|   | 1 | 7 | 6 | 9 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 4 | B | 8 | 2 | 9 | D | A | 6 | 5 | 4 | E | 0 | C | 1 | F | 7 | 3 |
|   | 8 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 1 | F | 4 | 0 | D | C | 1 | 8 | E | A | B | 7 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 2 |
|   | 4 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 9 | 1 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 3 | C | A | 5 | 4 | 9 | F | 7 | D | 2 | 1 | 6 | B | 8 | E | 0 |
|   | 9 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 6 | B | 1 | 8 | 9 | 2 | 7 | A | C | 4 | D | E | F | 3 | 0 | 5 |
|   | 2 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 9 | 3 | A | 2 | C | 7 | E | 5 | 4 | D | B | F | 3 | 0 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 6 |
|   | 3 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 6 | D | 9 | 4 | E | 3 | F | 0 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 5 | C | 2 | B | A |
|   | 6 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 9 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 0 | F | 3 | B | 6 | C | 8 | 2 | 9 | A | 1 | 4 | 7 | D | E |
|   | 7 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 5 | E | 7 | 3 | C | 5 | 8 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 0 | 4 | 2 | A | B | F | D |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 0 | A | 8 | 1 | F | 7 | D | 2 | E | 3 | C | B | 9 | 6 | 5 | 4 |
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## Our broken immigration system...



by **liam skoyles**

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Immigration is a fundamental part of the "American Dream," but recently neglect and apathy have corrupted that ideal. As it stands, the system is ineffective to the point of recruiting gun-toting New Mexican farmers to protect the border. Immigration, guest workers, illegal border crossings and national security are all parts of the same problem—a problem left far too long without a solution.

Immigration in the United States is and always will be a complex and contentious issue. Within the national immigration debate the best and worst of America is evidenced: from racism to rampant patriotism, and from liberalism to the "American Dream." In a way, immigration is America.

Recent demonstrations by the immigrant community against proposed changes and crack-downs have lead to a state of panic in Washington, D.C. and around the nation. Some are proposing draconian laws and fortified borders, while others are demanding amnesty for millions of law-breaking illegal aliens. One thing is certain, however: it must be changed from the current status quo.

While there definitely have been times of intense conflict and tension over immigration, America has ultimately flourished from its new citizenry, gaining a multitude of new ideas, talents and outlooks. It is essential to realize that at the center of a healthy American immigration policy is the belief that immigrants can and will develop a new, stronger sense of national pride in the United States.

My family moved to Houston from England fifteen years ago. We arrived with virtually no intention of staying permanently but eventually went through the immigration process.

What confronted my family was a massive headache created by an antiquated system. When we went to get a "Green Card" for legal residency, we failed the first time. We'd arrived later than 5:00 AM and not anticipated a multi-hour long line.

The second time, on a freezing December morning, we were made to stand outside in a line that stretched around the parking lot. No benches, no waiting room, and even more frustrating: no information explaining what was going on. Were we even in the right line? Nothing. And when we finally approached the door, there wasn't even a door handle. We felt like animals.

This was the system fifteen years ago: under-manned, under-funded and under-prepared. Since then, the population of Houston has increased by a quarter to over two million; the vast majority of this increase is comprised of Hispanics. The

increase in numbers alone would have rendered the system ineffective, but a singular event solidified the doom of the current immigration system: September 11<sup>th</sup>.

The image of foreigners doing grievous harm to the United States shook the American belief that immigration is innately positive – or even more so, that assimilation into an American belief system would be a mandatory byproduct of immigration.

The track to becoming a citizen, previously taking five to six years, suddenly became an almost laughable proposition. Extensive background checks, character references, and waiting periods hamper any efforts to become a citizen. It is almost necessary to "have a friend who has a friend who knows someone."

How can we as a nation expect these immigrants to develop a strong sense of national pride in the U.S.? For those that make a reasonable effort to legally enter the U.S., what do they receive in return? The system that, fifteen years ago, could be perceived as purposefully designed to hamper their efforts and send them back home, is now a brick wall standing between immigrants and America.

Subjecting prospective Americans to degrading mental and physical strains is hardly the best way to plant the seed of a new national identity. Is there any question as to why there is so much illegal immigration?

The system is undoubtedly broken.

Over the last fifty years, immigration laws have become outdated, irrelevant, and widely ignored.

The issue has come to a head as some lawmakers are proposing a crackdown on illegal immigration and a gargantuan fence to deter undocumented border crossings. This proposal has sparked massive protests in the immigrant community and a huge debate among all Americans as to who exactly is eligible to live the "American Dream."

Both sides of the debate have reasonable arguments, but both also have their share of loonies.

Ultra-conservative, ultra-patriotic nationalists will declare the borders closed, create a giant eco-dome over the U.S. and forget that the outside world exists (besides its oil); ultra-liberal immigrant activists will claim that everyone is an American deep down inside, declare universal amnesty and abolish little black lines on maps.

The answer lies somewhere in between: the American labor system essentially relies upon the steady influx of willing, ready workers, but we also can't simply provide Social Security for the whole world.

America has a great tradition of compromise and that is the only thing that will get us through these difficult times.

The answer, as it always ideally does, lies in thoughtful and cogent discussion. However, neither side of the proverbial fence seems to want to start one, no matter what language it is in.