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Office of Student Affairs

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2010-05-01

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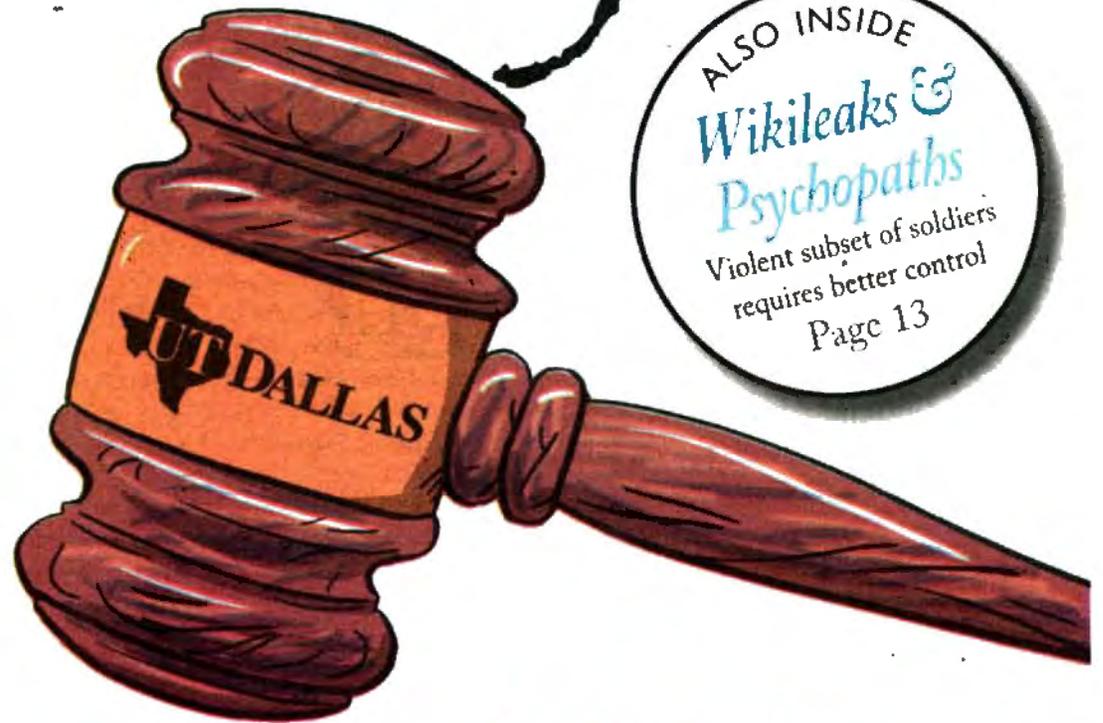
Jonathan Coker, *et al.*

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# A Modest Proposal

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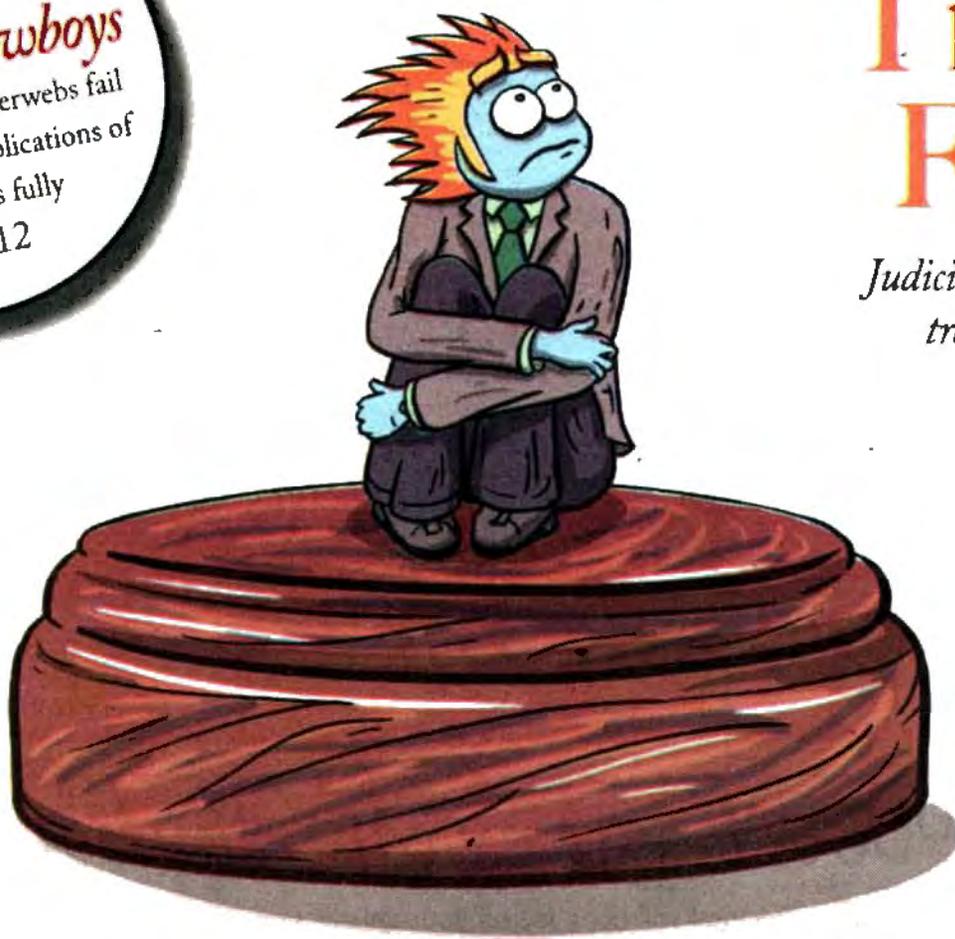
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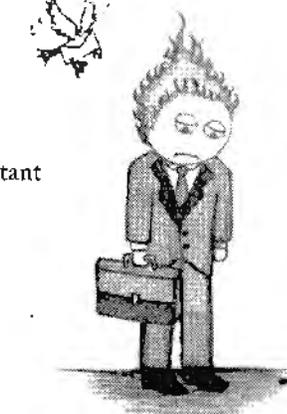
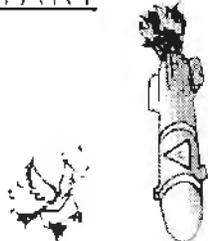
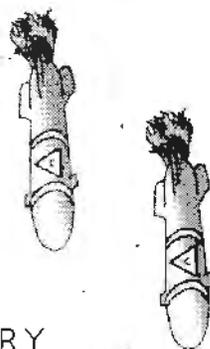
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# A Modest Proposal

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## Disclaimer

Opinions expressed in *A Modest Proposal* are those of the editor or of the writer of the article and are not necessarily those of the university administration, the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System, or of the operating board of the newspaper.

Cover design by luke mckenzie. Uranus cover design by david huddlestun.

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# A Modest Farewell

*Well, as modest as Coker can be ...*



by jonathan coker  
jcokerutd@gmail.com

As a freshman, *A Modest Proposal* and its mission called to me. Although editing an opinion publication might not be normal fare for the typical pre-med student, college is about expanding horizons and getting a diverse education. I've been an editor for two and a half years now, but with graduation comes the time for me to pass the torch on to the next generation of students.

Working for *AMP* has been hard: It's cost me thousands of hours, brought me to tears, almost certainly caused me a few B's and C's, and been at the root of countless shouting matches with fellow hard-headed editors. Nevertheless, every moment has been worth it for the close friends I've made, the laughs I've enjoyed, and the pride I feel knowing my work with *AMP* was a worthy endeavor. Before I go I'd like to address the challenges on *AMP's* horizon and how far the paper has come in the last few years.

*A Modest Proposal* is about to enter a new chapter in its history. Part of that new chapter is that *AMP* is now barely old enough to lay claim to multiple chapters of history. A bigger part is that once the Student Media Operating Board selects the editors for the Fall 2010 term, *A Modest Proposal* will for the first time have no editors from before it was an official school media organization. That brings up another momentous first: Of the 5 current editors, only one (David) will be applying for reappointment. Those circumstances may not seem all that momentous, but the large injection of new blood and the paradigm shift they represent are a huge step for *A Modest Proposal*.

Two years ago, in Spring 2008, *AMP* was having an identity crisis. The other editors

and I took pride in not accepting advertising or funding from student fees. That separation gave *AMP* the ability to print student opinions without fear of censure.

Of course, lack of funding was also about to separate us from the ability to print at all. We made the difficult decision to ask for funding from the Student Fee Advisory Committee, recognizing that a non-existent *AMP* would probably be the worst way to protect student opinion and freedom of speech.

Student fees funding came with what seemed to us to be major compromises. *AMP* would have to have a real-life, adult adviser, would become subject to the Student Media Operating Board, and would lose the right of the contributors to elect its editors.

In short, we worried that we were selling out to the man.

I spent my first year and a half of editorship worrying about keeping *AMP* alive (in addition to moving *AMP* into different offices three times). How would *AMP* maintain the humorous and pleasantly rebellious culture that came with its former independence once it had joined "the man"? How would it continue to voice student concerns? I knew the day would come when *AMP* would be led by people who would not have a full understanding of our apprehensions about joining student media, and it worried me to no end. I know now that my terror at that thought was unnecessary.

Compare an issue from 2008 with one from today. *AMP's* product is better in every aspect, and that's a direct reflection of quality changes made in the past two years. It certainly helps that the office is no longer an asbestos-filled Founders dungeon, a shared space with the chess team and UTD debate, or a closet barely big enough for one person (let

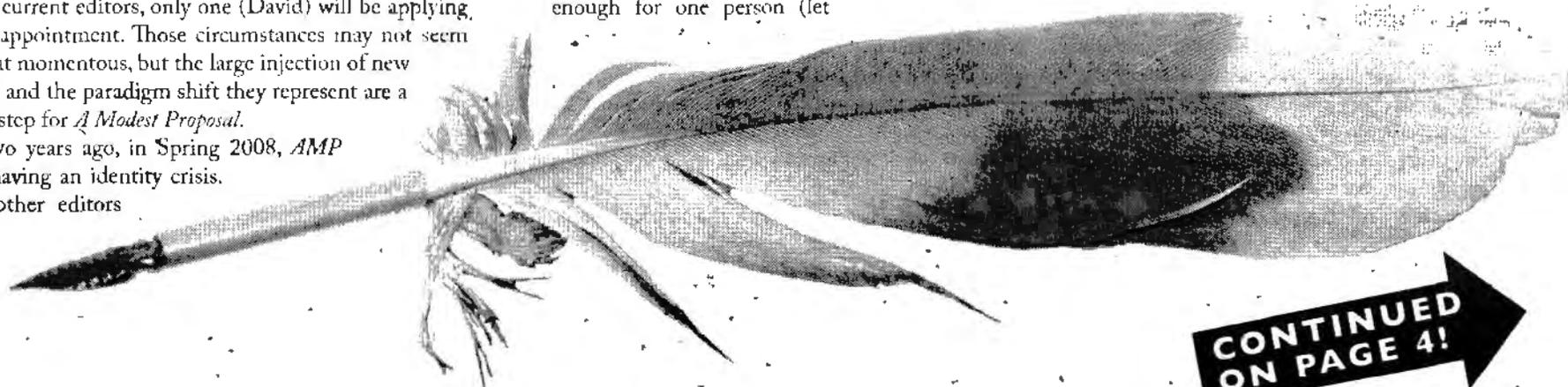
“ I have had the pleasure of spending my last year worrying about making *AMP* better. ”

alone five), but it's the changes to operations that have had real impact in our publication's quality.

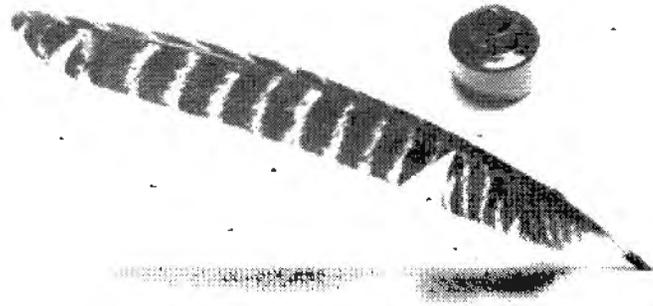
Would you believe *AMP* actually keeps track of and records who edits articles now and every change he or she makes? We editors also run the issue by an independent observer (our Ombudsman) to make sure we don't stumble blindly into situations in which we offend our readership. As our issues have improved, so too has the professionalism in the office. Still, you're more likely to find me playing foosball than actually accomplishing anything. What can I say — old habits die hard.

It turns out that *AMP's* addition to student media has done nothing but increase the paper's legitimacy and quality and has allowed students' opinions to shine in a medium they can be even prouder of. As a result, I have had the pleasure of spending my last year worrying about making *AMP* better.

That is largely due to UTD's student-friendly administration (*AMP* gets more funding when I say that, right?). In all seriousness, our university is replete with logical, understanding administrators who, despite not understanding why we insist on printing penis jokes on the back cover, won't move to pull *AMP's* funding because of it. That respect for freedom of speech is not



CONTINUED  
ON PAGE 4!



## THE EDITORS' DESK

# Want to get involved?

### Upcoming AMP dates:

*Story Meeting: August 16, 9 P.M. MC 3.612*

*Articles Due: April 19, Midnight.*

*Ice Cream Party: August 20, 8 P.M. MC 3.612*

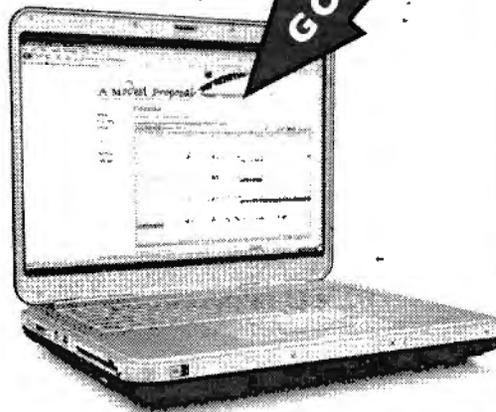
*Production Weekend: August 20-22 MC 3.612*

*Caption Contest Entries Due: August 20*

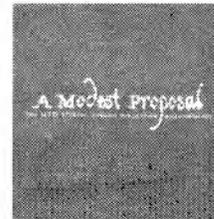
**All dates tentative.**

*Check [amp.utdallas.edu/calendar](http://amp.utdallas.edu/calendar) for updates.*

*Subscribe at [amp.utdallas.edu/subscribe](http://amp.utdallas.edu/subscribe) to receive meeting reminders via email.*

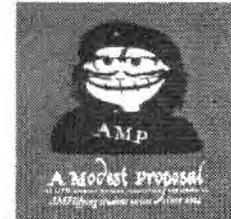


### A Modest Proposal T-Shirts!



Front

A Modest Proposal has undeniably awesome t-shirts. One could be yours today. All contributors are entitled to one free t-shirt. Anyone may purchase a t-shirt for \$10 (but why pay when you can contribute?). Email us for purchase information at [amodestproposal@gmail.com](mailto:amodestproposal@gmail.com)



Back

### About A Modest Proposal

**Opinion Publication:** AMP exists to amplify *your* voice. AMP does not assign topics or discriminate on the basis of the opinion expressed.

**No Staff:** Any student, faculty, or alumnus may contribute. Contributors can be as casual or as dedicated with involvement as they please.

**Equal Standing:** In submissions to AMP, every contributor speaks as an individual; even editors.

**Institutional Voice:** AMP can take a stand on issues as an institution. Only articles signed by all current editors and expressly labeled institutional opinion are institutional opinions.

#### Contact Us:

A Modest Proposal (MC 3.612)

[amp.utdallas.edu](http://amp.utdallas.edu)

[amodestproposal@gmail.com](mailto:amodestproposal@gmail.com)

Twitter: AMPatUTD

Google Group: AModestProposal

214-AMP-UTD0 (214-267-8830)

### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

something every university student can enjoy.

Another element of AMP's successful merger with student media has been the incredibly hard work of our adviser, Cristen Hixson. Cristen is charged with the hellish job of managing our budget (as meager as it is), taking care of the drudgery of office supply ordering, room reservations and paperwork, and making sure UTD TV, RadioUTD, *The Mercury* and AMP students know how to keep themselves from getting sued.

Far from being the burden or the hovering eye we feared, Cristen has been nothing but supportive of AMP's goal to be the students' voice. I can only hope that all future media advisers are as fair, hard-working, and knowledgeable as she is.

AMP has flourished through a difficult transition. There are finally enough contributors for editors to occasionally choose which articles should be printed rather than having to print what they get. There are more interested illustrators than there are pages of AMP.

However, those are not sufficient reasons for AMP leadership and contributors to rest on their laurels.

AMP will continue to face challenges, and it will need strong leadership if it is to maintain its upward trend in quality and mission accomplishment. AMP needs regular contributors who will come into the office and absorb its culture. AMP needs leaders who bristle when well-supported or well-argued ideas are censored, even if those ideas differ from their own.

AMP needs rational editors who can maintain the paper's tenuous and cherished distance from undue outside influence, while continually improving our relationship with UTD.

AMP faces big questions in the future. Will editors ever accept payment for their service? Should AMP continue running a print edition as the internet increasingly becomes the main means of communication? Can AMP maintain its unique identity as a haven for gentlepeople, rogues, scoundrels, and scholars even as it considers the implications of merging offices with *The Mercury*, RadioUTD, and UTD TV?

Those questions are ultimately up to you, our readers and contributors. I assure you, your voice matters to the current AMP leadership more than any other consideration. With your continued support (and future leadership), AMP will continue in that tradition.

As a conduit for student concerns, AMP is an important link between students and administrators. As a forum for opinion and expression, it is an integral part of the university atmosphere.

If you think otherwise, consider that major changes have been made in the way on-campus housing operates, the scrutiny the Dining Hall is under, and the way email listservs on campus work, at least partially because of the work done and the articles written by AMP contributors. With your help, AMP can continue to defend students, especially their right to express their ideas. ■

*Without AMP, Coker won't know what to do with 100 EXTRA HOURS A MONTH. Good luck in med school, sir. Discuss this article at [amp.utdallas.edu](http://amp.utdallas.edu)!*

# Freshmen: READ THIS

*A few tips and tricks about how to survive your first year of college*



by braeden mayer  
braedenmayer@gmail.com

**Tip #1** During the first week, in between the Welcome Week festivities and figuring out how to read a syllabus, take 30 minutes to write down some goals. Start with the end in mind. What do you want to achieve in life? Once you brainstorm a few ideas, think about the steps that you have to take to get there. Break it all the way down to daily objectives. This will allow you to maintain your priorities and focus as you continue through each semester here at UTD.

Now, those goals are in no way permanent: Believe us when we say that — we have both changed our majors a million times. However, those goals have allowed us to work proactively towards pursuing our own dreams and desires, which brings us to the second part of the tip.

Make sure that these goals are yours: not your parent's, your friend's, or your Raising Cane's cashier's, but *yours*. You are in college to get a degree, figure out what you want to do for the rest of your life, and have a good time while you're at it. This is extremely complicated and almost impossible to do if you are working off of someone else's agenda. Probably somewhere in those goals is something about making good grades (and if that's not in there you might want to re-think your goals).

**David's First Day of College**  
It's my first day of Freshman year, and I am still living under my parent's roof. I only live about 15 minutes away from UTD, so on the first day of class, I wake up an hour early thinking it would give me plenty of time to shower, grab some breakfast, and get to school on time for my 11:15 a.m. government class. Little did I know, I was dead wrong. No one ever told me that parking sucked on campus, so I end up arriving 40 minutes late to my first class — I walked into the lecture hall just as my professor was covering the tardiness and absences section of the syllabus. *That is no way to start off your Freshman year, so that's why we're here: to give you a few tips (based on first hand experience) that will make your first semester at college run a little bit more smoothly than ours.*

**Tip #2** Focus on school first. Cliché? Yes, but so important in college. Let us not forget the primary reason you are here: to get a degree. Your first semester of freshman year is crucial. Don't let it go by without studying at all. Yes, we know that college is fun, but you have to focus on your grades as well. Ask any graduating seniors who didn't achieve the G.P.A. they wanted in college, and they will most likely tell you that they messed up first semester of freshman year and no matter what G.P.A. they made after that, they couldn't get it back up to where they wanted it to be.

Even if you think you don't have something to study for, set aside time to study anyway. Go over your notes, actually read your textbooks, or listen to the lecture that you recorded in class. If you want to come out of college with a great G.P.A., you're going to have to study daily and actually learn the material your professor is lecturing. However, if you graduate with a 4.0 and no extra-curricular activities, you might as well have a 2.0, which brings us to the third and final tip.

involved in college is just do it. It will make your collegiate experience ten times better, and give your resume some umph.

So as you venture through your first semester of freshman year, be sure to write down some goals, remember to study, and create some balance by getting involved on campus. Don't be afraid to go balls to the wall and push yourself further than you ever have before. After all, that is what college is for. ■

*Braeden and David are so clutch. It is regal how rage they are right now. Discuss this article at [amp.utdallas.edu](http://amp.utdallas.edu)!*



by david petty  
davidpetty@student.utdallas.edu

**Tip #3** Get involved. Go back to your goals. No matter what your goals were, there is an organization here at UTD to help you get there.

If you want to be a doctor, then check out Health Occupation Students of America (HOSA). Always wanted to be a news anchor? Check out UTD TV. Had a dream to rule the world? Apply for appointment to serve on Student Government. Whatever your interest, there is a club that fits it here at UTD; you just have to go out and find it.

Also, not all of the organizations you join have to be related to your career. Both of us have found fun in a fraternity, while others have found it writing articles for A Modest Proposal — well we guess that is us as well.

But the bottom line about getting

## AMP's Tip #1 Write for A Modest Proposal

AMP is UT Dallas's opinion publication. Any student can submit an article for publication, and as long as the article is well-written and has a clear opinion, it will be considered regardless of the opinion expressed.

**We're your voice. Why not use it?**

Send your articles, art or funny stuff to [amodestproposal@gmail.com](mailto:amodestproposal@gmail.com)



by temac  
amodestproposal@gmail.com

# Judicial Abuse

*Exposing flaws in the academic dishonesty process at UT Dallas*



by brad davis  
brad.w.davis@gmail.com

“Evil flourishes when good men do nothing.” – Edmund Burke

As trite as it is to start an article with a quote, this one was the motivating force behind my struggle against academic expulsion from UT Dallas. A good friend and mentor reminded me of this call to action when I was in one of the lowest moments of my life.

This quote, along with an array of advisors and mentors who spurred me on to face the arduous, disheartening, unjust process of appealing a charge of academic dishonesty at UT Dallas, is the reason I can write this piece and say without a doubt I did all I could to oppose a process so skewed that Donna Rogers, Dean of Students, is “unaware” of even one academic hearing judged in favor of the student. I hope my story exposes that flawed process so that it will ultimately be fixed and students have at least a reasonable chance at fairness and to get through it with some dignity.

“Nothing, absolutely nothing, could have prepared me for the Kangaroo court I was about to be subjected to.”

In the first year of pursuing my PhD in Public Affairs at UT Dallas I took a required course for my degree. Throughout the semester our professor gave express consent to collaborate on all the work we turned in to him so he wouldn't have so much to grade. For the final take-home exam he specifically warranted collaboration by telling us verbatim “I cannot keep you from collaborating, so just know that if you do you will sink together or swim together.”

Without much thought on my part, I felt that was license to show a friend and struggling classmate a portion of my quasi-completed work — it amounted to roughly half the final paper. He then, idiotically, took that work of *mine* and decided to change some of it and turn it in

as his own, unbeknownst to me. Only after I was called into the Judicial Affairs office (JAO) and informed of the charge against me did I know what happened.

Ms. McKee, the Judicial Affairs Officer, informed me that she would investigate the case and get back to me. A few weeks later she informed me that she had done enough digging, that she was ready to accuse me of “cheating by giving aid to another student and facilitating the copying of data”, and that the punishment would be expulsion. The reason the punishment was so harsh, she told me, was that I had already been charged and found guilty of academic dishonesty while pursuing my B.S. in Business Administration at UT Dallas.

The situation she was referring to involved a business course I took my junior year. Almost a fifth of the class was sent to the Judicial Affairs office for apparently crossing some undefined — perhaps arbitrary — Turnitin.com threshold of plagiarism.

I distinctly remember the individual in charge practically bemoaning being sent so many students from the course. She told me appealing the punishment (losing 20 points from the assignment) would take quite a while and a lot of effort to pursue. I was heading out of town then and did not want to mess with all the procedures involved in formal appeal. After all, I was still going to make an A in the class after the punishment!

So I grudgingly accepted my punishment, never considering for a split second it would come back to haunt me some seven years later.

The irony of it all is that I was to be expelled only because I had pursued multiple degrees at UT Dallas: Had I been at another school with the same charge, the two-strike rule, which I was completely unaware of, would never have come into effect.

Even more ironic is that the one who actually cheated, who without permission copied my work (also a graduate student), got a veritable slap on the wrist.

So there I was sitting in Ms. McKee's office listening to her proclaim my punishment — as if she were talking to a seasoned criminal — with no emotion, no concern, no humility and no sense of justice or empathy, with a cold, callous pronouncement that almost made me think she got some kind of kick out of seeing students expelled.

I told her I would have to fight the decision because that is what my advisors, including a number of my professors, told me to do. Her reply was simply “I don't care who you've talked to”, and that was the end of that conversation.

I can't describe to you the amount of heartache and

stress I felt at that moment, so I won't even try. All I can say is that I was devastated and just wanted to give up. Without the help of my good friend and mentor Brandon Worsham, I would not have fought it.

I spent countless hours preparing documents — sworn statements, legal precedent, rules and procedures of the UT System — for the hearing I had requested, but nothing, absolutely nothing, could have prepared me for the Kangaroo court I was about to be subjected to. Let me simply highlight a few things about the proceedings.

The independent arbiter chosen had little to no idea how to preside over these hearings. She persistently and overtly took and solicited both verbal and non-verbal cues



Temoc McStudent stands no chance at UTD's court.

from my accuser, Ms. McKee. That, to me, is like a trial judge taking cues from the prosecution; does that sound impartial to you?

Although I have requested the cassette tape recording of the hearing to review and to make available through AMP, I know it will not do justice to the "collaboration" between my accuser and the arbiter. Also, the cassette tape recorder either was off or needed to be turned over multiple times, failing to capture the intermittent conversations.

It perplexes me that such a technologically advanced institution does not film these hearings in order to make sure all the subtleties of the parties' actions are recorded.

To make matters worse, I was forced to argue my case against an attorney practically by myself. University rules (Ch. 49) forbid advisors, whether for the university or the student, from questioning witnesses, introducing evidence, making objections, and presenting arguments.

At one point my advisor asked if he could ask a procedural question and Ms. McKee, with one of her many inappropriate head gestures, informed the "independent arbiter" inaccurately that that was not allowed. Nothing in the regents' rules or Ch. 49 says my advisor cannot ask questions of the arbiter. By using Ms. McKee as the accuser and not an advisor, the university had a lawyer arguing the case: I had to make do with myself and a silenced advisor.

Furthermore, most of my material was ruled inadmissible be-

“ Even though the regents' rules make it clear I had the benefit of doubt, Ms. McKee did not have to prove me guilty: I had to prove myself innocent. ”

cause it had not been presented in the "right" way.

I attempted to present two pieces of evidence directly from the judicial affairs website about academic dishonesty and how it was defined and it was ruled inadmissible! My sworn statements, which the JAO said to get, weren't accepted because Ms. McKee told the arbiter that the witnesses had to be in attendance or their sworn statements should be ruled out. I wasn't even told

I needed to bring the arbiter copies (per hearing rules I had given copies and summaries of evidence to Ms. McKee several days before), and so I had to give all my material to the arbiter, leaving me to argue everything from memory!

Nowhere in the explanation of the hearing proceedings did it say I would need to bring copies or that all of my witnesses (I had two who could come) had to be present. It was summer — they were all on vacation!

Even with all these challenges, students' testimony corroborated that our professor gave us the right to work together on the assignment, but somehow his word was deemed more reliable.

Finally, I was repeatedly interrupted by Ms. McKee but could not interrupt her, which only reflected the pervasive double-standard that favored her. Even though the regents' rules make it clear I had the benefit of doubt, she did not have to prove me guilty: I had to prove myself innocent.

When I found out a few days later that the arbiter agreed with Ms. McKee's punishment of expulsion, I was not in the least surprised.

Thankfully, my advisor for the case, Brandon, wrote a letter to Dean Rogers and VP of Student Affairs Dr. Rachavong explaining his embarrassment at the proceedings. Shortly after that communication we learned Dean

Rogers was "unaware" of a single student who has won an academic dishonesty hearing. Either the process is perfect and no one has ever been innocent, or the process is severely flawed — you decide.

As down in the dumps as I was before the hearing, I was ready to throw in the towel again after. Were it

not for the opportunity to communicate with Dr. Daniel directly, I would not have appealed the decision. Knowing his integrity, objectivity, and friendly nature, I was sure that although I would probably still be expelled, he would at least be able to explain it to me in a way that wasn't bellicose.

So, with the help of a number of advisors, I wrote him a very long letter detailing much more than I have here. His response, both simple and profound, was the voice of justice I so desperately needed to renew my love for UT Dallas. His letter for the most part led me to believe he would uphold the decision, but I respected his reasoning and his courtesy. I was shocked to read at the tail end of the letter that he had changed my punishment from expulsion to failing the class.

Dr. Daniel righted some wrongs in my particular case; nevertheless, I'm afraid that unless drastic measures are taken more UT Dallas students will fall through the gaping cracks in the Judicial Affairs process. Here are the five steps, my advisor, Brandon proposed to Dean Rogers and Dr. Rachavong to which he has had no reply:

1. Better and additional training for independent arbiters in these hearings.
2. More and clearer instructions for students in these hearings.
3. Clearly written instructions for advisors.
4. Student should be clearly offered the opportunity to sit down with the Dean of Students or an equally knowledgeable person to help them prepare their defense.
5. If UT Dallas chooses to use a lawyer to argue a charge, every student should have the right to be fully represented by an attorney.

I agree with these wholeheartedly and would add videotaping the hearings and removing the two-strike rule to the list. I think we as a student body must rally behind this effort to fix this process and ensure our right to due process. ■

AMP was sure to make Brad enough copies of his article to distribute to everyone.

Discuss this article at [amp.utdallas.edu](http://amp.utdallas.edu)!

#### Editors' Note:

If you've ever had an experience — good or bad — with UTD's Judicial Affairs Office, let AMP know! We'd love to hear (and quite possibly print) your stories. Email [amodestproposal@gmail.com](mailto:amodestproposal@gmail.com) or call 214-267-8830.

Also, if you'd like to know more about Brad's story, be sure to check out AMP's website at <http://amp.utdallas.edu>. Documents concerning Brad's case will be posted as they become available.



# Email Fail

*Why changed doesn't necessarily mean fixed*



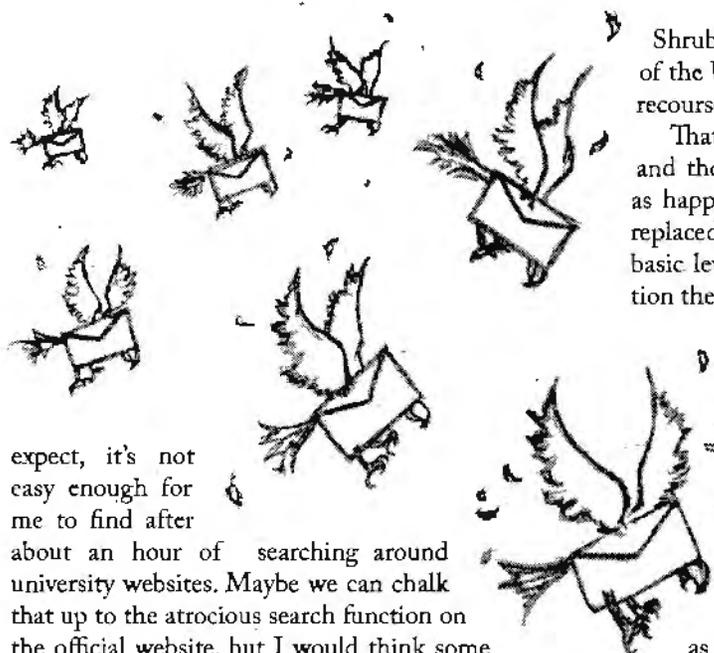
by john enderle  
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After Spring Break, the University's policy on e-mails sent to the [students] listserv (e-mail distribution list) changed. Now any e-mail that goes out to [students] must first be approved by someone in the Office of Communications. This seems to be a positive change, but it doesn't really solve the problem — there are still several holes plaguing the system.

Even if the recently-implemented change has fixed the [students] distribution, there are still several other listservs that present problems for students. This is the most obvious problem with the perceived fix. I'm in separate listservs for being an undergraduate, a senior, in the NS&M school, a physics major, a physics undergraduate, a physics senior — actually, there are so many different listservs, I'm not entirely sure what the complete, accurate list of them is. I've purposely left off the optional organizations and programs I belong to, just to show how much is required — basically forced on me — by the university.

In my own experience (having switched majors, schools, and classifications), some of these lists give more problems than others. In general, though, the main annoyances I've had with my e-mail are from those other lists, not the [students] distribution, whether it was the advertising of a new class for which most people on the distribution were ineligible, dozens of one-line thank-you e-mails sent to everyone, or even an email about the exact specifications on the vinyl flooring that's being installed in one of the new buildings. I shouldn't have gotten any of these e-mails, and all of them came to me through those extra lists rather than through [students].

What are the standards by which the people in the Office of Communications are filtering the e-mail? At the time the change was planned, guidelines hadn't been determined. Having put the plan into effect by now, they must have decided upon something, but if they've posted what these guidelines are anywhere, which I would



expect, it's not easy enough for me to find after about an hour of searching around university websites. Maybe we can chalk that up to the atrocious search function on the official website, but I would think some public announcement ought to have been made, probably accompanied by an e-mail.

The information I *could* find came from way back in January, when they said they would be taking student input and that many of the e-mails would be redirected to the Comet Calendar. That doesn't seem to be effective at all to me, as a significant portion of students don't even know of the Comet Calendar's existence, and most who do know about it don't use it very often, if ever.

Whatever the standards are, the process does seem to have drastically cut the number of e-mails getting out to [students], which I suppose is a good thing, but without knowing which e-mails we're missing or what the criteria are for stopping them, I don't know for sure. Certainly there must be *some* legitimate reasons for *someone* to have instant access to all students.

What about the people who have been sending all those e-mails? I think this question is being overlooked.

Yes, many of the e-mails were quite annoying for the hundreds to thousands of people who had to take the ten seconds to assess and delete them. In a great many cases, however, there was actually something positive that the senders were trying to do, flawed though their methods may have been. If there were a few students who wanted to start a Society of People Who Want

Shrubberies, there would probably be a decent part of the UTD community that would benefit, but what recourse is there to get such a group started?

That gets to the heart of the problem on this issue, and though technology has contributed to it (I'll be as happy as the next guy when the current system is replaced), it is primarily a people problem. At the most basic level, people want to tell other people information they think is important, and since they don't know how to do this and have people listen, they turn to e-mail.

The solution I envision is some kind of (hopefully official) electronic forum where people can post information for others to view. This would be more open-ended than the Comet Calendar, giving students and groups the freedom to do things that aren't tied to specific events, like gauging general interest. Ideally, it would be easier to navigate as well. The advantage for the readers is that their use of the forum is voluntary, and with the possibility of posting to the forum, fewer people will want to spam our inboxes.

Now if you'll excuse me, I have to go delete some e-mails. ■

*John learned first-hand about email abuse when we sent his picture to the entire AMP contributor list. Sorry, AMPers!*

*Discuss this article at [amp.utdallas.edu](http://amp.utdallas.edu)!*



Illustration by lewis chang

“...there was actually something positive that the [email] senders were trying to do, flawed though their methods may have been.”



# Elitism, Really?

*Learning not to judge others for what they enjoy*



by brady spenrath  
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For too long, there have been some things on my mind that I've been afraid to admit publicly. First, I prefer MySpace or Facebook. That's right, and I liked Matrix sequels and the Star Wars sequels, too. Did I mention that one of my favorite bands is Fall Out Boy or that I hate Firefox?

Obviously, my opinions aren't popular and I find that among certain groups of people, I just can't express my opinion without being insulted, ignored, or ridiculed altogether.

Why? The answer is elitism — the act of making a choice because of one's opinion. The "elitist" decided to be superior and refusing to accept any other opinion as valid.

In the age of YouTube, the blogosphere, and Twitter, anyone can easily express his or her opinion with the entire internet, often without a filter, and with confidence that comes from total anonymity.

That is great for society; I have always believed in the "Marketplace of Ideas", and the internet makes that marketplace much more accessible to everyone.

However, that same confidence from anonymity creates a breeding ground for extreme viewpoints. Then, with the rise of online trolls, those with strong opinions found the need to quickly argue their points each time the same argument arose.

That's how elitism breeds. Choosing specific criteria for your opinions before an argument begins allows you to defend your opinion faster. Eventually, it's those specific criteria that matter to you, and then you're an elitist.

Use the internet as an example, but the inability to accept any opinion but the consensus' opinion can be found everywhere. Consider saying these phrases

to everyone you know: "I think Nickelback is just a better band than The Beatles"; "the Star Wars prequels were more fun to watch than the originals"; and "the Wii has better games than the PlayStation 3 or Xbox 360." You know some of your friends will immediately have a backlash opinion.

Unfortunately, there is also the opposite camp; those that can't accept anything that is popular. To them, any indie band will always be better than the "sellouts" on the Top 10 List (regardless of whether they liked that band before it was popular), and more obscure movie titles just do everything better, and much earlier, than the hyped up Hollywood giant movies. Consider telling a friend like that how much you like Linkin Park or Shia LaBeouf movies.

Members of both camps are engaging in elitism. Consider, for example, someone who chooses the Beatles as superior using record sales and influence on future bands as the only criteria. The elit-

ist can't accept that Nickelback's songs might simply be catchier to another person because those criteria just plain *prove* that the Beatles are a better band. The elitist has to like only the Beatles.

Elitism is different from simply having an opinion. For elitists, it becomes easy to forget that if there's a "superior" choice and an "inferior" choice, it's okay to like both.

So what if the Wii has terrible online gaming, bad graphics, and an abundance of family-friendly games? Yes, the PS3 and Xbox 360 are technically better, but if you still have fun playing Super Smash Bros, why refuse the Wii outright? So what if Green Day's songs aren't as innovative or technically proficient as Coldplay's songs?

If you think "Basket Case" is a catchy song, then tap your foot anyway. It's fine to prefer Coldplay to Green Day, but don't let specific principles keep you from occasionally enjoying "American Idiot".



This motherfucker loves Episode 1. Illustration by jordon batura

“Enjoyment, as vague and subjective an idea as it is, should be the only factor for picking what you like.”

I want to remind everyone that you can like things for no reason at all. Sometimes you just have to listen to your tastes. This is a two-part rallying cry. First, I'm urging those with alternative preferences to voice them. If your favorite band is "too popular" for the crowd you're around, let them know that you don't care that the band sold out; the beat is catchy to you, and that's all that matters.

I hope we remind some elitists that enjoyment, as vague and subjective an idea as it is, should be the only factor for picking what you like.

Second, don't be an elitist yourself. If you're talking to someone who prefers the Monkees to the Beatles, I say feel free to intelligently debate your opinions, but remember that someone can like things even if the professional critics, tech sheets, Oscar awards, or record sales don't agree. Sometimes people's tastes differ from your deciding factors, so let it go.

I'm calling for an end to elitism. Reliance on elitism has turned differences in opinions into lazy exchanges of canned arguments that offer nothing to society. I say that even with the anonymity of the Internet and the convenience of picking specific reasons for our preferences, we should relearn to politely accept different opinions. Then maybe I will finally be able to admit my dissenting opinions without fear of a backlash of stale arguments. ■

*Brady hates elitism, but Freebirds will always be better than Chipotle, just 'cuz. Discuss this article at [amp.utdallas.edu](http://amp.utdallas.edu)!*

# Apocalypse Now?



by caroline lee  
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Floods, Spam, and 2012, oh my! Along with Lady Gaga and patterned tights, the end of the world is one of current fads sweeping the world. Though the apocalypse doesn't seem like it would become a fad, it has. Look no further than popular zombie kits you can buy that prepare you for the zombie apocalypse.

Of course, our attraction with the end of the world is nothing new. From biblical tales of a wrathful God flooding the world, to contemporary movies about catastrophic natural disasters that annihilate the world, end-of-the-world stories have always touched a deep part of human consciousness. Why do we have such a sick fascination with the end? Are we cynical by nature or are we just attracted to something we can't completely predict? Whatever the reason, our fixation with the apocalypse nowadays is higher than ever.

Though end time stories have always been popular, they receive special attention in certain pockets of history. For example, when the year 2000 was quickly approaching, paranoia over computer mishaps destroying the world was widespread. Most of us remember our parents hoarding heaps of Spam

and water, even though we may not have completely understood the situation at the time.

A decade later, after we grew up and came to college, another wave of world-end craze swept the globe. But this time, instead of at the beginning of the new millennium, everything's ending in 2012, at least according to the Mayan calendar. Though many scientists and other intellectuals dismiss that theory as bona fide baloney, the pervasiveness of the craze is validated from an unsuspecting source: the media. Popular media have always reflected societal trends and values. Examples include Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, which revealed how the recent progress of man threatened to overwhelm the human race.

A more contemporary example would be the 2008 movie *Wall-E*, which satirized man's dependence on technology. As for the apocalypse trend, big box-office movies like *Knowing* and *2012* reveal its value in today's society. Like other popular trends in society, this wholesome dose of apocalyptic disaster has been pushed along by many factors: depression over international recession, gloom about environmental doom, and despair concerning domestic affairs. The contemporary world's a perfect breeding ground for end-of-the-world theories.

This apocalyptic craze is a sign of a serious disease plaguing our nation — unhealthy and unnecessary pessimism that impedes on people's desire to be innovative. How can people produce change if

they're pessimistic about their own efforts and what the future holds? Think about it: Settlers would never have gone to America if they hadn't had some faith. Our forefathers would never have carried out the American Revolution if they hadn't believed that their hard work could pay off. The Great Depression never would have ended if nobody had had any hope. It's obvious: optimism yields results.

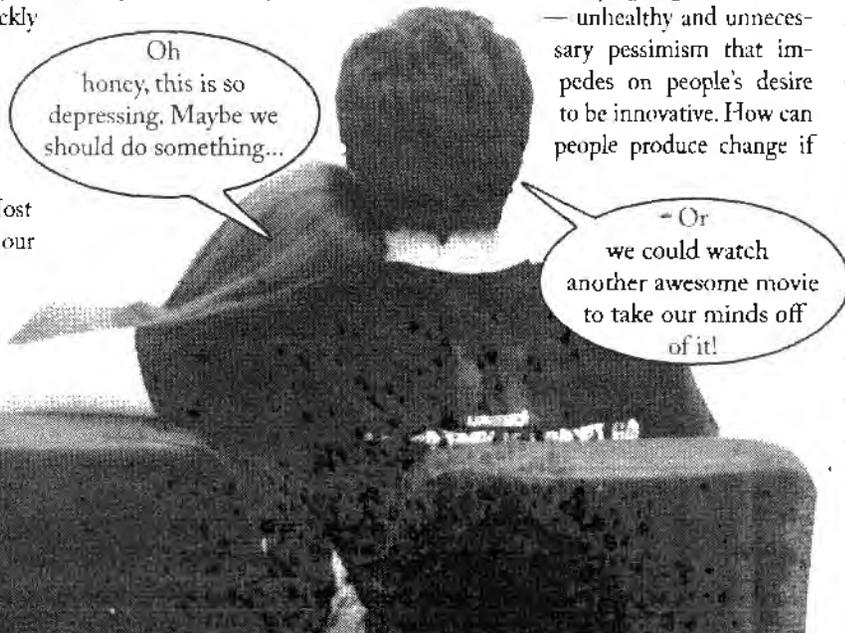
Don't get me wrong — I'm not saying that the world should be all about unicorns, Care Bears, and Lucky Charms. The end-of-the-world craze and the pessimism that comes with it isn't all bad. Stories about the destruction of the world give a fresh perspective; they satirize what we do wrong so we can change our ways for the better.

But the pessimism in contemporary times is too much. Like a fresh, meaty fart in a small room, this stifling mist of pessimism is polluting the air to the point of productivity suffocation. How can we make the changes our world needs if we always feel hopeless and needlessly worry about the end of the world? The best thing we can do is hope for the best and not let this pessimistic atmosphere weigh down our capacity for innovation.

So if the world's not going to end soon, how does the future look? The world will probably still be around. No grand floods or zombie apocalypses. New fads will replace Lady Gaga and patterned tights (and hopefully the *Twilight* series as well).

We'll still go through periods of end-of-the-world paranoia, except *we'll* be the parents hoarding pounds of water and Spam while our children look on in bewilderment. Lucky Charms will always be magically delicious. More specifically, though, let's talk about you. You'll feel cynical at times but there will an infinite amount people to see, places to go, and things to do. You're going to be too busy to let a pessimistic air weigh you down. If you're innovative and work hard, good things are bound to happen.

Author's note: No, you are not holding a fortune cookie right now. Don't eat it. ■



*The other day Caroline was seen as a zombie, so maybe this is a fortune cookie.*

Discuss this article at [amp.utdallas.edu!](http://amp.utdallas.edu/)

# Can't See the Humans for the Trees

*Why humanitarianism is more important than environmentalism*



by melissa kenfield  
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A plague has swept the nation: green fever (a.k.a. the sustainability movement). Save the planet! It's a great cause, and Captain Planet is a great superhero. Nevertheless, as a substitute for community service, volunteer projects dedicated to saving the planet don't save anything worth saving. What good is it to rescue the planet when we have lost compassion for humanity?

We can stay oblivious to the lives of others with little to no effort. Thanks to residential segregation, people are highly unlikely to live near people with a different socioeconomic status. Comfortable middle-class neighborhoods have middle-class neighbors; low-income housing stays far out of sight, and probably near a landfill or Superfund site, anyway. Automobiles are our personal bubbles; though the roads are congested, from the safe haven of our vehicles we never have to meet others during our commutes. Even on public transit, who actually talks to the people sitting nearby? They probably don't speak English anyway. Turn up your iPod and ignore the people around you.

Now that issues such as poverty, homelessness, and inadequate education opportunities have no human element in our lives, we reduce them to *somebody else's problem*. Nobody

I know first-hand would benefit from funding community redevelopment in South Dallas — why would I care? When the people in need are so detached from our lives, apathy reigns. So what do the altruistic among us do? The trendy new community involvement, of course: greening our surroundings. Reduce erosion, improve air quality, and feel good about giving back to your community!

“When the people in need are so detached from our lives, apathy reigns.”

Now wait a minute here, you might say. We're all breathing the same air, drinking the same water. Isn't it good to try to improve the environmental conditions of everybody on our planet, or at least in our community? Maybe. What's worrisome is the inherent selfishness within these apparently charitable acts. Planting trees, reducing waste, cutting pollution — our current environmental movements are largely focused on the comforts of the affluent, not on global needs.

What good is improving water quality when food accessibility is skewed? Residents of low-income communities have less accessibility to supermarkets than do those in middle-class communities. As if it weren't bad enough to have less money, poor people also have to pay higher prices for comparable food.

Meanwhile, the federal government subsidizes the production of certain staple foods (corn, soy, wheat, dairy), while neglecting similar subsidies for fruits and vegetables. The result is that highly processed foods (dependent on inexpensive by-products of corn and soy) are cheap, while fresh fruits and vegetables are comparably expensive. The government effectively subsidizes unhealthy food, making high fructose corn syrup and Big Macs affordable, and

treats it like an *individual* decision to eat crap food and thus suffer health consequences. Add in some time factors — increased likelihood of having to work multiple jobs means more dependence on fast food and less ability to cook healthily at home — and it's little wonder that the obesity epidemic is most prevalent among the poor.

Yep, improving water quality for everybody is really what's going to make a difference in the country.

Conserving the limited resources of our planet is laudable, but in pursuing that we run the risk of forgetting that human lives, too, are limited. Why do we put so much effort into protecting the planet for the next generation while we neglect the current generation?

Try this on for size: in Illinois, up to 10% of the juveniles in detention centers are held past their parole dates because of lack of suitable foster homes or transitional facilities. But why should we care — they're already criminals. Why spend money on them when they've already made it clear, before legal adulthood, that they have no interest in being law-abiding citizens? We are left to wonder, in our neoliberal state seeped in apathetic political correctness, whether it really is humane for us to abandon people to their own vices.

To avoid being entirely one-sided on this, I'll grant that some abuse of the environment comes with a human cost. Consider the international trade in electronic waste. The international dumping of scores of outdated electronics creates harmful working conditions in the overseas recycling industry. We are exploiting the lack of international regulation to dispose of our waste, while exposing workers to toxic conditions as they try to eke out every piece of valuable metal from trash for minimal cost. Wait — this sounds more like a human rights issue than an environmentalist's problem. Although the two are not diametrically opposed, the danger comes when we decide that a beautiful environment is more important than human needs.

How about this for a sustainable plan for the planet: Switch to reusable water bottles, turn off the lights when you leave a room, and remember that there are millions of the people on the planet who don't have clean water to drink or electricity in their homes. Next time you're invited to tree the town, question why the community rallies around environmentalism while neglecting humanitarianism. ■

*Melissa doesn't know what to do about Ents.  
She'll get back to you on that.  
Discuss this article at [amp.utdallas.edu](http://amp.utdallas.edu)!*



Planting these trees will make *all* of our lives better! illustration by megan tan

Yes, the characters are this ridiculous looking. That doesn't stop them from being badass, though. illustration by mac hird

# V for Vigilante



by david huddleston  
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The internet is awesome. But that awesomeness has some mitigating factors.

One of the most troubling themes permeating the series of tubes is a sense of stubborn vigilantism — the idea that justice (however you choose to define it) is sometimes best served by operating outside legal boundaries.

I'm not against vigilantism. In fact, the ability to breach the law is one of the factors that make the internet so amazing. The problem is that you (yes, I'm talking to you, Anonymous) need to pick carefully which laws you choose to break. You really aren't as anonymous as you think you are, and your safety in numbers is limited at best. If you do something illegal enough, you won't be all that anonymous for long.

I'm not saying that you should avoid doing illegal stuff. All I'm saying is that you need to make sure it's worth it when you do.

If you need pointers, look to Wikileaks. I'm sure most of you have heard about the release of footage from Afghanistan in which American soldiers in an Apache helicopter gun down Reuters journalists mistaken for enemy combatants (if you haven't, read the opposite page). Though many on the internet have blown some aspects of the controversy way out of proportion, the release of the video was definitely a Good Thing™.

However, it's important to remember that most of what Wikileaks does is illegal. They release documents marked as classified by the United States government, and they have a team of lawyers dedicated to (I'm guessing) obfuscating lawsuits long enough for their web team to continue releasing documents.

Essentially, Wikileaks is forcing transparent government. But by

doing so, they're taking justice into their own hands, determining which documents can safely be released without jeopardizing the safety of the public. At least, I hope that's the criteria they're using — and based on their track record, I'd say it probably is. That's worth it, and I trust them to keep doing what they've been doing.

The internet hasn't restricted its attention to the government; vigilantism against other established institutions is not uncommon. For example, take the internet's (mostly 4chan's, I suppose) war against Scientology. People protesting Scientology's scams while wearing V for Vendetta masks are undeniably awesome. (Might I recommend, Anonymous, that you take up a similar crusade against the Tea Party?)

However, the important thing to remember is that you are not invincible. It was a rash decision for 4chan to take out the servers that hosted Scientology websites — in the long run, such actions were likely to have little effect, but they came at a high risk to the attackers. It's not unheard of for individuals to be arrested for Directed Denial of Service attacks.

Illegal stuff isn't any less illegal "because it's the internet" or "because everyone else does it." Sure, some laws might be abysmally idiotic, but the fact remains that you could face legal consequences for violating them. For instance, torrenting music could garner you hefty fines. Statistically speaking, you're probably okay on that one just because a staggeringly

large number of people do it — the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA)

will have to come up with some better strategies if they actually want to put a stop to digital piracy.

Vigilantism also sometimes gets tangled up with journalism. Take a look at Gizmodo, a fairly popular tech news site. Journalists working for the site acquired a prototype iPhone for \$5,000

“ Illegal stuff isn't any less illegal “because it's the internet” or “because everyone else does it.” ”

from a guy who found it in a bar near Apple's campus. Gizmodo posted images and a hardware breakdown of the phone after having it for a week, though they couldn't investigate any of the phone's software after Apple remotely bricked the device.

All of these things — posting images, a hardware breakdown, and speculation about the device — are almost certainly worth the tradeoff of a possible lawsuit. Apple is notoriously secretive about its projects in development. Tech news sites pour massive amounts of resources into discovering hardware models prior to their releases. However, it's nearly unprecedented for one of these sites to find a legitimate Apple prototype. The entire internet was abuzz with the news for days (there was even a Dilbert comic strip about the fiasco). The ad revenue and popularity that Gizmodo gained from breaking that story will almost certainly outweigh the costs of the lawsuit Apple has already brought against the company.

Some of that popularity, though, was probably lost when Gizmodo published the name of the engineer who lost the phone. That was a dick move.

I recommend that you enjoy the internet the way it is now while you can. Lawmakers haven't figured out a good way to regulate its content just yet, which means that you can get away with quite a lot if you know what you're doing. Just remember this: Every time you push the limits, you give lawmakers more incentive to find ways to regulate you. So make sure that if you decide to break the law, it's worth the cost. ■

*Armed with nothing but a cursory knowledge of shell scripting, David and Al Gore roam the internet dispensing vigilante justice.*

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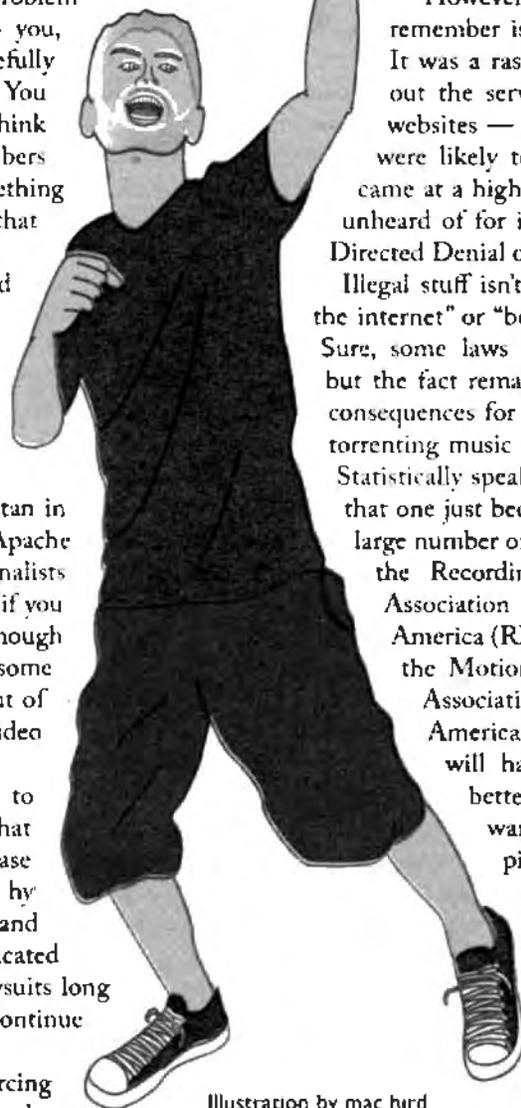


Illustration by mac hrd

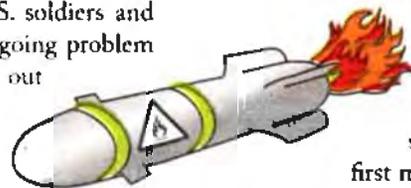
# Militant Maniacs



by mohamed mohamed  
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Wikileaks.org, the Wikipedia of whistleblowers, publishes anonymous submissions and leaks of highly sensitive documents and media from governments and other organizations in an effort to expose oppressive and unethical behavior of governments, corporations, and other groups. On April 5, 2010, Wikileaks released classified footage from two U.S. Army Apache attack helicopters showing three airstrikes carried out on July 12, 2007 in Baghdad, Iraq.

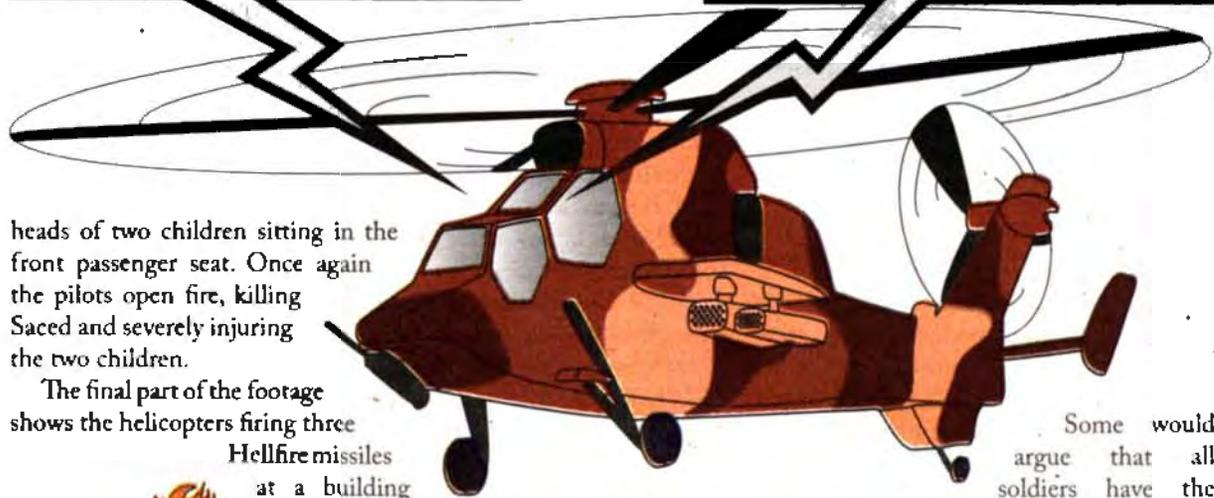
By doing so, Wikileaks exposed the unethical behavior of a few U.S. soldiers and shed light onto the military's ongoing problem with keeping sociopathic war junkies out of the armed forces. Without Wikileaks, we wouldn't see most of these abuses; however, whether we see them or not,



from the leaked video  
look at those dead bastards.  
gaze.  
ot?  
ak. Uh Crazyhorse One-Eight  
mission to uh engage.  
to the wounded?  
e trying to get permission to  
let us shoot!  
look at that. Right through the  
d!  
whacked [killed] 'em all.  
it, good.  
yes! Look at that bitch go!  
the more room.  
le.  
ik good?

Is that an iPhone 4? With a front facing camera?!

No way that is real! It's probably a bazooka. Let's blow him outta here!



heads of two children sitting in the front passenger seat. Once again the pilots open fire, killing Saeed and severely injuring the two children.

The final part of the footage shows the helicopters firing three Hellfire missiles at a building where armed insurgents are believed to be, although unarmed men are also seen entering. As the pilots fire the first missile, a pedestrian walking by the building chillingly disappears the instant the missile hits its target.

The collateral damage shown in the footage is disturbing — the actual killing of innocent human beings this video records is incomparable to the depictions of death we see in Hollywood. How could these pilots be so negligent as to massacre a small group of unarmed innocents? Were they not trained properly? Did their equipment fail or mislead them? It's hard to believe that to be the case in the highly advanced armed forces of the world's number one superpower. The transcript of the pilots' conversation paints a very different picture.

This was no case of collateral damage. The pilots intended to strike civilian targets, whether they knew it consciously or subconsciously. The pilots' dialog (which displays the moral compunction of kids playing a video game) shows just how desperate they were to destroy and how much they enjoyed it. Their negligence in identifying the men reveals their lack of concern for such procedures — they simply needed an excuse to pull their itchy trigger fingers, to "look at that bitch go!"

Unfortunately, this is not an isolated incident (remember the Abu Ghraib prison abuse?). The pilots and their actions are characteristic of a highly corrosive minority of sociopathic people within our society who take pleasure in the power they wield and the damage they can inflict. They are war junkies intoxicated by their ability to harm others, completely detached from reality and morality.

Some would argue that all soldiers have the potential to act like that, saying they are trained to kill indiscriminately. Those critics malign the military system itself as a producer of ruthless killers. However, that is just not true. Throughout the video, the pilots had to request permission to engage their targets, which was granted only because they claimed to see armed men.

This minority of people among us and within the armed forces is extremely damaging in many ways. Obviously, there are civilian deaths, which lead to worldwide condemnation and ruin our image and reputation. We are seen not as liberators but as murderers. At the very least, family members of the killed will hate us.

In the video, one of the pilots hastily identified a camera lens as an RPG. By mowing down his "targets", the pilot likely spawned an actual insurgent with an actual RPG, ready to take revenge for the slaughter, and put the respectable men and women serving in the military under tremendous, unnecessary danger to their lives.

Although they are relatively few, it only takes one or two pilots (as we have seen) to create major problems. As a result of technology, all such people have to do to follow through on their twisted desires is pull a trigger or press a button — their hands do not literally have to get bloody. The military is the last place these people should be, and for that reason, higher command needs to devise a way to identify and remove such combatants. ■

Hey look! AMP printed an image of Mohamed in the paper.  
Discuss this article at [amp.utdallas.edu/](http://amp.utdallas.edu/)



# Sexual Subjugation

*Society's shameful silence on the subject of sex trafficking*



by **anna li**  
anna.li.09@gmail.com

## Slavery.

The word may bring to mind images of cotton and tobacco plantations in the 1800s or bodies huddled together on ships traveling to the United States as a part of the transatlantic slave trade. It may remind you of the Civil War and Abraham Lincoln. Slavery, you may claim, has long been abolished. A mere thing of the past.

However, that claim is a lie. No longer limited to Africans or the Middle Passage, slavery is very much rampant today across the globe in a form that in many ways is more horrifying than the colonial slavery of the past: sex trafficking.

According to International Justice Mission (IJM), sex trafficking is defined as "the recruitment, harboring, provision or obtaining of a person in order that a commercial sex act can be [sic] induced, often by force, fraud or coercion." You may be shocked to know that as of 2010, sex trafficking is the world's leading crime, ahead of drug and weapon trafficking. It is also an extremely lucrative industry — the global market value of sex trafficking is more than 32 billion dollars, which is more than the net worth of Nike, Google, and Starbucks combined.

Commercial sexual exploitation is a huge problem. Numerous nations struggle with it every day. The International Labor Organization (ILO), an agency within the United Nations that deals with labor standards and social protection issues, estimates that more than 1.39 million men, women, and children are victims of sex trafficking. Eighty percent of those victims are women, and fifty percent are minors. Many of the children who are sold into sexual slavery are under the age of ten, which may seem unthinkable in the

minds of everyday college students.

But I'm not just throwing out statistics to try to impress you — that's for Google and Wikipedia to do. Instead, I can only hope that those numbers serve as a wake-up call to such a great injustice against humanity that is happening every moment of every day. It is essential to realize that sexual trafficking is not by any means too distant for you and me to care about. The FBI estimates that in the United States, well over 100,000 children and young women are currently forced into the trafficking industry.

In fact, as shocking as it may seem, there are instances of sex trafficking happening tonight in this very city. Recently, I heard a young woman speak about her experience working in the industry of sexual exploitation in Dallas. As a fifteen-year-old runaway roaming the streets, she agreed to go on a "date" with a pimp, though she did not realize it at the time. Within several days, she was forced into prostitution, working every night and giving all of her earnings to her pimp. During the day, he kept her locked in a house with barred doors and windows and sexually abused her. To brand her as his own, the pimp even

had his name tattooed on her neck.

The young woman, helpless to escape her situation, worked in the business for nearly eight years, even when she was eight months pregnant. Somehow, she was able to contact her mother, with whom she had not spoken in months, to take her back home. Although she fell back into sex trafficking to earn money for cancer treatment for her mother, she was eventually found by New Friends, New Life, an organization dedicated to rescuing young women in similar situations, and she was given a job in accounting.

The speaker was able to escape the industry of sex trafficking, but thousands of similar victims, both in the United States and in countries around the world, may never be as fortunate. Just as the slavery of the past was morally wrong, this sexual slavery is deplorable and disgusting. Children as young as six and seven years old are taught by pornographic videos to perform oral sex. Other children of the same age are raped because of a

“Where are the abolitionists of today, the civil rights movements fighting for victims of sex trafficking?”

belief in certain countries that sexual intercourse with a virgin child will cure someone of AIDS.

If we are such modern thinkers, how can such a terrible crime be so prevalent? In many foreign countries, the police and government officials are involved in the business; if the supposed makers and enforcers of the law are exploiting small children for sexual pleasure, who is left to turn to for help? Where are the abolitionists of today, the civil rights movements fighting for victims of sex trafficking?

There are people who have chosen to stand up and fight for justice. Organizations such as IJM and The Project to End Human Trafficking have begun to reach into foreign countries, such as Indonesia and Cambodia, and rescue sex trafficking victims. Although those are a good start, it is time for this generation to cease ignoring the problem of sexual slavery.

I believe that the more educated people are on the subject of modern-day sexual slavery — especially we college students who are so often looked to as the leaders of the future — the more effectively we can battle the problem. We have great potential to make significant changes in the future, especially regarding issues as grave as this one, and awareness is the first crucial step to progress. Don't just forget about this issue after you turn the page. If you don't believe me, go do a little research yourself. Realize the gravity of the situation. I challenge you to do something about it — even if it just starts with telling someone else. ■

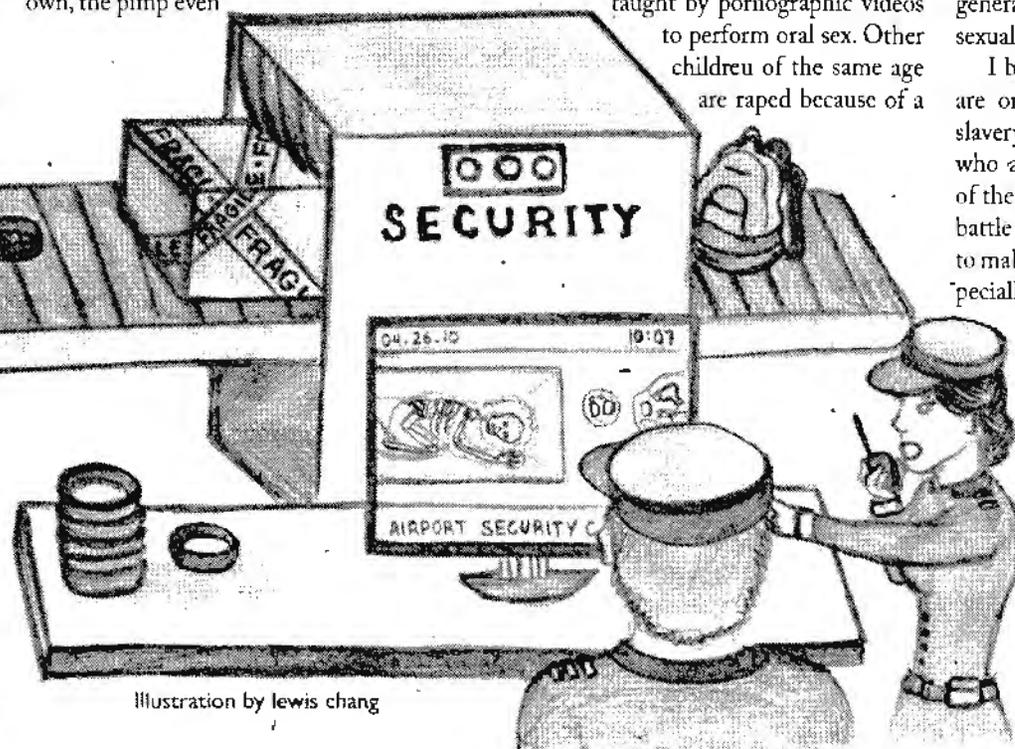


Illustration by Lewis Chang

*Anna is a slave to truth, but it will set her free. Discuss this article at [amp.utdallas.edu](http://amp.utdallas.edu)!*

# The Resolution



by taylor buttler  
trb071000@utdallas.edu

## Final Fantasy XIII

Imagine waking up and discovering that an all-powerful superbeing had bestowed you with magical powers. However, the catch is that you have to obey the orders of that superbeing or else you will be turned into a mindless, violent husk that roams the land for eternity. Unfortunately, the orders of the super being usually involve acts of terrorism against your society. You then have to work through the moral dilemma of having to choose between destroying your home and being doomed to a life devoid of meaning.

That is the central dilemma of *Final Fantasy XIII*. The story is complex, engaging and interesting, but it fails to live up to the very high standard set by previous installments, such as *VII* and *X*.

The *Final Fantasy* series is a long and well established franchise that has brought forth some of the best Japanese RPGs (JRPGs) ever. So when, after a drought of VI years, developer Square Enix released the thirteenth installment,

I was very excited to see what it had come up with. For the most part, I wasn't disappointed.

*XIII* is easily the most linear in the series, with only one area in which you can fully explore your surroundings in a semi-open world environment. Almost in response to the alarming trend in video games to make everything vastly open world (a discussion for another time), I appreciate that *FF XIII* keeps things much more linear, even if they do take it a bit to the extreme.

The gameplay consists of an Active Time Battle (ATB) system: A gauge charges at a steady rate and allows you to perform attacks, abilities, and magic when it fills. You can take three of your six characters into battle at a time, but you can only exert direct control over one of them. The other two are controlled by AI and act according to various roles (attacker, mage, healer, et al.) you set for them, which you can change instantly through the Paradigm Shift system.

The battle system has a distinct learning curve, but once you get the hang of it, it becomes like second nature; you select abilities and shift paradigms so quickly that it will seem like total chaos to someone watching you play. As with all JRPGs, you explore various areas that contain enemies, and when you run into an enemy you are transported to a battle arena based on the surrounding area.

Unlike most *Final Fantasy* games, *XIII* has no towns or

“ Once you get the hang of it, [the battle system] becomes like second nature. ”

cities filled with shops and inns for you to explore passively. Shops are accessed via Save Points and there are no inns, since health refills after each battle.

One of the big drawbacks of the game is the amount of time spent going through “tutorials”. Even though the game consists of thirteen chapters, you can't switch around the characters in your party until Chapter IX. The first half of the game consists of the party being constantly split up into pairs for various reasons, and you continue to run into new aspects of the game for quite a while.

On the one hand, it's good because it shows how many features are put into the game. On the other hand, having to spend an entire half of the game going through tutorials is annoying.

However, once you get all the members of your party back together and get through all the tutorials, the game gets into full swing and becomes truly enjoyable.

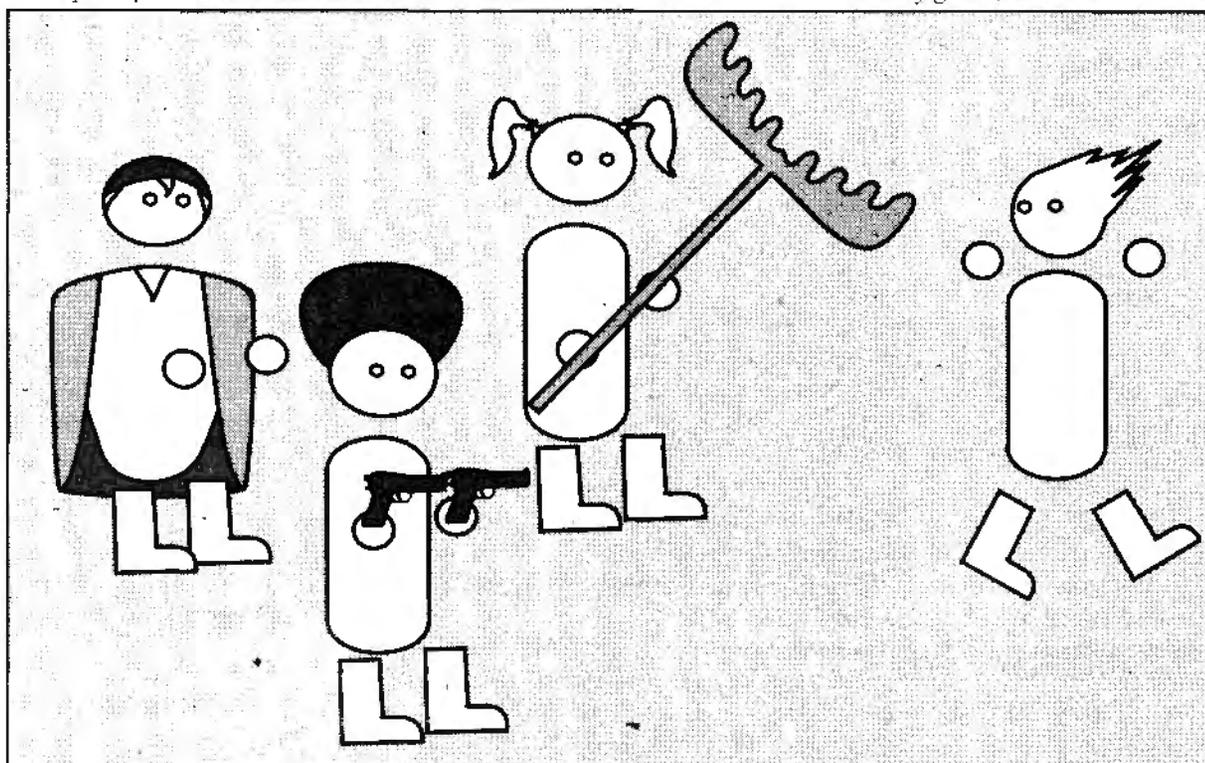
Visually, the *Final Fantasy* series has always been above and beyond anything else, and *Final Fantasy XIII* is no exception. The worlds of Cocoon and Pulse are beautifully imagined and come to life on the screen. The character designs are excellent, the powerful next-gen engines of the 360 and the PS3 allow some of the most realistic images yet seen in video games, and the transitions from gameplay into cutscenes are almost seamless. Also, as with every game in the series, *Final Fantasy XIII* has some of the best music to ever grace a video game.

Despite its flaws, *Final Fantasy XIII* is a fun and invigorating experience that is a blast for JRPG fans, but those of you who don't like story-heavy games shouldn't really bother with it. On that note, the game isn't something that should be undertaken unless you plan to play it for a *long* time. At completion, with only about half the side quests done, my play time was approximately 55 hours of awesomeness. ■

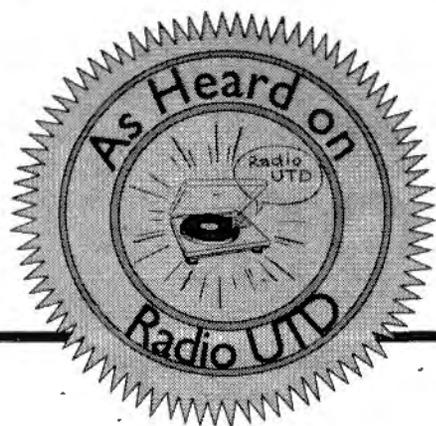
Story: 8.5/10  
Gameplay: 8/10  
Visuals: 10/10  
Voice Acting: 10/10

Overall  
8.5

Taylor knows 55 hours of awesomeness when he sees it.  
Discuss this article at [amp.utdallas.edu/](http://amp.utdallas.edu/)



Yes, the characters are this ridiculous looking. That doesn't stop them from being badass, though. Illustration by mac hird



# The Spin Cycle



MGMT  
***Congratulations***  
(Columbia; 2010)



by sean jordan  
rocknroll\_drummer121@yahoo.com

Recommended Tracks: 1, 2, 6, 7, 9

Recommended if you like: Flaming Lips, The Big Pink, Fleet Foxes

MGMT's sophomore release, *Congratulations*, comes two years after its very successful debut album, *Oracular Spectacular*. After a couple years of touring and enjoying its success, MGMT put a long year into its new album. Unfortunately, *Congratulations* did not get the grand release that MGMT expected and deserved

because the new album was leaked. As a result, MGMT decided to stream the album live on their website. Despite being No. 2 on the Billboard charts, MGMT's new album lacks the great tracks of *Oracular Spectacular*.



Even though *Congratulations* won't make splashes like *Oracular*, it does have a few songs that will catch you by surprise. This album focuses less on the driving bass and electric feel (no pun intended), it seems to have almost classic rock roots. MGMT seems to have drifted away from the syn-

thesizer and picked up a bass guitar. While it isn't as prone to mash-ups, this album does show another side of MGMT.

This album doesn't have many tracks that stand out, but after listening to it a couple times, a few tracks will really grow on you. "Brian Eno" has the intriguing synthesizer bass lines that get you moving in the mornings. "Siberian Breaks" is another diamond in the rough. Even though the song is more than double the length of any other track, that length gives the song a ton of dynamic changes, which makes the 12 minutes a really fun listen.

Overall, *Congratulations* is calm compared to MGMT's debut, but it is definitely worth hearing. Even though we may not see any electronic mash ups any time soon, it will be interesting to see where MGMT takes its sound for its next album. ■



Local Natives  
***Gorilla Manor***  
(French Kiss; 2010)



by liz organ  
corgan89@gmail.com

Recommended Tracks: 1, 3, 4, 9, 10

Recommended if you like: Grizzly Bear, The Beach Boys, road trips on sunny days

Hailing from Los Angeles, the Southern Californian mecca of music, Local Natives is a band on the rise. Having attracted much favorable attention in 2009 with appearances at South by Southwest (a major Austin, TX, industry-targeted music festival) the band has since become an L.A.-music success story and something of a festival favorite. At this year's Coachella festival in Indio, CA, it played to a packed tent of fans.

Its popularity is hardly localized, however; a show here in Dallas on April 22 in a fairly small club sold out during the in-

ternet presale, and a group of adoring fans was treated to an intimate set of songs from *Gorilla Manor*, the band's recently released debut album.

*Gorilla Manor* is what all good debut albums should be: invigorating, skillful, and just plain exciting. The album is certainly not perfect — a few of the tracks, like "Cards and Quarters" and "Sticky Thread", are vaguely repetitive and some-



what lackluster. Even at its worst, though, *Gorilla* showcases some of the most promising talent released this year.

The two musical elements that define Local Natives' sound are skillfully synchronized vocals and impassioned guitar progressions. Three of the band members feature prominently as singers, weaving their voices together to create emotion-drenched harmonies.

It also doesn't hurt that they write poetic lyrics: In standout track "Sun Hands", voices croon, "I'll endure the night/ for the promise of light... and even if the morning never comes/ my hands are blessed to have touched the sun."

The album begins with "Wide Eyes", a powerful opener with a strong drum line and haunting melodies. The chorus epicly cries out, "Oh, to see it with my own eyes", and the main guitar riff lingers with the listener long after the song is over.

Later in the album, "Cubism Dream" combines understated, playful guitar and piano chords with a beautifully sung story of two people who have been separated, both by distance and by changing feelings.

Watch out: Local Natives has rare talent and energy that will justifiably send it into the spotlight. You'll be hearing more from these harmonizers soon. ■

Listen for Local Natives' future releases, *Orangutan Mansion* and *Chimp Estate*.  
Discuss this article at [amp.utdallas.edu!](http://amp.utdallas.edu/)

# The Menu

*This month: Southern Recipes Cafe*



by brady spenrath  
bds062000@utdallas.edu

Southern Recipes Café has been practically across the street from UTD the entire time I've been here (and apparently had been before I arrived), yet it wasn't until recently that I decided to give it more than just a second glance.

Something about its outward appearance never drew me in: As part of a little strip mall of shops with names like Allergies-R-Us (or something like that), it looked more like a dentist's office than a restaurant. I had even tried it once and gotten a decent burger, but it wasn't until I caught a craving for pork chops one evening that I truly appreciated the place.

I typed "Pork Chops" and various nearby restaurant names into Google and searched for a good Yelp.com or Urban Spoon review of pork chops. "Pork Chops Southern Recipes Café" happened to be the first combination that did just that, so I was on my way.

Upon arrival, I was seated immediately in a boringly simple dining area. Although the interior doesn't offer much visually, two of the walls — almost entirely windows — offer a view of the slightly more interesting shopping center surrounding the Sprouts and HomeGoods on the southeast corner of Coit and Campbell.

The waitstaff wasn't very professional, but it *was* friendly and efficient enough to make up for it. I ordered the Grilled Pork Chops, and, as with every entrée, was given two sides, cornbread or a roll, and the choice of soup or one trip to the salad bar to start the meal.

I chose the salad, mashed potatoes with gravy, green beans, and cornbread. The salad bar was small in size yet held a surprising number of options (most of which seemed quite fresh): The offering

was a bit better than I expected from such a small restaurant.

My meal came almost as soon as I was done with my salad, and I was instantly blown away. My two pork chops were huge, and there were plenty of potatoes and green beans.

The pork chops were exactly what I had been craving — seared on the outside yet moist on the inside and as tender as a pork chop can get. You can also get them covered with a white wine sauce and sautéed mushrooms for an extra dollar more, but they're so moist you don't need to. I took a whole pork chop and most of my vegetables home, which became a filling lunch the next day. All that deliciousness and it was only \$8.95.

Two meals for nine bucks, with a salad and decent service — now I was on to Southern Recipes's *err*, recipe, for success. The simple décor and modest location and staffing allow the restaurant to give you a mountain of food for a great price. I'm so hooked that the evening waitresses are starting to recognize me. The restaurant has plenty of regulars, though I could understand if not everyone appreciates it as much as I do.

If buttery, fried, or gravy-soaked southern dishes don't turn you on elsewhere, Southern Recipes probably can't

change your mind, since much of the menu is just classic, not unique.

The Texas Chicken Fried Steak, for instance, doesn't do anything wrong, but it tastes the way it does everywhere else.

The Mushroom Chicken, one of many choices of grilled chicken accompanied by a wide range of toppings and sauces, is also a good dish. For another tasty choice, try the Blackened Chicken Pasta, which will be a treat for fans of spicy food.

As the name implies, most of the dishes at Southern Recipes come from a standard stock of southern foods. Almost every entrée besides steak is \$8.95 or \$9.95, and I have never finished a meal. No surprises, then, but a great value.

There are a few unique options, such as the croissant sandwiches, which might be worth a try (I'm just never in the mood for a sandwich when those pork chops are so close). Most of the appetizers, such as the chicken tenders, fried mozzarella sticks, onion rings, and fried mushrooms are excellent and come surprisingly lightly battered and fried, which is a refreshing change.

To vary the menu,  
Southern Reci-

“Fridays and Saturdays bring all - you - can - eat specials between 4:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. in the form of fried catfish (Friday) and barbecue ribs (Saturday).”

pes also has a variety of specials that change every day, which include a few Tex-Mex options such as enchiladas. Fridays and Saturdays bring all-you-can-eat specials between 4:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. in the form of fried catfish (Friday) and barbecue ribs (Saturday). Unfortunately, at press time I had only tried the catfish. Though it was certainly not the best catfish I've had — and a little bland — you can season it yourself, it comes with all the sides of a regular entrée, and it's all-you-can-eat for just \$9.95.

Maybe I've been a little contradictory. Much of what I like about Southern Recipe Café is how well it makes the familiar southern food I grew up with. Nevertheless, I would understand if you tried it and said “But I've had all of this at so many places before.”

I recommend that you try two meals and decide for yourself. Unless you're just not a fan of southern food, Southern Recipes is very likely to have something you'll *love*. It's like a Wal-Mart of southern food, except without the corporate agenda. Plus, you can feel good about supporting a local business when you go. Although you can get the goods they offer at a million other places, you can't get them at a much better price, and these days, there's no argument against a great bargain. ■

*Brady once argued with a great bargain for an entire 30 minutes — until it pulled out some of Southern Recipe's pork chops. Discuss this article at [amp.utdallas.edu](http://amp.utdallas.edu)!*



Photo courtesy of brady spenrath



AMPMD

The world's greatest database  
of medical conditions

## ALCOLOGIC



by alex garcia topete  
a.j.garcia-topete@student.utdallas.edu

## DEFINITION

Alcologic is an episodic impairment of cognitive skills that affects people under age 30, usually during weekends and holidays. In extreme cases, to which people under 25 are more susceptible, alcologic has been known to manifest at any point during the week. Alcologic was recognized as a condition by the Society of Health Institutions and Technicians after hundreds of thousands of cases were confirmed in ERs worldwide as parallel causes of obstructed colons, broken bones, and 9-month uterine parasites.

Despite the similarity of symptoms, alcologic should not be confused with the more acute Hallu-

cinatory-Inclined Gauged Homeostasis syndrome, which is regularly present in college, hippie, marginalized, and Californian populations.

## CAUSES

Alcologic episodes result from the combination of genetic poor judgment, sudden and sustained infusion of spirits, and environmental pressures. Risk increases according to the quality of the spirits and the length of the conversation during which the impairment develops. Alcologic can be very contagious via oral exchange for tight clusters of individuals (similar to mononucleosis), and a single case of alcologic can trigger overnight a chain reaction in the group.

Factors such as stress, collective idle time, extra money, birthdays, Mardi Gras and St. Patrick's Day can contribute to the occurrence and spread of alcologic episodes.

## COMPLICATIONS

Alcologic leads to a behavioral disorder known as Inadequate Decision and Ideas Of Total Indecorum Complex. The IDIOTIC disorder causes the individual to engage in activities that result in physical injury (e.g. super-hero emulation and pinecone shoving), psychological scarring (e.g. shagging the fugly girl), and/or dignity shedding (e.g. shagging the fugly girl or stripping unsexily to no music for a bunch of fat guys).

Although it has not been scientifically proven yet, alcologic and its IDIOTIC complication have been linked to most cases of drunk driving, Darwin Award scenarios, and marriage.

## TREATMENT &amp; PREVENTION

Genetic resistance, paced spiriting, healthy eating, and water intake can reduce the risk of developing alcologic. The best way to prevent it, however, is to have a second party (preferably somebody trustworthy) to enforce said measures of prevention among the at-risk population during the times of alcological danger.

There is no cure for alcologic once it has been contracted. Nevertheless, the impairment can be exploited and manipulated by a second party (again,

## DIAGNOSIS

Since alcologic is a cognitive impairment, the individual experiencing an episode will be unable to realize it, which is the main source of health risk. Instead, a second, unaffected party needs to diagnose in order for the diagnosis to be valid and reliable.

Common tests to reveal the existence and strength of an alcologic episode include:

The "Would you hit that?" one-on-one consult, in which the second party asks the possible patient if a certain unattractive person or in-house animal seems to be a desirable carnal companion.

The "How many have you had?" query, which the possible patient must answer more precisely than with a mere "a lot".

The "Good Friend" assessment, in which the second party can unilaterally rule on a positive diagnosis for alcologic upon hearing a conversation that includes "jumping", "marriage", "monkey", "roof", "dare", "awesome", and similar words or their derivatives in the same sentence.

hopefully someone trustworthy and good-intentioned) to use cunning to mitigate its effects.

For instance, hydration can be enforced by taking away any and all spirits from patients while convincing them that they drank the beverages already. Also effective is convincing the patients that an alcologic-induced decision just made them urinate on their person. In extreme cases, to contain a possible alcologic epidemic, the second party should persuade the alcologic patients, using tales and lies (everybody lies anyway), to gather and remain in a segregated place.

Only sleep, a subsequent moral hangover, and, occasionally an expensive hospital bill will let the patient recover the level of cognitive skills characteristic of a healthy person until the next alcologic episode hits. ■

*Alcologic is easily cured with a cold shower, hot plate o eggs, and some coffee with Kahlua.*

*Discuss this article at [amp.utdallas.edu](http://amp.utdallas.edu)!*

## SYMPTOMS

- Twinkling eyes
- Dehydration
- Mild nausea (in acute cases)
- Faulty memory
- Euphoria produced by any and all ideas
- Inability to maintain straight posture
- Inability to consider members of the opposite sex unattractive
- Increased attraction to some members of the same sex
- Inability to double-fist without spilling a drink consistently
- Impairment of motor skills, such as slurred speech
- Flawless engagement in randomly skipping conversation topics
- Inability to think an idea isn't "great" or "awesome"
- Having "great" or "awesome" ideas that make sense to no one else.

# Summer Caption Contest



What is Ahmadinejad doing? Photoillustration by mac hird, jonathan coker, and richard badgett

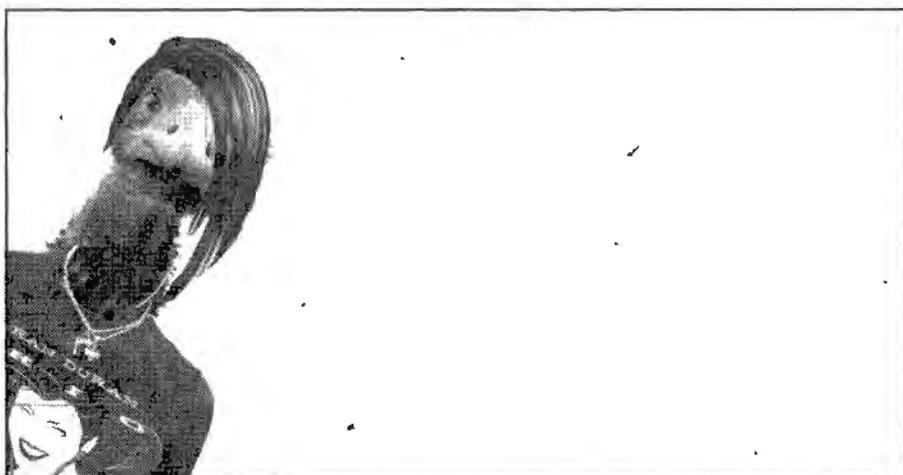
## Caption Contest Rules

Post your captions as comments on the website AND email them with your name to [amodestproposal@gmail.com](mailto:amodestproposal@gmail.com). The editors will select the best one at the end of the month to be the winning caption. The winning caption will be published in next month's issue of AMP! The writer of the winning caption shall receive a free AMP T-shirt — editors' treat!

Anyone may submit a caption, but only a current student of the University of Texas at Dallas may win. Captions MUST have been submitted to [amodestproposal@gmail.com](mailto:amodestproposal@gmail.com) using your UTD email. Captions that have not been emailed to AMP will be not considered for the contest. What are you waiting for? Get those creative juices flowing, and get to work!

Questions, comments, and concerns should be sent to [amodestproposal@gmail.com](mailto:amodestproposal@gmail.com).

## April Caption Contest



Photoillustration by mac hird

Winning caption by Alex Palmer: This is your emu on drugs.

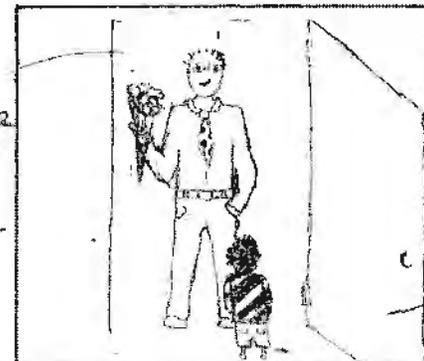
# Colonel Angus



by matthew dunn  
[mddunn3@gmail.com](mailto:mddunn3@gmail.com)

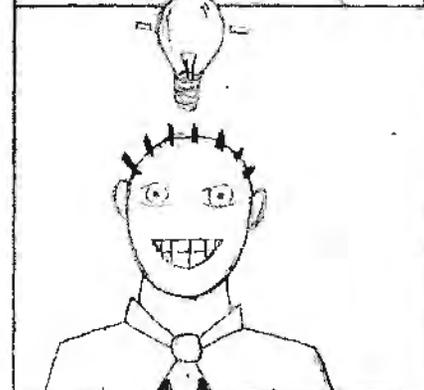
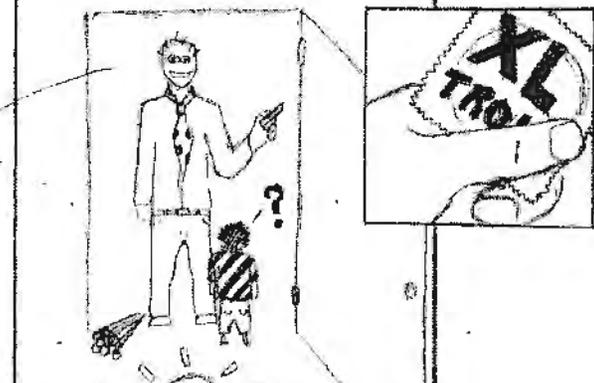
Illustrated by austin rupert

HEY LITTLE BUDDY. IS YOUR SISTER HOME?

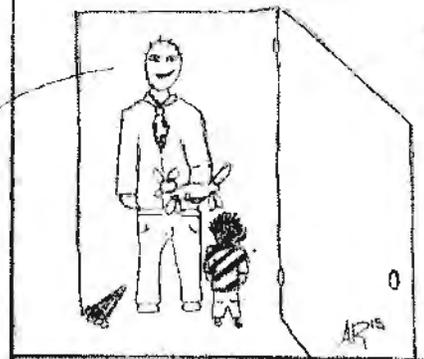


NO, SHE WENT OUT WITH HER FRIENDS.

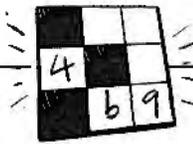
DARN. TONITE WAS GOING TO BE THE BIG NITE. NOW WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO WITH THIS?



DOG?



PRACTICE SAFE SEX. MAKE BALLOON ANIMALS.



by jonathan coker  
jcokerutd@gmail.com

# Hot Diggety!

# May Day!

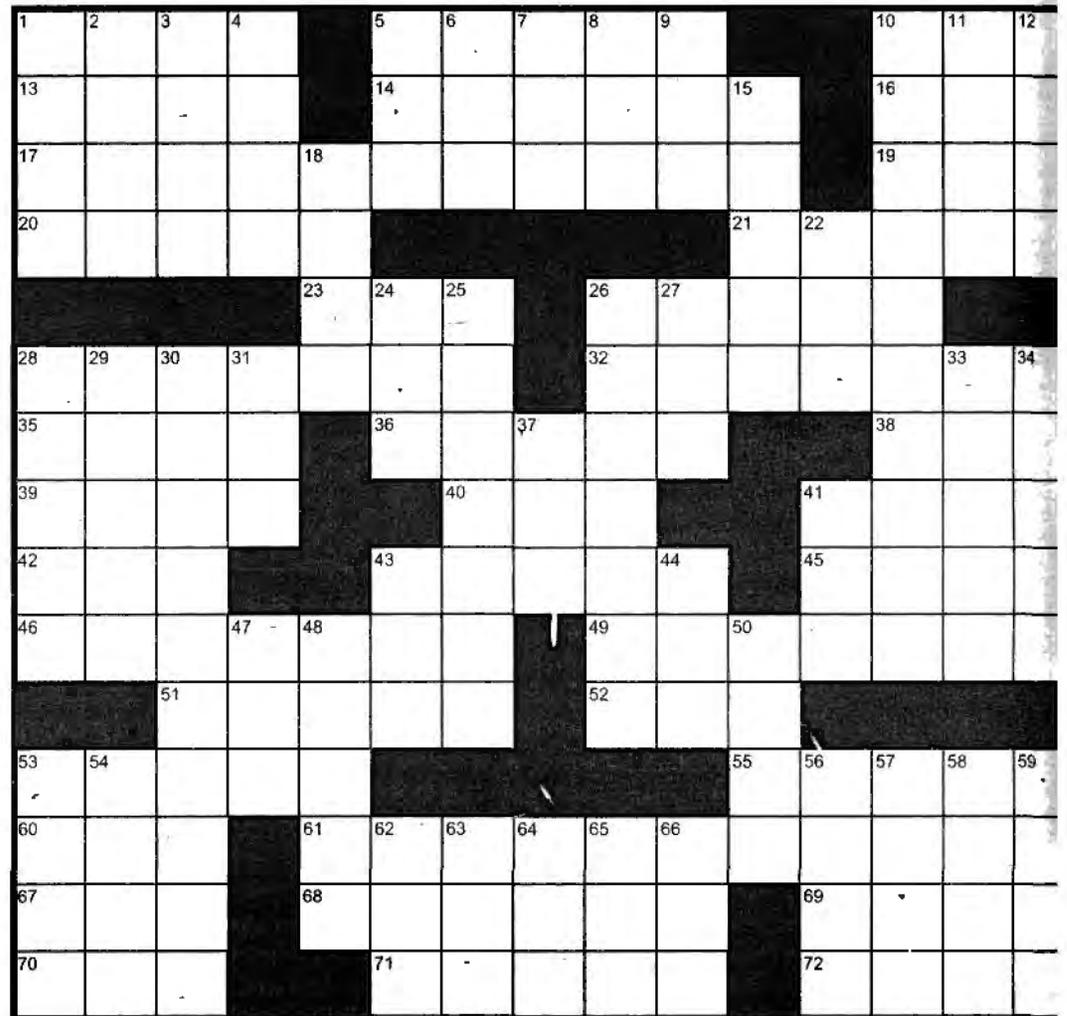
### Across:

1. Coffee spot
5. Dickinson or Bronte
10. Supraluminal velocity (abbr.)
13. Under partner
14. Star shaped flowers
16. Fury
17. Picnic Monday (2 wds.)
19. Ripe internal ovaries
20. Pencil action
21. Recuperates
23. North pole denizen
26. Papal command
28. More agile
32. Falls for example
35. Burn-soothing plant
36. Tight and stiff
38. Air terrors? (abbr.)
39. Quote or mention
40. Informal wear or ball stand
41. Produce or send
42. Cheerleader's chant
43. One sound or make whole
45. Glow stick locale
46. Adam or Eve
49. Put to the test
51. Covered with frost
52. Localized eye infection
53. Italian staple
55. Of the nose
60. Terminate
61. Corona-drinking holiday (3 wds.)
67. LAX approximation (abbr.)
68. Fearful
69. Barely gets by
70. Lock insert
71. Terminate
72. Egg holder

### Down:

1. Canine command
2. Firmly state
3. Katrina observer (abbr.)
4. Greek Cupid

5. Yale student
6. Gone AWOL perhaps (abbr.)
7. Sick
8. Topper
9. Nay's adversary
10. 5/1 (3 wds.)
11. Horse speed
12. Robert E., Sara, and General
15. Six Day War participant
18. Film or fishing-line holder
22. Campus's creeper cave
24. Diminutive suffix or allow
25. What the worried guitar did?
26. Dead Sea Scroll sect
27. Cee and ee neighbor
28. Mother-of-pearl
29. Homeric epic
30. Carnation holiday (2 wds.)
31. Honey, spelling, or bumble
33. Short in experience
34. Satisfy, as in thirst
37. New prefix
41. Epoch
43. Consumed
44. Superlative suffix
47. That's not dandruff ...
48. Apple all-in-ones
50. Auld Lang \_\_\_\_
53. Aboo preceder
54. Hand beginning?
56. Prayer ending
57. Rice wine
58. Voting yesses
59. J. J. Abrams show
62. Amer, Jess, or Jama follower
63. Collar
64. \_\_\_\_-Magnon
65. Over poetically
66. Banned pesticide (abbr.)



## April Answers



Have a puzzle you want to see? Want to write your own crossword? Want either to be in the next issue?

Let us know! Send emails to:  
amodest, roposal@gmail.com

[amp.utdallas.edu](http://amp.utdallas.edu)

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

Difficulty: Kool-aid



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

# Sudoku



*Disclaimer:  
AMP is not responsible for GPA loss due  
to obsessive puzzle solving; AMP takes  
credit for increased GPA due to obsessive  
puzzle solving.*

*Discuss these puzzles at  
[amp.utdallas.edu/](http://amp.utdallas.edu/)*

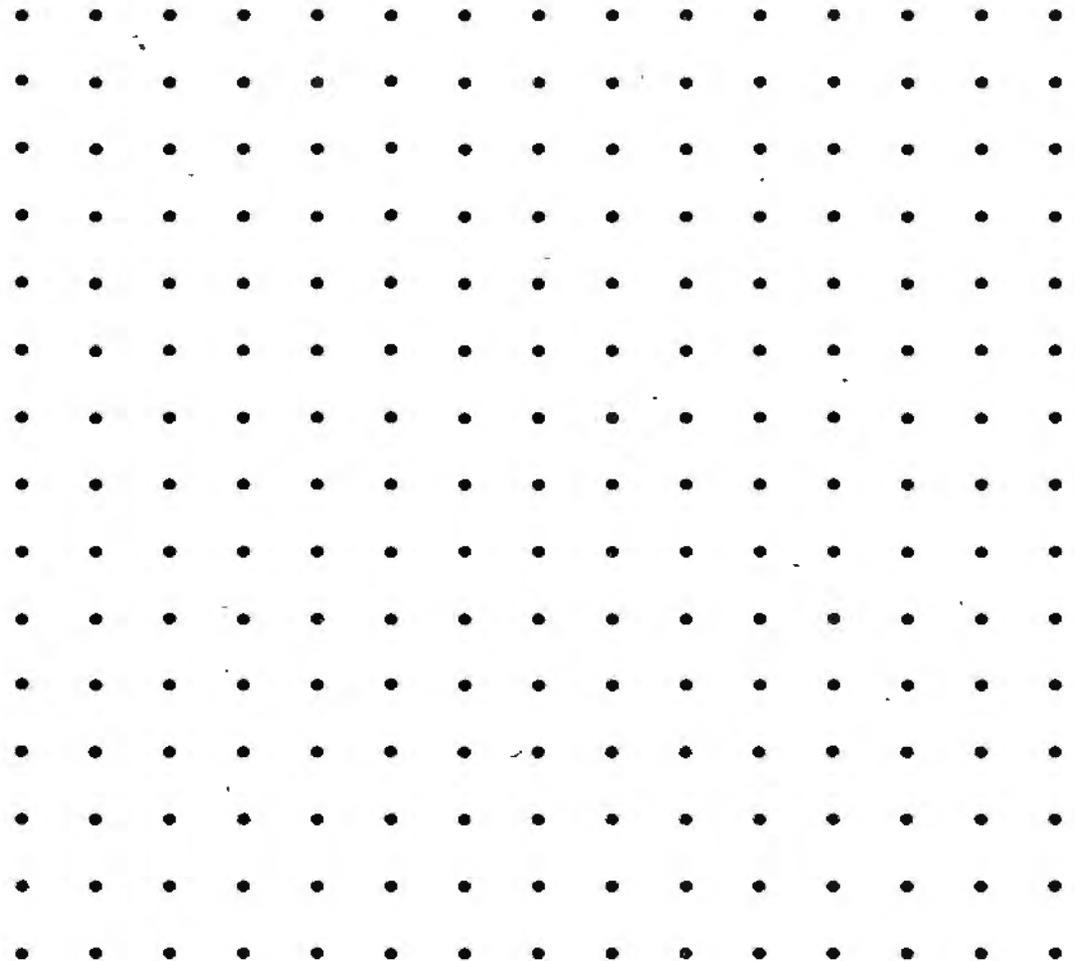
# Capture

Difficulty: SunnyD



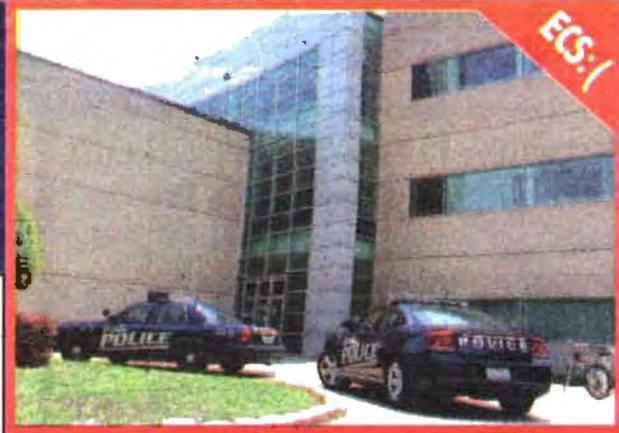
6			4			1	9	5
								6
	1		5	6		2		
			8				5	9
3			2		5			4
8	4				3			
		3		7	4		2	
2								
1	9	4			2			8

Difficulty: Long Island Iced Tea



Capture is a two-player game in which players take turns connecting pairs of horizontally or vertically adjacent dots. A player who completes a square by connecting two dots captures the resulting square and puts his initials in it. That player must draw another line after making a capture. Thus, a player may make a large number of captures in a single turn. After the last capture, the player must still connect two dots. The player who captures the most squares wins.

# Police Arrest ECS Building



THE MOST  
TRUSTED NEWS  
ON THE PLANET

# URANUS

## YOGI BEAR JOINS TEA PARTY

- Calls for fewer park rangers
- Keep the government out of our pic-a-nic baskets
- Smarter than the average tea partier

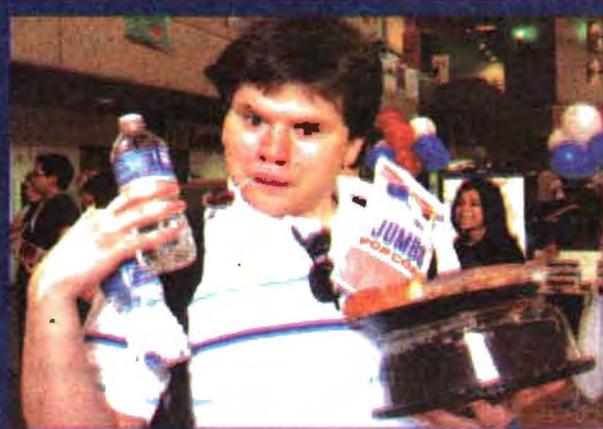


**URANUS  
EXCLUSIVE**

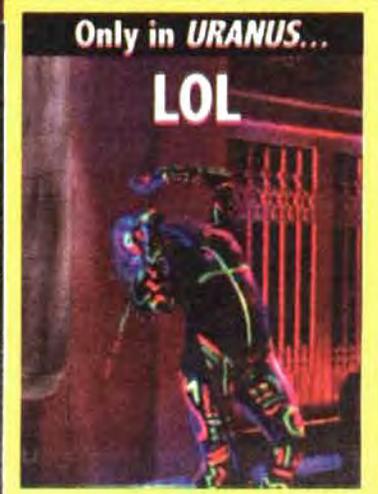


**PAIN**

You're breaking my balls, Mewtwo.  
You're breaking my balls.



People Die From Hunger!  
**OMFGROFLCOPTER!**



**Ke\$ha**  
Funniest Thing on SNL

## Twitter Failure Takes CNN Off the Air for Forseeable Future

NEW YORK (AMP) — The fail whale reared its ugly head last Tuesday as a new episode of Jersey Shore and the release of Justin Bieber's latest single led to a 5000% increase in server traffic for Twitter.

"We're just now getting the fires under control," said Twitter CEO, Evan Williams. "It may be weeks before Twitter up and running again."

\* One hour after Twitter's server failure, CNN went off the air citing technical difficulties.

"We ran through our actual news segments for the day in approximately 15 minutes," explained CNN station manager Milo Spacey. "We tried reading the news over again, playing old news, and even making news up. It was useless. We simply had no content without our Twitter feed."

Fox News has gleefully reported that 500 bodies have been found splattered on the side walk outside CNN's New York headquarters in apparent suicides, though MSNBC says it could be no less than 20 or more. ■

## AMP Editor a Dinosaur?

GLENROSE (AMP) — Citing her appetite, awkward gait when running, and T-rex-like eating movements, paleontologists have concluded that Liz Organ represents the only known living dinosaur.

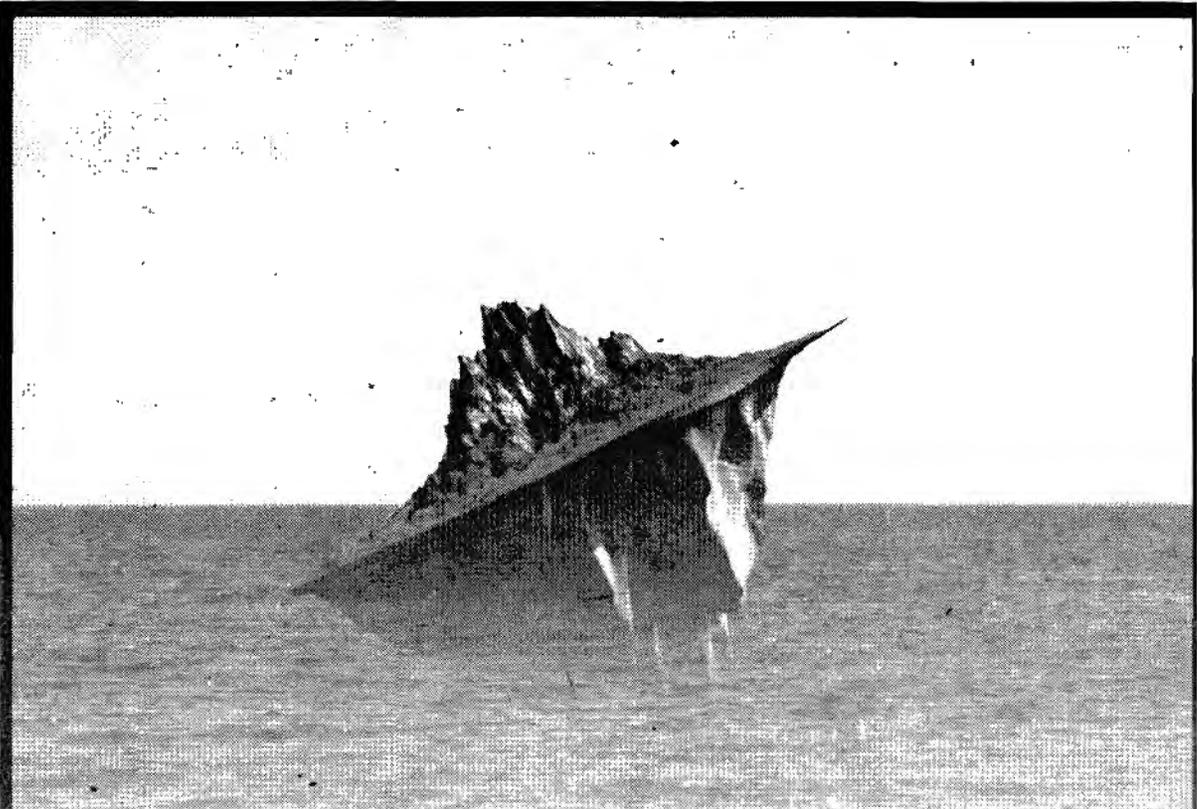
"While it's indisputable that Ms. Organ is a dinosaur, we are still debating exactly what suborder she belongs to," said Snidely Hanesworth, dinosaur researcher.

Hanesworth argues that Ms. Organ's massive daily consumption and relatively small brain to body ratio place her firmly in the infraorder Saurapoda.

Competing researchers say that the way she holds food close to her face while eating and her elbows-in-wrists-flailing running style make her more akin to a Tyrannosaurid.

"Whatever the case, she's incredibly dangerous," Hanesworth pressed. "That a wild animal is able to become the editor of a publication is baffling, no matter how bad that publication may be."

Liz Organ is being held in a reinforced transparisteel cage near Fossil Rim for the safety of her coeditors. ■



The mass of humanity overpopulating Guam causes it list and capsize into the sea.

# Guam Capsizing! Overpopulation to Blame

by D'Brickshaw Cunningham  
Resident Seismologist

GUAM (AMP) — Representative Wank Johnson (D-GA) warned us all, and we didn't listen. The Congressman expressed his concern last month that the massive increase in population on the island, coupled with its unstable topological dimensions, would cause it to "...uh...capsize."

Guam, one of the last remaining Pacific floating islands, had only remained afloat by careful dispersion of the population across the entire landmass. However, when KFC commenced an airdrop of its new Double Down sandwiches to its store on the north end of the island, a massive stampede ensued.

The onrush of humanity caused a deadly imbalance in the island's floating structure. As residents happily and unwittingly munched their way through their stunningly unhealthy meals, the entire island began to tilt.

Officials quickly realized what was happening, but 90% of the population had entered vegetative comas after consuming their KFC. Those that still clung to consciousness

died with the most genuine expression of happiness ever seen on a human face.

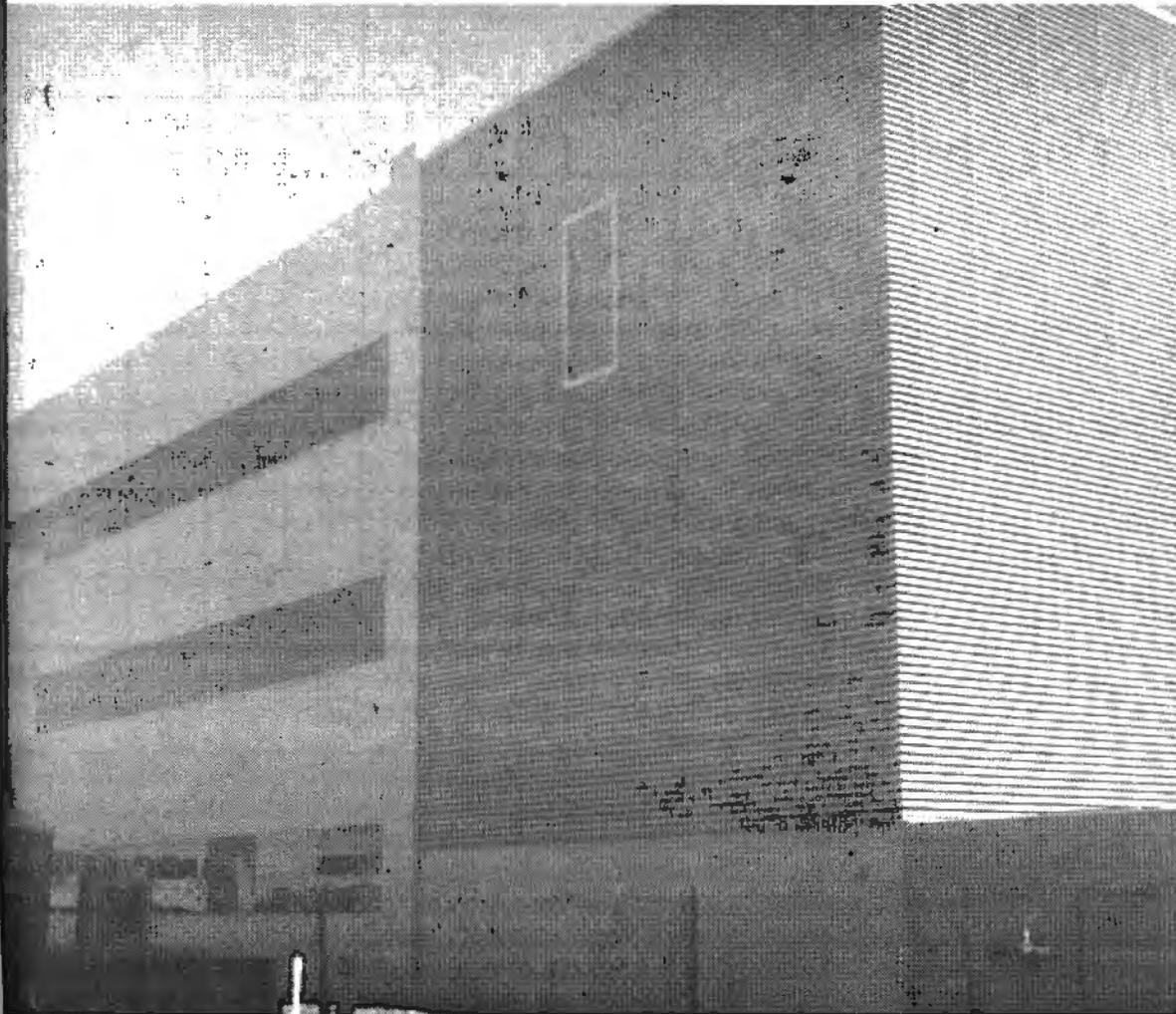
The gradual sinking of Guam wasn't the end of the horror story. In a seemingly contrived series of events, Guam hit several key tectonic areas in the Earth's crust, and it is believed to be the cause of the Icelandic eruption.

"Wow!" says geologist Flink Rockpun "We had no idea any of these things were possible. I hope that in Europe's new era of permanent night, the world will learn how dangerous incredibly delicious fast food can be."

However, Representative Johnson didn't stop there — he immediately began calling for legislation to deal with even more far-fetched disasters, including HR 666, which involves burying millions of turtles for when hell freezes over, HR 4135 or the "Mother's Back Initiative" which will make it illegal for pedestrians to step on cracks in the sidewalk, and HR 742637961452 which consists of giving every citizen in America a 4 ft. long titanium plated egg beater.

"When it comes time, you'll know why we need it." The Representative muttered darkly while staring into the sunset "...you'll know." ■

# Doorway to Nowhere?



The magnitude of the existential quandaries suggested by this door is staggering.

by Camden Wheathole  
Humanitarian & Door Aficionado

UTD (AMP) — UT Dallas students have been puzzled by the appearance of a seemingly pointless door on the side of the MSET building currently under construction. After a long retreat from the rest of society in order to properly contemplate the full philosophical and spiritual significance of this door (see: getting belligerently drunk and hiding in the woods), the fine writers of The Uranus have developed several theories:

- Adolfsen and Peterson Company is a cover company for ACME, Inc.
- Dr. Daniel's "exclusive tour" for anyone who opposes UTD's Tier-One status.
- Distraction from the fact that the construction company ran out of concrete and grass.
- It leads to a secret island that can manipulate time through electromagnetism.
- They are planning to build a giant waterslide that leads to Raising Canes.

- A door for UTD zoology majors to hand-feed the giraffes UTD is planning to buy.
- Post-final stress relief.
- Architect got bored.
- A stunning return to gothic architecture.
- Portal to the Eighth Circle of Hell.
- The door to the math TA's new office.
- Best. Prank. Ever.
- Reassurance to the engineering students that even huge glaring mistakes won't keep them from getting hired.
- A behavioral study: death by fire or jump out of a building?
- The door to Bowser's castle.
- The Twilight Zone is filming on the UTD campus
- A cleverly camouflaged bridge leads from the door to the Holy Grail.
- Building pimple.
- Will take you to the center of the Matrix
- A small thermal exhaust port. Hitting it with a proton torpedo should start a chain reaction and destroy the station. ■

## Physician Out of Lollipops

AFGHANISTAN (AMP) — Dr. Joseph Fox, military physician stationed at a secret military prison, has run out of the lollipops he customarily gives to patients for good behavior during a visit.

"I've dealt with supply shortages before. This is, after all, a military operation" explained Fox. "But this really takes the cake! Do you know how hard it is to get a detainee to sit still while you certify them for torture even with the promise of a lollipop at the end?"

Dr. Fox is reportedly trying new bribes to gain the cooperation of his patients. These include balloons fashioned from latex gloves, stickers, and promises to report what he is seeing to the media.

"I've seen some success with the stickers, but their bloody little ears really perk up at the thought of their plight being known," said Fox. "Maybe I should try temporary tattoos or those little plastic frogs that can jump! Yeah!" ■

## Vacation Travel: Human Right

DYSTOPIA (AMP) — European Union officials made waves this weekend, suggesting that vacation travel is a human right, much like life and freedom from torture.

"If I don't subsidize tourism for the poor, how else will I get votes?" asked Antonio Tajani, the E.U. commissioner for enterprise and industry.

"I'll tell you how," he continued, "by declaring sex, hi-definition television, and sunny weather to be human rights, all subsidizable by the taxpayer, which I promise won't be you, but just some unknown entity that just produces for your benefit, like those Nazi Germans. Vote Tajani!" ■